

Paragraphing Overview

Paragraphing is the segmenting of sentences into groups of ideas and or information that assists the reader to negotiate the text they are reading. The awareness and demonstration of how paragraphs work, assists students to:

- group their ideas in a deliberate and accurate way to pace their writing and direct readers' attention
- 'chunk' ideas and concepts as they write
- locate information as they read and as they review.

In narratives, paragraphing is an organisational tool to group (or chunk) sequential events and complications which carry the reader from event to event and idea to idea. Ideas are elaborated within each paragraph. They are usually focused on a single idea or set of like ideas linked from sentence to sentence. Paragraphs indicate a broad change in scene and time to structure the events, pace, tension and settings. The use of single sentence paragraphs in narratives can be used to add effect or intensity.

For other writing purposes, paragraphs act as topical segments of ideas often separated by headings and sub headings that combine to form a complete body of material such as that found in expository and informational texts.

For the purpose of the narrative assessment task, paragraphing could be indicated by:

- the indentation of a new line
- space between blocks of text
- student annotations, e.g. P for paragraph, tram lines, square brackets, asterisk
- available space on the previous line left unused, followed by a new line for a new sentence.

Skill Focus: Organising ideas

STAGES 1-2

Strategy

Using a skeleton framework to construct a simple narrative

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Students are assisted to produce a text that is organised into the correct sequence.

Students are provided with the 'skeleton' which may be in the form of a concept map. This can include sentence starters. The level of support can vary depending on the needs of the students in the class.

Present the skeleton on OHT or as a proforma for students to fill in the missing text.

This strategy can be used when:

- listening to a narrative
- reading and taking notes as they read a narrative
- planning a narrative
- planning writing for other purposes.

Short narratives can be divided into three paragraphs that follow the structure of a simple narrative.

Paragraph one: orientation
Paragraph two: complication
Paragraph three: resolution

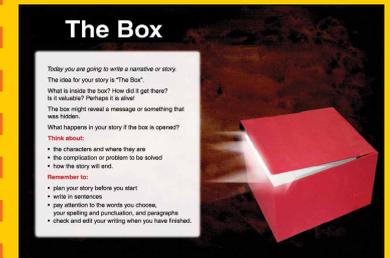
For Stage 1 students, the concept map will need to be simple and easy to understand:

K-6 Outcomes

- WS1.9 Writes elementary literary texts
- WS2.9: Structures texts in appropriate stages

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 7 Paragraphing



Item Descriptor

Writing carefully structured paragraphs

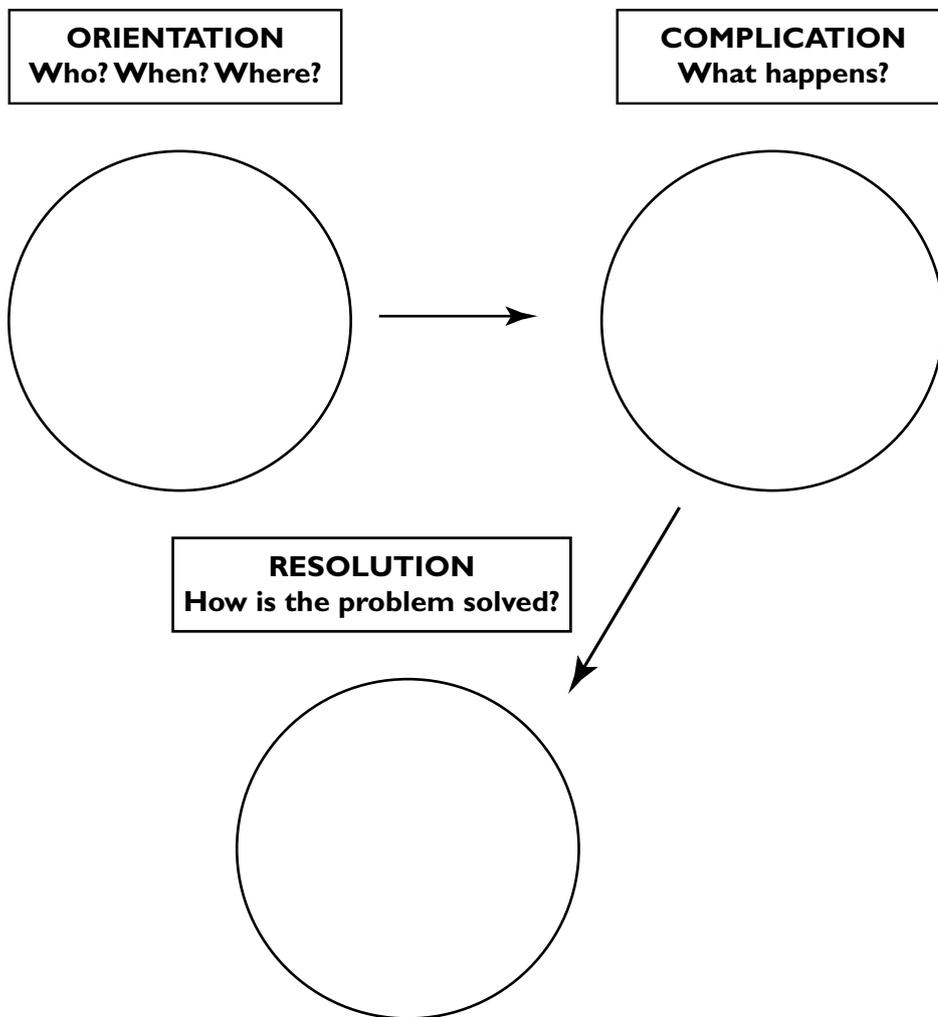
Statements of Learning for English (pp. 5, 18)

