

# UGRC 110

# Academic Writing

Session 9– Writing Body Paragraphs And Conclusions

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# Session Overview

In this session, we shall discuss how effective body paragraphs and conclusions are written.

## OBJECTIVES

By the end of this section you will be able to

- learn and practise the basics of writing body paragraphs
- write good topic sentences
- develop each controlling idea bearing in mind its contribution to the thesis
- recognise the relationship between the thesis statement in a text's introductory paragraph and the content of body paragraphs
- note the various ways of writing conclusions

# Session Outline

The key topics to be covered in the session are as follows:

- Developing the body paragraphs
- Organizing body paragraphs
- The Importance of the Concluding Paragraph
- Ways of Writing the Concluding Paragraph

# Reading List

- A) Chapter 5, Buscemi (2008) *A Reader For College Writers*, pp. 132-154
- B) Unit 13, Jordan (1999) *Academic Writing Course* pp. 82-87
- C) Chapter 4, Lewis (2001) *Academic Literacy* pp. 98-14

Topic One

# DEVELOPING THE BODY PARAGRAPHS



# Developing the body paragraphs

- Each body paragraph contains an opening sentence, the topic sentence, which relates to the thesis in the Introduction because it expresses a major piece of evidence for that thesis.
- Your task in a body paragraph is to present convincing details about the piece of evidence expressed in the topic sentence.
- The method or combination of methods you use to develop a topic sentence depends on the nature of the controlling idea it expresses as well as other factors, for example your purpose and audience.
- At your disposal to present such details are the skills you have learned concerning methods of paragraph development and organisation.



Topic Two

# ORGANIZING BODY PARAGRAPHS



# Organising the Body Paragraphs

- The organisation of the body paragraphs in the passage in the reading list on word processing is very effective and well thought out.
- This is evident in paragraph 3 to 5. The writer calculates correctly that taking the basic features of word processing first (i.e. in Paragraph 3) would allow his 1989 readers, who were novices as far as computers are concerned, to appreciate the relative advantages the computers have over typewriters.
- Having done that, he takes the readers a step further (in Paragraph 4) into the world of computers, i.e. to the **more complex instructions in software**.
- It is only after providing such education to his readers that he deems it okay to introduce them (in Paragraph 5) to the more sophisticated programmes.
- Notice that it is topic sentences that he has used, beginning of these paragraphs, to guide his readers.





Topic Three

# THE IMPORTANCE OF CONCLUSIONS



# The importance of conclusions

- The essay is made up of an introductory paragraph, body paragraphs and a concluding paragraph.
- The introductory paragraph and the concluding paragraph are special paragraphs because they are written in a slightly different manner from the body paragraphs.
- One's essay, for instance, is best remembered if the conclusion reiterates the points made in the essay. In other words, the conclusion sometimes makes our audience remember the points that are raised in the essay.
- The conclusion also brings an analysis or a discussion to a logical and timely end.



Topic Four

# **WAYS OF WRITING THE CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH**



# Ways of Writing the Concluding Paragraph

- There are various ways of writing a conclusion to an essay. Just as we do with the introductory paragraph of an essay, we have to vary the way in which we compose the concluding paragraph.
- You may conclude your essay by
  1. summarizing or re-stating your main points
  2. offering advice and recommendation
  3. closing with a quotation or statement that your readers will remember,
  4. ending with a rhetorical question, or you may answer a question that you have posed in the essay.



# Summarizing Or Re-stating Your Main Points

- . A summary will normally be a write-up based on the chief or main points raised in a piece of writing. This example is on the topic - 'Should Ghana go HIPC?':

*In sum, this essay has argued on four main fronts as to why Ghana should go HIPC. On economic reasons I argued that by going HIPC Ghana will have its external debts cancelled. Regarding political reasons, I mentioned, for instance, that Ghana will strengthen its political ties with powerful countries. I also touched on social and cultural reasons and argued that a people empowered economically are likely to be at peace with themselves and go about their normal life. Obviously, it becomes extremely important for Ghana to declare itself HIPC so as to belong to the international community.*

# *Offer Advice And Recommendation*

- In an essay in which you discussed a social problem, for example, you may want to conclude by offering your readers advice on how to solve the problem.
- Let us consider the following example concluding paragraph to an article by Buscemi et al (1996) entitled 'Everybody's Problem':

*If you have alcoholic friends, the worst thing you can do is to look the other way. This disease is not theirs to deal with alone. Try persuading them to seek counselling. Explain how their alcoholism is hurting their family, co-workers and neighbours. Above all don't pretend not to notice! Alcoholism is everybody's problem!*

- You will note that this conclusion sympathizes with alcoholics and would want the society to rise and help alcoholics since they are humans who need help.

## *Answer a question that you have posed in the essay*

- Questions we pose in the Introduction and discussed in the body may be re-echoed in the conclusion so that you can reiterate your answers to readers for emphasis.
- Consider the following pair of Introduction and Conclusion to an essay on the topic “Redenomination of the Cedi: Is it necessary?”
- Notice that questions posed beginning of the Introduction. are re-echoed and answered in the conclusion although the answers must have been provided in detail in the intervening body paragraphs:

# *Answer a question that you have posed in the essay*

- **Introduction**

*Why would a poor nation like Ghana want to use a lot of money in a redenomination of her currency? If the West African sub-region is going to have its currency very soon, then why would Ghana want a new currency in a redenomination exercise? These and many questions have been asked the debate on the necessity or otherwise of redenomination the national currency. All such questions are valid but as to whether they really should be considered in such an exercise is another matter altogether. This essay takes a look at some issues related to the debate and in the end will come to a conclusion as to the necessity or otherwise of the redenomination exercise which is to take off soon.*

- **Conclusion**

*In conclusion, we have noted several reasons why the redenomination exercise is important. While it is true that a lot of money is to be used to re-denominate the Cedi, this will be worth it since this exercise will take care of excess liquidity. The Eco which the West African Sub-Region will use as currency will come to fruition, but we would have to take care of security issues internally before all parameters are set for the introduction of the Eco. All said and done Ghana desperately needs a redenomination of her currency, the Cedi.*



# Closing with a quotation or statement

- You can close your essay with a quotation or statement that your readers will remember
- Sometimes a quotation can be an effective way of ending an essay, however, a quotation alone cannot serve as a concluding paragraph.
- First of all use any of the strategies discussed above to start your conclusion. You can then use a quotation that you consider to be very relevant to the issues discussed to close the paragraph.
- Consider how the final sentence in the example, the quotation places into focus the fact that change must not be avoided if such a change is inevitable:

*In conclusion, we have noted several reasons why the redenomination exercise is important. While it is true that a lot of money is to be used to re-denominate the Cedi, this will be worth it since this exercise will take care of excess liquidity. The Eco which the West African Sub-Region will use as currency will come to fruition, but we would have to take care of security issues internally before all parameters are set for the introduction of the Eco. All said and done Ghana desperately needs a redenomination of her currency, the Cedi for as our elders have often said **'When the time changes, man has to change with the times.'***

# Activity

- Write a concluding paragraph to an essay on the topic, 'Trends in Ghana's Democracy'. You may use any of the strategies discussed to write your paragraph.

