

CHAPTER 4

Writing with clarity

Task 3: Choose the best following sentence (a) or (b).

1. Multi-criteria analysis was carried out to identify the most preferential location for a ten-hectare school.
 - a Criteria of importance included human health, cost, and environmental risk.

Better than (b) because it starts with ‘known’ information (Topic reiteration).
2. The aim of the experiment is to test the validity of the “energy gap” theory of semiconductor resistance.
 - b This theory states that charge carriers in the semiconductor can be in one of two energy states, separated by an energy gap Eg.

Better than (a) because it starts with ‘known’ information (zigzag).
3. Economic changes may also signify increasing social complexity, especially the emergence of full time craftsmen.
 - a Craft specialisation can be seen from concentrations of artefacts relating to different crafts.

Better than (b) because it starts with ‘known’ information (zigzag).
4. If the Government had taken a less neoliberal approach, it is likely to have been more successful in safeguarding thousands of jobs.
 - b This re-enforces how much of a threat neoliberalism poses to workers in a globalising world, where different nation states react unilaterally to safeguard/stimulate their economy over time.

Better than (a) because it starts with ‘known’ information through the use of the pronoun ‘this’. It is hard to identify what ‘this’ refers to in sentence (a) because it is too far from its reference.

Task 4: Identify what the underlined pronouns are referring to in the following extract.

| | |
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| <p>By far the most common social organisation in the world today is <u>that</u> of the state; the first example of this type of society emerged in Mesopotamia, around 5000 years ago. States differ from hunter-gatherer bands in that <u>they</u> are not egalitarian, the society has a hierarchical structure, meaning <u>it</u> comprises strata; <u>they</u> are more complex than chiefdoms as <u>they</u> comprise several communities rather than just a few, and have a centralised government with power over religion, war, law and taxation; there is also heterarchical differentiation within each stratum as well as hierarchical distinctions. There are various characteristics of the state that can be recognised archaeologically which are outlined as a starting point; however, an important part of a state is the ideology which binds its people together, and <u>this</u> is harder to see in the archaeological record, particularly before people had written records. <u>This</u> makes it difficult to explain why societies became more complex and eventually formed states. This paper will look at the explanations advanced by Wittfogel, Carneiro, Marx and Flannery, as well as the more recent post-processualism theory.</p> | <p><i>that</i> = social organisation <i>they</i> = states <i>it</i> = <i>the society</i> <i>they</i> = states <i>they</i> = states</p> <p><i>this</i> = ideology which binds people together <i>This</i> = <i>Being hard to see in the archeological record</i></p> |
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Task 5

The standard deviation was used to work out the hazard bounds. Half of the standard deviation was deducted from the soil guideline value to give the lower bound of the medium hazard, and half of the standard deviation was added to the soil guideline value to give the upper bound of the medium hazard.

Task 7

In order to recognise a state, it is important to consider both the site, and the surrounding area as a whole; (1) **since** a defining feature of the state is that it comprises many communities, the site hierarchy of an area must be taken into account, (2) **as well as** the settlement pattern. A survey can be done to determine a site hierarchy of a particular area. A state society will (3) **generally** show a site hierarchy with hamlets, villages and small towns ranged around larger towns and one or two urban centres, (4) **whereas** a band society will have a narrower range of variation in site size, and all sites will be relatively small (Renfrew & Bahn 1996). (15) **For example**, in Southwest Iran on the Susiana Plain, there is evidence of four different sizes of settlement, ranging from small villages of less than 0.9 hectares, through villages of 2.3 hectares and small centres of 5.3 hectares, to large centres of 14.8 hectares. (6) **Finally**, there was Susa, which today might have been called a capital, which was around 25 hectares in size (Wright & Johnson 1975). The settlement pattern can (7) **also** be taken into account; the geographer Walter Christaller developed the Central Place Theory, which stated that in a uniform landscape, the spatial patterning of settlements would be perfectly regular; central places, i.e. towns or cities, would be equidistant and surrounded by satellite rings of smaller settlements. (8) **Although** a uniform landscape is rarely found in nature, in a state a ring of smaller settlements surround a ring of larger settlements, which in turn surround the major centre (Renfrew & Bahn 1996).

Task 8: Identify the ambiguity in the following sentences. Rewrite them to make them clearer (this may mean writing two alternative sentences).

1. The researchers treated the subjects using drugs.

The researchers used drugs to treat the subjects.

OR

The researchers treated drug-using subjects.

2. The situation affects university students and teachers.

The situation affects university students and university teachers.

OR

The situation affects teachers and university students.

3. The paper was published by a Chinese professor from Harvard University.

The paper was published by a professor from Harvard University who is Chinese.

The paper was published by a professor of Chinese from Harvard University.

4. Despite being only a prototype, our team won the race with our car design.

Despite being only a prototype, our car design won the race for our team.

5. The marks were scored on the sheets of plastic.

The sheets of plastic were scored to make the marks.

The marks were written on the sheets of plastic.

Task 9: Rewrite the following sentences to move the verb closer to the subject. Remember, try to avoid having a distance of more than eight words between the subject and the verb.

Possible answers

1. The argument that perpetual economic growth has a detrimental impact on employment and welfare, the environment, international aid, and public services will be explored.

This essay will explore the argument that perpetual economic growth has a detrimental impact on employment and welfare, the environment, international aid, and public services.

2. The standard error, being very low, and suggesting that random error within the repeated measurements can be discounted, indicates that one of the control measurements is incorrect.

The very low standard error indicates that one of the control measurements is incorrect and suggests that random error within the repeated measurements can be discounted.

3. Questionnaires and answer sheets with questions relating to health and security as well as personal opinions on ethical issues were handed out to the participants.

Questionnaires and answer sheets were handed out to the participants, with questions relating to health and security as well as personal opinions on ethical issues.

4. Gender differences and inequalities, when gender is defined as the socially constructed roles taken on by males and females, and where inequalities are discussed in terms of status and roles, can be explained in two key ways.

When gender is defined as the socially constructed roles taken on by males and females, and where inequalities are discussed in terms of status and roles, gender differences and inequalities can be explained in two key ways.

Task 10: Compare the improved version (below) with the original.

Last summer I worked as a waitress in a large restaurant. The company were trying to increase the number of customers, and asked staff for ideas. I had noticed that we never gave any offers. For example, other restaurants would often do a '2 for 1' offer on a Monday evening. So I suggested this idea to my colleague, but I did not say anything to my boss because I did not want to come across as too pushy and 'know-it-all'. The following week there was a meeting for all permanent restaurant staff and other employees, where we were told that they had received some useful ideas and that there was going to be a prize for the best one. I was about to submit my idea when my colleague told me that she had 'acted on our conversation'. When the company selected the 2 for 1 idea as the winner and started promoting it straight away, I felt disappointed and angry that I had not had any recognition for the idea. I felt upset by my colleague's behaviour, and unable to talk to her initially, due to my feelings. However, I now realise that it was largely my fault. I had lacked the confidence to tell my boss my idea. I had assumed that the company would not pay attention to a temporary waitress, because I was not committed to a career with them. The idea was a good idea (verified by being chosen as the winner), and I needed to have greater self-belief.

I no longer blame my colleague, as I made it clear that I was not going to talk to my boss. I intend to learn from this experience, and act on my ideas rather than talk about something without actually doing anything about it.

This experience of talking about something without actually doing anything about it, which is clearly not a good way to go about things, has taught me to act on my ideas instead.