When students read and view texts, they identify the main topic or key information, some directly stated supporting information, and the order of events.

Students have the opportunity to understand that stories have a structure.

Quality Teaching Framework

Intellectual quality: Deep knowledge, Metalanguage



view and print

Longer narratives will need several paragraphs developing the complications in the narrative.

Assisting students to organise their ideas develops the sense of paragraphs in:

- their planning stage (to give an overview of what they think they will be writing)
- their editing stages (as they build and change their text to develop meaning)
- their proofreading stage (as they check the surface features of their text).

The proforma provided will need the language and the amount of text changed to match the needs of the students in each class. A series of proformas can be provided that have a variety of levels of text or detail to support the needs of all students in the class.

<p>ORIENTATION- This describes the character and setting of the narrative. <i>This becomes your first paragraph.</i></p>	
<p>When Where Setting Who With whom</p>	
<p>COMPLICATIONS – This describes what events and problems take place. <i>This becomes your second paragraph.</i> <i>You may have more than one paragraph to develop these ideas.</i></p>	
<p>What happened?</p>	<p>Tell me more about these events Who was there? What did they do / see / feel / chose?</p>
<p>RESOLUTION – This describes how the problems are solved. <i>This becomes your last paragraph.</i></p>	
<p>THEMES -Write what lessons were learnt by the characters or about the underlying messages in the narrative</p>	

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Exploring metalanguage and deep knowledge (QTF)

When providing the framework, it is important to deconstruct the meaning of the information provided. The use of the framework also allows time to connect the key concepts from previous lessons with the new task. Asking probing questions to identify the skills the students know and can relate to the new task helps the teacher to assess the direction of the lesson to engage students.

Ask questions from the chosen proforma, like:

How does this help us to organise our ideas?

What can we see we need to include in our first paragraph?

Copy the framework to A3 or as an OHT.

A suggested text to deconstruct is *Belinda* by Pamela Allen

Students read the narrative with the teacher. The teacher stops after the orientation and guides the students to deconstruct the elements from the story that gives information about the orientation.

For example:

From the story	Questions asked
<i>Bessie and Tom live in the country.</i>	<i>Where will we record this information?</i> Next to the where in the orientation because it tells us the place the story is set in.
<i>They also live with a dog, a cat and a pig.</i>	<i>Where would we record this information?</i> <i>Why is it different from the 'who' category?</i> It is different because Old Tom, Bessie and Belinda are the main characters.

The teacher keeps reading.

As the teacher comes to the first event, they stop and ask what is happening. This indicates an event.

From the story	Questions asked
<i>Old Tom works in his garden every morning.</i>	<i>What is happening?</i> <i>Do we see any problems with this event?</i> Not yet <i>What are the details that tell us about the event?</i> He grows lots of vegetables like ... What might happen in his garden? The animals might run through and destroy the garden or there might be...

Guided

Help students to plot the information that they have discussed from the narrative onto their proforma.

Before they begin writing their paragraphs, work with the class to develop criteria for an effective paragraph.

For example:

A paragraph:

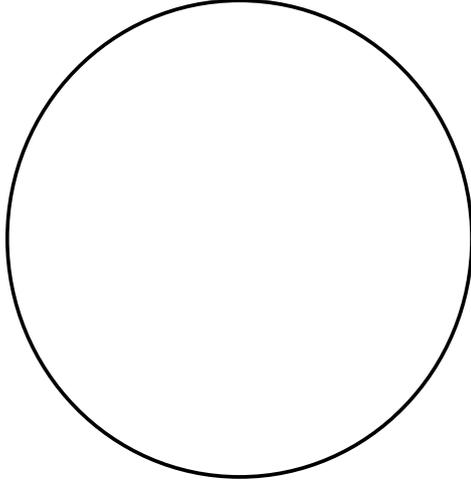
- has a topic sentence
- contains similar information linked to this topic sentence
- uses referencing and word chains to provide cohesion
- can introduce the ideas for the next paragraph.

