

*Important Concepts . . .*

# Preview Review



*Language Arts*

*Grade 9*

*W2 - Lesson 2: The Body of the Essay*

Important Concepts of Grade 9 Language Arts	Materials Required
W1 - Lesson 1 .....Paragraph Structure	Textbooks
W1 - Lesson 2 ..... The Persuasive Paragraph	<i>ResourceLines 9 / 10</i>
W1 - Lesson 3 .....The Business Letter	
W1 - Lesson 4 ..... Business Letter Assignment	
W1 - Lesson 5 .....Paragraphs and Business Letters	<i>SightLines 9</i>
<b>W1 - Quiz</b>	
W2 - Lesson 1 ..... The Five-Paragraph Essay	
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W2 - Lesson 4 .. Editing and Publishing Your Essay/Essay Review	
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# Preview/Review Concepts for Grade Nine Language Arts



*W2 - Lesson 2:  
The Body of the Essay*

# OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, you should

- understand how the main idea of an essay is developed and supported in the body paragraphs
- use transition words to help the ideas in an essay flow more smoothly, both within paragraphs and in linking paragraphs
- organize ideas effectively, according to the type and purpose of the essay

## GLOSSARY

Refer to *ResourceLines 9/10*

**chronological** - order in time  
(page 101)

**descriptive** - details *describe* rather  
than *tell* (page 111)

**expository** - an essay that exposes or  
explains an event, process,  
issue, or topic (page 111)

**narrative** - the story of an event  
or experience (page 111)

**reflective** - thoughtful exploration of  
a worldview (page 111)

**response** - reaction to an existing  
text, question, or event  
(pages 28 and 29)

**transitions** - clearly communicates  
connections between ideas  
(pages 89, 90, and 262)

## Overview

This lesson contains the following topics and activities:

- Glossary
- Overview
- The Body Paragraphs
- Transitions
- Learning Check 1: Transitions
- Order! Order!
- Learning Check 2: Patterns of Organization
- Another Look at “Three Passions”
- Learning Check 3: Organization of Ideas
- Paragraph Length
- Learning Check 4: Patterns and Transitions
- Summary of W2 - Lesson 2
- News, Clues, and Reviews

**Catch wave!**



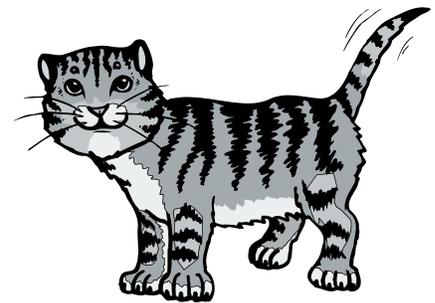
## The Body Paragraphs

In the five-paragraph essay, the body consists of the three middle paragraphs. In these paragraphs, you explain or prove your thesis.

Each paragraph focuses on one main point. This point is expressed in a topic sentence. Each paragraph also contains details or examples that support that point. Finally, each paragraph has a concluding sentence.

Look at how this works for an essay based on the thesis statement, “Cats make better pets than dogs, because they are cleaner, quieter, and more cuddly.” The body of the essay contains three main reasons that support this thesis. These reasons were previewed in the thesis statement:

- cleaner
- quieter
- more cuddly



Each of these reasons forms the basis of a topic sentence for a paragraph in the body of the essay.

- Cats are clean animals, which makes them easy to care for.
- Cats are usually very quiet.
- Most cats love to be petted and cuddled.

Each of these topic sentences must be developed with supporting points and details or examples to make a complete paragraph. You now need to prove that cats are clean, quiet, and cuddly.

Here is how the body of this essay might read. (In the first paragraph, the different elements have been labeled for you.)

