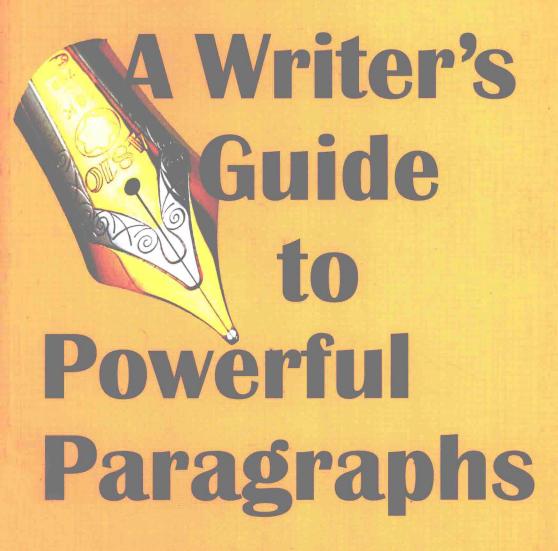
What You Need to Know About Writing Paragraphs . . . Now in One Book



Victor C. Pellegrino

30 Ways to Organize and Write Effective Paragraphs



Victor C. Pellegrino

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DEDICATION

To my wife

Wallette Pualani Lyn-fah

To my children

Shelley Jeanne La'ela'eokalā Lyn-oi Angela Terese Mahinamālamalama Mei-lyn Hōkūao Christopher Joseph Bailey Wu-wei

To my parents

Albert and Adeline Pellegrino

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PREFACE

Writing is something almost everyone must do, and do well. Writing well requires more than putting words on paper. Writing is best when it is concise, meaningful, and easily understood. This book is written with these objectives in mind. It is designed for writers of all ages and backgrounds who want to improve their writing.

If you are in school, this book will help you master basic paragraph writing skills that you can apply to longer pieces of writing. If you are entering the workforce, this book will be a useful reference tool to reinforce what you learned in school. If you have not written in a while, this book will help refresh your writing skills. If you have been recently promoted, changed jobs, or simply want to improve your writing, this book can add polish to your existing skills.

Most of today's communication is brief. Letters, notes, memos, faxes, and e-mails are generally short and to the point—sometimes only a paragraph or two. Writing briefly, however, does not mean you can ignore the hallmarks of good writing. Whether you are writing a long or short piece, your main focus should be clarity, brevity, and understandability. Writers should not rush. A common mistake writers make when using today's shorter styles is to rush through the writing process without organizing, proofreading, or editing.

To help you improve your writing, A Writer's Guide to Powerful Paragraphs focuses on how to organize the shortest piece of writing that can stand alone—the paragraph. The heart of this book lies in the thirty chapters that provide thirty different ways to write paragraphs. Each chapter contains a short, simple, and direct expla-

nation of one type of paragraph, followed by an example, an analysis of the example, and practical suggestions for writing that type of paragraph.

A Writer's Guide to Powerful Paragraphs is a "handson" book. Rather than force you to wade through fine print and a lot of complicated textbook-like instruction, this book uses short discussions followed by practical examples. After you read and study the paragraph type outlined in each chapter, practice writing that type of paragraph. Then let someone else critique your work; there is no better method to improve your writing than to have it reviewed by a friendly, but critical, eye. Hopefully, this process will make learning about paragraph writing painless and enjoyable.

Finally, although this book focuses on structuring your paragraph in one of thirty ways, do not think that you have to limit yourself to just one paragraph type. Good writers will be able to combine two or more. So once you have a good handle on each of the paragraph types, experiment by using more than one within a paragraph or in multiple paragraphs.

As writers, we combine words to make sentences, we combine sentences to make paragraphs, and we use multiple paragraphs to create essays, chapters, and books. Once you have mastered the paragraph, you are on your way. Experiment. Create. Enjoy.

Good writing, Victor C. Pellegrino Waikapū, Maui, Hawaiʻi 2003

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK



A Writer's Guide to Powerful Paragraphs is designed to be simple and easy to use. If you have not done so already, I recommend that you read the *Preface* and scan the *Contents*. Reading these sections will provide a sense of the goals of this book and a road map of how it will try to achieve those goals. I recommend reviewing these sections not because I wish to insult my audience, but because so many readers tend to neglect the importance of previewing a book in their haste to get into the content. In doing so, they fail to understand the "big picture" of a book.

Next, read and study the seven sections listed under *The Paragraph*. Some of this material may be familiar to you, depending on your age or writing experience, and some of it may be new. In either case, these seven sections will set the foundation for what is to follow, and make learning the thirty different methods less complicated and more enjoyable.

After you have reviewed the foundation chapters, it is time to move to the heart of the book—the thirty paragraph types. These thirty structures will help you write a variety of paragraphs. Each chapter is laid out similarly and contains the following sections: (1) a short explanation of the paragraph type; (2) a sample paragraph; (3) an analysis of the sample paragraph; and (4) practical suggestions for writing that type of paragraph.

I have tried to avoid formal terminology—what I call "scholarly gobbledygook"—as well as complex content. After all, the purpose of this book is not to camouflage or obscure information, but to show simply and directly how you can master basic paragraph writing skills.

While I certainly hope you benefit by studying this book, the best advice I can give anyone who wants to improve his or her writing skills is this: Practice. Practice. Practice. Use the models in this book as a springboard to create your own paragraphs. After you are able to write individual paragraphs using the basic structures, practice combining different paragraph structures within a larger piece of writing.

An equally important part of writing practice is sharing. Writing is meant to be read, so share your paragraphs with others. Listen to feedback and do not be afraid to restructure your ideas. Once you learn the value of writing and revising, you will become a much better writer.

Finally, as you begin to combine your paragraphs into larger pieces of writing, you will want to make the paragraphs flow together. Two excellent books that will be helpful to this process are *A Writer's Guide to Transitional Words and Expressions* and *A Writer's Guide to Using Eight Methods of Transition*.



A WRITER'S GUIDE TO POWERFUL PARAGRAPHS



THE PARAGRAPH



History
Definition, Signal and Function
Length and Development
Topic Sentence
Unity
Coherence
Planning and Organizing