These criteria could be developed by the teacher into a rubric for assessment.

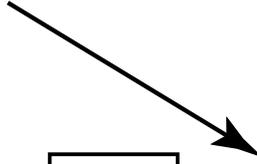
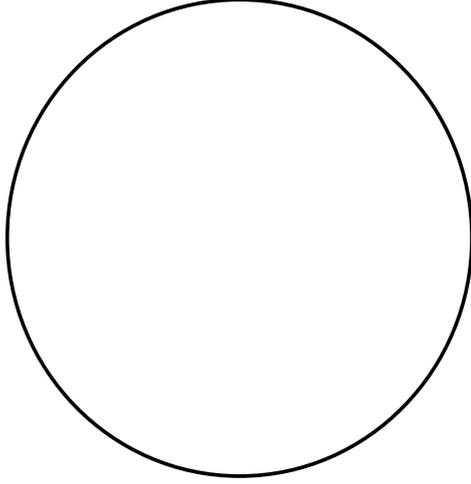
Independent

Referring back to the completed proformas, the teacher writes the topic sentence for each paragraph on the board. The students use the topic sentences and the information on their proforma to complete their paragraphs. Get students to share their paragraphs with the rest of the class.

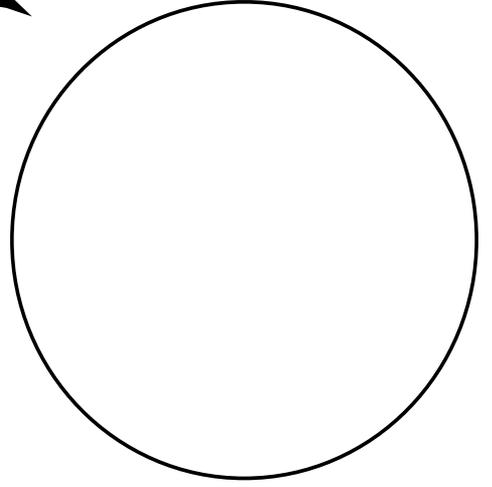
ORIENTATION
Who? When? Where?



COMPLICATION
What happens?



RESOLUTION
How is the problem solved?



Worksheet 2

ORIENTATION- This describes the character and setting of the narrative.
This becomes your first paragraph.

When

Where

Setting

Who

With whom

COMPLICATIONS – This describes what events and problems take place.
This becomes your second paragraph.
You may have more than one paragraph to develop these ideas.

What happened?

Tell me more about these events

Who was there? What did they do / see / feel / chose?

RESOLUTION – This describes how the problems are solved.
This becomes your last paragraph.

THEMES -Write what lessons were learnt by the characters or about the underlying messages in the narrative

Continued over the page

ORIENTATION - This describes the character and setting of the narrative

This becomes paragraph one

When

Where

Setting

Who

With whom

COMPLICATIONS – this describes what events and problems take place

This becomes your second paragraph.

You may have more than one paragraph to develop these ideas.

Events

Topic sentence

Supporting details

Topic sentence

Topic sentence

RESOLUTION – this describes how the problems are solved

This becomes your last paragraph

THEMES -Write what lessons were learnt by the characters or underlying messages in the narrative

Skill Focus: Structuring paragraphs

STAGES 2-3

Strategy

Deconstructing paragraphs to understand how they are structured

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Explain to students that paragraphs have a structure that includes a beginning, a middle and an end.

Choose a simple narrative paragraph to deconstruct so that students are able to recognise and identify the different parts of a paragraph. For example,

Maggie was the best pet in the world. She was a beautiful, black puppy that followed Alana and her and her sister Caitlin all around the yard. When they were playing in the purple and green cubby house, Maggie would sit outside the door waiting for them. When they were swimming in the pool, she would sit at the gate. When they were on their bikes Maggie would run behind them. Alana and Caitlin were so happy to have a friend like Maggie.

Ask students simple questions to check their understanding of the paragraph:

Who are the characters in the paragraph?

What sort of an animal is Maggie?

What do we learn about Maggie?

What is the main idea of the paragraph?

Identify for students the different parts of a paragraph. Explain that paragraphs contain:

- a statement or topic sentence that indicates what the paragraph will be about
- explanatory details that give more information about the topic
- a concluding statement that sums up the ideas presented in the paragraph.

Deconstruct the paragraph with students:

Ask:

Can you find the topic sentence of the paragraph?

What is the paragraph going to be about?

