WRITING AND READING CENTER
#52

PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE: SPECIFIC TO GENERAL

This development pattern is a logical sequence that is basically inductive, which means it first gives many specific and concrete details then draws a generalization or conclusion from those details. Inductive structure is the sequence used by a detective: the reader expects the investigation to come before the inference or conclusion.

EXAMPLE:

My mother gets terrible headaches every time she is around chalk dust. Two of my friends, Mark and Shelly, get hives whenever they eat raspberries. In the spring, my nephew sneezes constantly during the ragweed season. A girl in my botany class can’t have any wool next to her skin in the winter months. My wife doesn’t dare eat anything with olive oil in it; her tongue and throat swell nearly shut. Indeed, allergies are of all kinds, affect various parts of the body, and may occur any time of the year.

WRITING EXERCISE:

Think of a topic that can be developed in this manner. Your thought process may be the reverse of the written presentation. You may have a general idea and think of the specific support for it, but when you write it out, give the specific details first and let them “add up” to the general statement.