

Aula10

WRITING THE PARAGRAPH: ARRANGING DETAILS.

META

This class aims at highlighting the importance of organizing details in a paragraph.

OBJETIVOS

At the end of this class, it is expected that the students:
Recognize the importance of arranging details in a paragraph;
Raise awareness about different methods of arranging details;
Make appropriate use of transition and linking words;
Write clear and concise ideas considering the levels of sentence detail in a paragraph.

PRERREQUISITOS

Knowledge acquired from previous classes about paragraph structure, topic sentence, and types of paragraphs.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to class 10! This is the last class of this course on English writing. This is the final part of the studies about the Paragraph. Here, besides reviewing the contents of previous classes, including the ones about Sentence Structure, you will be dealing with arranging details in a paragraph. For such, let's start by using a technique that is used to help organize information and ideas to be used in our paragraphs/texts: THE SPIDER DIAGRAM or SPIDERGRAM.

ORGANIZING IDEAS THROUGH THE SPIDER DIAGRAM

See below a definition from The Cambridge Dictionaries Online (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/pt/dicionario/ingles/spidergram>. Last access on May 29th, 2016. Make the most of it! Besides helping you organize ideas, it is a great exercise for the mind.

Spidergram noun [C] - uk /ˈspɑː.de.ɪ.ɡrɑːm/ us /ˈspɑː.der.ɪ.ɡrɑːm/ › a diagram (= simple plan) with lines and circles for organizing information so that it is easier to use or remember: Use spidergrams to organize your English vocabulary into different subjects.

Here is another interesting definition of Spidergram or Spider Diagrams, from the online newspaper The Telegraph provided by Ed Cooke (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationadvice/9839678/Spider-diagrams-how-and-why-they-work.html>. Last access on May 29th, 2016).

(...) For essay writing in particular, there's nothing like having at your disposal a bird's-eye view of the subject matter at hand. You want to be able swiftly to look over all that could be said and pick out the most relevant parts, while leaving plenty of mental space for the crafting of an ingenious argument.

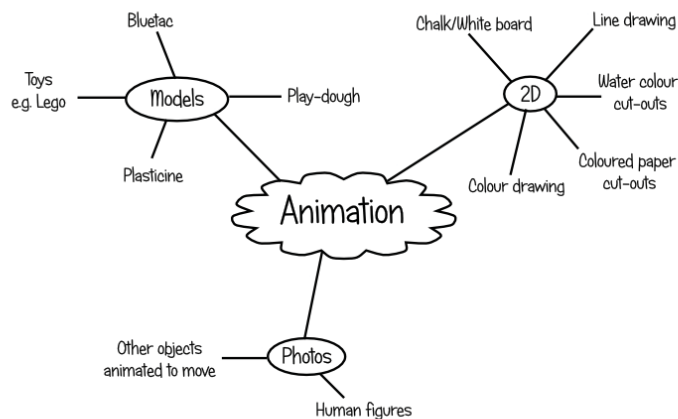
Spider diagrams are an excellent tool for creating an overview, and remembering it crisply. They help distil complex topics onto a single memorable page by using a branching spatial organisation, colour and images.

Spider diagrams can take different shapes and you can use images to present ideas, as well. You will realize how helpful that technique can be and it can even turn writing into something fun to deal with. I am positive it will help you in the writing process. Spider Diagrams can range from simple to complex. Take a look at the following examples:



<https://cramlingtonmuse.wordpress.com>. Last access on May 29th, 2016)

Let's suppose you were told to write about the importance of feedback in the teaching-learning process. As you can observe, the ideas are organized around the question that was positioned at the center of the diagram - "Why is feedback useful?" – and, from that question, different ideas came to help answer it. Each word or expressions are there to help with the development of paragraphs. Can you see the importance of this technique? Let us take a look at another example of Spider Diagram. The main idea to be developed is: animation.



