

2 Organization of the text: different thematic patterns

2.1 Main idea and supporting details

Exercise 1

Specific aim: To sensitize the students to different ways of conveying the information in a paragraph.

Skills involved: Recognizing the technique used by the writer.

Why? Some exercises can be focused on the technique used by the writer in a given paragraph as a preparation to the study of the organization of a whole text. For instance, if one considers the opening paragraphs of most articles and stories, one finds that there are a number of types, e.g. starting with a question to catch the reader's attention, going directly to the main point, starting with an anecdote, etc.

Read the opening paragraphs of the suggested texts and decide which category they fall into.

	<i>summary of the main point</i>	<i>question to hold the reader's attention</i>	<i>example</i>	<i>anecdote</i>
It's like having a criminal record pages 187–8				
Faulty Winks pages 141–2				
Traveller gets \$450 award page 210				
Programming people pages 28–9				
Botany Bay pages 47–8				

A similar exercise can be done with any paragraph in a text. This

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will familiarize the students with the different possibilities of conveying a message (e.g. use of comparison, contrast, examples) as well as with the most common types of expansions. It will then be easier for the student to grasp the general organization of a given text.

Exercise 2

Specific aim: To train the students to consider the structure and coherence of a passage.

Skills involved: Understanding relations between parts of a text.

Why? In this exercise students are asked to find out which sentence is out of place in the paragraph. This will oblige them to consider the topic of the passage and to find out (a) whether all sentences relate to this topic, and (b) whether the sentences follow each other naturally and logically.

Read the following passages and in each of them underline the sentence which does not belong.

In 1816, when she was 19, Mary Wollestonecraft was staying in Switzerland with her future husband – Shelley – and Lord Byron. They had read German short stories and decided to try to write their own. The result was a tale written by Mary and called 'Frankenstein'. It is the story of a scientist who creates a monster which will eventually destroy its creator. It was probably one of the first works of science-fiction. Mary's mother, Mary Godwin, had been one of the first feminists.

Mandrakes are plants that grow in Southern Europe. People used to associate them with magic and witchcraft. Mandrake juice was used by witches in lotions supposed to cause hallucinations. The flowers of the mandrake are white and the berries bright yellow. According to popular belief mandrake roots induced fertility in women and also grew under the gallows after a man had been hanged.

Exercise 3

Specific aim: To train the students to recognize the topic sentences and the relation of the other sentences to them.

Skills involved: Understanding relations between parts of a text. Distinguishing the main idea from supporting details.

Recognizing indicators in discourse.

Why? In order to read efficiently, one must be able to recognize the topic sentences of the text, since they carry the main information. One must also be able to recognize the indicators which announce the function of the sentences that are expansions of the topic sentence (e.g. indicators announcing an example, a restriction, a consequence, etc.) All the questions in this exercise aim at drawing the students' attention to these relations within the text.

I don't know why UFOs are never sighted over large cities by hordes of people. But it is consistent with the idea that there are no space vehicles from elsewhere in our skies. I suppose it is also consistent with the idea that space vehicles from elsewhere avoid large cities. However, the primary argument against recent extraterrestrial visitation is the absence of evidence.

Take leprechauns. Suppose there are frequent reports of leprechauns. Because I myself am emotionally predisposed in favor of leprechauns, I would want to check the evidence especially carefully. Suppose I find that 500 picnickers independently saw a green blur in the forest. Terrific. But so what? This is evidence only for a green blur. Maybe it was a fast hummingbird. Such cases are reliable but not particularly interesting.

Now suppose that someone reports: "I was walking through the forest and came upon a convention of 7,000 leprechauns. We talked for a while and I was taken down into their hole in the ground and shown pots of gold and feathered green hats. I will reply: "Fabulous! Who else went along?" And he will say, "Nobody," or "My fishing partner." This is a case that is interesting but unreliable. In a case of such importance, the uncorroborated testimony of one or two people is almost worthless. What I want is for the 500 picnickers to come upon the 7,000 leprechauns . . . or vice versa.

The situation is the same with UFOs. The reliable cases are uninteresting and the interesting cases are unreliable. Unfortunately, there are no cases that are both reliable and interesting.

(From Carl Sagan: *Other Worlds* (Bantam, 1975))

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- 1 Give a title to the passage.
- 2 If you had to pick out *one sentence* in the whole passage to sum up the main idea, which one would you choose?
- 3 Find the topic sentence of each paragraph.
- 4 Which words of the first paragraph do the second and third paragraph develop?
2:
3:
- 5 Find at least one instance of:
 - an illustration:
 - a restatement of an idea just mentioned:
- 6 What words are used to introduce the two illustrations given in the text?
.....
What words are used to introduce the conclusions drawn from these illustrations?
- 7 The following points are all mentioned in the text. Next to each of them, write down M if you think it represents a *main idea* in the passage and S if you think it is only a *non-essential, supporting detail*:
 - Space vehicles from elsewhere avoid large cities.
 - The primary argument against recent extraterrestrial visitation is the absence of evidence.
 - The author is emotionally predisposed in favour of leprechauns.
 - The fact that 500 picnickers saw a green light in the forest is terrific.
 - The green blur might have been a hummingbird.
 - Cases such as that of the picnickers are not interesting.
 - Someone said the leprechauns took him down their hole.
 - The man said his fishing partner was with him.
 - The reliable cases are uninteresting and the interesting cases are unreliable.

Exercise 4

Specific aim: }
Skills involved: } Same as for exercise 3.
Why? }

Calculator, calendar and clock

Even the cheapest and least complicated digitals are minor miracles of modern technology. They replace the traditional hands, springs and cogs with flickering digits and electronic circuits.

Some just display hours, minutes and seconds, but many function like baby computers. At the push of a button you can check the time in New York or New Dehli, see exactly how long Mario Andretti takes to lap a race track, set a small but shrill alarm, or even programme the watch, months in advance, to flash out a reminder about birthdays and other special dates. Some digitals have calendars that 'know' all about leap years and will remain accurate well into the 21st century.

Quartz, one of the world's most common minerals, lies at the heart of

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every digital watch. Almost a century ago, scientists discovered that quartz crystals vibrate at an absolutely constant frequency when an electric current is passed through them. But quartz digital watches did not become practical until miracles of miniaturisation were developed to save weight and room in spacecraft. The typical watch crystal, powered by a battery the size of a fingernail, vibrates 32,768 times every second. The vibrations are fed into a tiny 'chip' – little bigger than the end of a match – which is crammed with more than a thousand transistors and other components. This microscopic maze is the watch's 'brain' and can be designed to store a remarkable amount of information. But its most important single function is to keep dividing the vibrations by two until the quartz is pulsing precisely once every second.

Battery, crystal and chip combine to produce remarkably accurate watches whose timekeeping rarely strays by more than one or two seconds each month. They also tend to be very reliable, thanks to the absence of all the ticking machinery packed into a conventional clockwork watch.

If you fancy a digital watch, ask yourself how many of the tricks it performs are likely to be of genuine value. It makes no sense to spend extra money on what could become gimmicks once the novelty has worn off.

(From *The Observer Magazine*)

Below, you will find the topic sentence of each paragraph of the text.

