

SENTENCE SYNTHESIS

Everything that has been done this far has been in preparation for this stage in the evolution of thinking into writing: Analysis has brought to light the substance of knowledge in relation to the subject; organizational synthesis has evaluated it and given it arrangement; and now we are ready to put this experience into the framework of idea. Ideas spring directly from our experience with the subject and as we now have before us what we feel is of most importance in relation to the subject, all of our major ideas should be inherent in the relationship of elements in the diagram itself. None of these elements by themselves have much meaning. It is only in relating them and showing their connection with the subject that meaning begins to emerge.

Control of
the Idea and
conciseness

As was pointed out in organizational synthesis, a continuous relationship has been created running through all of the elements that have been developed which looks like this:

Subject I A 1 2 3 4 B 1 2 3 4 C 1 2 3 4 D 1 2 3 4 subject
 II a 1 2 3 4 B 1 2 3 4 C 1 2 3 4 D 1 2 3 4 subject III
 A 1 2 3 4 B 1 2 3 4 C 1 2 3 4 D 1 2 3 4 subject IV A
 1 2 3 4 B 1 2 3 4 C 1 2 3 4 D 1 2 3 4 subject V A 1 2 3 4
 B 1 2 3 4 C 1 2 3 4 D 1 2 3 4 subject VI A 1 2 3 4 B 1
 2 3 4 C 1 2 3 4 D 1 2 3 4

What has been accomplished has been to bring the disassociated elements of experience into sequences of relationship in which each part is seen as acting or interacting on each other part or contributing to it. The subject's unity and meaning emerges from the total context created by

these parts.

We cannot, of course, normally write through such a complex in one sentence and, as a result, the essential problem is the manner in which we fragment the total relationship suggested into workable units of thought and yet maintain the continuity of the whole relationship. This results in our sentences and paragraphs. It is right here that the ability to handle relationships and complexity shows up. The relationships inherent in any analysis can be treated very simply or made to flow in a unified connected whole:

		1 real
	A. experience	
		2 vicarious
IDEAS	I- thinking	
		1 logical
	B. mental processes	
		2 intuitive

The partial analysis of IDEAS above is indicative of a single relationship that looks like this:

Subject - I - A - 1 - 2 - B - 1 - 2

44
words

A. Ideas come from thinking. We need experience on which to think. This experience comes from what really happens to us. This experience may also be vicarious. Experience is not enough. We also need to develop mental processes. One type of mental process is logical--another is intuitive.

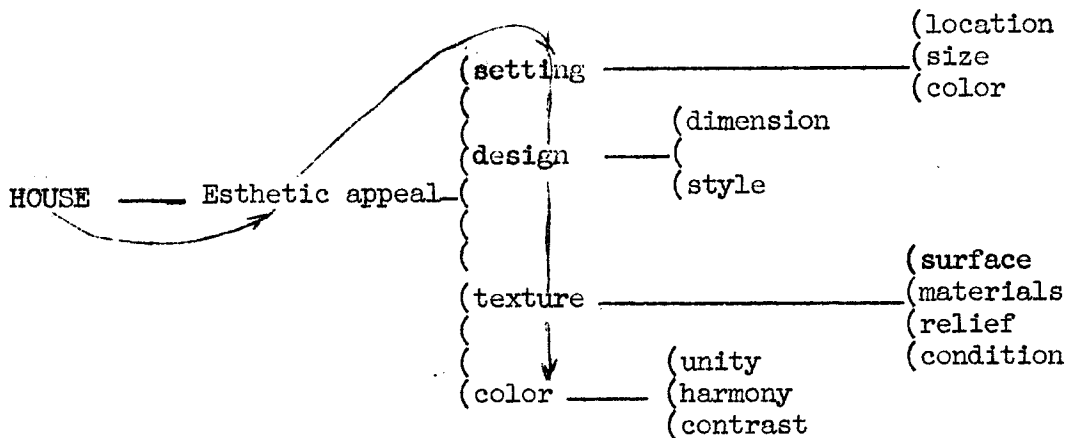
Although the whole relationship is expressed in the above example, it is so badly fragmented that it loses much of its meaning. In order to maintain connection, there is the need for constant repetition. It is in face infantile expression. It illustrates the point that even though the analysis may be good, poor synthesis can destroy the flow of the

ideas is the degree to which we fragment the total relationship that is visible to us in the analysis itself. Generally speaking, the less we fragment the relationship the more we gain in conciseness without any sacrifice in clarity. Furthermore, the expression of the more complex idea has a direct relationship to maturity in ideas as well as flow and unity.

