

Exercise walk-through

Organization, unity, and coherence ■ 5.3

eXercise

You must be able to

- define unity and coherence and tell them apart
- test a paragraph for unity in one step
- identify a coherence failure that is not a unity failure
- reorganise a passage that has both problems

Method — Two different properties

Unity: everything in the unit belongs to one claim. **Coherence:** the parts are ordered and connected so the reader can follow. A paragraph can be unified and incoherent — all on one claim, in an order nobody can follow.

Method — Testing unity

Write the claim of the paragraph in one sentence. Any sentence that does not serve it breaks unity. This takes seconds and finds most problems.

Method — Coherence failures

Sentences in a defensible order but with no signalled relationship; pronouns whose referents are unclear; a shift of subject without warning. Each leaves the reader assembling the argument themselves.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

Define unity and coherence.

Solution 2.1

Method: Two different properties

Worked steps

unity: everything belongs to one claim **B1**; coherence: the parts are ordered and connected so the reader can follow **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

State the one-step test for unity.

Solution 2.2

Worked steps

write the paragraph's claim in one sentence **B1**; any sentence not serving it breaks unity **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 1 mark

A paragraph's sentences all support one claim but appear in an order that jumps.

- (a) State which property is intact.
- (b) State which fails.

Solution 2.3

Method: Two different properties

Worked steps

(a) unity **B1**. (b) coherence **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

A paragraph containing one sentence on an unrelated point fails on

- A** unity
- B** coherence
- C** both equally
- D** neither

Solution 3.1

Method: Testing unity

A unity



B coherence

C both equally

D neither

Worked steps

A. the unrelated sentence does not belong to the claim.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

Unclear pronoun reference is primarily a failure of

- A** unity
- B** coherence
- C** thesis
- D** evidence

Solution 3.2

A unity

B coherence 

C thesis

D evidence

Worked steps

B. the reader cannot follow the connection.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

A passage's paragraphs are individually unified but appear in an order that makes the argument hard to follow.

- (a) State the failure.
- (b) Explain how you would repair it.

Solution 3.3

Method: Two different properties

Worked steps

(a) coherence at the level of the whole text **B1**. (b) reorder the paragraphs by dependence **B1** and add transitions that state what each depends on **B1**.