Write underneath each of them

- what expansions appear in the rest of the paragraph
- what kind of relation these expansions have to the topic sentence (e.g. illustration, cause, consequence, supporting detail, rewording of the same idea, etc.)

TS 1 Even the cheapest and least complicated digitals are minor miracles of modern technology.

expansions

relation to TS

TS 2 many function like baby computers.

expansions

relation to TS

TS 3 Quartz, one of the world's most common minerals, lies at the heart of every digital watch.

expansions

relation to TS

TS 4 Battery, crystal and chip combine to produce remarkably accurate watches . . .

expansions

relation to TS

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TS 5 If you fancy a digital watch, ask yourself how many of the tricks it performs are likely to be of genuine value.

expansions

relation to TS

Exercise 5

Specific aim: To train the students to find out the main idea of a passage.

Skills involved: Distinguishing the main idea from supporting details.

Why? When the main idea of a paragraph is not actually stated, that is to say when there is no such thing as a topic sentence, the students may find it more difficult to decide what the general meaning of that paragraph is. It is therefore necessary to train them to find out the main ideas in passages of that type.

The first agent Leamas lost was a girl. She was only a small link in the network; she was used for courier jobs. They shot her dead in the street as she left a West Berlin cinema. The police never found the murderer and Leamas was at first inclined to write the incident off as unconnected with her work. A month later a railway porter in Dresden, a discarded agent from Peter Guillam's network, was found dead and mutilated beside a railway track. Leamas knew it wasn't coincidence any longer. Soon after that two members of another network under Leamas' control were arrested and summarily sentenced to death. So it went on: remorseless and unnerving.

(From J. Le Carré: *The Spy Who Came In From The Cold* (Pan Books, 1964))

The main idea of this passage is that

- a) the police couldn't stop the murders of Leamas' men.
- b) Leamas couldn't understand why so many people were killed.
- c) Leamas knew someone was killing his agents.
- d) the murders of Leamas' agents were savage and cruel.

The Hotel Taft was on a hill in one of the better sections of town. A wide street curved up past large expensive homes until it neared the top of the hill, then there was an archway over the street with a sign on the archway reading Taft Hotel and as it passed under the archway the street turned into the entranceway of the hotel. Benjamin drove slowly under the archway, then up the long driveway until he came to the building itself. He had to slow his car and wait in a line with other cars, most of them driven by chauffeurs, stopped by the entrance of the building for a doorman to open

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the door for their passengers. When Benjamin was beside the entrance an attendant appeared at his car and pulled open the door.

(From C. Webb: *The Graduate* (Penguin, 1968))

The main idea of this passage is that

- a) Benjamin was going to stay in the Taft Hotel.
- b) The hotel Benjamin went to was a luxurious one.
- c) There was an attendant waiting for Benjamin in the hotel.
- d) Benjamin was impressed by the quality of the hotel.

Exercise 6

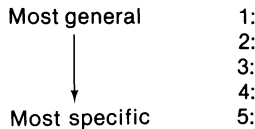
Specific aim: To train the students to discriminate between general and specific statements.

Skills involved: Distinguishing the main idea from supporting details.

Why? Training the students to distinguish between generalizations and specific statements will often help them to find the main idea of a passage more quickly.

Look at the following statements and classify them according to their degree of generality.

- a) Cats are extremely intelligent animals.
- b) Siamese cats are believed to be more intelligent than others.
- c) My neighbour's Siamese cat is exceptionally intelligent.
- d) Some Siamese cats are just as intelligent as dogs.
- e) My neighbour's Siamese cat can do all kind of tricks.



Exercise 7

Specific aim: }
Skills involved: } Same as for exercise 6.
Why? }

On the following page you will find a number of statements. Decide first which ones are generalizations and second which ones are more specific statements. Then match the generalizations and the examples.

- a) When I was young I could think of nothing but becoming a policeman.
- b) Do you know the name of the product for which Scotch Tape is but a brand name?
- c) The aim of advertisers is to create consumer wants.

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- d) The youths who attacked X in Chicago last week had all seen the ABC movie three nights before.
- e) All children cherish a dream.
- f) If the people who originally built many of our Eastern cities had been able to predict the automobile, there would certainly be less traffic problems nowadays.
- g) Violence on TV is probably more harmful than we think.
- h) Many of the problems one finds in city and suburban life result from a lack of proper planning.
- i) So effective has brand advertising become that, for some products, the most familiar brand name is used to cover all similar items.
- j) A producer of paper handkerchiefs recently launched a campaign to convince people they needed one box of tissues in each room of their house.

Generalizations:						
Specific statements:	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

Exercise 8

Specific aim: To help the students to find out how the text and the paragraphs are organized.

Skills involved: Understanding relations between parts of a text.

Why? Matching paragraphs and their main ideas or function is a simple and useful way of sensitizing the students to the way the different points of a text are organized.

Tit-for-tat Hindi letter irks doctor

A NORTH Wales family doctor was not amused when his letter in Welsh to a local hospital was answered in Hindi.

Dr Carl Clowes, of Llanaelhern, Gwynedd, sent a middle-aged woman patient with a knee injury for x-ray, along with a referral note describing the symptoms, to the Caernarvon and Anglesey hospital at Bangor. The reply, signed by a Dr L. J. Price and written in Hindi, arrived by post.

Dr Price later described the letter as 'a bit of fun'. He was not Welsh-speaking and his two Indian colleagues in the casualty department certainly did not understand Welsh. 'It's a bit of fun really, our way of asking Dr Clowes to write to us in English. We do not always

have time to get his letters translated, especially as many nurses do not speak Welsh.'

Dr Clowes is unrepentant. 'This is an insult not only to myself and my patient but to the Welsh language. All my patients are Welsh-speaking and it is their first language. It is a matter of principle in an area where the vast majority of people are Welsh-speaking.' He has complained to the health authorities and to his MP.

Mr Robert Freeman, administrator of the Gwynedd area health authority said yesterday that Welsh and English were equally valid. 'But a lot of our medical staff are English or foreign, although we do try to ensure that there is always a competent Welsh speaker on hand in the casualty department.' Dr Clowes could continue to write his letters in Welsh and in future he would receive a reply in Welsh.

(Ann Clwyd, *The Guardian*)

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Match the paragraphs and the ideas.

para. 1 The facts

para. 2 The Welsh doctor's opinion

para. 3 Dr Price's opinion

para. 4 Summary of the article

para. 5 Conclusion of the 'case'

What is the common structure of paras. 3, 4 and 5?

first sentence =

rest of the paragraph =

Exercise 9

Specific aim: To help the students to find out how the text is organized.

Skills involved: Distinguishing the main points of the text and completing a diagram.

Why? One way of drawing the students' attention to the way the text is organized is to give them a skeleton structure of the text which they are asked to complete. For instance, the following outline for the text entitled 'Just Call Him 181213 3 1234 5' simply indicates that the text is made up of an introduction and two parts, each of them divided into a number of sub-parts (or containing a number of points).

Decide what the main points of the text are and complete the skeleton structure given below.

