

TWO WAYS OF TEACHING PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

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ONE WAY OF THINKING ABOUT THE PARAGRAPH

- 3-5 sentences about one idea

FOR EXAMPLE

- Vegetables have lots of vitamins. They can help you feel full without eating too many calories. Children sometimes don't like vegetables. They can be cooked so that they are tasty, but they can also be badly prepared. Vegetables are healthy for you.

WHAT I WANT, THOUGH: ORGANIZATION AND FLOW

- Although vegetables are a crucial component of the human diet, too often people in industrialized countries do not eat enough of them. Of course, we all know that fresh vegetables are incredibly healthy. Not only do they contain lots of vitamins, but they can help you feel full without eating too many calories. But although we all have this information, still we fail to eat the recommended servings of vegetables. Some of us develop the habit of eating processed carbohydrates instead of vegetables as children, when our palates are still developing. Some of us simply don't know how to cook vegetables so that they are tasty, or grew up eating them badly prepared. We need to retrain ourselves to know what to do with vegetables and to enjoy their taste.

THE INFAMOUS PARAGRAPH BURGER

Your argument
(mini-thesis) is
the top bun.

Your analysis
is this and this
and this and
this and this.
If that looks
like most of
the paragraph
burger, that's
because it is.



Your evidence
(quotes from
the text) is the
ketchup, mustard,
and mayo.
Remember:
a little goes a long
way.

The bottom bun
relates the
paragraph back
to the thesis
for the entire
paper and
transitions to the
next paragraph.*



This is the Hamburger.
He is a plagiarist. Do
not be wooed by his

*This is not another
sandwich. In fact, it
contains a beef patty,
a slice of cheese and

MODEL I: PARAGRAPH AS BURGER

WHAT THIS MODEL EMPHASIZES

Internal organization:
not all of your
sentences do the
same thing or are at
the same level



MEAT, CHEESE, CONDIMENTS

Evidence: facts, quotations, details, specifics, experiment results

Analysis: what conclusions and implications you can draw from this evidence





THE BUN

- Holds together and organizes the rest of the burger
- Buns are synthesizing sentences that work at a different level than the rest of the paragraph
- Not just a “topic sentence,” which leads to the shopping bag model

big. beefy. bliss.



