**Example 1**

1. The presidential election of 2016 and the negative roles played in politics by traditional print and broadcast media and new platforms of social media has caused a national conversation, to arise. Whether or not those were her intentions, Hillary Clinton demonstrated a refusal to acknowledge the role professional identity plays for those who are living and working in coal country when at a Town Hall in March of 2016 she said, “We’re going to put coal out of business,” taking advantage of popular sentiment for greener energy sources for her political gain. Due to the dominant presence of media in politics, sayings like the coal country statement from Clinton are presented over and over by the media without context, becoming something outrageous. The belief that the media exaggerates the partisan divide was supported in a recent column by Mohammed el-Nawaway, professor of international communication, mass communication, media globalization and Middle East media courses who says “there is a tendency in most mainstream American news media to adopt a superficial ‘soundbite culture’ that neglects the context of critical events and focuses on filling the 24-hour news hole.” Inflammatory stories occur on traditional media and social media similarly; however, they differ in how society perceives each scandal to occur. There is an increased importance to generate page views and viral stories for traditional media outlets, revealing a prejudice toward eye-catching headlines or clips, even though the relative virality and harm is cumulative and happens over time. But by not using editors or fact-checkers, though, and by spreading shocking ideas instantaneously and at the push of a button, social media manifests the same scandalous messages with far greater impact and reaching far more users.
2. The 2016 presidential election inspired a national conversation about the media’s political influence. Take, for instance, the moment when Hillary Clinton said “we’re going to put coal out of business” — a statement that capitalized on popular interest in green energy but failed to acknowledge the importance of professional identity to those living and working in coal country. Multiple media outlets amplified Clinton’s statement, replaying her words out of context and stoking widespread outrage. Such scandals, according to the media scholar Mohammed el-Nawaway, are common in a “‘soundbite culture,’” where the media “neglects the context of critical events and focuses on filling the 24-hour news hole.” Both traditional and social media fill the “news hole” by promoting inflammatory stories, but their influence differs. Traditional media outlets, hoping to increase page views and publish the next viral story, manufacture scandal over time by publishing dramatic headlines and repeatedly playing context-free clips. Social media users, however, reach millions of followers instantly by broadcasting ideas that have neither been fact checked nor reviewed by an editor.

**Example 2**

*With your group, try rewriting a few of these sentences to clarify the actor, action, and actor-action relationship. You will probably find this easier if you first locate the actor and the action within each sentence and then revise accordingly.*

Frequently, after breaking news has aired, it ultimately becomes an appeal for people at large. Therefore media outlets, in order to capture the attention of the public, are eager to adopt a dramatic story by publishing only the sensational pieces of a story. This trend is apparent through close examination of the news created by the opioid epidemic which throughout the United States has instigated one of the longest and most severe public health crises of our modern times. Patients, seeking relief from chronic pain and using prescription painkillers such as oxycodone in a perpetual manner, are developing addictions to this powerful class of drugs. But to cause outrage within an audience far removed and generally misinformed from the genuine problem, the American media, is misrepresenting this crisis. Through emphasis of the addictive tendency that leads to the “personal choices” of addicts themselves, media outlets are simplifying the roles of powerful drug companies and prescribing physicians. The opioid crisis, so implied by the media, is a tragedy stemming from poor personal choices.

**Example 3**

1. Roald Dahl was a beloved laureate of modern children’s fiction.  He often boasted of his uncanny access to the seven-year-old mind.  He preeningly referred to himself in old age as a ‘geriatric child.’   But he did not write a children’s book until his forties.  When he did, he was only following his agent’s advice.  He did so grudgingly because his stories for adults weren’t selling.  He published *James and the Giant Peach* in 1961.  Until then, he regarded writing for children as a joke.  Writers of adult fiction rarely enter willingly into the ghetto of children’s fiction.  But for Dahl, the dreaded Kiddy Korner proved to be his liberation.  Miraculously, his children’s work did not banish his nastiness.  Instead, it transmuted the nastiness into something vigorous and joyful.  His capacities as an adult writer were fatally limited by misanthropy.  But misanthropy brought energy and subversive humor to his children’s books.
2. Roald Dahl, the beloved laureate of modern children’s fiction, who often boasted of his uncanny access to the seven-year-old mind, who preeningly referred to himself in old age as a “geriatric child,” did not actually get around to following his agent’s advice and writing a children’s book until he was well into his forties. Even then he did so grudgingly, and only because his short stories for adults were not selling. Prior to the publication of *James and the Giant Peach* in 1961, he seems to have regarded the idea of writing for children as something of a joke.   Writers of adult fiction rarely enter willingly into the ghetto of children’s fiction.  For Dahl, however, the dreaded Kiddy Korner proved to be his liberation.  The miracle of his children’s work was not that it banished his nastiness, but that it transmuted the nastiness into something vigorous and even joyful.  The misanthropy that fatally limited his capacities as a writer of adult fiction brought energy and subversive humor to the children’s books.