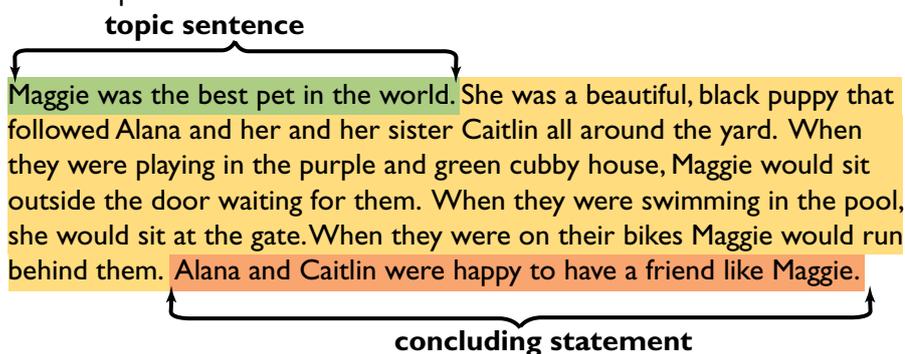
Which sentences give more information about the topic?

List all of the new information that we learn.

Which sentence concludes the paragraph?

How does it sum up the main idea presented in the paragraph?

Get students to highlight or underline the different parts of the paragraph. See the example below.

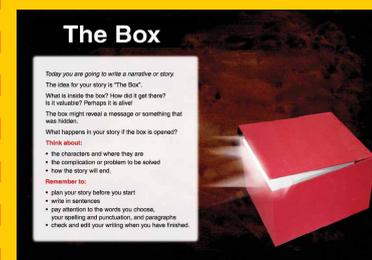


K-6 Outcome

WS3.9 Writes paragraphs that contain a main idea and elaboration of the main idea

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 7
Paragraphing



Item Descriptor

Writing carefully structured paragraphs

Statements of Learning for English (p. 9)

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use paragraphs for separate points.

Quality Teaching Framework

Intellectual quality: Deep understanding, Metalinguage

Guided

Activity one

Get students to write a short paragraph. Provide a topic for their writing, like:

- I am special
- My pet
- Saturday is the best day of the week
- I have the best mum in the world.

Remind them that they have to write a topic sentence, include details that expand on the topic sentence or main idea of the paragraph and then write a concluding sentence.

Ask for volunteers to share their paragraphs so that the class can jointly deconstruct them.

Activity two

Exploring metalanguage and deep understanding (QTF)

The type of passage must be relevant to the students such as the first step in research, a deconstruction of a paragraph about a class novel. The teacher uses a paragraph in context with the students' learning topic and discusses how the paragraph is organised to sequence and group the ideas relating to the main topic. Students are provided with a copy of the passage. Together, through shared discussion, the students highlight the topic sentence and the supporting detail. The complexity of the paragraphs provided will depend on the ability of the students and their stage of learning.

Explain to students that paragraphs with different purposes have the same structural elements. Provide students with a number of informative paragraphs relating to different key learning areas.

Identifying topic sentences

Highlight the topic sentence and the summary sentences within the passages.

Underline the supporting details and connecting key words

SPORT TOPIC

CREATE A TITLE: _____

For centuries the traditional game of cricket has been a part of life in England and is now part of the world sport arena. It began to spread as it was played in countries that had been colonised by England. The date of the invention of the game is unknown but it was played as early as 1300. Overarm bowling was introduced in the 1800's but apart from that little has changed in the game rules. It is a popular world sport that attracts much attention during summer.

SCIENCE TOPIC

CREATE A TITLE: _____

Rocks are grouped as sedimentary, igneous or metamorphic rocks and are classified according to the way they are formed. Rocks made when hot liquid rock from inside the earth hardens are called Igneous Rocks. Rock made from parts of other rocks, fossils or shells layered in sediments over time are called Sedimentary Rocks. Rocks that have been changed by heating or pressure inside the earth are called Metamorphic Rocks. There are hundreds of different kinds of rocks which are formed in different ways.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TOPIC

CREATE A TITLE: _____

The constructions of innovative buildings are often difficult and require new techniques and special building materials. Many unexpected problems can arise no matter how careful the planning. The architects and engineers who designed the Sydney Opera House faced many problems. Many specialists in sound and acoustics were called in to design the shape of the inside rooms. Metal, glass and plastics were used in the building. The Opera House is an imaginative design and stands as a unique masterpiece not only in Australia but around the world.

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Independent

Provide groups of students with a paragraph that has been cut up. Get them to 'unjumble' the information so that they end up with a logically structured paragraph. When students have successfully put together their first paragraph, give them the jumbled parts of a number of paragraphs together so that they will have to determine which parts belong to the same paragraph before sequencing the sentences in each individual paragraph.

If necessary, provide support to students by highlighting the topic sentences amongst the sentence strips.

