

Maintaining Unity

Unity is the concept of one main idea per paragraph. That is, you should try to stick to examples that support the pointer word or opinion word of your topic sentence. What is the **pointer word** of the topic sentence in this paragraph? Notice how it governs the rest of the details that follow.

Exercise:

Read the paragraph and then list the numbers of the sentences that violate unity. In other words, which sentences do not develop the pointer word "dreary"?

(1) It was plain to the doctor that his day was going to be dreary. (2) Already twelve patients waited in the outer office. (3) The happy Tiller teenager giggled over a comic book as she rolled up her sleeve for her shot. (4) It was a joy to chat for a moment now and then with a happy, healthy, and well-adjusted kid. (5) It didn't improve the day, either, to be haunted by the difficult tonsillectomy facing him Monday morning. (6) By mid-afternoon poor old Mrs. Clark would come begging for another bottle of sugar pills to pull her through another half-dozen "heart attacks." (7) The Everson infant needed surgery, but there was no convincing his backward parents, and the telephone jangled constantly. (8) Both the Mumford twins were down with a dangerous relapse. (9) Not that he had really hoped to fish tomorrow, but already a cold mist was falling. (10) By morning his little world would be iced over. (11) At least Nurse Hearne wouldn't be around to annoy him. (12) Never again. (13) He had gladly let her go when she demanded a sizeable pay raise and an extra half-day off. (14) He meditated for the length of one cigarette, coughed, and studied the frayed edge of his office carpet. (15) Craig Adams' test had come back positive, of course, and young Mrs. Adams would go into hysterics. (16) It would take until closing time to calm her. (17) And the town drunk, in for another Cure, was at this moment passing out in the waiting room.