Context and meaning

Another product of the more complex idea is that it brings the elements that make it up into closer relationship and thus creates a context with greater potential meaning or more clearly defined meaning. Context is the whole relationship out of which each part derives its meaning and, conversely, in which each part contributes to the meaning of the whole. The fullness of context conditions the meaning of each element, each sentence, each paragraph and, of course, ultimately the whole composition. The context that is created gives meaning to each part which by itself has little meaning as a vehicle of communication.

The analytical diagram creates the substance of this context, which gives each part its particular meaning. The analysis of HOUSE used previously illustrates the point :



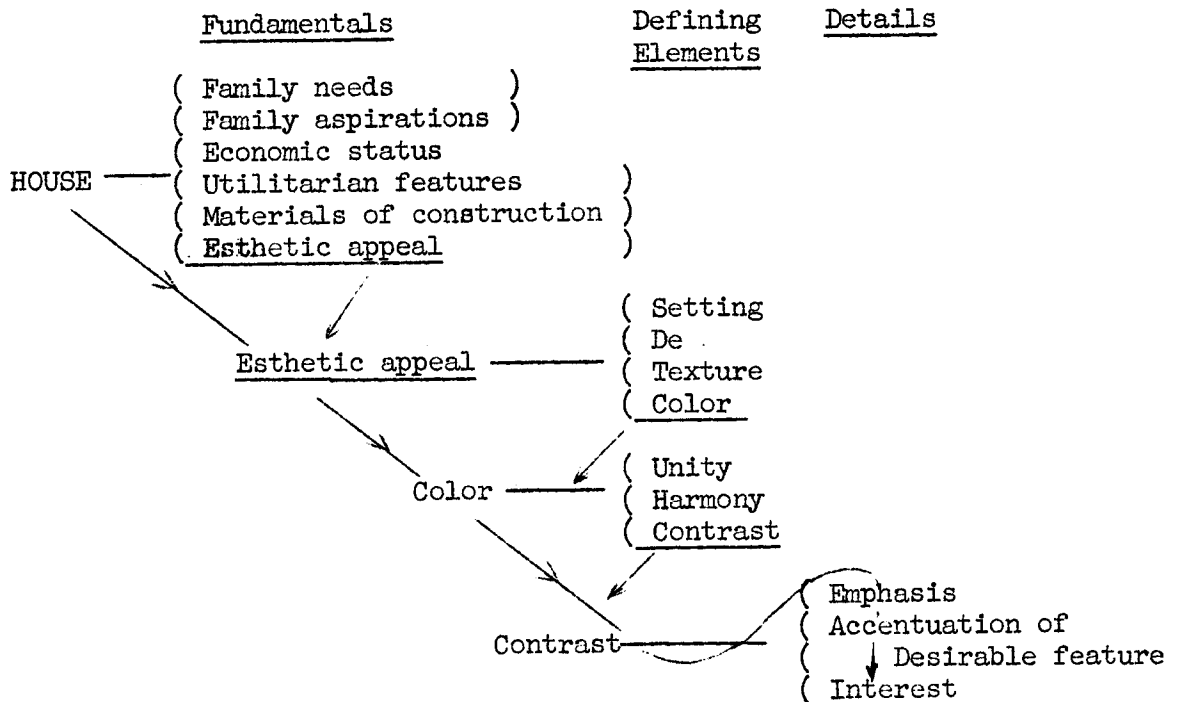
Here we see that esthetic appeal actually gets its meaning from setting, design, texture and color. When these are brought into relation to esthetic appeal the reader knows precisely what areas of meaning are indicated by esthetic appeal in the writer's mind. Clarity hinges on the ability to create this parallel meaning. In the following example these elements have been combined into a sentence:

The esthetic appeal of a house is conditioned by its setting, design, texture and color.