Tahlia is my best friend.	It is hot and the days and nights are long, especially Christmas Eve.	I wish I was as smart as Jacob.
The house looked like it had been empty for years.	My favourite place is the beach.	Some of the things that we do together are swimming and dancing
It is not as easy to have fun when it is raining.	She is fun to be with and she makes me laugh.	There are a whole heap of reasons why I like Christmas.
I also love catching up with all my cousins when we get together to exchange presents.	Jacob is one of the smartest kids in my class.	I love surfing the waves on my body board.
If my mum let me, I would spend every day at the beach in summer.	I don't like rainy days, especially during the holidays.	Inside it was creepy and old and there was dust all over the furniture.
He is really good at spelling because he reads all the time.	She always thinks of fun ways to spend our time.	He is almost always correct when he answers questions in class.
I would rather be outside riding my bike with my friends than trapped inside.	Some of the windows were broken and the stairs leading to the front door were cracked.	Christmas is my favourite time of the year.
One of the reasons I like it so much is that Christmas time means school holidays.	The feel of the sand beneath my feet and the warmth of the sun on my back are delicious.	It looked lonely, as if it had been abandoned years ago.
I like spending time with Tahlia more than with any of my other friends.	Jacob also writes great stories that are funny and entertaining.	When it rains, my brother and I are stuck inside and there is nothing to do.

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Worksheet I

Identifying topic sentences

Highlight the topic sentence and the summary sentences within the passages.

Underline the supporting details and connecting key words

SPORT TOPIC

CREATE A TITLE: _____

For centuries the traditional game of cricket has been a part of life in England and is now part of the world sport arena. It began to spread as it was played in countries that had been colonised by England. The date of the invention of the game is unknown but it was played as early as 1300. Overarm bowling was introduced in the 1800's but apart from that little has changed in the game rules. It is a popular world sport that attracts much attention during summer.

SCIENCE TOPIC

CREATE A TITLE: _____

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TOPIC

CREATE A TITLE: _____

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Worksheet 2

<p>Tahlia is my best friend.</p>	<p>It is hot and the days and nights are long, especially Christmas Eve.</p>	<p>I wish I was as smart as Jacob.</p>
<p>The house looked like it had been empty for years.</p>	<p>My favourite place is the beach.</p>	<p>Some of the things that we do together are swimming and dancing</p>
<p>It is not as easy to have fun when it is raining.</p>	<p>She is fun to be with and she makes me laugh.</p>	<p>There are a whole heap of reasons why I like Christmas.</p>
<p>I also love catching up with all my cousins when we get together to exchange presents.</p>	<p>Jacob is one of the smartest kids in my class.</p>	<p>I love surfing the waves on my body board.</p>
<p>If my mum let me, I would spend every day at the beach in summer.</p>	<p>I don't like rainy days, especially during the holidays.</p>	<p>Inside it was creepy and old and there was dust all over the furniture.</p>
<p>He is really good at spelling because he reads all the time.</p>	<p>She always thinks of fun ways to spend our time.</p>	<p>He is almost always correct when he answers questions in class.</p>
<p>I would rather be outside riding my bike with my friends than trapped inside.</p>	<p>Some of the windows were broken and the stairs leading to the front door were cracked.</p>	<p>Christmas is my favourite time of the year.</p>
<p>One of the reasons I like it so much is that Christmas time means school holidays.</p>	<p>The feel of the sand beneath my feet and the warmth of the sun on my back are delicious.</p>	<p>It looked lonely, as if it had been abandoned years ago.</p>
<p>I like spending time with Tahlia more than with any of my other friends.</p>	<p>Jacob also writes great stories that are funny and entertaining.</p>	<p>When it rains, my brother and I are stuck inside and there is nothing to do.</p>

Skill Focus: Creating, selecting and crafting of ideas for a narrative

STAGE 3

Strategy

Using a matrix to map ideas

Activities to support the strategy

Providing a matrix is a strategy that assists students to-

- organise ideas and facts
- link and connect ideas
- write ideas using key words as a way to summarise information.

Features	How are they introduced?	What problem do they encounter?	How do they react?	How do they feel?	How do they solve the problem?
Character					

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Guided

Exploring metalanguage (QTF)

Activity one

Discuss the proforma headings with the students and ask:
What do you think the titles are asking us to look for in the film?
How will they help us to learn about the ideas?
How will this help us to organise them into paragraphs?

Access: <http://australianscreen.com.au/titles/silver-brumby-friends/clip2/>

View the film clip titled *Beware*

Students list the characters shown in the scene in the shaded column of the proforma. As a group, students discuss as they complete the matrix.

Students view the film clip again and then discuss and record any changes to ideas in the matrix. Students then work in pairs using their notes to construct a paragraph describing the incident. Encourage students to write sentences based on the grid headings.

Students share their first draft with their peers in a writer's circle.

Discuss with students how their paragraph was constructed.

