

**Text A: Short coursework essay introduction**

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the developing world. Schooling opportunities, even for those who are comparatively well-off, are limited by centuries of traditional attitudes and the predominantly rural nature of the population base. These opportunities have become even more limited, particularly for women, by the impact of continuous war and the destruction of much of the existing educational infrastructure. This essay examines the role of gender and birth order in underpinning discrimination in schooling opportunities and will limit itself to data from two sites, one in metropolitan and one in rural Afghanistan. It will be shown that gender and birth order are the two most significant factors impacting on schooling opportunities for Afghani girls and women. The essay will first examine the educational landscape of current Afghanistan, and then move on to consider in turn the specific factors impacting on access to schooling.

- 1) Where are boundaries of the 3 main stages in this introduction?
- 2) Based on this introduction, predict the structure of the main body which might follow.

**Text B: Paragraph from a research article**

A few authors have attempted a more quantitative approach to identifying important contributions. For example, [Cottrill et al. \(1989\)](#) carried out a co-citation analysis of the literature on 'innovation diffusion' and on 'technology transfer', showing there was little interaction between these two research streams. However, their focus was much narrower than the study reported here. A few years later, [Granstrand \(1994\)](#) produced an overview of the economics of technology, but he focused on economic contributions and (primarily) on books that had made important contributions (as opposed to journal articles). Moreover, this analysis is now over 15 years old, so it is worth looking at what has since changed.

Martin, B.R. (2012). The evolution of science policy and innovation studies. *Research Policy* 41, pp. 1219-1239.

- 1) What is the main idea of this paragraph?
- 2) Does this paragraph have a topic sentence, a concluding sentence, both, or neither?
- 3) How is the information in the body of the paragraph ordered?
- 4) Can you predict this from the beginning of the paragraph?

**Text C: Body of a paragraph (From a literature review on secondary school attrition)**

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The main complaint about the sociological perspective is that it concentrates on social structures and norms and, as a consequence, ignores the individual's dispositions and characteristics (Hurrelman, 1989; Poole, 1989). Sociological research has also been censured for treating the individual as a passive recipient, influenced solely by environmental forces. This criticism is especially relevant to the 'social address' studies (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Bronfenbrenner and Crouter, 1983).

Hemmings B. (1994). Senior secondary school persistence and attrition: The development and testing of a theoretical model. PhD thesis, UNSW.

- 1) What is the main idea of this paragraph?
- 2) What is the order of the information in the body?
- 3) Write a topic sentence above the paragraph which makes these two things clear.
- 4) If you have extra time: Write a concluding sentence below this paragraph.  
(Note: A concluding sentence would usually not be necessary for such a short paragraph, especially if there is a good topic sentence.)

**Text D: Paragraph (From a literature review on secondary school attrition)**

Australian studies (e.g., Apps, 1981) often have included age as a variable in school persistence and attrition investigations but little light has been shed on the significance of this factor. In contrast, several North American projects have revealed that age can be a contributing factor in the school dropout decision (Cairns, Cairns and Neckerman, 1989; Hess and Greer, 1986; Pallas, 1984). Although the accumulated evidence on this is minimal, the indication is that over-age students, that is, those older than the average of their class, are more inclined to drop out of school. Interestingly, Hess and Greer (1986) found that over-age students, even if performing at higher standards in reading compared with their normal aged peers, were 7 to 10 per cent more likely to leave school prematurely. Perhaps students who are older because they have repeated a grade/grades may be more susceptible to dropping out because they lack the support commonly afforded by an ongoing age-cohort of students.

Hemmings B. (1994). Senior secondary school persistence and attrition: The development and testing of a theoretical model. PhD thesis, UNSW.

**Bonus questions: Word choices which improve clarity**

- 1) Find all the words which are synonyms for 'age' in the paragraph. (If you have time: Do the same for words which mean 'research', and words which are related to 'school attrition'.)
- 2) Underline all the reference words (e.g. pronouns like 'it', demonstratives like 'these' & comparatives like 'higher').
- 3) Circle all the conjunctions (e.g. 'therefore', 'however').
- 4) Can you find a sentence which has a weak Theme, without 'known' information? What is holding that sentence to the rest of the paragraph?

**Text E: Two versions of a paragraph from the introduction to a research proposal**

**Version 1.**

Determining good learning outcomes for young children is something in which early childhood educators have a unique and important role. The national early years framework introduced in 2010 states that ‘educator’s practices have a significant effect on children’s involvement and success in learning’ (Australian Government Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations [DWEER], 2009, p. 9) with the role of the educator responding and contributing to ‘developmental outcomes in relation to their [child] identity, connection with the community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators’ (Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority [ACECQA], 2011, p. 19). The educator’s pedagogy and how they support young children’s learning and well-being is now in the spotlight, framed within this new educational paradigm; that is, the process of teaching and learning have the educator’s pedagogical practices at the centre (Barnes, 2012: DEEWR, 2009: Pelo, 2013: Siraj-Blatchford et al, 2010).

**Version 2.**

Early childhood educators have a unique and important role in determining good learning outcomes for young children. This has recently been highlighted by the national early years framework introduced in 2010, which states that ‘educators’ practices have a significant effect on children’s involvement and success in learning’ (Australian Government Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations [DWEER], 2009, p. 9) with the role of the educator responding and contributing to ‘developmental outcomes in relation to their [child] identity, connection with the community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators’ (Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority [ACECQA], 2011, p. 19). Framed within this new educational paradigm, the spotlight now focuses directly on the educator’s pedagogy and how they support young children’s learning and well-being; that is, the educator’s pedagogical practices are central to the process of teaching and learning (Barnes, 2012: DEEWR, 2009: Pelo, 2013: Siraj-Blatchford et al, 2010).