Cats are clean animals, which makes them easy to care for. **(topic sentence)** From an early age, they learn to wash themselves, and they do this with great regularity. **(supporting point)** Their owners do not normally need to bathe them. Dogs need to be bathed, and this can be quite a difficult undertaking. Many dogs dislike being bathed and they struggle against it. When they are wet, they shake and spray water all over the place. Keeping a cat’s fur clean is much easier. **(details, examples, description)** Cats can be easily trained to use a litter box. **(supporting point)** This keeps the mess covered and in one place. Changing the litter is quite simple and quick, and no smelly packages are left all over the yard. **(details, examples, description)** For someone who likes a clean pet, a cat is the better choice. **(concluding sentence)**

Cats are usually very quiet. Who has not been annoyed on occasion by a dog’s incessant barking? This is not a problem with cats. Cats normally make very little noise, and, even if they do meow, it is not nearly as loud as a bark. Cats do purr, but that is a quiet, pleasing noise. Unlike dogs, cats rarely disturb the neighbours. They are quieter pets than dogs.

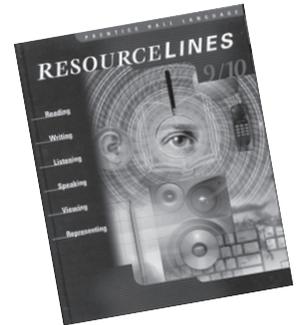
Most cats love to be petted and cuddled. This is the most enjoyable part of having a cat as a pet. A cat will curl up in its owner’s lap and sleep there quite happily. Except for very small dogs, a dog does not normally cuddle up on a lap. Dogs are not as nice to pet, because they often leave an obnoxious doggie smell on one’s hand. This is not a problem with cats. There is nothing like curling up with a good book and a sleepy cat.

Notice that each topic sentence is developed with two or more supporting details. Each paragraph focuses on its topic and helps to prove the main thesis of the essay in some way.

### Transitions

The body paragraphs in the above example are quite effective, but something is missing. They do not flow smoothly. They require transitions to help connect the ideas, both within the paragraphs and between the paragraphs. If an introduction is like the road map for the essay, the transitions are like the road signs along the way.

Transitions are words, phrases, or sentences that guide the reader through the essay. Adverbs and conjunctions frequently do this job. See pages 90 and 91 in *ResourceLines 9/10* for a list of some common transitions.







## Order! Order!

When you write an essay, you must decide on the most effective way to organize your points. The type of essay you are writing and your purpose influence the way you organize your ideas.

**Chronological:** An essay that uses chronological order is organized according to time sequence. In other words, it relays events in the order in which they occur (first, next, last). A narrative essay probably uses chronological order.

**Spatial:** This method of organization follows a physical sequence. For example, the points in a descriptive essay might describe an item beginning at the top and ending at the bottom, going from left to right, or working from the outside toward the inside.

**Step-by-Step or Procedural:** An essay that gives instructions or describes a process likely follows a step-by-step sequence, beginning with the first step and ending with the last step. This is similar to chronological order.

**Order of Importance or Climactic Order:** The points in the essay are organized so that the strongest, most important, or most dramatic point comes last. A reader may remember the last point better than the first point. Therefore, this method of organization is useful for a persuasive essay. It can also be another effective way to organize a narrative essay.

## Learning Check 2: Patterns of Organization

Four other patterns of organization are described on pages 108 to 109 of *ResourceLines 9/10*. Read that section, and add your own notes on those patterns in the space provided below. Try to *paraphrase* the information (put it in your own words). Paraphrasing information shows you understand it.

### Definition:

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**Comparison:**

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**Cause and Effect:**

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**Problem-Solution:**

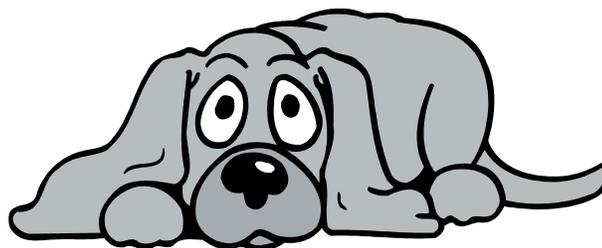
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Note: The body of the essay on cats, above, is a comparison essay. It compares cats and dogs. In each paragraph, the writer discusses one characteristic of cats in comparison to dogs.



## Another Look at “Three Passions”

Look again at the essay, “Three Passions”, on pages 109-110 of *ResourceLines 9/10*. Notice how it is organized. Notice the transitions Russell has used.

How is this essay organized? It seems to be organized according to *order of importance* or *climactic order*. The effect is that pity for the suffering of mankind seems to have been the strongest influence in Bertrand Russell’s life.