Double Quarter Pounder®
with Cheese

Big Mac®

Angus Deluxe
Third Pounder**

i'm lovin' it®

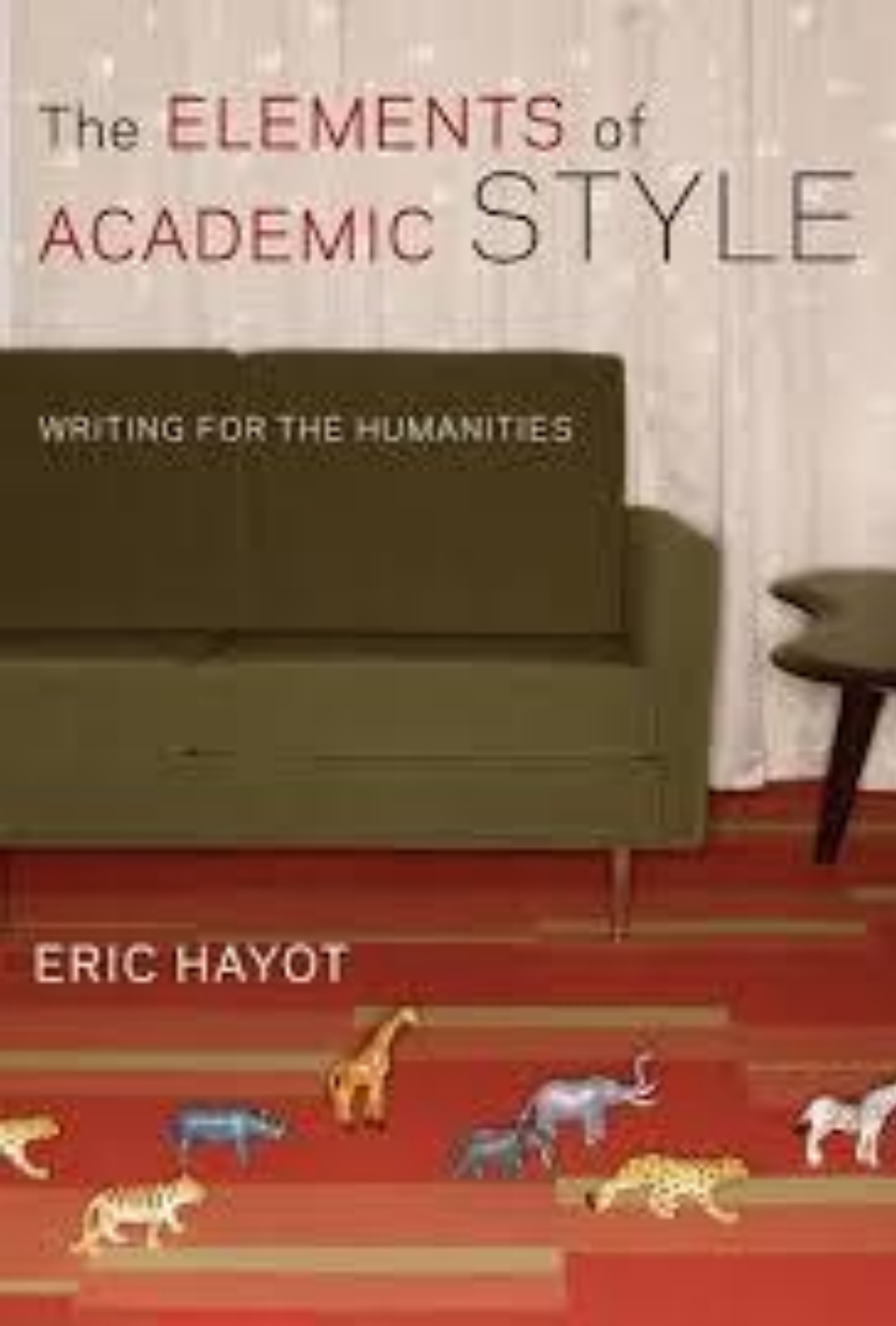


*Weighs before cooking 8 oz. (226.8 g) and
**Weighs before cooking 3.23 oz. (91.7 g) and
At participating locations. ©2011 McDonald's

WHAT'S WRONG?

The word “big” is easily linked with the US, both with its expansive geography and its people, who often face obesity. The word “big” makes that fatness into something positive, even an accomplishment, especially if it’s describing men, who don’t face as much pressure as women do to be thin. The word “beefy” is specifically associated with masculinity—in the 1950s, one might call a handsome man a “beefcake,” both strong and manly. Women are excluded from these associations: calling a woman “beefy” or “big” is not considered polite.

- This ad associates McDonalds with both the US and with men. The word “big” invokes both the country’s expansive geography and its people, who often face obesity. Here, “big” makes that fatness into something positive, even an accomplishment--if it’s describing a man. The word “beefy” is also a compliment, if associated with masculinity—in the 1950s, one might call a handsome man a “beefcake,” both strong and manly. Women are excluded from these associations: calling a woman “beefy” or “big” is not considered polite. These first two words invoke an image of an American man—and seem to leave out women.



**MODEL 2:
ERIC HAYOT'S
UNEVEN U**

WHAT THIS MODEL EMPHASIZES

- Again, the different functional levels of different sentences in the paragraph
 - 5 = higher level of abstraction
 - 1 = detail, quotation, evidence
- Flow and progression across the paragraph