In the same way setting begins to get its meaning from size, contour and location; and color, from unity, harmony and contrast. What emerges is a steadily broadening and more particular understanding of what is meant by esthetic appeal in which each element is brought to a point of definition wherein the writer's intent is clear. In other words, each element at each level of subordination is put into a context where its scope is defined and yet a clear relationship is maintained with the subject.

You will notice that this idea is beginning to move from the general to the specific: house is the broadest term in this context of which esthetic appeal is only a part; esthetic appeal is the general element that reflects setting, design, texture and color, etc. In this movement, each level of elements gives definition to each and all previous elements including the subject.

The following diagram illustrates how this bridge of relationship can be maintained to even the remote details.



Another significant consideration in creating a high level of esthetic appeal in the decoration of a house resides in the use of contrasting colors through which emphasis, the accentuation of desirable features or interest generally may be heightened.

The last two examples illustrate distinctly different movements in the use of the analytical or projective development in the formation of ideas. The first:

The esthetic appeal of a house is conditioned by its setting, design, texture, and color.

creates a broad context which would allow a discussion of all of these elements to be brought into the framework of a single paragraph.

The second:

Another significant consideration in creating a high level of esthetic appeal in the decoration of a house resides in the use of contrasting colors through which emphasis, the accentuation of desirable features or interest generally may be heightened.

is a movement in depth which narrows the discussion to a restricted

topic, in this case, the use of contrasting colors. These two movements and variations of them allow the writer to expand or restrict the context in which he wishes to work in the treatment of any paragraph. They also allow the writer to create emphasis by setting up a rapid and more general movement through certain sections of his composition and a more detailed examination in sections where this would seem desirable. Both of these possibilities are applied in a variety of ways in the next section dealing with the synthesis of principal ideas which from the topic sentences.

Synthesis Of The Topic Sentences

Ideas are relationships which, as has been indicated, may be very simple or extremely intricate combinations of elements, depending on the degree to which we fragment the total relationship implied in the analysis. It becomes apparent that this fragmentation allows us to control the scope and content of any idea with which we may wish to work in any given paragraph. We can, by the inclusion or exclusion of elements exposed in the analysis and made a part of the topic sentence, limit or expand the development in the paragraph itself as long as the sequence of inclusion follows a logical pattern. It becomes extremely important, then, to see the functions of the topic sentence and the basic relationships that allow the control of paragraph content.

Functions of the Topic Sentence

The construction of the topic sentences, then, involves a determination of the basic divisions of thought that will occur in the composition and a clear statement of the principal idea to be expressed in each part of that division. At the same time, while this division takes place, these sentences are under obligation to maintain the continuity of the whole relationship which gives the composition its unity. The concept of the principal idea must be formulated in the writer's mind before it can be communicated to the reader. This may seem like a truism but the importance of this to the writer cannot be overestimated. It is right here that the writer determines the scope, nature and meaning of the concept he intends to communicate in a particular paragraph. Once this has been clarified it facilitates the subsequent development of the paragraph in every way. These functions of the topic sentence, therefore, should be kept in

mind as the topic idea is developed:

They introduce the principal unit of thought to be discussed in the paragraph and relate to the subject.

After the first paragraph, they maintain connection with what has been said before.

They re-establish relationship with the subject as each new paragraph is set up and introduce the new area to be discussed.

They not only introduce the unit of thought to be discussed but define its scope.

They indicate the order in which the elements of the principal idea will be discussed.

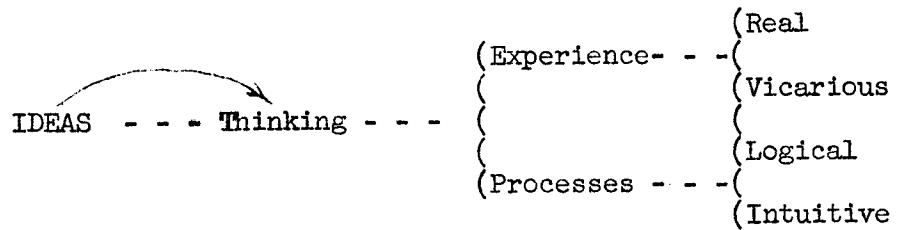
Collectively, they establish the continuity of the composition and the hard core of its meaning.