Antonia Peacock

<http://becuo.com>. Last access on May 29th, 2016)

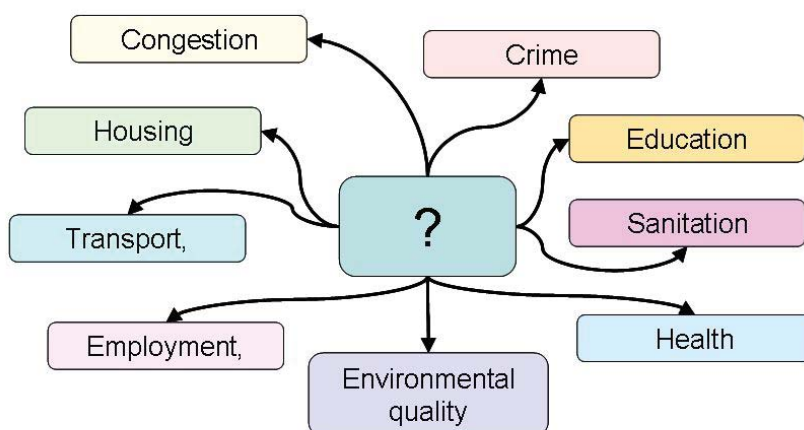


ACTIVITY

Based on the explanation and the examples given about Spider Diagrams, look at the image below and answer the question: “What do you think the linking idea is in the middle that is missing?”

Answer:

Here is a spider diagram
What do you think the linking idea is in
the middle that is missing?



<http://slideplayer.com>. Last access on May 29th, 2016)

COMMENTS ON THE ACTIVITIES

This is a very good exercise to help you think about how Spider Diagrams work. Think of at least two possible answers and share them with your teachers and classmates.

METHODS OF ARRANGING DETAILS IN THE PARAGRAPH

Now that you are familiar with a technique that helps you brainstorm ideas before you write about any topics, the Spider Diagram, let us talk about other very important point related to writing. Did you know that there are some methods of arranging details in the paragraphs? And it is not something exclusively used when writing in English. So, learn and practice it will help you think of the way you write in Portuguese as well!

In Class 8, you've studied about the Types of Paragraph: descriptive, narrative, expository, and persuasive. Now, let's think of how to arrange details in the paragraphs. Here are some guidelines you should considered when doing that. According to Sebranek, Meyer, and Kemper (1995, p. 83), you can organize your ideas into:

Chronological (time) order: You can arrange your details in the order in which they happened (first, second, then, next, later, etc.).

Order of location: You can arrange your details in the order in which they are located (above, below, alongside, beneath, etc.)

Order of importance: You can arrange your details from the most important to the least – or from the least important to the most.

Cause and effect: You can begin with a general statement giving the cause of a problem and then add a number of specific effects.

Comparison: You can explain a subject by showing how it is similar to another better-known subject.

Contrast: You can use details which show how your subject is different from another better-known subject.

Illustration (general to specific): You can arrange your details so that the general idea is stated first in the paragraph (topic sentence). Specific reasons, examples, facts, and other details are then added which illustrate or support the general statement.

Important: A paragraph can present one or more of the characteristics below. However, one ends up standing out. When writing, it does not mean that a paragraph will be organized only according to the order of location or only according to chronological order.



ACTIVITY

Based on the information below, read the examples of paragraphs that follow and try to identify their main characteristic as for the method of arranging details. The paragraphs were taken from Pattern Basic Writing website and adapted for the purpose of this class.

(online source: http://patternbasedwriting.com/elementary_writing_success/paragraph-examples/ Last access on May 29th, 2016.

a) Paragraph organized according to: _____

I do well in school, and people think I am smart because of it. But it's not true. In fact, three years ago I struggled in school. However, two years ago I decided to get serious about school and made a few changes. First, I decided I would become interested in whatever was being taught, regardless

of what other people thought. I also decided I would work hard every day and never give up on any assignment. I decided to never, never fall behind. Finally, I decided to make school a priority over friends and fun. After implementing these changes, I became an active participant in classroom discussions. Then my test scores began to rise. I still remember the first time that someone made fun of me because “I was smart.” How exciting! It seems to me that being smart is simply a matter of working hard and being interested. After all, learning a new video game is hard work even when you are interested. Unfortunately, learning a new video game doesn't help you get into college or get a good job.

b) Paragraph organized according to: _____
_____.