Just Call Him 181213 3 1234 5

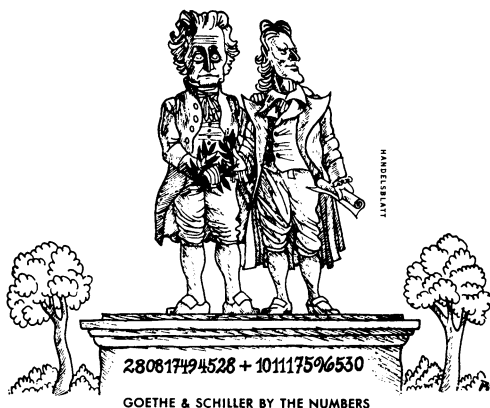
BY 1975, nine years ahead of Orwellian projections, every West German citizen may be officially known to his government by a twelve-digit number. The government has sent the Bundesrat (upper house of parliament) a proposal that would identify each person by six digits indicating his birth date, a seventh his sex and the century of his birth, the next four to distinguish him from others born on the same day, and the last a "control" number — which would make Chancellor Willy Brandt Number 181212 3 1234 5 or something very close to that. The number will follow a person from birth until 30 years after his death when,

presumably, he would be expunged from the computers.

The government explains the move on the grounds that its voluminous registration system is being computerized. It also hopes to eliminate the confusing snarls that sometimes arise in a country where many people have the same surname (there are 600,000 Müllers alone in West Germany). Israel and the Scandinavian countries already have such systems, and a number of others, including Japan, are preparing to follow suit.

As most Germans seem to see it, bureaucratization is already so pervasive that the new system could not be any worse. "We are already over-numbered," wrote Munich's respectable *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, "and who would have objections to a simpli-

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fication of the system?" As it is, anyone moving from one city to another in West Germany must fill out an 18-inch-long questionnaire, in triplicate, first to deregister and then again to reregister. But not everyone is

pleased with the name-to-number switch. In an opinion poll about the change, 31% protested. "I have been a number long enough as a soldier and a prisoner of war," said a retired policeman. "I want to keep my name."

(Time)

Introduction:

I

- A
- B
- C

II

- A
- B

Exercise 10

Specific aim: } Same as for exercise 9 but this is an easier version
Skills involved: } of the exercise since the different points of the
Why? } text, out of order, are given together with the
skeleton outline of the structure.

Can you reorder these different points in the skeleton structure given below?

- Reactions against the project in Germany
- Reasons given by the government
- Presentation and explanation of the project
- Supporting argument: the example of other countries
- Reactions in favour of the project in Germany

Organization of the text

What German people think of the idea

The project will reduce the possibility of errors

Computers are being used nowadays in registration

Introduction:

I

A

B

C

II

A

B

2.2 Chronological sequence

Exercise 1

Specific aim: To help the students to understand the chronological sequence in a text.

Skills involved: Selective extraction of relevant points from the text.

Why? This exercise will oblige the students to refer back to the text to check in what order the events took place and it is one way of drawing their attention to the chronological organization of the passage.

(See 'It's like having a criminal record' pages 187–8). After reading the text complete the sentences with one of the following words: before, after, when, since, while, during, as soon as

- Michael left school getting his A levels.
- he was at the London School of Economics, Michael did not work very hard.
- entering the Warburg Institute, Michael Godfrey brilliantly got his degree.
- his year in Canada, Michael thought that getting a job was no problem.
- his year in Canada, Michael found it was very difficult to get a job.

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Exercise 2

Specific aim: To help the students to study the chronological sequence in a text.

Skills involved: Understanding relations between parts of a text.

Why? In order to be able to rebuild a passage whose different parts are given out of order, the students will have to study the time adverbs, the system of reference and the chronology of events which help to make the text coherent.

Can you reorder the following frames so as to get a coherent story?



(From *Nobody's Perfect Charlie Brown* by Charles Schultz)

The right order is:

It is also possible to combine this exercise with a matching exercise (see pages 135ff). The speech balloons are then cut out and both the text and the pictures are presented out of order and have to be reorganized. For such an exercise cartoons in which the pictures are more or less interchangeable obviously must be avoided.

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Exercise 3

Specific aim:
Skills involved:
Why?

} Same as for exercise 2.

Here is a recipe for sherry trifle. But the instructions are not in the right order. Can you reorder them?

Serves 8 Time taken: 45 minutes
Chill for several hours

Ingredients

6 trifle sponge cakes 100g ratafias
raspberry jam 1 ½dl sweet sherry

For the custard:

6 egg yolks
50g castor sugar a few drops of vanilla essence
3 ½ tsp flour toasted flaked almonds
½l cream

- a) Draw off the heat, add the vanilla essence and allow to cool for a few moments.
- b) Split the sponge cakes and spread with jam.
- c) Separate the egg yolks into a basin. Add the sugar and cornflour. Mix the ingredients.
- d) Pour over the soaked sponge cakes and leave until cold. Chill for several hours. Then sprinkle with the toasted flaked almonds just before serving.
- e) Cut in pieces and place them in a large dish. Add the ratafias and pour over the sherry.
- f) Heat the cream in a saucepan until very hot, then draw off the heat and gradually stir into the egg mixture. Mix well and put the custard into the saucepan. Put over low heat and stir until it thickens. Do not let it boil.
- g) Set aside for 30 minutes while preparing the custard.

The right order is:

II How the aim is conveyed

Exercise 4

Specific aim:
Skills involved:
Why? } Same as for exercise 2.

Here is the opening page of a novel by Charles Webb, *Love, Roger* (Penguin, 1970). But the various sentences or paragraphs have been jumbled. Can you reorder them?

- a) The man looked over at her, then back at me. 'She's just leaving.'
- b) I got there just as it was closing. On the other side of the glass doors a man was turning a key in the lock. 'Sir?' I said.
- c) 'I thought you were open till six.'
- d) 'I have some stationery to pick up,' I said. 'I could just run in, pick it up, then run out.'
'We're closed,' he said.
- e) The reason I had to go to Filene's was to pick up some stationery with my name on it, which I had ordered a few weeks before. During the middle of the afternoon I called up to find out if the stationery was ready, and I should have found out how late the store was open.
- f) I stepped nearer and moved my shoe ahead so the door stuck on it. 'I had a letter to write tonight. I wanted to be able to write it on personalized stationery.'
- g) 'Five-thirty.'
- h) He pointed at some letters on the door that said the store closed at five-thirty, then turned and started walking away.
- i) The woman took her bag and started over towards the door. As she approached, the man opened it for her, then stood and held it as she walked out.
- j) 'Sir?' I said again, putting my face up the crack between the doors.
'We're closed,' he said.
- k) I pointed over to one of the counters inside where a woman was being handed a package. 'I see a customer in there,' I said.
- l) He stopped, turned around and came partway back towards the doors. 'We're closed,' he said.

Exercise 5

Specific aim:
Skills involved:
Why? } Same as for exercise 2 but the sentences of two different stories have been jumbled.

Here are two very short stories. But the sentences of each story are out of order and the two stories have been mixed. Can you separate the sentences belonging to story 1 from those belonging to story 2 and then reorder the sentences so as to get two meaningful stories.

- a) His friend was upset and told him to hurry up.
- b) 'When I make out my report it will be easier to write "King Street" as the place of occurrence.'
- c) 'Whatever are you doing that for?' asked a bystander.

