

**S R A**

**CONTEMPORARY COMPOSITION**  
**STUDENT MANUAL** ]

by

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" "  
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## UNIT V PARAGRAPH PATTERNS

*Look to the paragraph and the discourse will look to itself. . . .*

Alexander Bain

### Aims

1. To learn to use subtopic sentences within a paragraph—sentences that are clearly and logically related to the topic sentence.
2. To learn the structure and use of five of the common kinds of paragraph patterns.

### Terms to Know

1. **Topic sentence**—A general statement of the unifying idea of the paragraph. It always presents a subject and an attitude toward the subject.

2. **Subtopic sentence**—A miniature topic sentence. Like the topic sentence, it presents a *subject* and an *attitude*. And just as the topic sentence is a general statement of the unifying idea of the paragraph, so the subtopic sentences are general statements of the unifying ideas of the parts of the paragraph.

*Example:* We have learned that a topic sentence is a general statement of the unifying idea of the paragraph and that it always presents a *subject* to be discussed and an *attitude* toward the subject. Sometimes, as we plan the development of the paragraph, we wish to group our details under minor headings. We might, for example, wish to break down our *subject* or our *attitude*, or both, into two or three parts. Suppose that we wish to write about Bill Caprell's family. "Family," then, is our subject. After some thought we decide on an attitude—that Bill's family is "a curious blend of disparate personalities." Our first subtopic sentence might be: "Bill's mother is a strangely quiet woman." *Subject* and *attitude* are clearly present. Our second subtopic sentence might be: "His father is an outspoken man and proud of the fact." Again we have *subject* and *attitude*. And our third subtopic sentence might be: "His sister, Yvonne, is as sophisticated as her name suggests."

Each subtopic sentence presents a *subject* to be discussed and an *attitude* toward it, and we are now ready to develop these generalizations with detail. Notice that we have refined *both* the subject of the topic sentence and the attitude.

3. There are five common kinds of paragraph patterns:

**A. Particularization**—The use of a loose collection of specific details to explain the meaning of the topic sentence. The details are of approximately equal value in the writer's mind and are therefore presented in the order in which they occurred or in the order in which the writer happened to think of them.

*Example:* Coming home for dinner at dusk in winter never loses its charm. I hurry up the walk, cold, hungry, and perhaps a little depressed by the day's mistakes, but here at home I am sure of warmth and food, rest and cheer. I balance in my arms my paper and purse, with maybe a pound of butter from McCann's or a pair of shoes with the heels straightened, and my fingers mechanically grope for the right key in the dark. I like the warm, moist air which meets me in the hall, steaming my glasses and smelling of roast pork or sauerkraut—savory dishes for frosty nights. Mother hears me close the door, which shuts out for a while the world and its problems, and she calls to me from the living room as I run up the stairs. The shaded light over the davenport catches the glints of white in Mother's hair as I stoop to kiss her, and the bright green tips of the fern fronds tremble in the current of air. The draft stirs the flames in the grate. They sputter over the broken radiant and turn from blue to orange. I chuckle because Mother fears I will spoil my appetite when I nibble at the salad on my way through the dining room, and I coax Margaret in the kitchen to tell me what's for dessert. The bubbling percolator, the hissing fat in the oven, the dripping faucet in the sink—

each familiar detail has a message of welcome. Simple, commonplace, narrow, if you will, but coming home for dinner is an important part of my life.

**B. Comparison or contrast**—In this pattern the writer develops his topic sentence by showing likenesses or differences between two things, two people, or two ideas. There are two variations of this pattern. (1) The writer introduces one side of the comparison (or contrast) in a topic sentence and proceeds to develop it with details; he then introduces the other side of the comparison (or contrast) and develops it in a similar way. (2) The writer alternates his details from one side of the comparison or contrast to the other until the list of likenesses or differences is complete. Often, each group is introduced with its own subtopic sentence.