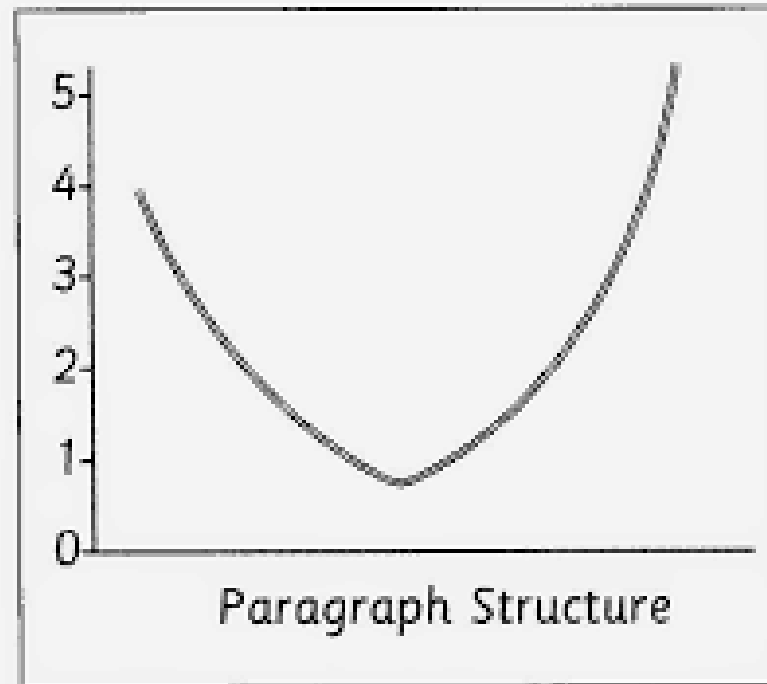


FIGURE 8.1 The Uneven U.

- Vegetables have lots of vitamins. They can help you feel full without eating too many calories. Children sometimes don't like vegetables. They can be cooked so that they are tasty, but they can also be badly prepared. Vegetables are healthy for you.

2 2 2 2 3

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4
3
2 2
3 5

FOR THINKING ABOUT MACRO-STRUCTURE

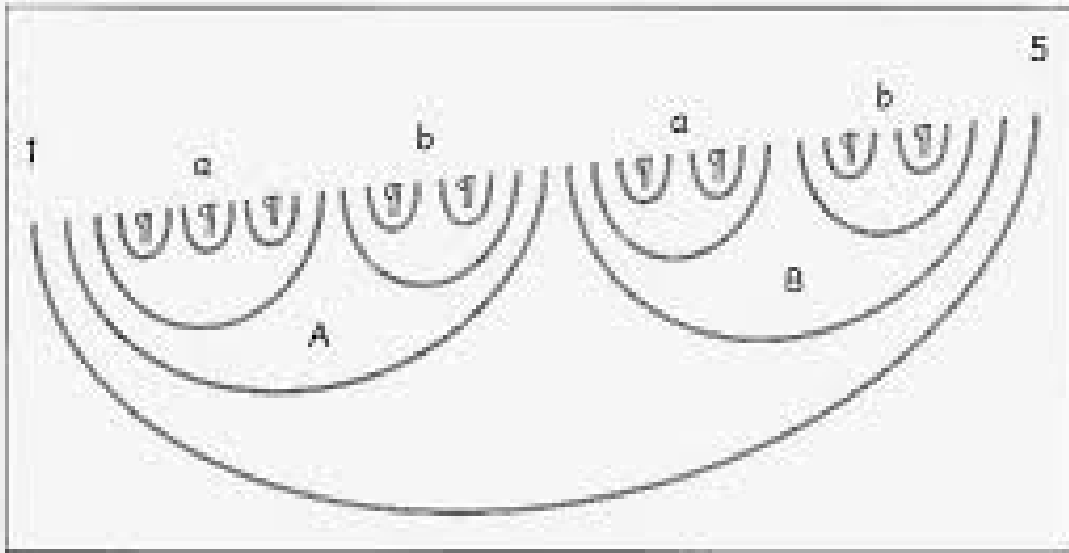


FIGURE 8.4 Fractal madness: two large sections, A and B, with subsections, a and b, inside a larger section.

- How to build up an argument that “grows”
- Flow and progression across the essay
- Helps us see how important those level 4 and 5 sentences are!

BRIDGE INTO NEXT ¶

The next term, however, brings women into the picture, by invoking the idea of romance. The word “bliss” suggests the catchphrase “wedded bliss” and asks us to see these big, beefy men in relation to women. Even further, “bliss” might be understood as an emotional, “feminine” word, one we associate with women. At the end of this sequence, the term “bliss” suggests that while “big” and “beefy” make us think of men, we are in the perspective of a woman when we do so. Altogether, the phrase puts us in the mind of a woman admiring a handsome man. We, the readers, are the woman, and these burgers, photographed like Hollywood stars, are the big, beefy men we want.