

Exercise walk-through

Control over the elements of composition ■ 4.14

eXercise

You must be able to

- state the three levels at which coherence occurs
- state what writers achieve coherence through
- name the devices that indicate relationships
- test a draft for coherence

Method — Three levels

In a sentence, the idea in one clause logically links to an idea in the next. In a paragraph, the idea in one sentence logically links to an idea in the next. In a text, the ideas in one paragraph logically link to the ideas in the next.

Method — What achieves it

Writers achieve coherence when the arrangement and organization of reasons, evidence, ideas or details is logical. Coherence is a property of the arrangement, not of the connecting words.

Method — Devices

Transitions, repetition, synonyms, pronoun references, or parallel structure indicate relationships between and among reasons, evidence, ideas and details.

Method — The test

Read the first sentence of each paragraph in order. If they form an argument, the essay is coherent at the text level. If they are a list of topics, the arrangement has not been thought through.

Practice 2.1 ■ 3 marks

State the three levels at which coherence occurs.

Solution 2.1

Method: Three levels

Worked steps

in a sentence, between clauses **B1**; in a paragraph, between sentences **B1**; in a text, between paragraphs **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 3 marks

Name three devices that indicate relationships.

Solution 2.2

Method: Devices

Worked steps

any three of: transitions; repetition; synonyms; pronoun references; parallel structure

B3.

Practice 2.3 ■ 2 marks

Coherence is a property of arrangement.

- (a) State what this means about transitions.
- (b) State the test for coherence at the text level.

Solution 2.3

Method: The test

Worked steps

(a) transitions signal a relationship **B1** but cannot create one where the arrangement is not logical **B1**. (b) read the first sentence of each paragraph in order and see whether they form an argument **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

Coherence occurs in a sentence, a paragraph and

- A** a text
- B** a title
- C** a footnote
- D** a margin

Solution 3.1

A a text



B a title

C a footnote

D a margin

Worked steps

A. a text.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

Writers achieve coherence when the arrangement of ideas is

- A** logical
- B** alphabetical
- C** chronological only
- D** decorative

Solution 3.2

Method: What achieves it

A logical



B alphabetical

C chronological only

D decorative

Worked steps

A. logical.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

An essay is full of transitions and still hard to follow.

- (a) State the likely problem.
- (b) Explain how to fix it.

Solution 3.3

Worked steps

(a) the arrangement is not logical, so the transitions are labelling connections that do not exist **B1**. (b) reorder the paragraphs so each claim follows from the last **B1**, then rewrite the transitions to name the real relationships **B1**.