*Example* (contrast with subtopic sentences):

Why is animal physiology more interesting to me than political science? Because animal physiology, the study of the organs of the body, their uses and controls, is concerned with concrete objects and details. In the laboratory, I can see the trichambered heart of a turtle, throbbing as it pumps blood to the exposed vessels of its paralyzed body. I can touch laboratory white rats and feel the heat of their bodies. I can smell the tangy, heavy scent of ether as the fumes anesthetize a frog for dissection. I can hear the steady "lubb-dup, lubb-dup" of my own heart through a stethoscope, and can thus distinguish it from the faster beat of the frog's. I can taste my own stomach acid—the nauseating gastric juice. The most important point, however, is that I am able to satisfy my curiosity by experimenting with these objects, and from my observations I can prove or disprove the theories expressed in the textbooks. On the other hand, because political science deals with the functioning of government and its agencies, it must be taught, not by solid details, but by broad generalization, in order to encompass the many phases of the subject. This method of learning is not as satisfying to me, because these generalizations can only be read about or discussed, and can never really be touched or seen. In the classroom, I cannot see National Security. I cannot touch Democracy. I cannot smell Liberalism. I cannot hear Conservatism. I cannot taste Individual Freedom. Yet I must tolerate all these ambiguities, because to delve into any one of them deeply enough to touch upon even specific details would take more

time than the course allows. Worse, I have no means available to prove by experimentation the theories found in my textbooks, for the terms used in the theories are abstract and do not at all lend themselves to concrete explanations. Therefore, physiology—with concrete objects that I can observe, grasp, taste, smell, and hear—is more fascinating for me than is political science, with its abstract theories, terms, and phrases, which slip through my mind like smoke through cheesecloth.

*Example* (comparison with alternating details):

I was looking for something interesting to read on a long bus trip. I had in mind taking Nero Wolfe or Mike Hammer along to keep me company, but somehow I ended up with L. P. Elwell-Sutton. This distinguished gentleman is the editor of a small volume entitled *Persian Proverbs*, in which some of the old sayings date as far back as 550 B.C. It isn't the sort of thing I usually read. Self-consciously, I kept the title of my little book concealed from the other passengers, but I enjoyed the book so much that I subsequently read Henry Hart's translation of *Seven Hundred Chinese Proverbs* and Edmund Kremer's *German Proverbs*. I was surprised to learn that a large number of our contemporary "gems of wisdom" are in reality only durable old platitudes. Certainly there can be no doubt concerning the paternity of our "Ignorance is bliss" and "Spare the rod and spoil the child." Our Oriental ancestors only phrased the prototypes a little differently. They said, "The more stupid the happier," and "Master easy, servant slack." And long, long before our first almanacs observed that there was a time and place for everything, Chinese scholars had their students writing in their copybooks, "There is a day to cast your nets and a day to dry your nets." Many hundreds of years later, but still in times ancient to us, our Teutonic forefathers with a characteristically practical bent were telling their children that "Almost never killed a fly." I think that's even better than our current version—"A miss is as good as a mile." While the Germans admonished each other on the need for accuracy, the Persians counseled diplomacy. A very old Persian proverb declares, "To avoid disfavor, follow the crowd," and once more we have a counterpart in "When in Rome do as the Romans do." Speaking of Rome, I think the most flagrant plagiarism I've noticed is in our saying, "All roads lead to Rome." This is probably quite old by our standards, but apparently even this isn't original

with us Occidentals. Long before Romulus and Remus were suckled, the Chinese maintained that "Every highway leads to Peking."

**C. Elimination of negative details**—In this method the writer tells what he does *not* mean by his topic sentence and then tells what he does mean.

