ENGLISH, LITERACY, AND COMMUNICATION

Paragraph organization

Difficulty level: Intermediate

English, Literacy, and Communication

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Overview of the concept

This is how you put your ideas in an order readers can follow, like telling a story in the order things happened instead of jumping around. A set of instructions only works if the steps come in the right order, and an email only makes sense if the points follow on from each other. A reader who has to jump back and forth to follow you will give up, no matter how good the ideas are. Good order does half the work of good writing.



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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q Organize: (a) In short, dogs need care. (b) Dogs need care. (c) Owners feed and walk them. Give the order.

SOLUTION

First comes the topic sentence — the sentence that states the main idea: (b).

Then come supporting details — sentences that back up the main idea: (c). Last comes the conclusion — the sentence that sums up the main idea: (a).

So the order is: b, c, a.

EXAMPLE 2

Q Organize: (a) Trees clean the air. (b) Trees help us. (c) Clearly, trees are a help. Give the order.

SOLUTION

First comes the topic sentence: (b).

Then come supporting details: (a). Last comes the conclusion: (c).

So the order is: b, a, c.

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Practice questions

1 Organize: (a) It strengthens the heart. (b) Exercise is healthy. (c) In short, exercise is good for health. Give the order.

- **A** a, b, c
- **B** b, a, c
- **C** b, c, a
- **D** c, b, a

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2 Organize: (a) Libraries are useful. (b) They lend books. (c) Clearly, libraries matter. Give the order.

- **A** a, b, c
- **B** b, a, c
- **C** a, c, b
- **D** c, a, b

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3 Organize: (a) Rain waters crops. (b) Rain helps farms. (c) Clearly, rain is vital. Give the order.

- **A** b, c, a
- **B** a, b, c
- **C** b, a, c
- **D** c, a, b

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4 Organize: (a) Good friends are kind. (b) They listen and help. (c) In short, kind friends matter. Give the order.

- **A** b, a, c
- **B** c, b, a
- **C** a, c, b
- **D** a, b, c

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5 Organize: (a) Reading builds vocabulary. (b) Reading helps learning. (c) In short, reading is powerful. Give the order.

- **A** b, a, c
- **B** a, b, c
- **C** c, a, b
- **D** b, c, a

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6 Organize: (a) Cats groom daily. (b) Cats are clean. (c) Clearly, cats keep clean. Give the order.

- **A** a, c, b
- **B** b, a, c
- **C** c, b, a
- **D** a, b, c

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7 Organize: (a) Saving prepares you for needs. (b) Saving is wise. (c) In short, saving is smart. Give the order.

- **A** c, a, b
- **B** b, c, a
- **C** b, a, c
- **D** a, b, c

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8 Organize: (a) Bees pollinate flowers. (b) Bees help plants. (c) Clearly, bees matter. Give the order.

- **A** b, c, a
- **B** a, b, c
- **C** c, b, a
- **D** b, a, c

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9

Organize: (a) Practice builds speed. (b) Practice improves skill. (c) In short, practice helps. Give the order.

A b, a, c

B c, a, b

C a, b, c

D b, c, a

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10

Organize: (a) Healthy food gives energy. (b) Healthy food helps the body. (c) Clearly, healthy food supports us. Give the order.

A a, b, c

B b, a, c

C b, c, a

D c, b, a

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ANSWER KEY

1. b, a, c

2. a, b, c

3. b, a, c

4. a, b, c

5. b, a, c

6. b, a, c

7. b, a, c

8. b, a, c

9. b, a, c

10. b, a, c

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