**Example 4**

1. If anyone knows how gentrification has displaced Black working-class residents in Atlanta, it’s Makeisha Robey, a preschool teacher. During her two decades living in the city, she has watched affordable apartment complexes vanish as new developments arise and wealthier, white residents move in. After being priced out of renting in a series of neighborhoods, Ms. Robey, a 43-year-old single mother, became determined to buy a house of her own. “Being able to build some kind of equity, being able to have this home base where your family can come visit,” Ms. Robey said, “I wanted that for myself.”

That wish became a reality when she discovered the Atlanta Land Trust, an organization that creates and protects affordable housing. Community land trusts are locally run nonprofits that purchase land, build homes on it and sell those homes below market rate to low-income buyers. The trust keeps the deed for the land, leasing it to homeowners who sign a long-term agreement to limit their home’s resale price, so that it stays affordable into the future.

“You make a one-time investment in creating a community land trust unit, and that unit is affordable forever,” said Amanda Rhein, executive director of the Atlanta Land Trust. Community leaders founded the organization in 2009 during the development of the Atlanta BeltLine, a 22-mile rail park — similar to New York City’s High Line — that has inflated housing prices in historically Black neighborhoods nearby.

1. Three months ago, I left behind my life and drove 22 hours across the country.

I was hauling myself from the Midwest to New York City, a place that only knows Iowa as “potatoes?” or “near Nebraska, right?” I had packed my bags, sold my stuff, and quit my job in one week… Three weeks’ worth of AirBNB hopping later, I had racked up $200 in alternate side parking tickets and only fruitless apartment tours…

But, finally, I found a place to call home.

It was a bright three-bedroom covered in construction dust, tucked on a residential street in a truly technicolor neighborhood. Even in bleary February, the Bushwick streets vibrated with life. Artists abounded. Everywhere, old warehouses were painted over with jaw-dropping murals that literally spilled onto the sidewalks. Men played card games on fold-out tables at every street corner. Weeds poked out of the concrete, rats ran rampant, delis beckoned with cheap cold cuts, and every local restaurant smelled divine. On my fire escape, my roommates and I drank beers and watched Manhattan glow. I finally felt at home.

But then, I heard the ghost stories.

The first came from my newly hired dog walker. “This old woman, she gave all the neighborhood

dogs treats. They loved her. Barked every time she came downstairs. Really awesome lady.”

“Where does she live?” I asked, hoping to swing by sometime. “Well, she *lived* right here,” he

mumbled, motioning back up at my apartment on the top floor. “They forced her out when, uh,

these apartments went up.” I stammered, then stumbled my way back up the stairs. Spooked,

saddened, and the spectrum in between.

1. In developing cities across the globe, residents and housing advocates are sounding alarms in response to rapidly rising land values and the diminishing pools of affordable housing. This spatial and social transformation is commonly referred to as gentrification. Although definitions vary, Davidson and Lees (2005) suggest gentrification is distinguished by four key characteristics: (1) reinvestment of capital, (2) increase in high-income demographics, (3) landscape change, and (4) direct or indirect displacement of low-income groups (p. 1187). In the United States, urban neighborhoods are gentrifying at twice the rate of the 1990s, with one in five low-income neighborhoods experiencing rapid increases in median home values, and cities nationwide reporting affordable housing crises (Maciag, 2015). A recent study by the National Low Income Housing Coalition (Aurand, Emmanuel, Yentel, & Errico, 2017) found the United States currently has a 7.4 million unit shortage in affordable housing. Though multiple factors contribute to this gap, the shortage is most severe in states experiencing gentrification. Similar patterns of soaring housing values and shrinking affordability have been documented in Canada and the United Kingdom (Owen, 2015; Sturgeon, 2016). Given social work’s commitment to pay “particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty” (National Association of Social Workers, 2017), the field has a distinct responsibility to intervene in gentrifying neighborhoods.