*Example:* She looked at John sitting across the room and wondered why he was so different from other people. She had known him for nearly two years now, yet she felt sometimes as though he were a stranger. It wasn't that they didn't get on together. They had been good friends since that first night when they had washed the dinner dishes together and he had told her about his family after saying abruptly, "You look like you'd care to hear." She remembered that after he had gone that night, she had told her mother that he was "nice, but strange." Everyone thought him strange. The kids in the neighborhood had stared when he went down the street munching a piece of stuffed celery, and Mother had thought it odd when he went around the living room, studied the paintings, shrugged, and said that they were "all right." But it wasn't just being unpredictable that made him different. Part of it was the way he seemed, at times, to be listening to something that no one else could hear. He looked like that now, she thought, with his head turned a little to one side and his eyes shadowed. There was an aloofness about him. Yet sometimes he was very gay. She thought of the lunches that John and she and Jane had had last summer, when they ate Welsh rabbit and lingered over their coffee, talking and laughing. He could be more fun than anyone else she knew. The difference in him, she thought, was something intangible. It was in the way he bent his head when he lit a cigarette, in the way he walked, and in the absent-minded way he missed trains and took the wrong streetcar. She watched him as he went out into the kitchen. When he had gone, she thought of what Jane had said of him: "When he's gone, you're never sure that he's been here." Then she went across the room and poked a stick into the fire. Yes, she thought, that was what made him different.

**D. Illustration or instance**—The use of a special example or anecdote or short narrative to develop and clarify the topic sentence.

*Example:* Part of the terror of tragedy, I think, is the swiftness of its coming. I have witnessed death more than once, but my most vivid picture

of it came with the sudden shock of a plane crash. On a clear, warm Sunday afternoon, I was walking through the grassy field on the hill behind our house. As I topped the hill, I saw a plane flying low to the ground—so low that it seemed to quietly disappear beneath the yellow waves of field grass. Then it suddenly pulled up, the explosive roar of its open throttle blasting through the stillness of the afternoon. The pilot banked to the left, coming toward me, and as he did I caught a flash of sunlight from the polished wings. As he flew by about fifty feet overhead, I noticed that there were extra cross braces between the wings, and what looked to be extra-large control surfaces. It was a trim blue craft with white checks on the tail, and the steady purr of the engine suggested unlimited power. From its looks this was no ordinary plane, but one modified to meet the many g's of force found in stunt flying. As the pilot continued in his wide arc, he repeated the low flying maneuver I had seen before, but now I could see that he was buzzing a pile of hardened macadam in the field, a quarter of a mile from where I was standing. His second pass was to within two or three feet of the pile. The pilot was really pressing his luck. Again the pullout and the flash, and as he passed a few feet directly overhead the roar of the engine became a hammering vibration that set my teeth on edge. After completing his circle he lined up on the macadam pile once more. His wings wobbled as he tried to level the plane for the pass. This time he came in too low. He had pushed his luck a little too far. The landing gear scraped the top of the pile, slamming the nose of the plane into the ground with a thud and jerking the tail into the air. The wings lurched forward with a grating, tearing sound until they hung by shreds. The engine was pushed back into the cockpit. Orange flames, mixed with thick black smoke, shot twenty feet into the air. The smoke alone spiraled a hundred feet high. The sweet smell of burning field grass mixed with the pungent odor of burning oil. The fire burned fast and was all-consuming, and by the time I reached the plane all that was left of it was the charred skeleton of the frame, the smoldering hulk of the engine, and the smell—that acrid, burned-out smell that always haunts the scene of a fire. In a few days the wreckage was hauled away; in a month the burned grass had grown in and the field was peaceful again. Today all that remains of the incident is a memory, clear and precise, of a burning funeral pyre too hot to approach.

**E. Composite**—This type of paragraph combines two or more of the other types.

*Example* (topic sentence developed first by *particularization* and then by *illustration*): I've been wondering what beauty is, what John Keats was thinking of when he wrote, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." People find it in different things. Grandpa Williard has looked at the sunset every night for fifty years, and I doubt whether he ever saw anything beautiful in the sweep of color; Elinor, the hired girl, dish towel draped over her thick arm, stands and gapes at the "lovely sundown." Doctor Lawton beams and waves his hand inclusively when he talks about the digestive system of a frog. He thinks it's beautiful. Uncle George explains blueprints to me, white lines on a blue background, which have absolute-

ly no meaning for me, and wonders why I look dull. This is beauty to him, those white lines on blue paper. So I come back to the idea I had when I started to define beauty: beauty is what anybody chooses. One day Tuggles took me out on a long dusty road. He had something to show me, he said. We stopped at a field full of weeds. By a rotted rail fence, a stone chimney rose like a grave marker out of the foundation of a burned farmhouse. The smell of rotted wood was strong; a green snake slithered away through the grass; red ants crawled over my shoes. I didn't like the place. We leaned on a fence, Tuggles and I, and I was beginning to wonder why he had brought me out there when he asked, "Isn't it pretty here? This is where I was born." I've long since given up trying to understand what beauty is.