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delightful – red brick. We can scarcely pack in as it is, and the dear knows what will happen when Paul (younger son) arrives tomorrow. From hall you go right or left into dining-room or drawing-room. Hall itself is practically a room. You open another door in it, and there are the stairs going up in a sort of tunnel to the first floor. Three bedrooms in a row there, and three attics in a row above. That isn't all the house really, but it's all that one notices – nine windows as you look up from the front garden.

(From E. M. Forster: *Howards End* (Penguin 1941))

- 2 The largest building, in the very centre of the town, is boarded up completely and leans so far to the right that it seems bound to collapse at any minute. The house is very old. There is about it a curious, cracked look that is very puzzling until you suddenly realize that at one time, and long ago, the right side of the front porch had been painted, and part of the wall – but the painting was left unfinished and one portion of the house is darker and dingier than the other. The building looks completely deserted. Nevertheless, on the second floor there is one window which is not boarded; sometimes in the late afternoon when the heat is at its worst a hand will slowly open the shutter and a face will look down on the town.

(From C. McCullers: *The Ballad of the Sad Café* (Penguin, 1963))

- 3 I entered. It was a very small room, overcrowded with furniture of the style which the French know as Louis Philippe. There was a large wooden bedstead on which was a billowing red eiderdown, and there was a large wardrobe, a round table, a very small washstand, and two stuffed chairs covered with red rep. Everything was dirty and shabby. There was no sign of the abandoned luxury that Colonel MacAndrew had so confidently described.

(From W. Somerset Maugham: *The Moon And Sixpence* (Pan, 1974))

- 4 The house itself was long and low, as if a London house holidaying in the country had flung itself asprawl; it had two disconnected and roomy staircases, and when it had exhausted itself completely as a house, it turned to the right and began again as rambling, empty stables, coach house, cart sheds, men's bedrooms up ladders, and outhouses of the most various kinds. On one hand was a neglected orchard, in the front of the house was a bald, worried-looking lawn area capable of simultaneous tennis and croquet, and at the other side a copious and confused vegetable and flower garden . . .

(From H. G. Wells: *Marriage* (Macmillan and Co, 1912))

- 5 Woodleigh Bolton was a straggling village set along the side of a hill. Galls Hill was the highest house just at the top of the rise, with a view over Woodleigh Camp and the moors towards the sea . . . The house itself was bleak and obviously Dr. Kennedy scorned such modern innovations as central heating. The woman who opened the door was dark and rather forbidding. She led them across the rather bare hall and into a study where Dr. Kennedy rose to receive them. It was a long, rather high room, lined with well-filled bookshelves.

(From Agatha Christie: *Sleeping Murder* (Bantam, 1976))

Organization of the text

Descriptions – further hints

The same kind of exercise can easily be done by asking the students to compare several portraits (e.g. the description can go from top to bottom, from general appearance to details, from the most striking features to the less striking ones, etc.)

2.4 Analogy and contrast

Exercise 1

Specific aim: To help the students to understand comparisons made in the text.

Skills involved: Understanding relations between parts of a text.

Why? Asking the students to fill in a comparison table is a good way of clarifying the analogy or contrast developed in the passage.

- 1 Read the text called 'The Classification of Species' and fill in the table below:

e.g. class	vehicles
order	
family	
genus	

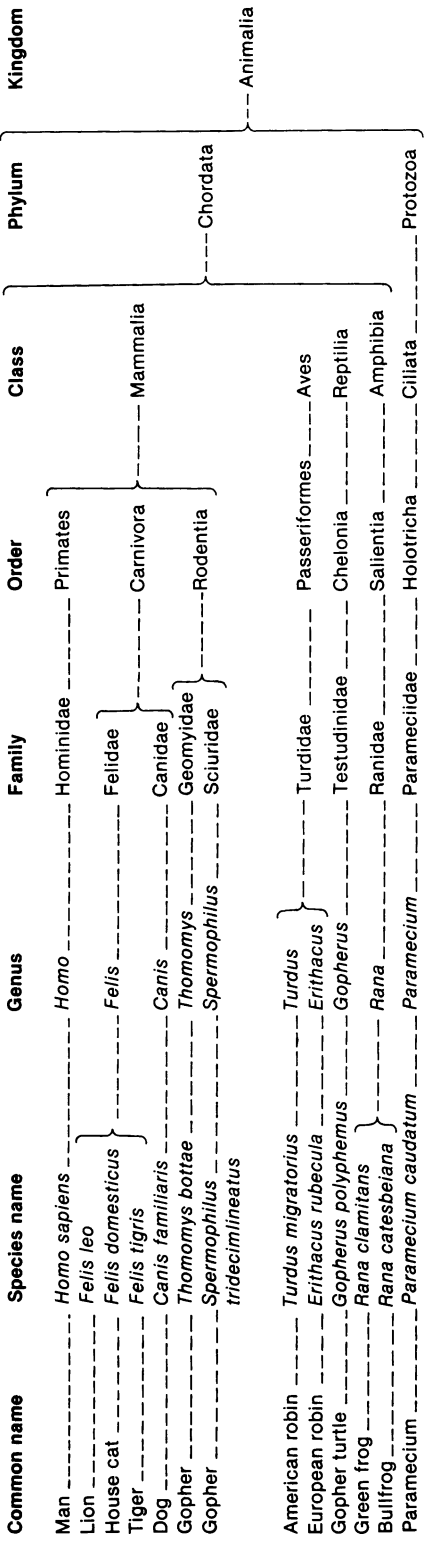
- 2 Can you draw a tree diagram to represent the different types of vehicles? Think of as many branches as you can besides the ones mentioned in the text.

The Classification of Species

The group *species* is the starting point for classification. Sometimes smaller groups, *subspecies*, are recognized, but these will not concern us until we discuss evolution. There are many larger groups: genus, family, order, class, phylum, and kingdom.

Let us begin with the first seven species. We belong to the genus *Homo* and to these more inclusive groups: (1) the family Hominidae (hoh·MIN·ih·dee), which includes, in addition to *Homo*, extinct men not of the genus *Homo*, and (2) the order Primates (pry·MAY·teez), which includes also the lemurs, monkeys and apes. The three cats – lion, house cat, and tiger – belong to the genus *Felis*. In general we can think of a *genus* as a group of closely related species. The three cats also belong to the family Felidae (FEE·lih·dee). Generally a *family* includes related genera (in the table, this is shown only in the case of the two genera of robins).

The first seven species, different enough to be put in three orders, are yet



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alike in many ways. All are covered with hair, they nurse their young with milk, and their red blood cells are without nuclei. Because of these and other resemblances they are combined in a still more inclusive group, Class Mammalia (ma·MAY·lih·ah). A *class*, therefore, is composed of related orders.

Biologists have classified all of the known animals and plants in the way just described. Their system of classification not only shows how organisms are related to one another, but it also conveys much information about the organisms themselves. This can be brought out by analogy. Suppose you are told that object X belongs to a group 'vehicles'. Even if you have never seen this particular X you would be able to make some very general predictions about its structure and function. It would probably have wheels or runners, be used for carrying objects or people, and so on. If you were then told that X belongs to a more specific group, 'vehicles with internal combustion engines', you could make more specific predictions. It would probably have spark plugs and pistons and use a fuel derived from petroleum. If you were told that X is an 'automobile' you would be able to make still more specific predictions. Finally, if you were told that X is a 'Ford automobile' you would know a great deal more about it. The group, Ford, might be thought to correspond to the group, genus, in biological classification. The many kinds of Fords would correspond to the various species within a genus.