Discuss with the students where they think the event comes in the narrative and ask them to justify their reasons.

K-6 Outcomes

- WS2.9: Structures texts in appropriate stages
- WS3.9: Writes paragraphs that contain a main idea and an elaboration of a main idea

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 7 Paragraphing

The Box

Today you are going to write a narrative or story.
 The idea for your story is "The Box".
 What is inside the box? How did it get there?
 Is it valuable? Perhaps it is alive!
 The box might reveal a message or something that will happen.
 What happens in your story if the box is opened?
 Think about:

- the characters and where they are
- the complication or problem to be solved
- how the story will end.

Remember to:

- plan your story before you start
- write in sentences
- pay attention to the words you choose, your spelling and punctuation, and paragraphing
- check and edit your writing when you have finished.

Item Descriptor

Writing carefully structured paragraphs which are sequenced appropriately

Statements of Learning for English (p. 18)

Students have the opportunity to understand that stories have a structure.

Quality Teaching Framework

Intellectual quality – Metalanguage, Deep understanding

Map a line on the whiteboard and ask students to plot where they think the event is placed in view of the total narrative.

Activity two

Using the narrative proforma as a guide, students summarise the storyline of the narrative *The Silver Brumby*.

<p>ORIENTATION- This describes the character and setting of the narrative <i>This becomes paragraph one</i></p>	
<p>When Where Setting Who With whom</p>	
<p>COMPLICATIONS – this describes what events and problems take place <i>This becomes your second paragraph.</i> <i>You may have more than one paragraph to develop these ideas.</i></p>	
<p>Events Topic sentence</p>	<p>Supporting details</p>
<p>Topic sentence</p>	
<p>Topic sentence</p>	
<p>RESOLUTION – this describes how the problems are solved <i>This becomes your last paragraph</i></p>	
<p>THEMES -Write what lessons were learnt by the characters or underlying messages in the narrative</p>	

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Independent

Exploring deep understanding (QTF)

Students write a paragraph that explores an event that preceded the events recorded in the film clip.

Worksheet 1

Features Character	How are they introduced?	What problem do they encounter?	How do they react?	How do they feel?

Worksheet 2

ORIENTATION - This describes the character and setting of the narrative

This becomes paragraph one

When

Where

Setting

Who

With whom

COMPLICATIONS – this describes what events and problems take place

This becomes your second paragraph.

You may have more than one paragraph to develop these ideas.

Events

Topic sentence

Supporting details

Topic sentence

Topic sentence

RESOLUTION – this describes how the problems are solved

This becomes your last paragraph

THEMES -Write what lessons were learnt by the characters or underlying messages in the narrative

Skill Focus: Sequencing paragraphs in a narrative STAGES 3-4

Strategy

Deconstructing narratives to examine how the paragraphs are structured and sequenced

Activities to support the strategy

Modelled

Using a complex orientation, students work with the teacher to identify the paragraphs in a given passage.

The teacher, together with students, edits the given text to mark paragraphs using parenthesis to indicate a new paragraph.

The temperature had dropped well below zero degrees Celsius and the falling snow was thick and absorbing. Moscow was faintly lit by lonely, grey streetlights dotted randomly along the icy gutters. People with layered clothes and furry collars buried their hands into their pockets as they walked the streets. They released a white burst of steam out of their mouths as they proceeded slowly along the pathways looking like old fashioned steam trains. Russia was like this every year when the season set in. It reluctantly accepted the cold element as it took over the country. Ponds had no ripples skimming their surface, only cracks of white were scattered along the firm, slippery surfaces. Buildings seemed almost forgotten but businesses were never released from the owners' grasps. For no matter what the conditions were, people were always on-shift. In the distance, three men dressed completely in white, were making their way through the snow. Almost unnoticed they carried suspicion in their pockets with their fisted hands. They had all the latest technology today's genius' could supply them with in their back packs. Heat and night vision goggles, sniper scopes with an adjustable laser pointer for extreme accuracy and three dimensional maps. They also had lightweight backpacks full of food and water, Iodine tablets, a torch and ammunition. They were all connected by radio. Their secret mission was about to commence.

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The teacher talks through the sample working with the class as they organise the ideas.

Ask:

What is the first topic sentence?

What information follows the topic sentence to expand on the main idea?

When is a new idea introduced?

How many sentences following expand on that idea?

What words indicate that the information is related to the second topic sentence?

What sentence introduces the next idea in the text?

Jointly, the teacher and class underline and highlight the separate parts of each paragraph.

