

5.3 Organization, unity, and coherence

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 11 marks

KEY WORDS unity 统一 • coherence 连贯 • style 文体

Objective

Build the skills to test a text for **unity** 统一 and **coherence** 连贯.

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

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

2 Practice

2.1 Define unity and coherence. [2]

2.2 State the one-step test for unity. [2]

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

(a) State which property is intact. [1]

(b) State which fails. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 A paragraph containing one sentence on an unrelated point fails on [1]

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

3.2 Unclear pronoun reference is primarily a failure of [1]

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

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

(a) State the failure. [1]

(b) Explain how you would repair it.

[2]

Solutions

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

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

2.3 (a) unity. (b) coherence.

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

3.2 B. the reader cannot follow the connection.

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