(From *Biological Science, An Inquiry into Life* by Biological Sciences Curriculum Study)

Exercise 2

Specific aim: }
Skills involved: } Same as for exercise 1.
Why? }

Read the following text and complete the table given below.

Imagine a piece of land twenty miles long and twenty miles wide. Picture it wild, inhabited by animals small and large. Now visualize a compact group of sixty human beings camping in the middle of this territory. Try to see yourself sitting there, as a member of this tiny tribe, with the landscape, your landscape, spreading out around you farther than you can see. No one apart from your tribe uses this vast space. It is your exclusive home-range, your tribal hunting ground. Every so often the men in your group set off in pursuit of prey. The women gather fruit and berries. The children play noisily around the camp site, imitating the hunting techniques of their fathers. If the tribe is successful and swells in size, a splinter group will set off to colonize a new territory. Little by little the species will spread.

Imagine a piece of land twenty miles long and twenty miles wide. Picture it civilized, inhabited by machines and buildings. Now visualize a compact group of six million human beings camping in the middle of this territory. See yourself sitting there, with the complexity of the huge city spreading out all around you, farther than you can see.

II How the aim is conveyed

Now compare these two pictures. In the second scene there are a hundred thousand individuals for every one in the first scene. The space has remained the same. Speaking in evolutionary terms, this dramatic change has been almost instantaneous; it has taken a mere few thousand years to convert scene one into scene two.

(From Desmond Morris: *The Human Zoo* (Corgi Books, 1970))

	scene 1	scene 2
land		
human beings		
other living creatures		
your feelings		
what people do		

2.5 Classification

Exercise 1

Specific aim: To help the students to understand a text based on a classification.

Skills involved: Understanding relations between parts of a text.

Why? It is important to encourage the students to draw tree diagrams to visualize the information contained in a text. It will help them to see at once the main points of the text and the relations between them. Obviously, tree diagrams are particularly well adapted to texts based on classifications.

Read the following passage and complete the tree diagram below with the words given underneath.

Anthropology

We shall outline the four major subfields of anthropology that have emerged in the twentieth century: physical anthropology, archeology, linguistics and cultural anthropology.

Physical anthropology deals with human biology across space and time. It is divided into two areas: paleontology, the study of the fossil evidence

Organization of the text

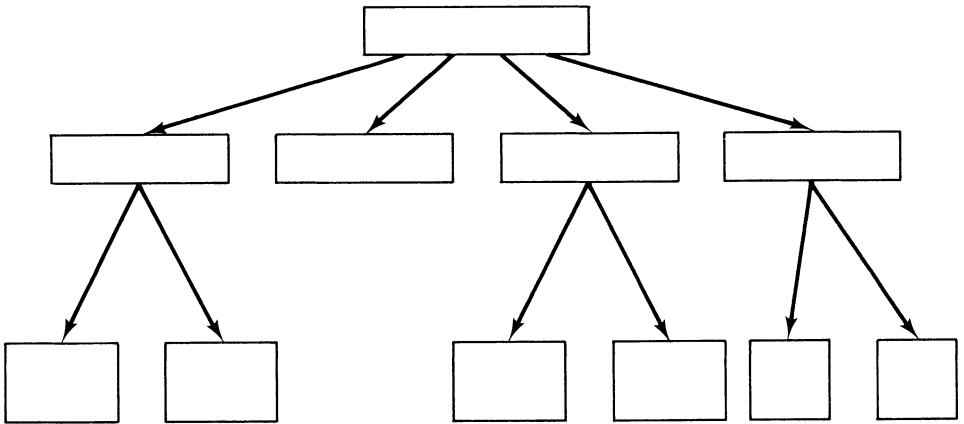
of the primate (including human) evolution, and neontology, the comparative biology of living primates, including population and molecular genetics, body shapes (morphology), and the extent to which behavior is biologically programmed.

Archeology is the systematic retrieval and analysis of the physical remains left behind by human beings, including both their skeletal and cultural remains. Both the classical civilizations and prehistoric groups, including our prehuman ancestors, are investigated.

Linguistics is the study of language across space and time. Historical linguistics attempts to trace the tree of linguistic evolution and to reconstruct ancestral language forms. Comparative (or structural) linguistics attempts to describe formally the basic elements of languages and the rules by which they are ordered into intelligible speech.

Cultural anthropology includes many different perspectives and specialized subdisciplines but is concerned primarily with describing the forms of social organization and the cultural systems of human groups. In technical usage, ethnography is the description of the social and cultural systems of one particular group, whereas ethnology is the comparison of such descriptions for the purpose of generalizing about the nature of all human groups.

(From D. E. Hunter and P. Whitten: *The Study of Anthropology* (Harper and Row, 1976))



ethnology
archeology
structural linguistics
physical anthropology
neontology
anthropology

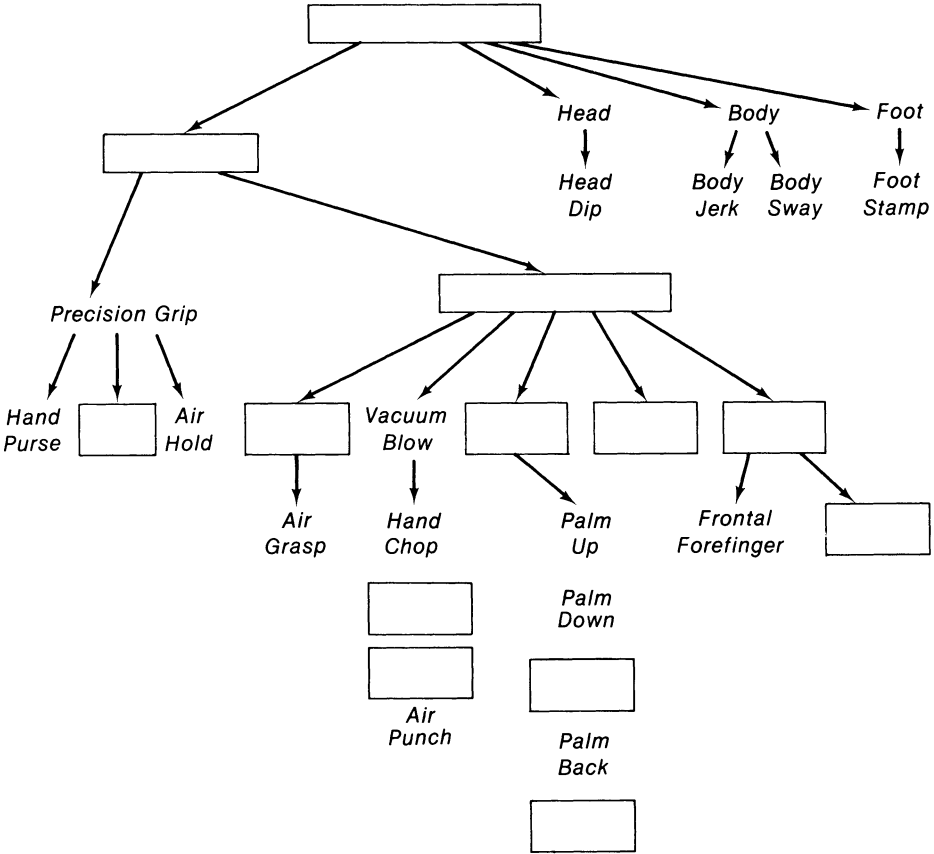
historical linguistics
cultural anthropology
linguistics
paleontology
ethnography

II How the aim is conveyed

Exercise 2

Specific aim: } Same as for exercise 1 but some of the boxes have
Skills involved: } been filled to help the students.
Why?

