



# HOW TO WRITE MORE COHERENTLY: A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

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Writing coherently is crucial for academic success. Coherent writing ensures your ideas flow logically and clearly, making your essays and reports easier to read and understand. This guide will provide practical tips on improving coherence, illustrated with examples of bad and good writing, and tailored advice for different types of academic writing.

## WHAT IS COHERENT WRITING?

Coherence refers to the logical bridge between words, sentences, and paragraphs. In a coherent text, ideas flow smoothly and are well-connected, allowing readers to follow your argument or narrative effortlessly.

## TIPS FOR WRITING COHERENTLY

**Plan Your Writing:** Before you start, outline your main points and the structure of your essay. This helps you organise your thoughts logically (Literacy Ideas).

**Use Clear Topic Sentences:** Each paragraph should start with a topic sentence that introduces the main idea. This helps the reader understand the paragraph's purpose and how it connects to your overall thesis (Montana State University).

**Link Ideas with Transitions:** Use transitional words and phrases (e.g., moreover, however, therefore) to connect your ideas and guide the reader through your argument (Monash University).

**Keep Related Ideas Together:** Ensure that sentences within a paragraph discuss a single idea and that paragraphs transition smoothly from one idea to the next (Montana State University).

**Be Consistent with Terminology:** Use the same terms consistently to avoid confusing your reader. This helps maintain clarity and focus (Monash University).

## EXAMPLES OF BAD VS. GOOD WRITING

**Bad Example:** "Many students struggle with writing. Writing is important for success. There are many ways to improve writing skills. Practice is one way to improve. Reading is also important."

**Good Example:** "Many students struggle with writing, which is a crucial skill for academic success. To improve writing skills, students can engage in regular practice and read extensively. These activities help enhance both their writing technique and comprehension."

## WRITING STYLES FOR DIFFERENT ESSAYS

**Narrative Essays:** Focus on telling a story with a clear beginning, middle, and end. Use descriptive language to engage the reader. Ensure each event follows logically from the previous one.

**Expository Essays:** Provide clear and concise information on a topic. Start with an introduction that includes a thesis statement, followed by body paragraphs that each cover a single point supporting the thesis.

**Persuasive Essays:** Aim to convince the reader of your point of view. Use logical arguments supported by evidence. Each paragraph should build on the previous one, reinforcing your overall argument.

**Research Papers:** Present and analyse data or literature on a topic. Begin with an introduction that outlines your research question, followed by a literature review, methodology, results, and discussion. Each section should flow logically to the next.

## DETAILED PARAGRAPH CONSTRUCTION

**Topic Sentence:** Introduce the main idea.

**Supporting Sentences:** Provide evidence or examples.

**Explanation:** Explain how the evidence supports the main idea.

**Linking Sentence:** Transition to the next paragraph.

## EXAMPLE OF PARAGRAPH CONSTRUCTION

**Topic Sentence:** "Effective writing requires clarity and coherence."

**Supporting Sentences:** "Clarity ensures that the reader understands your message. Coherence allows your ideas to flow logically."

**Explanation:** "When your writing is clear and coherent, your reader can easily follow your argument and grasp the nuances of your discussion."

**Linking Sentence:** "In addition to clarity and coherence, proper grammar and style are also crucial."



# ENHANCING COHERENCE IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACADEMIC WRITING.

To further improve coherence in your academic writing, let's delve into specific strategies for various types of essays and research papers. Each type of writing has its unique requirements, and understanding these will help you craft more effective and coherent texts.

## 1. DESCRIPTIVE ESSAYS

**Purpose:** To describe a person, place, object, or event in vivid detail.

**Coherence Tips:** Use Sensory Details: Engage the reader's senses (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste) to create a vivid picture.

**Organise Logically:** Describe things in a logical order (e.g., spatial order for places, chronological order for events).

### EXAMPLE

**Bad:** "The park is nice. There are trees. Birds are singing. The grass is green."

**Good:** "The park is a serene haven with towering trees swaying gently in the breeze. Birds chirp melodiously from their perches, while the lush green grass provides a soft carpet underfoot."

