**Topic Sentences:** a topic sentence provides direction by stating the main idea of a paragraph and answering the reader’s unspoken question, “What is your point?”

- [Carrying a homemade lunch instead of eating out] has **had unexpected benefits**.
- [Knowing how to research using a computer] is **an essential skill in college**.
- *There are many creative ways to hide* [thinning hair.]

**Supporting Sentences:** these sentences are specific, giving details and examples. They provide the proof or explanation of your topic sentence.

- [Adopting a pet from the animal shelter] can **help both animal and owner**.
  Shelter animals are killed if they are not adopted, so adopting a pet from the shelter saves a life. Shelter puppies and kittens are usually spayed or neutered before adoption, saving the owner veterinary fees.

- [Failure to take care of small details of car maintenance] can **make driving dangerous**.
  Tires that do not have enough air can be dangerous to both driver and passengers. These tires can cause a car to lose its grip on the road and flip.

**Unity:** unity means that you will write about the topic you mention in the topic sentence and the point you want to make about that topic and nothing else.

- [One way that I try to keep in shape] is **by eating good food**.
  - ✗ I get plenty of exercise.
  - ✔ I eat very few sweets or candy.
  - ✔ I stay away from too much fat.

- [My neighbor’s yard] is **ugly**.
  - ✔ In his front yard, he has an old, rusty car.
  - ✗ At the side of his house is a beautiful old oak tree.
  - ✔ Because he never mows his lawn, tall grass and weeds surround his house.

**Coherence:** this means that the ideas in the paragraph are logically connected and easy to follow. The most common coherence tools are transitional expressions/words and repetition.

- My neighbor’s yard is ugly. Because he never mows his lawn, tall grass and weeds surround his house. *Even worse,* in his front yard, he has an old, rusty car.