After reading the text on pages 143–6, can you complete the following tree diagram where some of the boxes have been left empty?

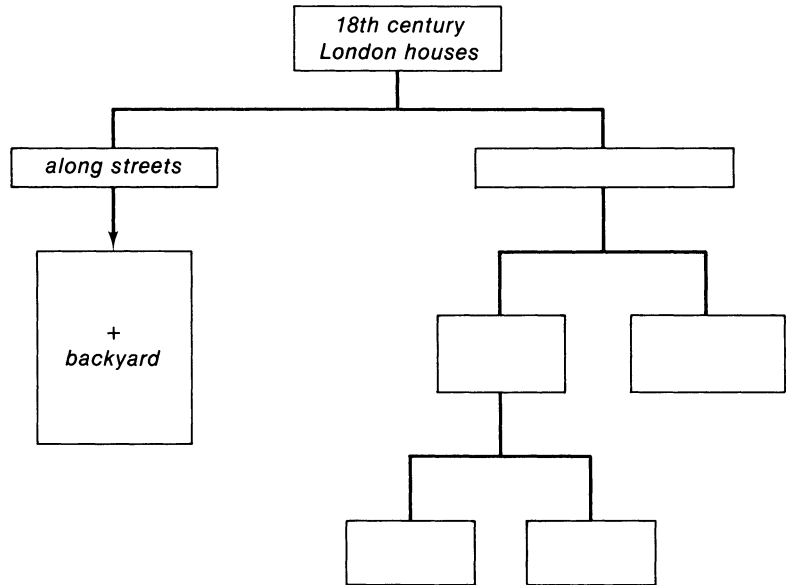


Organization of the text

Exercise 3

Specific aim:
Skills involved:
Why? } Same as for exercise 2

Read the text on page 155 which describes eighteenth-century houses in London. Then complete the diagram below showing the different types of housing.



Exercise 4

Specific aim:
Skills involved:
Why? } Same as for exercise 1 but no frame is given this time.

In the following passage, Bertrand Russell explains one of the examples Plato gives of the method of division. After reading the passage, can you draw a tree diagram to represent the various categories mentioned in the text and find an example of what could appear at the end of each branch of the tree.

The term to be defined is angling. To begin with, angling is an art, so that the arts constitute the first category. We may divide them into arts of production and arts of acquisition, and angling evidently belongs to the latter. Acquisition is now divided into cases where its objects give consent,

II *How the aim is conveyed*

and where they are simply captured. Again, angling belongs to the second of these. Capture can be divided into open and concealed, angling being of the latter kind. The things taken can be inanimate or living; angling is concerned with living things. The animals in question may live on land or in a fluid, and again the term to be defined belongs to the second class. Inhabitants of fluids may be birds or fish, fish may be caught by net or by striking, and you may strike by night or day. Angling is done in daylight. We may strike from above or below, and angling is the latter kind. Retracing our steps and collecting all the differences, we define angling as the art of acquiring by concealed capture animals that live in water, catching by day and striking from below. The example is not to be taken too seriously, it is chosen because the sophist may also be taken as an angler, his quarry being the souls of men.
(From Bertrand Russell: *Wisdom of the West* (Macdonald, 1959))

Classification – further hints

The students can also be given three or four diagrams or trees and asked to choose the one corresponding to the classification presented in the text.

2.6 **Argumentative and logical organization**

Exercise 1

Specific aim: To help the students to discriminate between ‘for’ and ‘against’ arguments in a text.

Skills involved: Understanding the communicative value of sentences.
Understanding more or less explicitly stated information.

Why? In many argumentative passages, the various arguments presented can be found throughout the text, so that all the reasons given in favour of the point being discussed as well as those against it are not necessarily found together. An exercise of this type can be useful to help the students think about the meaning and value of the ideas expressed in the text.

In the following text, several arguments are presented for or against canned food. Decide whether the arguments contained in the underlined sentences are for or against food canning.

Organization of the text

One of the first men to make a commercial success of food conservation was Henry John Heinz. He started by bottling horse-radish, and he was so successful that in 1869 he founded a company in Pittsburgh, USA. Like other Americans of his generation, Heinz made his name a household word throughout the western world. At last, man seems to have discovered how to preserve food without considerably altering its taste. The tins of food (Heinz tins!) which Captain Scott abandoned in the Antarctic were opened 47 years after his death, and the contents were not only edible, but pleasant. The main argument against conserved foods is not that the canning of food makes it taste different; rather, people complain that the recipes which the canning chefs dream up are tedious or tasteless. But any recipe is tedious or tasteless when it is eaten in great quantities. And a company like Heinz can only produce something if it is going to be eaten in great quantities. The tomato is very pleasant to eat when it is freshly picked. A regular diet of tomatoes alone could well prove tedious. The canning companies try to cook the tomato in as many ways as possible. The Heinz factories in Britain use millions and millions of tomatoes every year. They claim that if all

(From *Current 9*)

Arguments for:
Arguments against:

the tomatoes were loaded on to 15-ton lorries, the line of lorries would stretch for 60 miles.

But there are many people who do not like to eat food out of season. They like their food to be fresh, and they like to cook it themselves in "the old-fashioned way". But it is very difficult for modern man to realise what it is like to live without the advantages of pre-packaged and canned food. European society in its present form could not cope without modern methods of food processing. Imagine your local supermarket without all the cans of pre-packaged foods. There wouldn't be much variety left, and what was left would have to be increased enormously in order to give the same amount of food. The supermarket would turn into a chaos of rotting vegetables, stale bread and unhealthy meat. The health problems would be insurmountable, unless we all went back into the country to support ourselves.

So next time you reject canned food as being tasteless or unimaginative, remember that you can only afford to eat fresh food because canned food exists.

Epicurus

II How the aim is conveyed

Exercise 2

Specific aim: } Same as for exercise 1 but the students have to
Skills involved: } draw up a list of all the arguments presented in
Why? } the text.

You're thinking of having your windows double glazed. You want to consider all the aspects of the problem before making up your mind. Read the following article and draw up a list of all the points you can find for and against double glazing.

Double Glazing

Presumably you have already insulated your roof and walls if you are considering double glazing? In an 'ordinary' home you lose 25 per cent of heat through the roof and 35 per cent through the walls, so they must be your priorities unless your house is made of windows.