Name ..... Class .....

### EXERCISE V-1

**Directions:** Follow the directions given by your instructor and repeated under **A, B,** and **C** below.

Topic sentence: So far my work in college has been helpful.

**A.** Divide the subject, "work," into three parts, but do not divide the attitude, "helpful." Now write three subtopic sentences with different subjects but with "helpful" as the attitude for all three.

.....	has been	helpful.
.....	has been	more helpful.
.....	has been	most helpful.

**B.** Keep the subject "work," but divide the attitude "helpful" into three different attitudes. Write three subtopic sentences with "work" as the subject but with different attitudes.

My work	has been	.....
My work	has also been	.....
Finally, my work	has been	.....

**C.** Divide both subject and attitude into three parts. Write three subtopic sentences, each with a different subject and attitude.

.....	has been	.....
.....	has been	.....
.....	has been	.....

**EXERCISE V-2**

**Directions:** After you have read the paragraph below, fill in the outline with the topic sentence, the subtopic sentences, and the closing sentence.

Trout fishermen are divided into nearly as many classes as the Hindus. The "plunker," or worm fisherman, is the untouchable. He is looked down upon as one who is more interested in the catch than in the sport. His tackle is nondescript. It usually consists of a bamboo pole, a cotton line, several hooks, and a salt sack to hold his catch. The plunker refuses to get wet and tempts the trout from a bank or convenient bridge. His bait is a gob of worms, and he is not satisfied unless he catches all he can lawfully take and then some. Men interested equally in the sport and the catch are the wet fly fishermen. They usually have a rod and reel and a pair of hip boots to boast about. They will wade a stream but always take the easiest way and wade with the current. They allow their flies to sink under water. Although they can appreciate the sport of landing a fish, the finer points of angling are lost

on them. A wet fly fisherman frequently graduates to the class of dry fishermen. These are the scientists of trout fishing. They don waders and a fishing jacket with innumerable pockets, into which go boxes of trout flies, boxes of leaders, tweezers, fly oil, clippers, a knife, a hook sharpener, and countless other instruments. Their rods are the finest split bamboo, and their lines are of double-tapered nylon. Before they start to fish, they try to find what insect the trout are feeding on and then choose a fly that resembles it. They always wade upstream and lay the fly gently where they imagine the trout to be. Each group of fishermen finds fault in the others, and sometimes they will not even speak when they meet on the stream. The "fraternity of anglers," as the men are sometimes called, reminds me less of a fraternity than of the caste system of India.

- 1. Topic sentence: .....
- .....
- 2. Development:
  - A. First subtopic: .....
  - .....
  - B. Second subtopic: .....
  - .....
  - C. Third subtopic: .....
  - .....
- 3. Closing sentence: .....

### EXERCISE V-3

**Directions:** In each of the following paragraphs, underline the topic sentence with a double line, the subtopic sentences with a single line. Put a circle around each subject and an oblong around each attitude.

#### Hilltop Living

I never lived on the top of a hill before; and in spite of the drawbacks of cold weather, ice, snow, and rain, which have done their worst to destroy its charm, I have enjoyed the experience. There are weary evenings when the upward climb shortens my breath. But most of the time the ascent is worth the effort. The long straight street adjacent to the river, the swift, sharp rise at the top, and then the long wood stairway reaching up between the trees are not yet entirely commonplace to a level-country citizen. One rainy night, before the leaves were gone, there was a weird beauty about the rain-drenched layers of leaves in tree above tree as the dim light gilded them and the breeze shook them into a million glimmers of green and crystal. But going down is better. I like to go down slowly so that I am conscious of one view dissolving into a quite different one a few feet below. First there is a sunshine-and-haze view of the filtration plant, every pool gleaming like a window-pane, the river beyond, and back of that the hills marching toward each other from converging directions. There is an ugly mill of some sort where the hills meet on the other side of the river; but when the fog is just right, the mill blurs mistily into a castle. A little farther down, the river disappears and the hills have a new outline; but the filtration beds are plainer and the wide grassy spaces greener than they were farther away. Best of all is the view from home at night. The lights in the houses below seem almost like the thoughts of my friends who live in them. The automobiles flash up and down the avenues and through the streets and swing around the boulevards across the river like little fiery shuttles weaving a pattern that I can see better than they can. And the moon changes the dirty, unromantic river