## 2. COMPARE AND CONTRAST ESSAYS

**Purpose:** To analyse the similarities and differences between two or more subjects.

**Coherence Tips:** Use Comparative Structures: Clearly state the subjects being compared and use consistent structures (e.g., block method or point-by-point method).

**Transition Words:** Use transitional phrases like "similarly," "in contrast," "likewise," and "on the other hand" to guide readers.

### EXAMPLE

**Bad:** "Cats and dogs are different. Cats are independent. Dogs need attention."

**Good:** "While both cats and dogs are popular pets, cats are often praised for their independence, whereas dogs are known for their need for attention and companionship."

### 3. ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS

**Purpose:** To persuade the reader of a particular viewpoint.

**Clear Thesis Statement:** Present your main argument clearly in the introduction.

**Structured Arguments:** Each paragraph should present a single point that supports your thesis, backed by evidence.

**Counter Arguments:** Address opposing views and refute them logically.

#### EXAMPLE

**Bad:** "School uniforms are good. They make students look nice. Some people don't like them."

**Good:** "School uniforms should be mandatory as they promote equality among students and reduce distractions. Although some argue that uniforms suppress individuality, the benefits far outweigh this concern."

### 4. ANALYTICAL ESSAYS

**Purpose:** To analyse and interpret elements of a text, event, or idea.

**Focus on Analysis:** Go beyond summarising the content; provide deep analysis and insights.

**Organised Structure:** Use a clear, logical structure to present your analysis.

#### EXAMPLE

**Bad:** "The novel is interesting. The characters are well-developed. The plot is engaging."

**Good:** "The novel's success lies in its complex characters and engaging plot. The protagonist's development from a naive youth to a seasoned leader underscores the theme of personal growth."

### 5. RESEARCH PAPERS

**Purpose:** To present and analyse original research or review existing research on a topic.

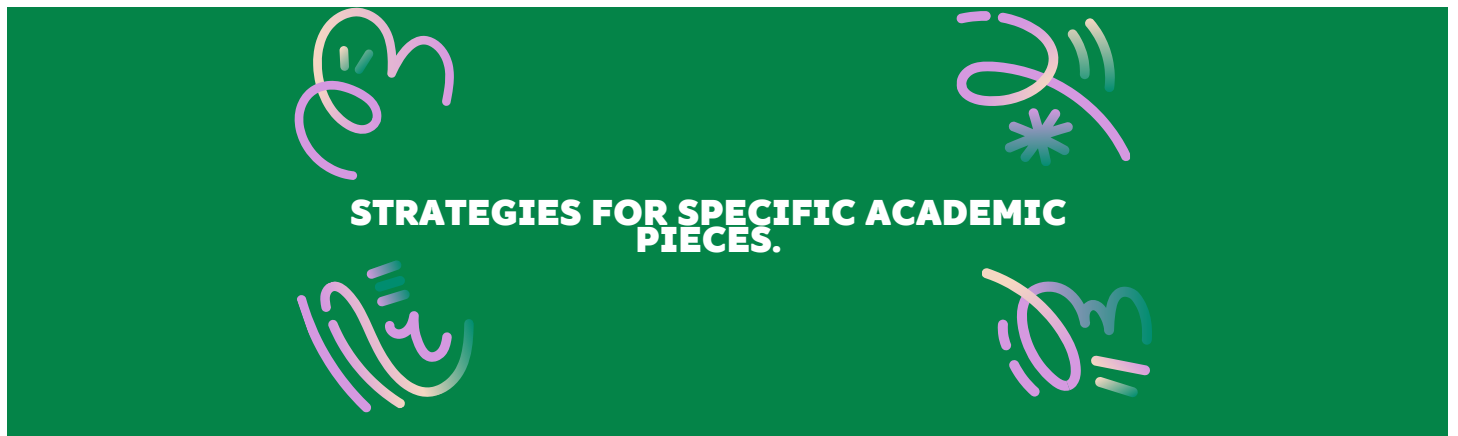
**Clear Sections:** Divide the paper into clear sections (Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion) with appropriate headings.

