PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE: CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

The basic structure for this type of paragraph is the logical sequence of chronology (time). Often this simple sequence of events involves a process. The reader expects the written material to follow the reality of time as seen in everyday life, one event following the next in a logical and chronological order.

EXAMPLE:

Sally uses a system to make sure she gets up early enough to arrive at school on time for her eight o’clock class. First, she makes sure that all of her studying is done by ten o’clock the night before. Next, she refuses all temptations to go out for a late pizza or to watch late-night TV—even if her schoolwork is done. In fact, she’s in bed by 10:30, making sure that she has already decided what to wear the next day and that the alarm is set for 6:30 the next morning. When the alarm goes off at 6:30, she gets right up so she won’t fall asleep again. Her morning routine never varies: she showers, dresses, and eats a bowl of cereal. Finally, she leaves home with plenty of time to drive to school and to find a parking place. These steps usually guarantee that Sally is in class on time.

WRITING EXERCISE:

Think of a simple process for doing or making something that involves three or four steps that should be—or have to be—done in a certain definite order. Then write a paragraph explaining this process. It’s important to keep the sequence of steps in a chronology that is clear to the reader.