

TBSIR Paragraphs

Reading-Writing 400

Spring 2015

Intensive English Institute

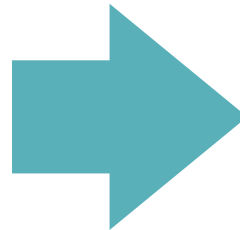
University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign

Write better paragraphs by following this structure:

T Topic

S Support

R Return



T Topic

B Bridge

S Support

I Interpretation

R Return

The Writing Faculty of the IEI developed this structure to help IEI students write better, more well-developed paragraphs that show critical thinking.

TBSIR

It breaks down the structure of a good paragraph into parts that are easy to identify and follow.

Following this structure will make your writing more interesting to readers and help you prepare for writing paragraphs that include sources.

American academic culture
values analysis and critical
thinking.

With this structure, you can show that you can analyze texts well and think critically about them.

Practicing this kind of structure will prepare you for higher level American education.

“Runners” (TSR Sample)

In the world of track and field, there are three different types of runners: sprinters, middle distance runners, and distance runners. Sprinters run the shortest distances, in which the races usually last just a few seconds. Sprinters are often characterized by their tremendous speed, and therefore, they typically have large muscles. The second type, middle distance runners, run races such as the quarter-mile dash or the 800-meter run. A good middle distance runner must be versatile; he or she must possess a combination of speed and endurance. Physically speaking, a distance runner is on the other end of the spectrum from a sprinter. The final type is the distance runner. He or she typically runs races that are anywhere from 1,600 to 10,000 meters long. Distance runners are usually small and lightweight. Because their races are longer and take more time to complete, distance runners need to be mentally strong in addition to their physical strength, so that they can put forth their best performance over the duration of the race. Because of the variations, almost any runner can be classified by one of the three categories.



TOPIC

In your sample paragraph, identify the TOPIC.

What information does the topic sentence give the reader?



SUPPORT

In your sample paragraph, identify the MAJOR support.

What is the purpose of the major support?



SUPPORT

In your sample paragraph, are there any MINOR support? How many for each major support?

How do the minor support help the whole paragraph?



RETURN

In your sample paragraph, identify the RETURN.

What is the purpose of the return?

Add 2 more parts to the paragraph
to show off your analytical and
critical thinking skills

Bridge Interpretation

“Runners” (TSR)

T

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S

Sprinters run the shortest distances, in which the races usually last just a few seconds. Sprinters are often characterized by their tremendous speed, and therefore, they typically have large muscles. The second type, middle distance runners, run races such as the quarter-mile dash or the 800-meter run. A good middle distance runner must be versatile; he or she must possess a combination of speed and endurance.

Physically speaking, a distance runner is on the other end of the spectrum from a sprinter. The final type is the distance runner. He or she typically runs races that are anywhere from 1,600 to 10,000 meters long. Distance runners are usually small and lightweight. Because their races are longer and take more time to complete, distance runners need to be mentally strong in addition to their physical strength, so that they can put forth their best performance over the duration of the race.

R

Because of the variations, almost any runner can be classified by one of the three categories.

“Runners” (inserting a bridge)