K-6 Outcomes

RS3.7: Identifies typical structures used in different text types, such as narrative and exposition

WS3.9 Writes paragraphs that contain a main idea and elaboration of the main idea

KLA Outcome

English 4.4.13: Students learn about the metalanguage of subject English used to describe, discuss and differentiate texts and their language forms, features and structures

Item & Stimulus

Writing task criterion 7
Paragraphing



Item Descriptor

Sequencing paragraphs appropriately for a narrative

Statements of Learning for English (pp. 9, 22)

Students have the opportunity to draw on their knowledge of texts and language to use paragraphs for separate points.

When students write imaginative texts, they have the opportunity to develop a storyline of sequenced events involving complications and resolutions with relevant details.

Quality Teaching Framework

Intellectual quality – Metalanguage

Guided

Provide students with a cut up narrative appropriate for their learning level. Get them to identify what is going on in the narrative and sequence the events into an appropriate order so that the story develops and makes sense. If it is a complex narrative, provide students with the first and last paragraphs to help them to complete the task.

The example provided in the attached worksheets is the narrative 'Lacy' from the 2008 NAPLAN Year 5 Reading magazine.

Worksheet 2

Read the first and last paragraphs of the story, *Lacy*. Keeping that information in mind, closely examine the jumbled paragraphs that, when properly positioned, make up the rest of the narrative. Decide in what order the paragraphs should be positioned. You may have to experiment and rearrange the paragraphs a number of times before you are happy that the story is logical and the events properly sequenced.

Lacy

I met her in the drought, when the air was baked thin above the shed and casuarinas shivered in the heat.

I spent the morning guarding the chookhouse. Lacy goanna spent the morning up the tree, trying to pretend it wasn't swaying with their weight, probably about to break

[view and print](#)

Read the opening and closing paragraphs with the students.

I met her in the drought, when the air was baked thin above the shed and casuarinas shivered in the heat.

I spent the morning guarding the chookhouse. Lacy goanna spent the morning up the tree, trying to pretend it wasn't swaying with her weight, probably about to break.

Ask:

- Who do you think 'her' refers to?
- What sequence of events could link the opening paragraph to the closing paragraph?

Get students to read all of the jumbled paragraphs before deciding what the second paragraph might be. They can be prompted to look for a paragraph that continues on with information about the heat of the night. Guide them through some of the paragraphs and then get students to complete the narrative in pairs. Working in pairs will require them to verbalise and justify their choices about the sequence of events.

It's a giant goanna and she's heading for the chookhouse.'
Something moved in the veggie garden. It was as long as I am, and even wider, a mottled yellow grey. It lifted its head and stared at me.
'Maybe I'm not hallucinating,' I decided. 'Maybe someone is making a dinosaur movie in my potato patch and a model dinosaur has escaped...' when I realised ...
'Stop! Hey stop! Get out of it!'
It was too hot even to sleep by the creek. I came back to the shed and lay on the bed and dreamt of ice-cream and glaciers.
This goanna was the largest I'd ever seen. Goannas keep growing all the time, as long as they live. Lacy goanna was probably a couple of hundred years old, older than white settlement in this country.
It was a very small wattle tree and she was a very large goanna. The further up she climbed the more the tree bent down, till finally I was eye-to-eye with a confused goanna.
I slammed out the door. The goanna saw me. She lurched in the other direction, up the hill towards the chooks. I ran after her.
I don't know what woke me. I went to the window.
And then: 'No, I'm hallucinating – there can't be a dinosaur in the potatoes.'
Lacy blinked a couple of times as though to say, 'No, you can't see me really. I've climbed up a tree. I'm way up here! You really can't see me at all.'
The goanna turned her head, gave me a disgusted glance and lurched faster. Not much faster – when you're as big as Lacy goanna you don't go very fast. Goannas do walk like dinosaurs – or rather movie makers have modeled the way they make dinosaurs walk on komodo dragons, close relatives of goannas.
I ran faster. The goanna kept lurching up towards the chookhouse. It was obvious I was gaining on her. She swerved to one side and began to clamber up a wattle tree instead.
'There's a dinosaur in the potatoes,' I thought.

view and print

When students have completed the task get individuals to read their completed narratives aloud. Ask other members of the class to comment on how similar or different their own narratives were to those shared with the class.

Provide students with the original copy of the narrative so that they can closely examine how the sequence of events is ordered and compare it to their own.

LACY

This story is narrated (told) by a woman who has a small farm in the bush.

I met her in the drought, when the air was baked thin above the shed and the cassamias shivered in the heat. It was too hot even to sleep by the creek. I came back to the shed and lay on the bed and dreamt of ice-cream and glaciers. I don't know what woke me. I went to the window. Something moved in the veggie garden. It was as long as I am, and even wider, a mottled yellow grey. It lifted its head and stared at me. 'There's a dinosaur in the potatoes,' I thought. And then: 'No, I'm hallucinating – there can't be a dinosaur in the potatoes.'

