

## WRITING DEVELOPMENT

In her book, *The Writing Revolution* Judith Hochman tells us that students' problems with reading comprehension, as well with writing essays, occur because they have not been taught systematically to write ... to which her book gives a step-by-step guide.

The Writing Development exercises here are adapted from her programme.

### Hungary, 1956

#### 12. Paragraphs - turning points into a paragraph

Let's say I have been asked to write a narrative which explains the failure of the Hungarian Revolution. I reach the events of , and I turn to my notes:

*4 Nov: 1000 Soviet tanks invaded Budapest; Hungarian army crushed by 8:10 am; 4000 Hungarians killed.*

a. I summarise these into a 'basic paragraph' of three simple sentences:

"The Soviets invaded. The Hungarians resisted. They were crushed."

That is not going to score me many marks! SO... how might I improve this paragraph?

b. To improve the paragraph, I will use Judith Hochman's ideas:

*i.* Start with a topic sentence introducing the idea of the paragraph

*ii.* Expand sentences by adding factual information

*iii.* Vary vocabulary

*iv.* Use conjunctions and an appositive

*v.* Explain how this information addresses the question, including proving information

*vi.* End with a concluding sentence which directly answers the question

c. Doing all this, I might end up with a paragraph which reads:

*"Finally, the Revolution ended on 4 November. Operation Whirlwind' - the invasion of more than a thousand Soviet tanks - rolled into Budapest and destroyed the Hungarian Army, notably capturing the Hungarian Radio station as it broadcast its last words: 'Help! Help! Help!'" The Hungarians, including young children, fought back bravely for a week with machine guns and Molotov cocktails. Yet it was hopeless; they were crushed by the Soviet Army, which fired indiscriminately on rebels and ordinary citizens alike; in all, perhaps 4,000 Hungarians were killed. This aspect of the defeat of the Revolution is easy to explain - overwhelming Soviet military power.*

1. Look at my revised paragraph. Identify in it the parts where I have implemented ideas *i-vi*.

This is a **really good way** to write an essay:

- Choose the topic for a paragraph.
- Write a 'basic paragraph' of three simple sentences.
- Improve the paragraph using ideas *i-vi*.

2. Using this approach, write the rest of the essay:

'Write an account explaining the failure of the Hungarian Uprising, 23 October - 4 November 1956.'

adding paragraphs on: 23, 24, 28 and 29 October – 3 November, using the notes on the webpage and your wider research:

**TOP TIP: before you put a paragraph 'to bed', read it (or better still, ask someone else to read it) out loud. You will immediately catch any grammatical errors, and also realise whether its meaning is clear enough.]**