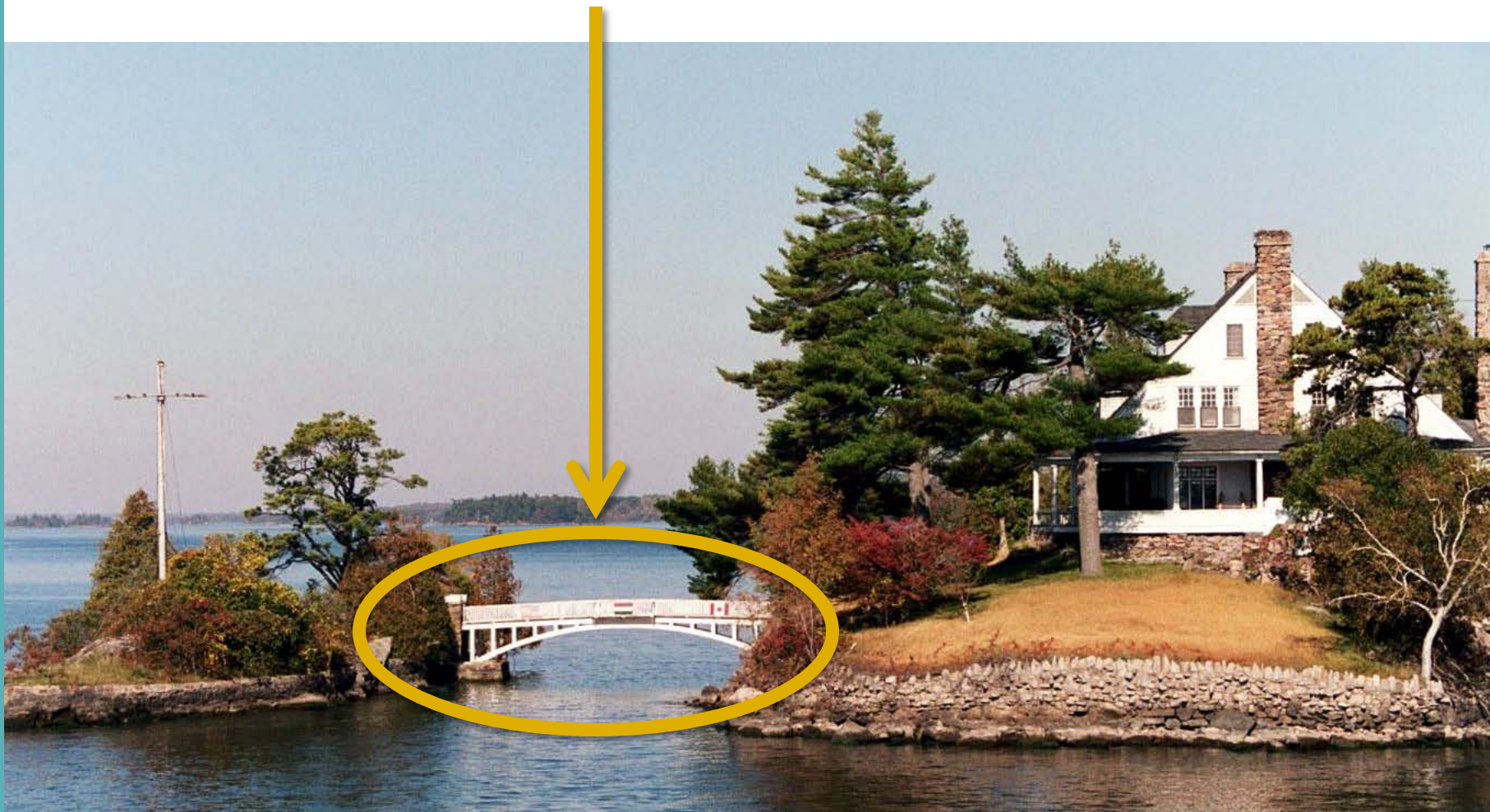
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Bridge