**Logical Flow:** Ensure each section logically follows from the previous one.

## EXAMPLE

**Bad:** "The study was conducted. Results were analysed. There were significant findings."

**Good:** "The study was conducted using a randomised control trial to ensure validity. The results were analysed using statistical methods, revealing significant findings that support the hypothesis."



## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES

**Summary, Evaluation, Reflection:** Clearly separate each part of the annotation.

## EXAMPLE

**Bad:** "This article is about climate change. It is useful."

**Good:** "Smith (2020) discusses the impacts of climate change on coastal regions. The article is useful for its comprehensive analysis and will be valuable for research on environmental policy."

## CASE STUDIES

**Detail-Oriented:** Provide detailed descriptions and analyses.

## EXAMPLE

**Bad:** "The case study examines a company. It faced challenges."

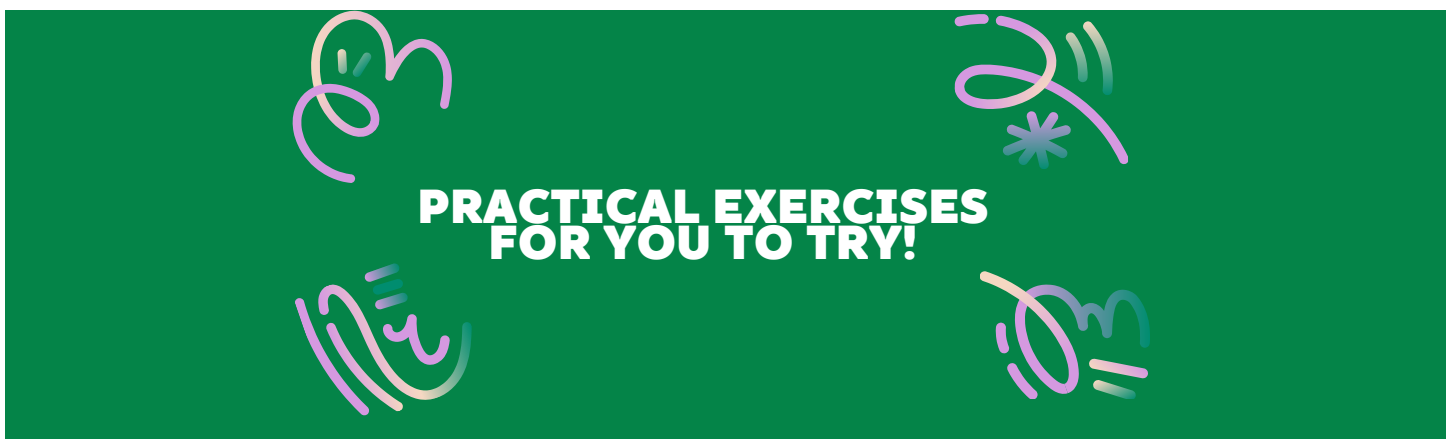
**Good:** "This case study examines XYZ Corporation, focusing on the challenges it faced during its market expansion and the strategies it employed to overcome them."

# LITERATURE REVIEWS: THEMATIC ORGANISATION: ORGANIZE THE REVIEW BY THEMES OR TRENDS RATHER THAN BY INDIVIDUAL STUDIES.

## EXAMPLE

**Bad:** "Jones (2018) says this. Smith (2019) says that."

**Good:** "Recent studies highlight two major trends in climate change research: the impact on biodiversity (Jones, 2018; Smith, 2019) and the economic consequences (Brown, 2020; Lee, 2021)."



**Practice Exercise 1:** Identify the topic sentences and supporting details in a sample paragraph. Rewrite any sentences that don't clearly support the main idea.

**Practice Exercise 2:** Use transitional words and phrases to improve the flow between paragraphs in a provided essay.

**Practice Exercise 3:** Analyse a paragraph for coherence. Highlight subjects and verbs to ensure they are logically connected.

**Practice Exercise 4:** Write a short essay on a given topic, focusing on using clear topic sentences, transitions, and logical organisation.

By applying these strategies and practicing regularly, you can enhance the coherence and overall quality of your writing, making your academic work clearer and more compelling.