

# Identifying Cohesion and Coherence in Writing - II

NLN 101 Language & Writing Skills-2 (Week 9)  
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## 1 Topic sentences as essay guides

Where the sub-divisions of an essay begin and end are indicated by its paragraphs. Paragraphing helps the reader to grasp the main points of the essay and see its organisation.

The kinds of information that a paragraph can contain include: a series of brief examples, a single long illustration of a point, descriptions of a place, character, a process, a narration of a series of events, a comparison of two or more things, a description of a cause and effect

But what is common to all good paragraphs is what is called a topic sentence.

Any organised and coherent paragraph is a series of sentences centred around a single topic or idea. Usually the idea or 'topic' discussed by a paragraph is indicated by its first (few) sentence(s) or **topic sentence(s)**.

1. Read the title of the piece given to you. It is an excerpt from the introductory chapter to Caroline Criando Perez's book *Invisible Women*
2. Underline the first sentence of every paragraph. Check if this could be a potential topic sentence. If not, look at the next sentence as well. If together the two sentences function to state a topic, underline both.
3. Based on the topic sentence(s), attempt to predict the content of the paragraph. Write down in a few words what the paragraph may be about.
4. In structured writing, such as non-fiction and academic writing, the content of the last sentence of the previous paragraph may lead the reader to the topic of the upcoming paragraph. So, if you are unable to write down the prediction, read the last sentence of the previous paragraph as an extra clue.
5. Once you are done writing down your predictions, read all the paragraphs to check how accurate your prediction has been.
6. Now ask yourself the following questions.
  - (a) Do the topic sentences of each paragraph do a reasonable job of unifying the content of that paragraph?
  - (b) What do all the topic sentences together substantiate?
  - (c) How are all the topic sentences linked to the very first topic sentence.

## 2 Task 2: Assemble the essay (30 minutes)

You will now use what you have learnt about markers of cohesion and coherence in writing to assemble the essay *Soccer Was Once India's Great Love. What Happened?* by Ayesha Le Breton. Use the following method to predict the right structure of the essay.

1. Behind each paragraph/group of paragraphs, write down in one sentences what that paragraph/group is about.
2. Now put these summary-sentences in an order that builds a plausible narrative.
3. Now upturn your pieces of paper and check if the order you predicted seems correct.
4. Verify the structure by looking for the appropriate signposts.