Creating Paragraphs Using Academic Thought Patterns

Purpose:
• to provide an engaging and fun activity to reinforce the five different academic thought patterns, to give the students the opportunity to actively participate in creating their own assignment
• to provide writing practice and to give students the chance to apply what they are learning.

Preparation:
Instructor will print the names of the academic thought patterns on tag board or another type of stiff paper. Laminate if possible. Then cut out the academic thought patterns as strips. (see page 2)

Directions:
1. Students are introduced to the five academic thought patterns: list, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, definition and example, and time order/sequence. They also receive some practice differentiating between the various patterns with class handouts and textbook exercises.

2. The instructor explains that students are now going to become published authors who will create their own assignment for next class.

3. The instructor walks around the room asking individual students to draw a strip of paper from the pile. Students are choosing from strips containing the five academic thought patterns (see page 2). Students need to think of a topic that would fit their pattern and then they need to write a paragraph using that pattern. They need to come up with a main idea and some ideas that support it. They should include appropriate transition words. Then they put the information into a coherent and brief paragraph.

4. I have allowed a few students to trade with another student if they prefer to write a comparison/contrast or another type of paragraph. They were only allowed to do this if they could find someone willing to trade.

5. The instructor walks around and provides assistance to students. You may want to provide suggestions for topics if a few students seem lost. Then give all students time to create a paragraph.

6. Students turn in their papers and the instructor will edit them and turn the paper into a class assignment for the next class (see page 3-4 for samples).
   a. The instructor will have to change the opening of some paragraphs and add an introduction so the main idea is not always the first sentence.
   b. You may have to add a few transition words to paragraphs if some students do not include enough.
   c. You will have to select approximately ten to twelve paragraphs for the class assignment.

7. At the next class meeting, hand out a copy of the student paragraphs turned into a class assignment. Direct students to read paragraphs, find transitions and identify the thought pattern the author has used.

8. When everyone has completed the assignment, check all answers together and then let students guess at who wrote each paragraph. (That is fun for them). Included on page 3-4 is a sample assignment made with student paragraphs.
Print the page, make a few copies and then cut thought patterns into strips.

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Cause and Effect paragraph

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Comparison and Contrast paragraph

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Definition and Example paragraph
Definition and Example paragraph

Sequence or Time Order paragraph

Sequence or Time Order paragraph

List paragraph

List paragraph
Definition List/Enumeration Cause/Effect Comparison/Contrast Time Order/Sequence

- Underline the Main Idea.
- Write the Academic Thought Pattern the author is using.
- Circle two transition or signal words the author has included.

Paragraph One

Did you know that Ramadan is a holy month for the Islamic calendar? Ramadan means a time of fasting that lasts for one month. For example, you may not eat or drink from sunrise to sunset for thirty days. Boys and girls must fast from the age of twelve and older. If a person is sick they are not required to fast. Each year Ramadan begins ten days earlier than the past year.

Paragraph Two

Do you want to be a soccer star? First, you have to run a lot every day. It gives you more power so you won’t get tired during the game. Also, you must spend more time with the ball, kicking it and running with it. Finally, you have to play a lot with a big group of people. There are really several things you can do to be a soccer player.

Paragraph Three

My mother and I have the same blood inside our bodies, but we have very different temperaments and behaviors. I am an outside person and I like to talk to people and make friends. However, my mother is a quiet person who stays at home or only goes out with someone she knows, not a new friend. I like to show my abilities to everyone. On the other hand, my mother would never do that. My mother and I have one similarity, we both do like to go shopping.

Paragraph Four

The civil war in the Sudan has caused many people to be displaced from their homes. People are also left with a shortage of food. Another result of the war is that there is a lack of security. The people do not feel safe. There is also a shortage of food. One very sad consequence of the war is that many people have left their land and immigrated to other countries. The war has taken a terrible toll on its people in a variety of ways.

Paragraph Five

I have many favorite television shows but I am going to narrow it down to my top favorite shows. The first show And the one I like the most is Family Guy. The next most favorite one is The Simpsons. Third on my list is the show that is not a cartoon, The First 48 Hours. My fourth and fifth favorite shows are Viva La Bam and Mad TV.

Paragraph Six

Have you thought about joining the military? Do you know anyone who has joined? There are negative and positive consequences to being in the military. One effect of being in the army is that it shows people who don’t know you that you are a dedicated person. When you tell someone you are in the army, it leads them to have a good impression of you. For some reason, when you’re in a uniform, people look up to you even if they do not know you. There are some bad effects of being in the army too. You never know when you will be called to duty, today, the next day, or never. As a result of signing up for the military you have to be left wondering when you will go.
Paragraph Seven

Thanksgiving is coming. Who should we give thanks for? There are many people we should thank. First I think we must thank God who gives us everything. Second, we must express our heartfelt gratitude to our country which gives us freedom and peace. Third, we must say thanks to the people who constructed our society. As a person, I want to also say thanks to my teachers, my family and my classmates who always help me.

Paragraph Eight

Kalue is a popular name in my culture. Kalue means a very hardworking and successful child. Many people in my culture like the name and it has been passed on from generations to generations. For example, the name Kalue was my great grandfather’s name, then it moved on to my grandfather, then to my father, then my uncle and then me.

Paragraph Nine

Are you wondering how to get rid of a boyfriend? First, you need to tell him that you need time. Usually topics like family, school, church, and work are the best. Second, after some time has passed, erase him from My Space, Facebook and other contacts. Third, don’t answer his calls, reject his flowers and presents. Finally, don’t get another boyfriend soon. Take time, focus on getting better in every way possible and enjoy your freedom. This is a simple procedure for getting a guy out of your life permanently.

Paragraph Ten

Rock music from the 1950’s and from the 1970’s with punk bands have some similarities and many differences. Most of the earlier music was inspired by famous singers like Roy Orbison, Jerry Lee Lewis, Buddy Holly and Elvis. It was much different in tone and style from Punk music of 1970’s. Punk music from the 70’s was hard core, loud and heavy. On the other hand, music in the 1950’s was calm, sweet and smooth. Punk music is also different in its wording.

Paragraph Eleven

Are you ever in a hurry on the road? Do you race your car or speed on the way to school or work? When you are a reckless driver, there are many consequences. When you race your car, you are putting a lot of people at risk. You can cause an accident. The end result could be a death or injury. Speeding also leads you to get stopped by the police. If you are doing dangerous things on the road, you will be given a ticket.

Paragraph Twelve

There are many things you can do to pass a class. First, show up on the first day. Second, ask lots of questions during class. Third, study and do your homework. Finally, sit in the front of the class so you can see and hear well. It will also help you pay attention better and get the most for your money and time.