Oceans and lakes have much in common, but they are also quite different. Both are bodies of water, but oceans are very large bodies of salt water, while lakes are much smaller bodies of fresh water. Lakes are usually surrounded by land, while oceans are what surround continents. Both have plants and animals living in them. The ocean is home to the largest animals on the planet, whereas lakes support much smaller forms of life. When it is time for a vacation, both will make a great place to visit and enjoy.

COMMENTS ON THE ACTIVITIES

Remember what I told you about the way ideas are organized in a paragraph: a paragraph can present one or more of the characteristics below. However, one ends up standing out. Check your answers with your teachers and classmates.

TRANSITION OR LINKING WORDS

Here are some words that can help you establish the relationship between the ideas in a paragraph. They are called Transition or Linking Words. The table below was also organized by Sebranek, Meyer, and Kemper (1995, p. 89).

TRANSITION OR LINKING WORDS

Words which can be used to **show location**:

above across against along among around behind below
beneath beside between beyond by down in back of in
front of inside into near off onto on top of outside
over throughout to the right under

Words which can be used to **show time**:

about after at before during first second third till
until today meanwhile tomorrow next week yesterday soon
later afterward next immediately finally then as soon as when

Words which can be used to **compare two things**:

in the same way similarly likewise like as also

Words which can be used to **contrast things** (show differences):

but otherwise on the other hand although however yet
still even though whereas

Words which can be used to **emphasize a point**:

again truly for this reason to repeat in fact to emphasize

Words which can be used to **conclude or summarize**:

as a result finally in conclusion to sum up therefore lastly
in summary all in all

Words which can be used to **add information**:

again another for instance finally also and moreover
as well additionally besides next along with in addition for
example

Words which can be used to **clarify**:

in the words for instance that is



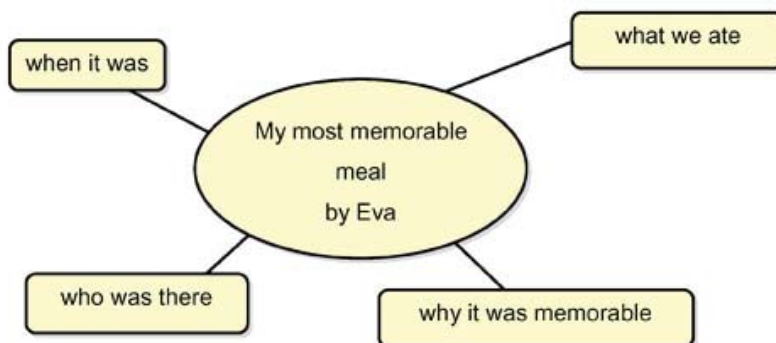
ACTIVITY

Analyze the spider diagram provided by *BBC's Skillswise*. It presents ideas related to the topic “My most memorable meal”. Think of a memorable trip/weekend/day you’ve had and create your own spider diagram. You might want to use the structure from the example and it is OK. Instead of ideas related to the ‘what we ate’, think of ‘what we did’.



Planning with spidergrams

There are lots of different things you can do to plan your writing. One way is to put your ideas in a 'spidergram'.



The meal I remember best is when my four grandparents all came to lunch. It was Easter when I was about five. My sister, friend and all four of my grandparents were there. We ate a meal of chicken, sweet potatoes and salad. I will always remember this lunch because it is was the only time I had all my grandparents around one table. We had a great time. I remember everyone laughing and smiling.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk> Last access on May 29th, 2016)

Reminder: A paragraph is a unit of text. Therefore, it is composed of three parts: beginning, middle, and conclusion (end). Also, a good paragraph should present, at least, 03 sentences.

My most memorable

COMMENTS ON THE ACTIVITIES

It is a good idea to go over the ‘Methods of Arranging Details’ and the table with ‘Transition or Linking Words’ before you write your paragraph. Share your answer with your teachers and classmates.