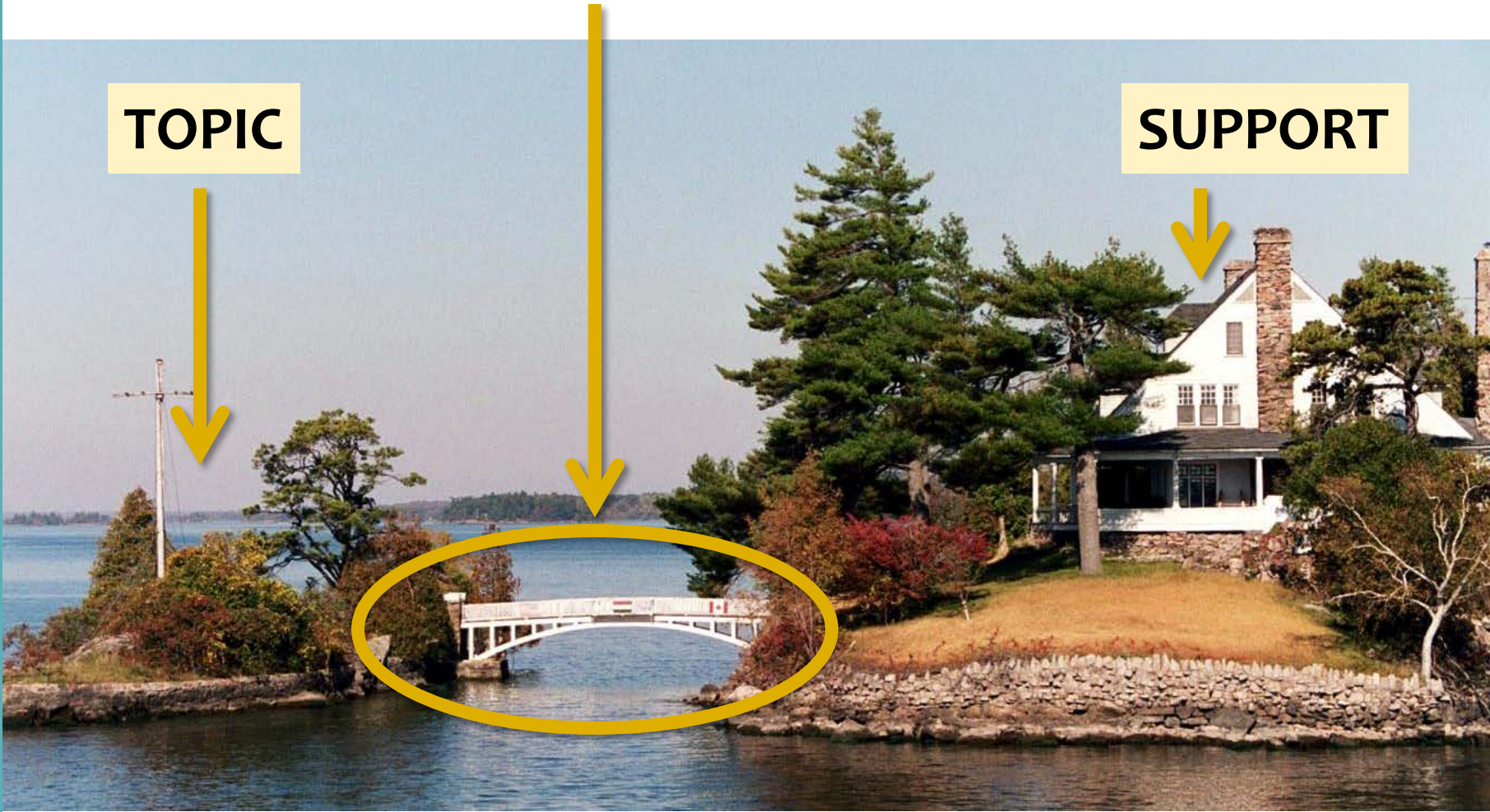
Bridge



Bridge

TOPIC

SUPPORT



Bridge



Bridge

**Old information
from the topic**



**New information
from the support**



Bridge

**Old information
from the topic**

BRIDGE

**New information
from the support**



“Runners” (inserting a bridge)

In the world of track and field, there are three different types of runners: sprinters, middle distance runners, and distance runners. **All these athletes have different skills according to the distance of the race.**

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Bridge

**Old information
from the topic**

BRIDGE

**New information
from the support**

Write a sentence that includes words from the topic sentence AND a summary of the major support.

Bridge

**Old information
from the topic**

BRIDGE

**New information
from the support**

In your sample paragraph, what could be a good bridge sentence?