into a quivering mirror. Then, when I have finally put my books and papers away and have crawled into bed, I look at the bright window and the bright sky beyond and I am thankful that I live on top of a hill.

### The Green World

When I first stepped into a busy operating room, I entered a strange new world. Lost in a huge shapeless dress with a drawstring waist, I carefully tucked a few wisps of hair under my turban and tied the strings of a thick muslin mask behind my head. Then, dressed for duty, I pushed open the door and walked in slowly and quietly for, in spite of all that I had read and been told, I did not quite know what to expect. At first, I was aware only of the color green. It flooded my vision, obscuring details. As though in a haze, I could tell that almost everything was some shade of green—walls, floor, the clothing of the personnel, the coverings over the patient. I shook my head as if to clear my eyes, and objects began to take focus. I could distinguish the doctors and nurses hovering over the operating table and the anesthetist seated at its head. Soon I was conscious of the contrast of the shiny metallic instruments arranged for use against the dull, green background. In one corner stood a rack containing bottles of antiseptic solution. These seemed to glow green, aqua, and emerald. As I continued to look around, I became aware of sounds. First I heard the constant pfut-put, pfut-put of the positive pressure breathing apparatus, then a steady meep-meep as an electronic heart wave chased itself across a large screen—both, to me, reassuring sounds. An occasional sharp hiss punctuated the muffled conversation of the masked surgical team as the electric cautery unit was used. Over it all droned the whir of the ponderous air-conditioning machinery, muting and blending all other sounds. I stood unmoving, not really comprehending, only feeling awe and uncertainty. Now, three years later, the strange new world is strange no longer; everything is known and familiar. And yet sometimes, when I look into the shining eyes of a brand-new student nurse, I can feel as she does, as if seeing and hearing it all over again for the first time.

**EXERCISE V-4**

**Directions:** Write subtopic sentences for each of the following topic sentences. Be sure that the subtopic sentences have both *subject* and *attitude*.

*Example:* The Cotillion is a pleasant restaurant.  
Subtopic sentence 1—The Cotillion's color scheme is restful.  
Subtopic sentence 2—The Cotillion's waiters cater to my whims.  
Subtopic sentence 3—An organist plays soft music during the dinner hour.

1. In more ways than one, the pigeons in Wilson Dormitory are a nuisance.

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2. Eating at a cafeteria has its advantages.

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3. A walk down Maple Street sharpens the senses.

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4. I enjoy spending time at a lakeside, even when I don't go in the water.

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5. Certain temptations often keep me from studying.

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### EXERCISE V-5

**Directions:** Each of the passages below illustrates one of the paragraph patterns we have studied. In the space following each paragraph, name the method of development used and explain the reasons for your choice.

*Paragraph 1:*

A railroad conductor is a speedy, skillful worker. I had the chance to watch one closely last weekend as I rode from New York to New Haven on the poor old New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad. Shortly after I had taken my seat, the door at the head of the car opened, and with an air of authority the conductor strode in announcing, "All tickets, please." He was dressed in the traditional dark blue suit and vest with gold buttons and a gold stripe and star on his sleeve. He also wore a gold watch chain, but instead of having it across his vest, he had one end attached to the top vest button so that the chain snaked its way down his left side into the left pocket. His coat and vest pockets bristled with papers, cards, and tickets of many colors. The conductor was an elderly man, but sure-footed. As he stopped by each seat, he put one foot into the middle of the aisle to maintain his balance, snatched the ticket from the outstretched hand of the passenger, leaned back, glanced briefly at the momentarily precious piece of paper, then vigorously snipped five or six holes across it and thrust it into the "wastebasket" pocket of his coat, the left one. Then, depending on the passenger's destination, he placed a green or yellow card on the back of the seat in front of him. As he left each seat he punched a hole in a long thin card protruding from his upper left pocket. It looked as though he were making a design of some kind, but it must have been a counter of sorts. When he reached a passenger who had to purchase a ticket from him, he whipped out a sheet of paper folded in the middle, punched several holes in it, snapped it apart with one flick of his wrist, handed one half to the passenger and forced the other into the trash pocket. He carefully placed the passenger's dollar bill in the left pocket of his trousers and then reached into another coat pocket, jingled around for a second or two, and came up with a handful of change. Undaunted by the vigorous rocking of the coach, he moved on down the aisle, bracing himself occasionally against the back of a seat as