ACTIVITY

Here is a situation that, unfortunately, is not uncommon to happen. Let’s suppose that a Park in your community is supposed to be destroyed to be replaced by a private Parking Lot that will serve some business. However, you and the people from your neighborhood are against it. Someone had the idea of writing a petition to be taken to the Mayor of your city. Do you know what a petition is? Before you write your text, take a look at definition below provided by the Cambridge Dictionaries Online:

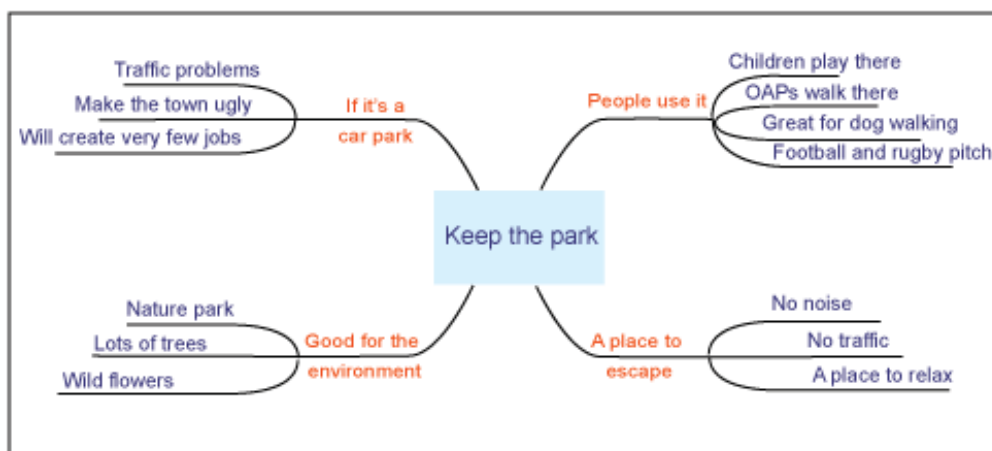
(Online source: <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/petition>. Last access on May 29th, 2016).

Petition (noun) uk /p??t???.?n/ us /p??t???.?n/

› a document signed by a large number of people demanding or asking for some action from the government or another authority: I signed a petition against the proposed closure of the local hospital today.

› specialized law a formal letter to a law court asking for a particular legal action: She's filing a petition for divorce.

Based on the information below, prepare your arguments organized into 04 paragraphs. Use the information provided by each “leg” of the spider diagram below when writing your paragraphs. It is an activity adapted from BBC’s *KS3 Bitesize webpage*.



<http://www.bbc.co.uk>. Last access on May 29th, 2016).

COMMENTS ON THE ACTIVITIES

While writing your paragraphs, make sure you apply the contents from previous classes about sentence structure and The Paragraph. As for the idea of writing a petition, have you ever thought of writing one? Have you ever signed a petition? They have become very popular as more and more people understand they are also responsible for what goes on in their communities and in the world.

Change.org (<https://www.change.org>) is one of the most popular online platforms for social change where you can find relevant petitions and where you can start your own. Why don't you go there and check it out?

Challenge: what if you get together with one or two of your friends or classmates and think of a topic that is worth writing a petition about? If you do find a cause why do fight for, talk to your teachers and let's go for it!



SUMMARY

This is the last class of the semester and I do hope you are already making the most of the contents of each of the classes! The idea, as you know, was to help you improve the way you write. For such, I've highlighted the importance of thinking about the writing process itself at the levels of sentence and paragraph structure. Many people never think about these issues, but if we want to write good, interesting, and coherent texts, we need to read a lot, talk to people about the topics we want to write about, do research, and practice writing!



SELF-EVALUATION

Did I increase my knowledge related to paragraph writing?
Can I arrange details in a paragraph in a coherent and understandable way?

Is my writing more fluent and accurate?

Has my knowledge of the English language improved considering the studies and practices of previous semesters?



NEXT CLASS

Keep up the good work for the next semester!

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