Tables & Templates

**Moments to introduce a paragraph break**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| When you transition from describing a broad trend to pointing out specific instances of that trend | When you want to introduce a new or contrasting interpretation of the evidence that you have just analyzed. | When you want to introduce a theory, statistic, or concept that helps you reconsider some evidence you’ve just analyzed. |
| When you transition from discussing a phenomenon to considering its causes or effects. | When you transition from outlining a problem to suggesting a way we could address that problem. | When anticipating an objection to a point you have just made. |

**Tasks that individual paragraphs can accomplish**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Draw attention to something | Identify or classify something | Speculate about something | Connect two or more things | Contrast two or more things | Point out a conflict |
| Resolve a conflict | Defend/justify something | Build upon/develop an idea | Point out a problem | Warn an audience | Inspire an audience |
| Summarize something | Analyze something | Analyze something w/ the help of theory | Challenge or criticize something | Defend something | Recommend something |
| Deduce something | Reveal a pattern | Differentiate between two or more things | Elaborate on something | Find errors in something | Refute something |

**Phrases for defining your terms**

* Historically, the term X has been used to describe …
* In this essay, the term X will be used in its broadest sense to refer to all …
* While a variety of definitions of X have been suggested, this paper will use the definition first suggested by Smith (1968), who…
* According to Smith (2002), X can be defined as follows…
* In this paper, the terms X and Y are used interchangeably to mean …
* Unfortunately, X remains a poorly defined term, but this paper will…
* Smith (2001) identified four qualities associated with X….
* Since the definition of X varies among researchers, it is important to clarify how the term is …

**Phrases for defining the impact of your topic**

* X is a common/growing problem for Z….
* Estimates suggest that X affects more than Z people…
* Since DATE, numerous incidents have demonstrated the importance of X….
* X is valuable because it invites us to consider…
* As one of the only instances of Z, X reveals….
* Studies have consistently shown that X has a positive/negative impact upon…
* There is a large body of literature suggesting that X….
* Discussions of X are absent from the literature, but Z data suggest that it...
* When viewed through Y lens, X becomes significant because…

**Phrases for defining the ongoing conversation**

* A number of studies have postulated a convergence between …
* It is now well established from a variety of studies that …
* Many critics have argued that … (e.g. Jones, 1987; Johnson, 1990; Smith, 1994).
* There is a consensus among social scientists that … (e.g. Jones, 1987; Johnson, 1990)
* Only in the past ten years have studies of X directly addressed how …
* The first serious discussions and analyses of X emerged during.…
* The construct of X was first articulated by Smith (1977) and popularized in his book: …
* What we know about X is largely based on observational studies.
* Most studies of X have situated it in Z field…
* X has largely been neglected by scholars, perhaps because…

**Phrases for defining your methodology**

* Using an X approach….
* X offers a way to understand/reframe…
* Analyzing X through a Z lens illuminates…
* My argument draws on the teachings of…
* This paper uses X as a means of understanding…
* I argue that X can be understood as a Z issue…
* Combining an X perspective with a Y approach, this paper…
* I draw on X theories/analyses/studies…

**Helpful websites**

**Academic Phrasebank – gives numerous examples of how to word things academically**

<https://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/>

**Fraze It – shows you words in context and allows you to play clips to hear the words pronounced**

<https://fraze.it/>

**Purdue OWL – a free, comprehensive, easily searchable resource. Find guidance for virtually anything grammar or writing-related**

<https://owl.purdue.edu/>

**Carnegie Mellon Global Communication Center – an excellent collection of resources, with some particularly strong guidance on science writing**

<https://www.cmu.edu/student-success/other-resources/index.html>

**USC Writing Center – schedule one-on-one visits, view videos of past workshops, download templates for different citation systems, and review a wide library of handouts**

<https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/>