Basic Relationships
of the Topic Sentence

In order to perform the functions mentioned above it becomes apparent that certain

elements of the analytical diagram provide the basic parts of the relationships that make up these vital sentences. The sentence is under obligation to maintain relationship with the subject, it indicates relationship with what has already been stated in the previous paragraph and it defines and gives order to what is about to be expressed. For these reasons, the topic sentences must evolve out of the relationships that the writer sees in the subject, the fundamentals, the supporting elements and, in some cases even the details. These elements, the subject, the fundamentals and the supporting elements, give us the substance of the ideas that will make up the topic sentences and, when used in different combinations, the means of controlling the scope and content of the paragraph itself.

The simplest combination that makes up a topic sentence is the subject and a fundamental:



Ideas are generated out of thinking.

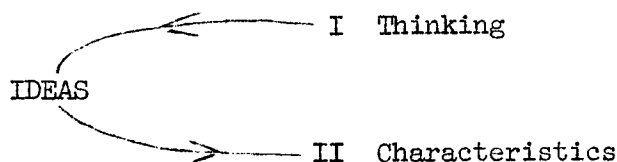
This sentence does perform two vital functions of the topic sentence: it does introduce thinking as the area to be discussed and it does relate thinking to the subject, ideas. What it does not do is to give any indication of what is meant by thinking nor does it establish any order in which the discussion of thinking will take place. These short topic sentences are of value in creating emphasis, i.e., they single out the fundamental area of discussion; but as these fundamentals are invariably generalities, every reader would have a different concept of its meaning. It therefore becomes necessary to follow this generalization with defining elements as soon as possible so that the writer's intent becomes clear:

Ideas are generated out of thinking. Thought, however, is dependent on the wealth of the individual's experience and the mental processes that he applies to that experience.

At this point, the line of the writer's idea has been indicated insofar as thinking is concerned in that it involves experience and mental processes. This not only gives definition to the areas on which thinking is dependent but establishes the order in which these elements will be discussed. The rest of the paragraph would go on to develop how real and vicarious experience establishes the base on which thinking takes place and the implications of logical and intuitive mental processes in using that experience in the formation of ideas.

This simple relationship of the topic sentence and the subsequent development of the paragraph has been indicated in Roman Numeral I, Page SS-20 of the Sentence Synthesis Diagram. It shows the introduction of the generality, the follow up in supporting elements and the subsequent movement toward definition in the particulars. This step by step unfolding of the idea is particularly applicable to complex ideas where the reader is assumed to have little background in the subject under discussion.

Transition The simple relationship of subject and fundamental which serves as the basis of the topic sentence indicated above applies only to the first paragraph or in cases where the fundamental to be introduced is so clearly related to the previous fundamental that the connection need not be expressed. In most instances, however, the relationship between the fundamental that has just been written into a paragraph and the new fundamental which is about to be written should be expressed and relationship re-established with the subject. It is this connection that gives cohesion and unity to the main core of the composition. The basic relationship of this traditional movement involves the fundamental that has just been exposed, the subject and the fundamental that is being introduced.



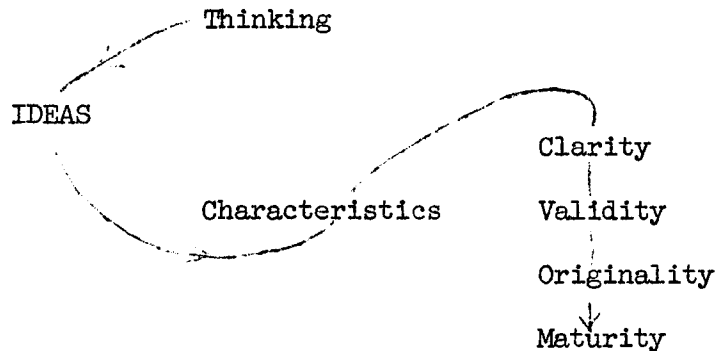
Although all people think and produce ideas, few achieve certain essential characteristics in the expression of thought that should typify the educated mind.