“Runners” (inserting an interpretation)

In the world of track and field, there are three different types of runners: sprinters, middle distance runners, and distance runners. **All these athletes have different skills according to the distance of the race.**

Sprinters run the shortest distances, in which the races usually last just a few seconds. Sprinters are often characterized by their tremendous speed, and therefore, they typically have large muscles. The second type, middle distance runners, run races such as the quarter-mile dash or the 800-meter run. A good middle distance runner must be versatile; he or she must possess a combination of speed and endurance. Physically speaking, a distance runner is on the other end of the spectrum from a sprinter. The final type is the distance runner. He or she typically runs races that are anywhere from 1,600 to 10,000 meters long. Distance runners are usually small and lightweight. Because their races are longer and take more time to complete, distance runners need to be mentally strong in addition to their physical strength, so that they can put forth their best performance over the duration of the race.

Although all these runners must possess speed, strength, and endurance, the type of runner determines what skill they need the most. Because of the variations, almost any runner can be classified by one of the three categories.

Interpretation

/inˌtərˈpriːtāʃən/

noun

1. the action of explaining the meaning of something.

"the interpretation of data"

synonyms: **explanation**, **elucidation**,
expounding, **exposition**,
explication, **exegetics**,
clarification [More](#)

Interpretation

Information in the support sentences

Why ???

Your readers expect you to tell them WHY you are writing about this topic.

Of all the things you can possibly write about, WHY did you write about this?

Interpretation

Information in the support sentences

Why ???

This part shows your reader your critical thinking skills.

Tell them why this topic is worth writing about.

Interpretation

Information in the support sentences

Why ???

What is the significance of all the other sentences written before?

