



Step Up to Writing *Strategy Spotlight*

Paragraph Elaboration, Strategy 4-31, 4-32, and 4-33

Describe the process of photosynthesis. Explain the Allied troop's dilemma in Afghanistan. Argue for or against freedom of speech. Tell why schools have rules. Teachers of students in Grades 2-12 commonly ask questions requiring one-paragraph answers. A common complaint is that students don't include enough detail or explanation in their paragraphs.

Step Up to Writing helps students think about additional ways they can elaborate, or tell more, in each paragraph. Commonly called the E's, these are the parts of a paragraph that support the big ideas. If you are using Step Up color-coding, these make up the red sections. Below are sentences taken from short-answer paragraphs. For more examples, use Tool 4-32a/b.

The E's or the Reds

Examples - provide an example that backs up your fact or detail

Binary ionic compounds are named by writing the name of the cation followed by the anion. For example, a compound made from calcium cations and fluoride anions is called calcium fluoride.

Michigan's Native American people were also threatened by a loss of natural resources. With more settlers in the area, there was less hunting land available and more competition for existing food sources.

Elaboration - tell the reader more

Animals learn behaviors that help them survive. Lion cubs learn how to hunt. Squirrels learn how to crack open nuts. Baby chimpanzees learn how to use tools to catch insects.

Natural resources are derived from the environment. They occur naturally and are valuable or essential to our survival. Natural resources can be divided into biotic and abiotic categories.

Evidence - share evidence to support a point

Perception can influence memory. In our experiment, 17 of the 20 subjects studied remembered the list of facts that corresponded to their stated point of view.

Even numbers can be evenly divided by two. Six tennis balls divided into two sets results in zero leftover tennis balls. The same is true for any other even number.

Expert Opinion - cite an expert for support

Our climate has gotten warmer over recent decades. According to every national science academy, humans have contributed to negative climate change.

What we eat influences our health. The American Dietetic Association states...

Effective Illustration - provide enough detail to paint a picture in the reader's mind

The wolf is an impressive hunter, as well. Weighing between 75 and 120 pounds, with a length of 5 to 6 ½ feet, the grey wolf looks like a large German shepherd dog with longer legs, a wide head, bigger feet, and a tail that is long and bushy. Its fangs are up to two inches long and can tear apart large prey.

Experiences - tell about your or others experiences

Matter contracts when cooled. Have you ever taken an inflated balloon outside on a freezing day? If so, you'll remember that it appeared shriveled in the cold air.

Likewise, the war impacted civilians. Families even had to change the way they ate because less food was available in the markets.

Everyday life - explain how this impacts everyday life

Different materials conduct heat at different rates. Stepping from carpeting onto a marble floor in your bare feet is a good illustration of this.

Exact Information - specific, precise details

A quadrilateral is also a polygon. It has four sides and four corners or vertices.

The Brønsted-Lowry definition is more inclusive. With it, you can identify an acid and a base. An acid such as HCl does not simply dissociate in water to form H^+ and Cl^- ions...

Explanations - help the reader understand

Both groups shared common goals. While they differed in philosophies, access to resources to survive continued to be their primary goal. Likewise, both groups hoped to maintain their quality of life, especially land and home ownership.



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Ticket Out (Strategy 3-12 in the Step Up Manual, Tool 3-12a and 3-12b)

The Ticket Out strategy from Step Up to Writing is an easy one for both ELA and non-ELA teachers to incorporate into daily instruction. In short, students write one sentence which is turned in as they are leaving class for the day. The sentence can be a summary, a personal reflection, a brief explanation of a concept taught in class, a comment about something that was confusing or challenging, or even what they hope to learn the next day; you, the teacher, decides.

Students should know ahead of time what the criteria is (ex. accurate content, grammar and punctuation; acceptable spelling) and students can begin the next class by correcting errors from yesterday's sentence or expanding on what they wrote the day before. Collected sentences provide a quick, easy-to-grade way of collecting information about student learning.

Ticket Out: One Perfect Sentence	
Name: _____	Date: _____