New buildings now have to meet new standards of insulation and are often fitted with double glazing when built, especially since the Government's Save It campaign. Usually this factory-made double glazing does not just add to the comfort but is very well designed and actually looks quite good.

Still, it's a difficult decision to double glaze an existing home, since you're going to have to spend a lot of money on what, in an ordinary small house with smallish windows, will save you about 10 per cent of the heating bill. And that's if you install sealed units.

Of course there are other benefits besides the financial one. The room will be much more comfortable. You won't get a chilly feeling when sitting near the window and draughts will be fewer. So on the whole, if the wherewithal exists, double glazing is not a foolish enterprise, though even good double glazing won't be as effective as a brick wall!

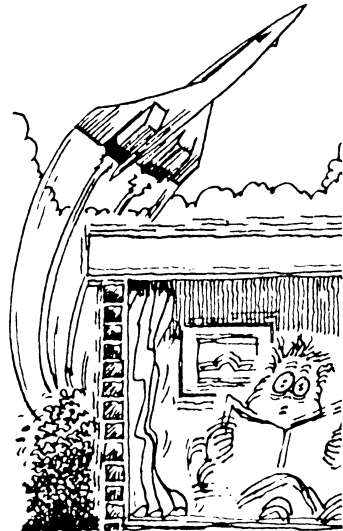
Double glazing is not just 'Double Glazing'. There are several ways of achieving it. You can install Replacement Windows with two sheets of single glass or twin-sealed units. Or you can have Secondary Windows, either hinged to the existing window or sealed to it. Secondary windows are cheaper, can often be installed by the

owner, but are not likely to be so efficient as replacement windows.

The simplest form of DIY double glazing is the applied frame method which means fixing a second pane of glass directly on to the original frame using beading or special frame sections. The most important thing is that the second leaf should be completely sealed, and that the seal should be long-lasting.

Points to check are: that condensation will not occur between the two panes; that you will be able to open 'openable' windows (or that you're prepared to give up that luxury); that you will (or won't) want to be able to clean the window and that you have some other form of ventilation.

If you think that by double glazing



Organization of the text

you automatically insulate against sound too — think again. To have a noise insulating effect the two leaves will need a gap of 110 mm or 200 mm (the wider the gap the better) so double glazing with noise insulation needs to be specially made. It is more difficult to

make it look nice and to fit it into the existing window openings. With this gap it won't work as well for heat insulation unless thicker glass is used. So unless you live directly under Concorde's flight path it will hardly be worth insulating for sound.

(From *The Observer Magazine*)

Exercise 3

Specific aim: To help the students to understand the organization of a discursive passage.

Skills involved: Understanding relations between parts of a text.

Why? The exercise consists of completing a diagram which visualizes the organization of the whole text and also indicates (in small boxes) the link-words or indicators that introduce the different parts or arguments. This kind of exercise usually requires a close study of the text, but it can be made more or less difficult by the following adaptations:

- one can give a partly-filled frame to the students and ask them to complete it
- one can give everything except the link-words (or give only the link-words)
- one can give the frame only
- advanced students can be asked to draw the diagram themselves.

After reading the text called 'The last bus to Donington-on-Bain' can you complete the diagram that follows?

The last bus to Donington-on-Bain

JOHN FRYER reports on the local problems of a national crisis—how people without cars can move about in the country

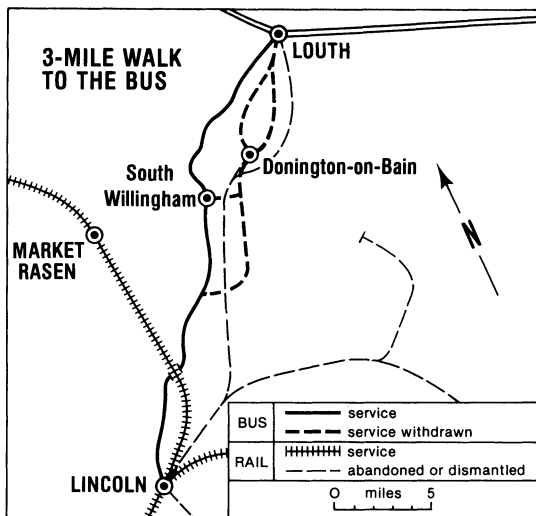
LAST MONDAY the little village of Donington-on-Bain, deep in the Lincolnshire wolds, lost its last contact through public transport with the outside world. Once, Donington (pop. 236) boasted its own railway station. That closed a generation ago, and on April 1 the two bus services, to Lincoln in one direction and Louth in the other, were withdrawn. Now the villagers of Donington, a third of whom do

not own a car, face a three-mile trek for the nearest bus route.

Lincolnshire is not good bus country, with the population scattered around in little pockets over the flat, rich farmland.

The buses have to cover long distances from place to place carrying only a few passengers at a time. The bus companies argue that they don't make enough money on these journeys, and that even using the

II How the aim is conveyed



money they make on the busy routes to pay for the less busy ones they can't make ends meet. So they cut back the services. There are fewer buses. Fewer people find the service they need. For some the car has taken over.

In 1952 21% of people travelled by rail, 45% by bus and 34% by car. In 1970 9% went by rail, 14% by bus and 77% by car.

But what about the 14% who still use the buses? What are they going to do when the services stop?

It came as a shattering blow to Donington-on-Bain. "They've got no right to leave us here without a bus," said Eva Traves, a 56-year-old housewife who has lived in the village for 36 years. "We've ever such a lot of elderly people here. How are they going to get out?"

"My husband Ron was in hospital at Louth recently and I visited him every day. I couldn't do that now, unless somebody took me in their car. The nearest bus is at South Willingham, three miles away."

Donington's local councillor, Charles Turner, was one of the first to be hit by the lost service. Unlike Ron Traves, who rides on a

scooter to the local gravel pit to work, he cannot drive. "There were two committee meetings in Louth this week," he said. "I couldn't get there." Turner says that some 35 per cent of the Donington people, especially in the old people's bungalows and the council houses, do not have a car.

All hope, however, is not lost. Louth Rural District Council is trying to persuade a local firm to run a bus service to and from Donington two days a week. The trouble is that it will not do so unless the council underwrites the costs at the rate of £7 a day. The council has refused, but its clerk, Bryan Spence, is trying to talk the firm into having a few experimental runs to see what happens.

Unless something is done, the drain of people from the villages to the towns will continue, which cannot be healthy. If there are more people in the villages it will be easier to justify running buses to them. Many councillors seem to cling to the mistaken belief that all villagers are two-car families, when in fact many do not even have one.

(The Sunday Times)

II *How the aim is conveyed*

text, and then decide which words could introduce each part. This will oblige them to actively re-create the author's reasoning.

In the following text, the sentences have been separated from their introductory link-words and both have been jumbled. All you know is that the following points appear in the text, in this order:

- 1 general truth
- 2 example
- 3 consequence
- 4 restriction
- 5 conclusion

<i>Link-words:</i>	<i>Sentences:</i>
However	In the Carlisle trial, last year, two different witnesses, both intelligent and reliable persons, contradicted each other.
This is why	
But	One should always bear in mind that additional evidence is essential to recognize someone guilty.
For instance	It is difficult to find good witnesses. It is difficult to disregard witnesses completely, partly because they can help us understand the truth. The police tend to look for more dependable proofs of guilt, such as fingerprints.