What transitions has Russell used? In the first body paragraph, Russell discusses the three reasons the longing for love has been a governing passion in his life. At the beginning of the first body paragraph, Russell uses the word *first* to indicate the first reason. In the second sentence, he uses *next* to indicate the second reason. In the third, he uses *finally* to show this is the final reason. In the concluding sentence, he uses the word *this*, which helps the last sentence to flow from the sentence before it.

In the second paragraph, the word *equal* forms a link between the *longing for love*, discussed in the first paragraph and the *search for knowledge* discussed in this paragraph. And, again, in the concluding sentence, the word *this* acts as a transition.

In the third paragraph, the mention of love and knowledge links the first two topics to this one.

In the concluding paragraph, the word “this,” once again, serves as a transition.

## Learning Check 3: Organization of Ideas

If you are in a classroom situation, your teacher may ask you to work in pairs or small groups for this activity.

Following is a list of ideas one writer brainstormed in support of the following topic sentence:

*The invention of the automobile has had a negative impact on our world.*

- air pollution
- rush around to lessons and activities
- changed pace of life
- changed our landscape
- trees cut down for roadways
- gas stations, rest stops, and campgrounds
- litter on roadsides
- fast food restaurants and drive-throughs
- cause of pollution

Organize these ideas into three main categories or topics. Write the main topic on the first line in each section, and write the two examples or explanations on the following two lines (a and b).

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
    a. \_\_\_\_\_  
    b. \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
    a. \_\_\_\_\_  
    b. \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
    a. \_\_\_\_\_  
    b. \_\_\_\_\_

If you were to write this essay, you would now have a useful start on an outline or organizational plan for it.

### Paragraph Length

How long should each paragraph be?

Each paragraph in an essay should contain a minimum of about 50 words. However, a well-developed paragraph will most likely be between 70 and 150 words. It should contain *at least* four sentences: a topic sentence, two or more supporting details, and a concluding sentence. The paragraphs should be relatively equal in length. Your final body paragraph may be somewhat longer than the others because that is the paragraph that contains your most important or most dramatic point. You will probably have the most to say in that paragraph.

Keep in mind that these are not hard and fast rules. Use your judgement. The exact number of words is not most important. Developing and explaining your ideas is important, but staying on topic and not including unnecessary or off-topic details is significant.

## Learning Check 4: Patterns and Transitions

The transitions you choose will depend on the type of essay you are writing and the pattern of organization you are using. For example, a *cause and effect* essay would most likely use transitions from the *to show logical connections* section of the table on pages 90-91 in *ResourceLines 9/10*. On the other hand, the final body paragraph in a persuasive essay would probably use transitions from the *to show emphasis* section of the table to emphasize that final, strongest point.

1. Which transitions would you most likely use in an essay that compares the fashions of the 1970s to the fashions of today? List three from the choices on pages 90-91 of *ResourceLines 9/10*.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

2. Which transitions would you most likely use in an essay that tells the reader how to change a tire? List three from the choices on pages 90-91 of *ResourceLines 9/10*.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

An effective five-paragraph essay has a body that contains three paragraphs. Each paragraph focuses on one main idea that supports, proves, or explains the essay’s thesis. These three paragraphs should be organized effectively with transitions that help the writing flow both between and within paragraphs.



## Summary of W2 - Lesson 2

- The body of an essay develops the thesis. In a five-paragraph essay, the body contains three main supporting points that prove or explain the thesis statement.
- The organization of the ideas will depend on the type of essay and the writer's purpose.
- One effective way to organize an essay is to have the most important argument or most dramatic point in the final body paragraph.
- Each body paragraph should have a topic sentence, supporting details, and a concluding sentence.
- Transitions between paragraphs and within paragraphs give your essay coherence.
- Each body paragraph should be at least four sentences long, and the paragraphs should be relatively equal in length.



# News, Clues, and Reviews

## News



Extra! Extra! Here are three new ideas I learned in this lesson:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Clues

Here is a question or an example I thought of for each of the above ideas. When I thought of a question, I tried to find the answer, and I wrote it below the question:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Reviews

Use the notes you made on this page to help you review for tests.