This sentence moves the reader from the completed paragraph

on thinking as the source of ideas into a consideration of the qualitative nature of ideas and at the same time re-establishes ideas as the subject. This is the essence of transition in that it does not drop what has been said before but uses it as the base for the introduction of a new but related consideration. While this transitional connection is indicated here at the center of the whole idea in the movement from fundamental to fundamental through the subject, it applies equally to the movement from supporting element to supporting element through the fundamental, and detail to detail through the supporting elements as indicated on the synthesis diagram. This maintains the bridge of connection that allows inference to go all the way back to the subject from the details and hence produces a unified whole in which meaning can flow from the generalization to its particular implications or, conversely, from the particulars to the generalization.

Increasing the Complexity of the Topic Sentence

Complicating the structure of the topic sentence really means a more rapid movement into the essence of the idea exposed in the analysis. In this case, instead of using only the subject and the fundamental as the base for its composition, the supporting elements will also be included in the relationship.



All people think and produce ideas; but there are few who achieve the characteristics of clarity, validity, originality and maturity in the expression of thought which should typify the educated mind.

This topic sentence, which is the application of Roman Numeral III on the Sentence Synthesis Diagram, is, of course, a highly distilled complex which would require considerable amplification, illustration and example before its full meaning in terms of implication could be brought into focus to a reader who is first experiencing the idea. It does, however, have the advantage of enabling the writer to introduce an extensive awareness of the problem in a relatively few words. This is of particular significance in writing exams where time is a factor or in reports where full examination of a subject is indicated and the level of the reader's understanding is established as being able to handle this complexity.

In order to see what has happened as these introductory sentences have been increased in complexity they are brought together here:

All people think and produce ideas, but few achieve certain essential characteristics in the expression of thought that should typify the educated mind.

All people think and produce ideas; but there are few who achieve the characteristics of clarity, validity, originality and maturity in the expression of thought that should typify the educated mind.

All people think and produce ideas; but there are few who achieve the following characteristics in the expression of thought that should typify the educated mind: clarity, with its dependence on completeness, connection and well defined movement toward definition; validity, which rests on pertinence of information, the support of generalities, a balanced examination of the subject and a willingness to accept reality; originality, which reflects a lively mind that can move beyond the obvious and introduce fresh or individual insight; and, lastly, intellectual maturity which recognizes the complexity of the world in which we move and reflects a reasoned judgment thereof.

The wording and impetus of these sentences has been deliberately kept the same in order to illustrate the principle of this progression. Variations of this treatment will be discussed later.

Related
Implications

A second important aspect of this complexity is that it has a direct relationship to reading. If students continue in the composition of simple ideas in their own work they never really get to see how complex ideas are put together, with the result that when they meet writers who require that an extensive sequence of elements be held in mind in order to understand meaning they flounder. On the other hand, if they begin to see how principal elements are made to stand out and other elements are subordinated in their own work then the complexity of meaning in the works of others is less baffling.

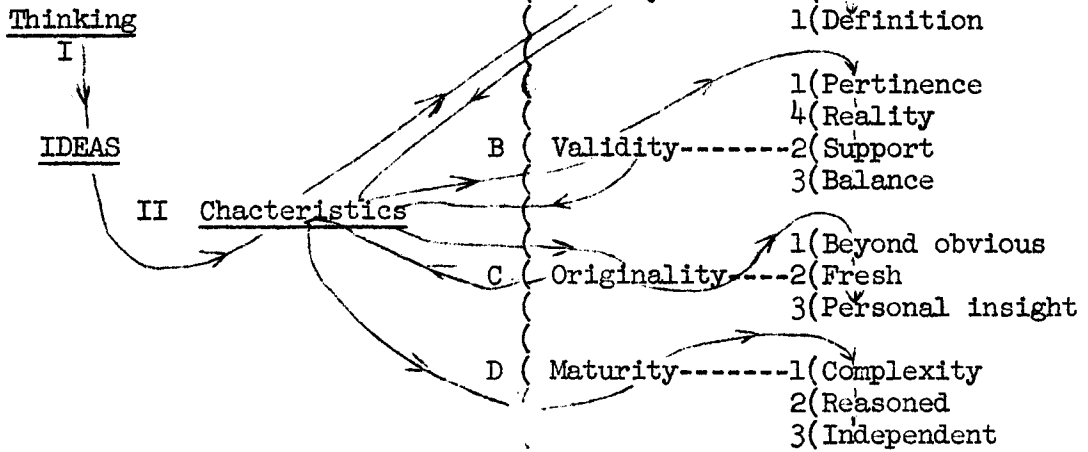
It will also be noticed that as the complexity of the sentences increased so did the requirements of punctuation: the first sentence used only the comma; in the second, the comma and the semi-colon were required; and in the last, the construction required the colon, the semi-colon, and the comma. This merely highlights the point that punctuation becomes meaningful--more than that, a necessity--as the complexity of ideas is increased. Taught in the context of controlling more intricate ideas it loses its academic ring.