the train suddenly jerked. He finally came to my seat. He grabbed my ticket and punched so violently that when he moved away, I was dotted with little bits of red paper from his punch. As I watched the conductor move on down the car, I could not help admiring his skill, his speed, and his accuracy in using the right pocket at the right time. He never missed.

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*Paragraph 2:*

The farmers seemed satisfied as they turned home across the frozen field; the hunt after the sheep killer had been successful. There he lay on the ground just as they had shot him, the steam still rising from his sleek body. Only yesterday, as the sunset was blazing red over a white world, I had seen him course across a meadow and leap a fence, headed for a sheepfold on the next farm. Then he had been a perfect specimen of a German sheep dog, long and graceful, with a bounding stride that sent his tawny body quickly out of sight. It seemed as though death could never take him. I felt in a small way honored that I had seen the outlaw off on his last raid. For weeks, Chris Kringle, as he was called, had terrorized the countryside. Every sheepfold had known a snarl in the dark, a leap, a crunch of bones, and a dying bleat as the ewe or lamb fell before the killer. Now, there in the wet new-fallen snow, lay the raider. His legs were tucked up and his muscles were taut, for he had been shot while clearing a fence. Fresh blood trickled from a hole behind his ear and reddened the trampled snow. His foam-flecked lips were curled back. His white fangs were all the whiter against his black

muzzle. Glassy eyes stared between long lashes on which ice particles were already forming. Ears and tail were laid straight out as if caught in the middle of a spring. As I kicked snow over his body, I hated the thought of his going for carrion-crow meat. But, as the farmer said, these blooded dogs are the worst when they run amuck.

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*Paragraph 3:*

It was Saturday afternoon, one week from the Halloween party, and I didn't have the vaguest idea what Don and I would wear for costumes. The theme for the party was "National Advertisements." In the past, I had always found that it was more difficult to think of an idea for a costume than it was to make one, and today was no exception. As I sat there wondering where I could get inspiration, I suddenly thought, why not try Kroger's? A supermarket should provide hundreds of ideas. I grabbed my hat and coat, and in fifteen minutes I was strolling up and down the aisles of the Shadyside market, probably looking quite suspicious to the regular Saturday afternoon shoppers. Scanning the first counter, I noticed the bakery goods—bread and rolls neatly packaged in cellophane wrappings. There wasn't an idea here—or was there? Could I go as a duck on Mother Drake's bread? No. I wouldn't look good in a yellow beak. On to the next counter. Skimming over the shelves stacked with canned vegetables, I noticed Del Monte asparagus, peas—Green Giant corn and peas? Why not? Don and I could go as the Green Giants. I could dye two union suits green and cut leaf petals out of crepe paper. But then, our faces and hair would also have to be green, and Don would never agree to that. On to the next aisle. Olives? Pickles? Ketchup? Salmon? Suddenly, a shiny green label caught my eye, a label on a can of Chicken-of-the-Sea tuna fish. It was a glossy picture of a blond mermaid. Was this it? I'd let my hair down and spray it blond. Don could be the tuna fish. My mermaid's outfit would be a cheap, strapless dress covered with shiny green

scales of paper. Don's head could be made of papier-mâché and wire, and his tail—paper—could drag on the floor behind him. Maybe he could even blow bubbles out of the fish's mouth. Quickly I purchased the can of tuna fish and started for home. The following Saturday night, first prize for the best costumes at the Halloween party went to a blond mermaid and a seven-foot tuna.