Can you write the paragraph?

Exercise 5

<i>Specific aim:</i>	To train the students to understand the logical relationships within a passage.
<i>Skills involved:</i>	Understanding relations between parts of a text.
<i>Why?</i>	When working on this exercise, students will be forced to consider each sentence carefully and look for 'clues' or 'signals' indicating its possible place in the text and its relationship with the other passages.

Can you reorder the following sentences so as to form a coherent paragraph?

- a) We should not dismiss Malthus too quickly, however.
- b) But certain directions of developments are clear and suggestive of our future problems.
- c) There are few people today who agree with the Malthusian theory in its original form.
- d) It is hard enough to understand those we already face.

Organization of the text

- e) A large part of the world population still lives in hunger, just above starvation level.
- f) No one can predict exactly what our main problems will be in the next generation or two.
- g) The reason may be that he didn't know about the advances in technology and transportation which have increased food production and made it possible to use in one part of the world what has been produced in another.
- h) One certainly will be the difficult balance between man and the natural resources on which he depends.
- i) Because of these historical facts, the English economist Robert Malthus declared in 1798 that population tends to grow more quickly than food supplies.
- j) Despite the enormous increase of the world population since his day, his theory is no longer feared.
- k) Time after time, the population of certain areas has developed so quickly that there was not enough food available, which brought about starvation and social disorders.
- l) In the foreseeable future, world food production will be enough for the population.

Now look at the text again and underline all the words and expressions that helped you find the articulation of the passage.

Exercise 6

Specific aim: } Same as for exercise 3 but the text is more
Skills involved: } complex and its organization is both
Why? } argumentative and logical.

Read the following text and complete the diagram.

Tighten Your Belt

The fact is that the energy crisis, which has suddenly been officially announced, has been with us for a long time now, and will be with us for an even longer time. Whether Arab oil flows freely or not, it is clear to everyone that world industry cannot be allowed to depend on so fragile a base. The supply of oil can be shut off at whim at any time, and in any case, the oil wells will all run dry in thirty years or so at the present rate of use.

New sources of energy must be found, and this will take time, but it is not likely to result in any situation that will ever restore that sense of cheap and copious energy we have had in the times past. We will never again dare indulge in indiscriminate growth. For an indefinite period from here on in, mankind is going to advance cautiously, and consider itself lucky that it can advance at all.

To make the situation worse, there is as yet no sign that any slowing of the world's population is in sight. Although the birthrate has dropped in some nations, including the United States, the population of the world

II *How the aim is conveyed*

seems sure to pass six billion and perhaps even seven billion as the twenty-first century opens. The food supply will not increase nearly enough to match this, which means that we are heading into a crisis in the matter of producing and marketing food.

Taking all this into account, what might we reasonably estimate supermarkets to be like in the year 2001?

To begin with, the world food supply is going to become steadily tighter over the next thirty years – even here in the United States. By 2001, the population of the United States will be at least two hundred fifty million and possibly two hundred seventy million, and the nation will be hard put to expand food production to fill the additional mouths. This will be particularly true since the energy pinch will make it difficult to continue agriculture in the high-energy American fashion that makes it possible to combine few farmers with high yields.

It seems almost certain that by 2001 the United States will no longer be a great food-exporting nation and that, if necessity forces exports, it will be at the price of belt-tightening at home.

This means, for one thing, that we can look forward to an end to the ‘natural food’ trend. It is not a wave of the future. All the ‘unnatural’ things we do to food are required to produce more of the food in the first place, and to make it last longer afterward. It is for that reason that we need and use chemical fertilizers and pesticides while the food is growing, and add preservatives afterward.

In fact, as food items will tend to decline in quality and decrease in variety, there is very likely to be increasing use of flavouring additives. Until such time as mankind has the sense to lower its population to the point where the planet can provide a comfortable support for all, people will have to accept more artificiality.

Then, too, there will be a steady trend toward vegetarianism. A given quantity of ground can provide plant food for man or it can provide plant food for animals which are later slaughtered for meat.

In converting the tissues of food into the tissues of the feeder, up to 90 percent is used for reasons other than tissue maintenance and growth. This means that one hundred pounds of plant food will support ten pounds of human tissue – while one hundred pounds of plant food will support ten pounds of animal tissue, which will then support one pound of human tissue. In other words, land devoted to plant food will support ten times as many human beings as land devoted to animal food.

It is this (far more than food preferences or religious dictates) that forces overcrowded populations into vegetarianism. And it will be the direction in which the United States of 2001 will be moving – not by presidential decree, but through the force of a steady rise in meat prices as compared with other kinds of food.

This, in turn, will come about because our herds will decrease as the food demand causes more and more pastureland to be turned to farmland, and as land producing corn and other animal fodder is diverted to providing food directly for man. And in the suburbs, lawns and gardens will be converted into vegetable plots as was done during World War II. They will be ‘survival gardens,’ rather than ‘victory gardens.’

Another point is that it is not only energy that is in short supply. A shortage of oil means a shortage of plastics; a shortage of electricity means

Organization of the text

a shortage of aluminium. We are also experiencing a shortage of paper and most other raw materials.

This means that, for one thing, our generosity in wrapping, bagging and packaging will have to recede. There will have to be at least a partial return in supermarkets to the old days where goods were supplied in bulk and ladled out in bags to order. It may even become necessary to return bags, as we once returned bottles, or pay for new ones.

A decline in per-capita energy use will make it necessary to resort to human muscle again, so that the delivery man will make a comeback (his price added to that of the food, of course). Since energy shortages will cause unemployment in many sectors of the economy, there will be idle hands to do the manual work that will become necessary.

From an energy-saving standpoint, it would make far more sense to order by phone and have a single truck deliver food to many homes, than for a member of each home to drive an automobile, round-trip, to pick up a one-family food supply.

To be sure, it will not all be retrogression. Even assuming that Earth is in a desperate battle of survival through a crisis of still-rising population and dwindling energy reserves, there should still continue to be technological advances in those directions that don't depend on wasteful bulk-use of energy. There will be continuing advances in the direction of 'sophistication', in other words.

Most noticeably, this will mean a continuing computerization and, where possible, automation of the economy.

By 2001, we can imagine devices that will make the phoned-in order more versatile and more precise. We might imagine a centralized supermarket catalog, issued once a year, that lists, with description and price, all that is in stock. If you want peas, you will very likely get peas in a plain package, minimally marked – or just a bag, filled by a computerized device responding to the size of your order.

(From an article by Isaac Asimov)

A possible way of completing the diagram is shown on page 126.

Argumentative and logical organization – further hints

- When using diagrams, the students can be asked to number the paragraphs of the text and, under each of the boxes in the diagram, write down the number(s) of the corresponding paragraph(s).
- The students can be asked if all the boxes of such a diagram are equally important and if some of them could be taken out without changing the main idea of the passage.
- The following procedure can also be of interest: After the students have filled the diagram with the help of the text, they can be asked to write a text again, looking only at the diagram. (Obviously this should be done with shorter texts.) It can then be interesting to compare the various texts produced in the class.

Here is a possible way of completing the diagram.