'Maybe I'm not hallucinating,' I decided. 'Maybe someone is making a dinosaur movie in my potato patch and a model dinosaur has escaped...' when I realised ...

'It's a giant goanna and she's heading for the chookhouse.'

I slammed out the door. The goanna saw me. She lurched in the other direction, up the hill towards the chooks. I ran after her. 'Stop! Hey stop! Get out of it!'

The goanna turned her head, gave me a disgusted glance and lurched faster. Not much faster – when you're as big as Lacy goanna you don't go very fast. Goannas do walk like dinosaurs – or rather movie makers have modeled the way they make dinosaurs walk on komodo dragons, close relatives of goannas.

This goanna was the largest I'd ever seen. Goannas keep growing all the time, as long as they live. Lacy goanna was probably a couple of hundred years old, older than white settlement in this country.

I ran faster. The goanna kept lurching up towards the chookhouse. It was obvious I was gaining on her. She swerved to one side and began to clamber up a wattle tree instead. It was a very small wattle tree and she was a very large goanna. The further up she climbed the more the tree bent down, till finally I was eye-to-eye with a confused goanna.

Lacy blinked a couple of times as though to say, 'No, you can't see me really. I've climbed a tree. I'm way up here! You really can't see me at all.'

I spent the morning guarding the chookhouse. Lacy goanna spent the morning up the tree, trying to pretend it wasn't swaying with her weight, probably about to break.



view and print

Worksheet 1

The temperature had dropped well below zero degrees Celsius and the falling snow was thick and absorbing. Moscow was faintly lit by lonely, grey streetlights dotted randomly along the icy gutters. People with layered clothes and furry collars buried their hands into their pockets as they walked the streets. They released a white burst of steam out of their mouths as they proceeded slowly along the pathways looking like old fashioned steam trains. Russia was like this every year when the season set in. It reluctantly accepted the cold element as it took over the country. Ponds had no ripples skimming their surface, only cracks of white were scattered along the firm, slippery surfaces. Buildings seemed almost forgotten but businesses were never released from the owners' grasps. For no matter what the conditions were, people were always on-shift. In the distance, three men dressed completely in white, were making their way through the snow. Almost unnoticed they carried suspicion in their pockets with their fisted hands. They had all the latest technology today's genius' could supply them with in their back packs. Heat and night vision goggles, sniper scopes with an adjustable laser pointer for extreme accuracy and three dimensional maps. They also had lightweight backpacks full of food and water, iodine tablets, a torch and ammunition. They were all connected by radio. Their secret mission was about to commence.

Worksheet 2

Read the first and last paragraphs of the story, *Lacy*. Keeping that information in mind, closely examine the jumbled paragraphs that, when properly positioned, make up the rest of the narrative. Decide in what order the paragraphs should be positioned. You may have to experiment and rearrange the paragraphs a number of times before you are happy that the story is logical and the events properly sequenced.

Lacy

I met her in the drought, when the air was baked thin above the shed and casuarinas shivered in the heat.

I spent the morning guarding the chookhouse. Lacy goanna spent the morning up the tree, trying to pretend it wasn't swaying with their weight, probably about to break

Worksheet 3

It's a giant goanna and she's heading for the chookhouse.'

Something moved in the veggie garden. It was as long as I am, and even wider, a mottled yellow grey. It lifted its head and stared at me.

'Maybe I'm not hallucinating,' I decided. 'Maybe someone is making a dinosaur movie in my potato patch and a model dinosaur has escaped...' when I realised ...

'Stop! Hey stop! Get out of it!'

It was too hot even to sleep by the creek. I came back to the shed and lay on the bed and dreamt of ice-cream and glaciers.

This goanna was the largest I'd ever seen. Goannas keep growing all the time, as long as they live. Lacy goanna was probably a couple of hundred years old, older than white settlement in this country.

It was a very small wattle tree and she was a very large goanna. The further up she climbed the more the tree bent down, till finally I was eye-to-eye with a confused goanna.

I slammed out the door. The goanna saw me. She lurched in the other direction, up the hill towards the chooks. I ran after her.

I don't know what woke me. I went to the window.

And then: 'No, I'm hallucinating – there can't be a dinosaur in the potatoes.'

Lacy blinked a couple of times as though to say, 'No, you can't see me really. I've climbed up a tree. I'm way up here! You really can't see me at all.'

The goanna turned her head, gave me a disgusted glance and lurched faster. Not much faster – when you're as big as Lacy goanna you don't go very fast. Goannas do walk like dinosaurs – or rather movie makers have modeled the way they make dinosaurs walk on komodo dragons, close relatives of goannas.

I ran faster. The goanna kept lurching up towards the chookhouse. It was obvious I was gaining on her. She swerved to one side and began to clamber up a wattle tree instead.

'There's a dinosaur in the potatoes,' I thought.

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