Furthermore, instruction in parallelism becomes a necessity at this juncture. The great difference between this and the traditional treatment is that the student can be shown that the origin of parallelism is in the multiplicity of his own reaction to a given stimulus in the recall process - that is a mental explosion that defines or gives meaning to what he had already brought to mind at a previous level of thought. Additionally, he can be shown that the elements that make up parallel structure have been indicated as equal in the diagrammatic representation of the idea and, hence, must be treated as equal in the grammatical sense. At this point also the functional means of subordinating levels of thought can also be given significance.

Limiting the Scope
of the Paragraph

What has been indicated in Roman numerals I, II, and III of the sentence synthesis diagram have been ways of moving into a fundamental area in three degrees of complexity. In each case, the context has been created that would make possible the treatment of the whole unit in a single paragraph. Frequently, however, in order to create emphasis or because the context demands fuller treatment it may be necessary to divide a fundamental area into a number of paragraphs. One way of doing this is suggested in Roman numeral IV. Here the transitional movement is carried from the preceding fundamental through the subject into the new fundamental area and then the topic is limited by the introduction of a single defining element with its details. The other supporting elements would be brought in in subsequent paragraphs introduced as indicated on the diagram.

Sentence synthesis - IV



Out of our thinking, we should strive as writers to develop ideas that have the quality of clarity. This characteristic is achieved when we carry relationships to a point of definition, maintain well defined connection, and when we present concepts without gaps or voids so that the meaning is complete.

----- Paragraph -----

The characteristic of clarity must be present in our ideas before we can begin to assess their validity. It is only when we "see" the idea expressed without confusion that we can evaluate the pertinence of information that has been brought in to support generalities, the balance of the writer's perspective and his willingness to come to grips with the reality of his subject.

----- Paragraph -----

While clarity and validity are first objectives in forming ideas, originality, which moves ideas beyond the obvious and introduces fresh or personal insight, is perhaps a paramount goal.

----- Paragraph -----

An extension of the three previous characteristics culminates in maturity of the writer evidences an awareness of the complexity of the world in which he moves, expresses a reasoned judgment thereof, and indicates the capability of independent thought.

----- Paragraph -----

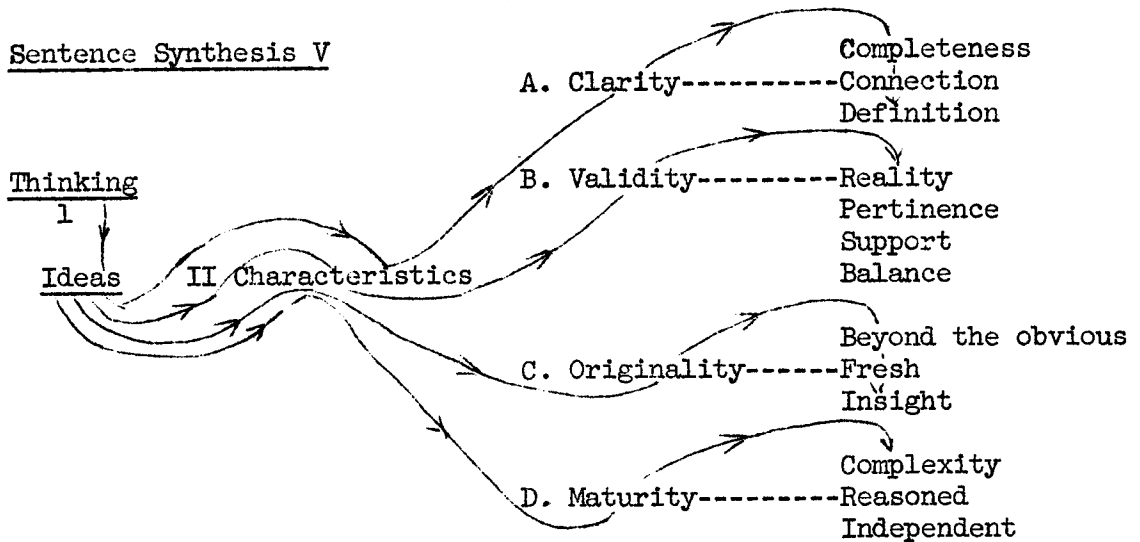
A number of points are illustrated in the application Roman numeral IV above:

1. The treatment of each supporting element as a separate entity sets up the potential for a more detailed treatment of the fundamental area.
2. Although these elements are treated separately their inter-relationship is maintained with the principal linkage through the fundamental. In this case the subject is brought in regularly but this is not always necessary.
3. These sentences follow the continuity that was set up in organizational Synthesis which was basically a movement from the most simple aspect, clarity, to the most complex consideration, maturity.
4. If these sentences are read in sequence it is apparent they delineate and control the flow of the whole idea.
5. Lastly, they establish the order of development in each of the paragraphs.

Note: It may also be pointed out that the conception of the ideas in terms of their scope and nature is a direct outgrowth of the analysis. It also becomes clear that once these concepts have been established and are clearly defined the remaining problem is one of interpretation wherein the points enumerated are amplified, implication is pointed out, illustration is introduced which brings them into the life situation of the reader and generalization extracts their common meaning. Perhaps most important of all the mind has been freed to the problem of conceptualizing only. With the elements brought to light in analysis and their order determined through organizational synthesis, we can concern ourselves with the single problem of expressing relationship and meaning.

Roman numeral V on the sentence synthesis diagram indicates a variation of IV. Like four it sets up each supporting or defining element as the topic of a separate paragraph, but it establishes a more definite cleavage or division in the total idea to be expressed.

Sentence Synthesis V



While all ideas are generated out of thinking, it does not follow that because we think, ideas will necessarily be good. It should be born in mind that thinking should direct itself toward certain desirable characteristics in ideas. The first of these, clarity, depends on the degree to which relationships are carried to a point of definition, the maintenance of connection and the completeness of the concepts expressed. -----

----- Paragraph -----

A second desirable characteristic in ideas is validity. This quality depends on the pertinence of the information we use, the support we marshall for our generalities, the balance of our perspective, and our willingness to probe for reality in the subject's meaning.-----

----- Paragraph -----

A third vital characteristic in ideas is originality. Here ideas must be pushed beyond the obvious, fresh perspective introduced and insight reflecting the uniqueness of the individual exposed.-----

----- Paragraph -----

The ultimate goal in ideas, perhaps, is intellectual maturity wherein an awareness of the complexity of the universe in which we live is expressed, where judgment is reasoned, and where there is a clear indication of the courage of independent thinking. -----

----- Paragraph -----

It will be noticed in Roman numeral V that while there is a gain in clarity (simplicity) over IV, there is a loss in complexity. The inter-relationship that appears in IV is missing in V. The unity in V is maintained through the subject, ideas; and the fundamental, characteristics; but the progression of idea which is an integral part of IV does not show up in V.

