



Cohesion: How to make sentences 'flow'

Achieve 'flow' in your writing by making each sentence clear, then linking one sentence to the next.

Avoid 'run on' sentences (too much flow!)

We did not collect any precise information about infections **but** we found that having bronchitis before the age of two was a strong, independent risk factor for both wheeze and diagnosed asthma in indigenous children **although** it is possible that indigenous children who had bronchitis in early life were more likely to be diagnosed with asthma than non-indigenous children who had bronchitis.

Tighten up to control the flow of information and focus the emphasis:

While we did not collect precise information about infections, we found that having bronchitis before the age of two was a strong, independent risk factor for both wheeze and diagnosed asthma in Indigenous children. It is possible, however, that Indigenous children who had bronchitis in early life were more likely to be diagnosed with asthma than non-Indigenous children who had bronchitis.¹

Avoid an overload of ideas in one sentence

In 1973 Darboven began incorporating texts – transcribed directly because, she has claimed, they could not be bettered – from various writers, initially Heinrich Heine and Jean-Paul Sartre, whose works spoke to her recognition of the failure of the grand narratives of Enlightenment thought to provide convincing encompassing interpretations and, equally, to her fundamentally romantic existentialist position.

Give each sentence one clear focal point:

In 1973 Darboven began incorporating texts from various writers. She transcribed these texts directly because, she claimed, they could not be bettered. Initially, she used the writing of Heinrich Heine and Jean-Paul Sartre because their work spoke to both her fundamentally romantic position, and her recognition of the failure of the Enlightenment's grand narratives.²

Avoid overly complex structure

Levels of calcium **rise**, causing levels of Ca²⁺/calmodulin to rise which **disrupts** autoinhibitory interactions which **are essential** for Ca²⁺/calmodulin binding, permitting access of substrates to the catalytic domain.

Reduce the number of verbs and clauses to make the sentence lighter and faster:

Increased levels of calcium **disrupt** the autoinhibitory interactions essential for Ca²⁺/calmodulin binding and access of substrates to the catalytic domain.³

Avoid unexpected 'jumps' to a different idea (see 'theme & rheme')⁴

We found that 43% of **parents smoked**. Children were at a higher risk of having respiratory problems if their **parents smoked**.

Link sentences by using the end of one to begin the next:

We found that 43% of **parents smoked**. Children of **parents who smoked** were at a higher risk of having respiratory problems.⁵

¹ Peat, J. et al. (2002). *Scientific Writing: Easy When You Know How*. London: BMJ Books, p. 207.

² Cooke, L., 1980-83, *Hanne Darboven, Kulturgeschichte 1880-1983*, Dia Center for the Arts

³ *Student example, with permission*

⁴ http://www.uefap.com/writing/parag/par_flow.htm

⁵ Peat et al. p. 201

Sentence 'flow' in paragraphs

As well the sentence strategies on p.1, consider these strategies in paragraph writing:

- Key topic words repeated throughout paragraph
- Connective words (transitions)
- Referential language: words or phrases that refer back to ideas already mentioned
- Linking sentences: the end of one begins the next
- Subjects of sequenced sentences short and consistent

In the following examples, these strategies are shown in the colour-coded text.

NB: for ease of reading, actual references have been removed and denoted as [R].

Example 1 (Education):

When **learning**, we retrieve information from our memory by either **remembering it, or knowing it**. These **responses** were theorised by Tulving [R] as the **Remember-Know paradigm**. 'Remembered' information is recollected in close association with details about when it was **learned**. *In contrast to this*, 'Known' information is recalled, retrieved and applied without any such contextual associations, but is "simply...a certain sense of just knowing" [R]. An important implication of **this distinction** is that '**remembered**' information is more vulnerable to fading with time, while '**known**' information is retained, often permanently, and is *therefore* indicative of deeper learning [R].⁶

Example 2 (Nursing):

A tailored patient-centred approach to **preparing and informing patients** about proposed radiation procedures **is recommended** [R]. **A number of evidence-based recommendations** [R] and guidelines [R] explain how healthcare providers can assist in adequately **preparing patients** for procedures such as radiation therapy. *However*, **the current recommendations** are broad, providing only basic suggestions on how to facilitate communication with patients. *As a result*, radiation oncology departments vary in how they **prepare patients** for procedures [R]. The **information given to patients** is often inconsistent, insufficient in detail, or too technical [R]. **This lack** of clear treatment-related knowledge and, in some cases, **misinformation**, has been reported as a cause of patient fear and anxiety about commencing radiation therapy [R]. **Poor quality information** can result in patients misinterpreting the significance of their side effects and may affect patients' treatment decisions [R]. Reports have revealed a need to **improve patient education on and preparation for** radiation therapy [R].

A number of studies [R] have examined patient experiences and satisfaction with radiation therapy and receiving information related to radiation therapy. The findings have indicated that most patients want to receive full details about their treatment and that preconceived perceptions of radiation therapy influence how well patients feel prepared for treatment. Several studies [R] have assessed the effects of intervention strategies to improve patient preparation for radiation therapy. Results have indicated that educating patients on what to expect during radiation therapy leads to reduced treatment-related anxiety, stress, and fear.⁷

⁶ Mangan, A., Walgermo B. & Brønnick, K. (2013). Reading linear texts on paper versus computer screen: effects on reading comprehension. *International Journal of Educational Research* 58, 61-68

⁷ Forshaw, K., et al. (2017). Patients' Experiences of Preparation for Radiation Therapy: A Qualitative Study. *Oncology Nursing Forum* 44(1), e1-e9. doi: 10.1188/17.ONF.E1-E9