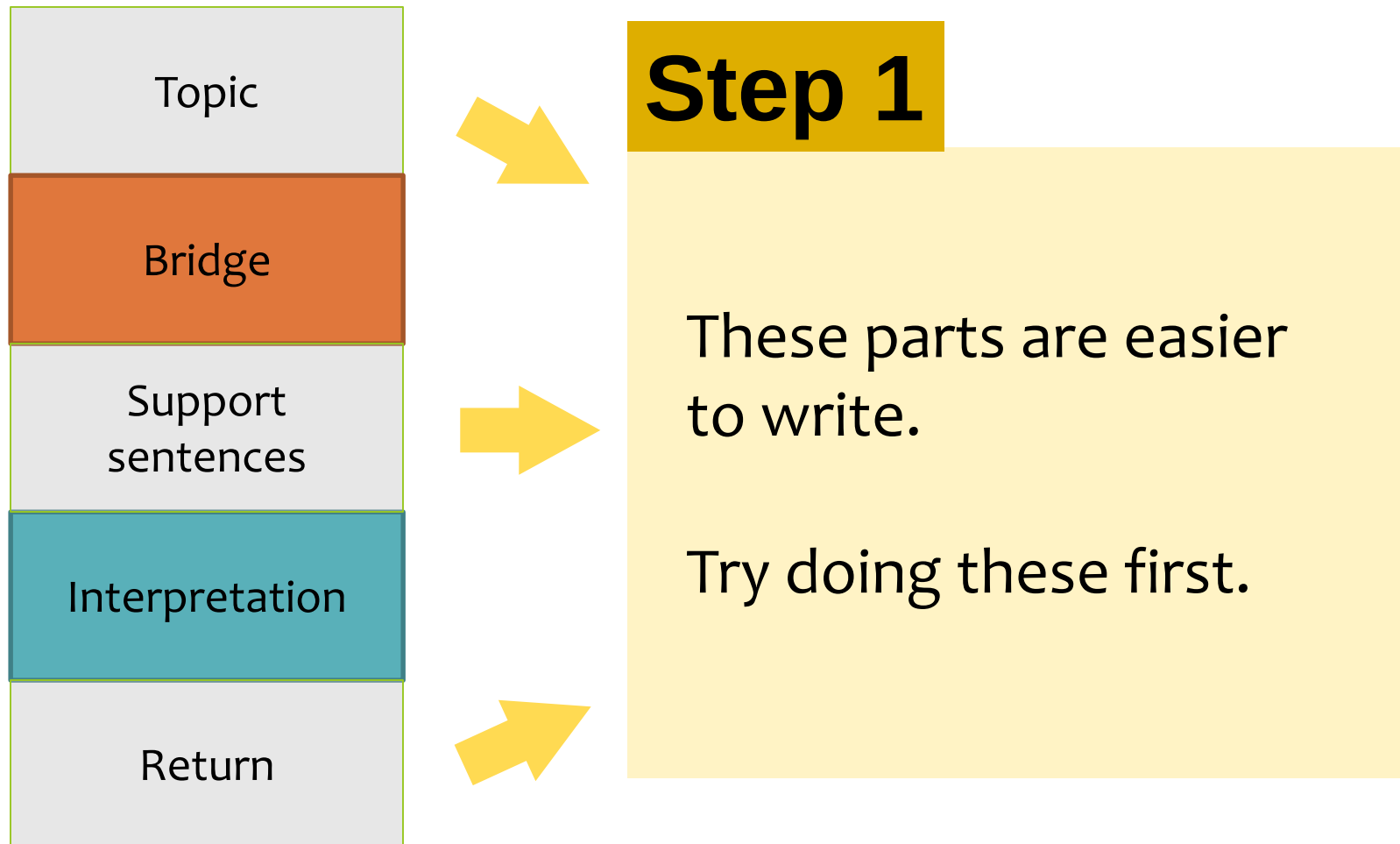
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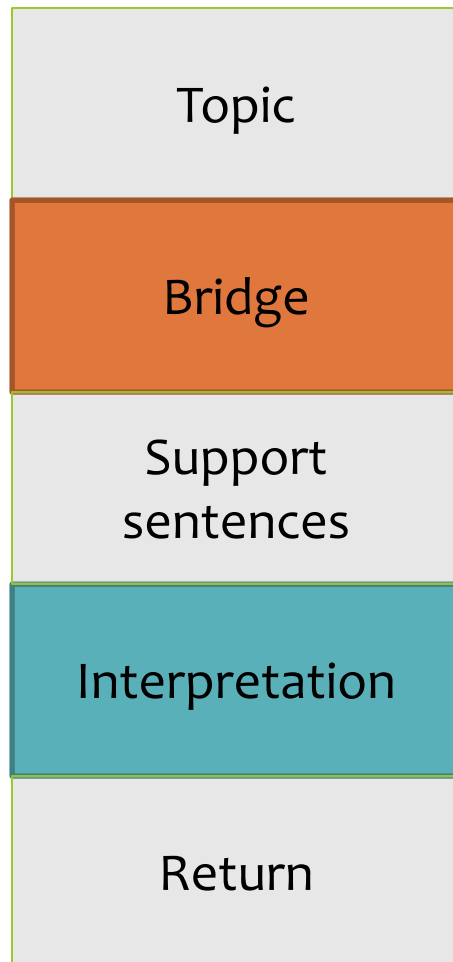
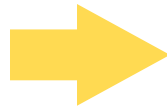
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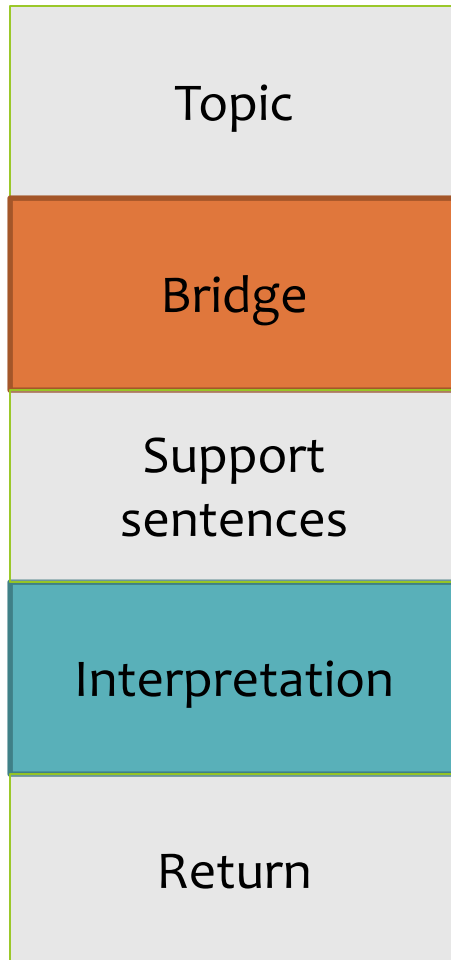