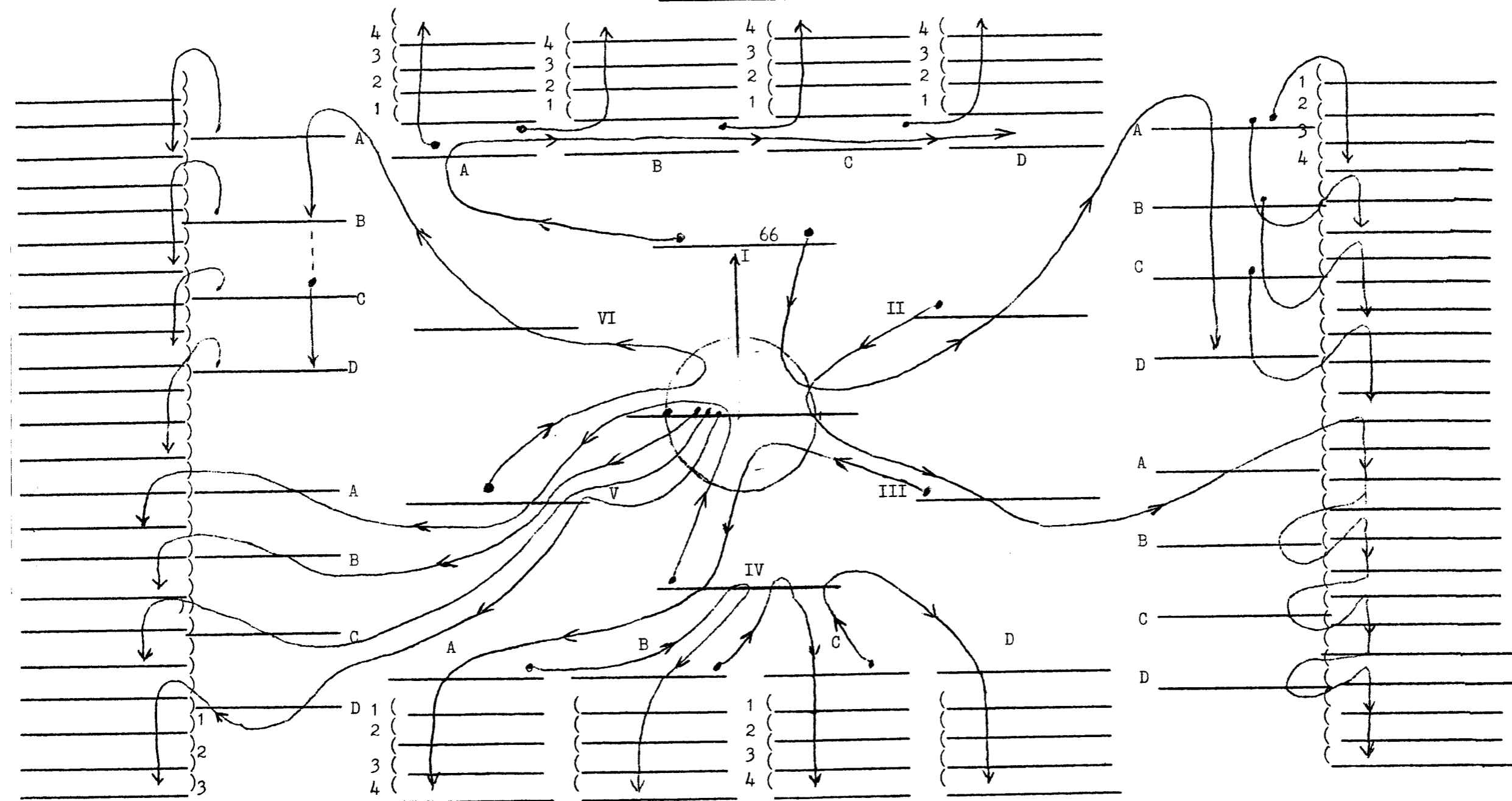
Roman numeral VI on the sentence synthesis diagram indicates the possibility of dividing the fundamental area into two paragraphs. This unit shows the division as equal with two supporting elements in each paragraph--it might also be three and one. These supporting elements sometimes can be handled in groups rather than as a whole as indicated in I, II, III or as individual in IV and V. The arrangement in VI also indicates a means of bringing in elements of an opposite or alternate nature.

Variations in Topic
Sentence Structure

It will be noticed that in the six modes of forming topic sentences shown above that they all had the same general impetus, i.e., they all moved generally from the subject out toward the particulars. It is possible to work these same basic elements in different patterns. The lines on the sentence synthesis diagram merely represent relationships - elements that can be combined logically in forming principal ideas. These variations make possible a great deal of variety in the structure of ideas.

From the Particular to the General. The movement from the general to the particular shown above can, of course, be reversed with the principal

SENTENCE SYNTHESIS



THE THINKING BEHIND WRITING