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*Paragraph 4:*

Out on the big hay ranch in New Mexico, we boys could always tell the approach of noon. A sense of midday would almost be forced upon us by the changing impressions of the natural objects. Up past Taos and the shoulder of Old Baldy, the first clouds of the afternoon, gleaming white in the reflected sunshine, would come rolling in toward the valley, accompanied by a faint warning of distant thunder. The morning breeze would suddenly die out, and the line of the distant mesas would become indistinct as the shimmering heat waves blurred their natural outline into a purple haze of light. The smoke of the coke ovens at Dawson, twenty-five miles away, would spread in a thin gray haze along the ranges of the Sangre de Cristo. Up at Toril a switch engine whistled as it sorted out its daily assignment of stock cars. Nearby, a herd of sheep, pasturing on the upper hillside all morning, formed a great gray patch upon the brown prairies as it rested in the sun. Mosquitoes took shelter from the heat in the short hay stubble. Blackbirds, after an ample breakfast of ladybugs and weevils, settled along the barbed-wire fence. Everything was quiet except for the rustle of the mountain hay as we threw it into the shocks. It is natural that the native Mexicans should call it the "siesta hour." Almost without a word or question as we finished the windrow, we stuck the forks, picked up the warm, half-emptied canvas water bag, and started for the coolness of the ranch house and dinner. It was noon.

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and didn't get anything?" they would ask. But there over the top of the cliff, the hawk was turning. His wings were almost vertical; he was coming toward me. He was a bird of prey, a bird living by strength of wing and talons. He was a hawk, not a fluttering bird in the bushes; he was a flesh-eater, a brother to the eagle. Other birds might flutter to safety, but he would soar back to fight. Again he screamed, again he swooped over my head, and this time I shot. He rose sharply, his wings crumpled, and then he fell, faster and faster until he crashed through the treetops below me. I ran down the hill, leaping over rocks, tearing through the underbrush. I had killed a hawk! But when I got to where he lay, I didn't see the screaming hawk that had soared above me. He was only a heap of broken feathers. His wings looked awkward and heavy. And his eyes, the glaring, fierce, yellow eyes, were spots where the gray dirt stuck. His talons closed on nothing; he was dead. They teased me at home about hunting all morning and coming back empty-handed. They laughed at me, but I didn't tell them that I had killed a hawk; and I didn't tell them that I had cried because his yellow eyes were filled with dirt.

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*Paragraph 5:*

Hawks were bad: they were fierce birds that killed chickens. As a boy I knew that, for I lived in a country where all the shotguns were loaded and all the fence posts wore scarecrows. Hawks were bad: I had been given a shotgun for my twelfth birthday; Grandpa had promised me a dollar for every hawk I killed. I went out to kill one. All the morning I waited on Paylor's Cliff, where I had seen the great goshawks soaring. I waited until I was tired and ready to go home; then I saw the hawk. He was just a dot over the point of scrub ridge when I saw him. He wasn't even as big as the gnats which had been buzzing around my ears. But I knew that he was a hawk, for only a fighting bird could fly so easily and gracefully. He must have seen the bushes move, for just over me he rose and swung screaming. I was surprised. I had never expected him to fly so near; I had hoped only for a long shot across the treetops. As he came toward me, I fumbled, aimed a shaking gun—and didn't shoot. He is gone! I thought as the hawk slid behind the trees. He is gone, and I didn't shoot. They would laugh at me when I came home. "Hunting all morning

Name ..... Class .....

### EXERCISE V-6

**Directions:** Under each of the kinds of paragraph patterns listed below, write three topic sentences that you think could best be developed by that particular method.

#### 1. Particularization

a) .....

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b) .....

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c) .....

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#### 2. Comparison

a) .....

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b) .....

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c) .....

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#### 3. Contrast

a) .....

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b) .....

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c) .....

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**4. Elimination or Negative Detail**

a) .....

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b) .....

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c) .....

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**5. Illustration or Specific Instance**

a) .....

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b) .....

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c) .....

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