Step 2

Write this next.

It is easier to write it after you know what your topic and support are.

Try this paragraph writing sequence.

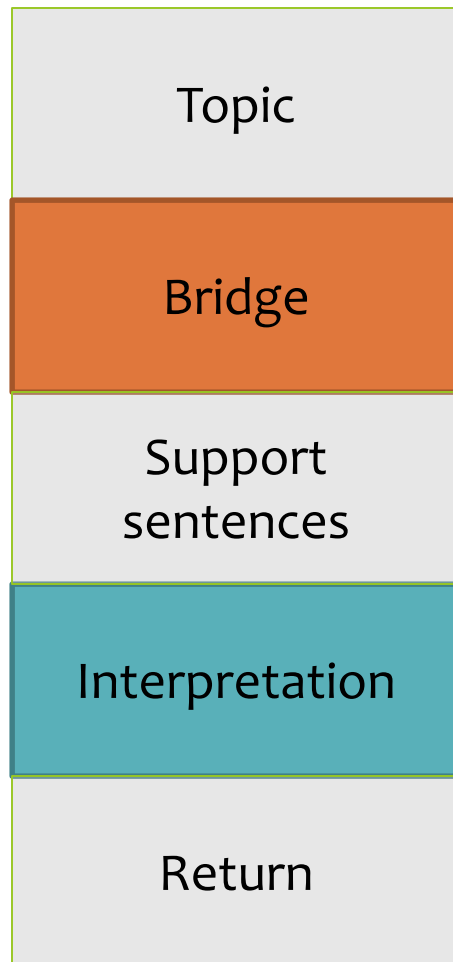


Step 3

Write this last.

You need to reflect on the WHOLE paragraph first.

Try this paragraph writing sequence.



Step 4

Review your topic sentence, especially the controlling idea.

Does it still all make sense? Rewrite if you need to!

“Runners” (TSR)

T

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Now You Try

“Saving Water” (TBSIR)

Directions: Analyze this paragraph using the TBSIR outline handout.

Using water wastefully has caused a water crisis, but there are a lot of ways in which we can save water. We can save water in one place in particular, which is the bathroom. First of all, you can save a lot of water by making your shower shorter. According to my personal experience, no shower should last longer than three minutes. The second way to save water is to use a glass for water to rinse teeth when we brush. This will help us to save between two and three gallons of water. Another way to conserve water is to save cold water that is wasted when we wait for hot water to heat up. We could save the cold water in containers and use it to water plants, or wash cars. These methods could result in saving five to six gallons of water per person per day, which would be a large amount of water to give to a person who has none. Using these small ideas will keep us from water scarcity.

References

Folse, K., Solomon, E. & Clabeaux, D. (2010). *Great Writing 3: From Great Paragraphs to Great Essays*. (2nd ed.). Boston: Heinle Cengage Learning.

Pike-Baky, M., & Blass, L. (2008). *Mosaic 1: Writing*. McGraw-Hill Education.