This text makes sense *and* flows well! **Local** coherence and cohesion.
Quick review from last time:
Coherence

“...is an experience we create for ourselves as we make our own sense of what we read” (Williams 2007).

Reader’s have:

• Genre expectations (e.g., APA, IMRaD...)
• Department expectations (e.g., expanded introductions)
• Explicit expectations the text sets up (e.g., aim & hypotheses)
• Implicit expectations about how texts work (e.g., how information placement shapes what we expect from the text)
Coherence

“...is an experience we create for ourselves as we make our own sense of what we read” (Williams 2007).

Global level: “a sense of the whole;” understanding of what all sentences/paragraphs/sections add up to.

Local level: a clear sense of what an individual paragraph or an individual sentence communicates.
Global Coherence

1. There’s a point
2. Everything is relevant
3. There’s an order

See Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace (Williams 2007)
Coherence

“...is an experience we create for ourselves as we make our own sense of what we read” (Williams 2007).

Global level: “a sense of the whole;” understanding of what all sentences/paragraphs/sections add up to.

Local level: a clear sense of what an individual paragraph or an individual sentence communicates.
Degree to which errors bother readers

Word choice
Word location
Sentence structure
Sentence location
Paragraph structure
Paragraph location
Section Structure
Section Location

Bothers less

Bothers most

From Scientific Writing and Communication (Hofmann)
Local Coherence

1. Topic sentences— what’s the point of this paragraph?
2. Clear “main character” in the sentence, which is often the grammatical subject.
3. Concrete language: concrete nouns, vivid verbs, actions as verbs (not nouns).
4. “Who’s kicking whom?” Keeping actions and agents (or subjects and verbs) close together where possible.
5. Managing connections between sentences

See Stylish Academic Writing (Sword 2012)
Local Coherence

1. Topic sentences— what’s the point of this paragraph?
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See Stylish Academic Writing (Sword 2012)
Topic Sentences

1. Should directly answer the question or aim.

2. Limit what is going to be in the paragraph.

3. Help readers to transition between ideas.
In Russia, the Siberian silk moth is an important disturbance factor and since it is migrating into new areas further west and north it may become a larger problem. Insects in the European Russia do not seem to be such of a problem as in Siberia (Shorohova et al., 2009). In North America, insects are an important disturbance factor but there are regional differences. The only province experiencing severe attack from mountain pine beetle is British Columbia, but its range is projected to expand. Spruce budworm is present over all of Canada. In Fennoscandia the European spruce bark beetle is the most important insect, but it has so far not shown the same severe damage to large regions as the outbreaks of mountain pine beetle in Canada.

*grammar errors not fixed
The level of insect disturbance in a particular region depends upon the species present. In Russia, the Siberian silk moth is an important disturbance factor and since it is migrating into new areas further west and north it may become a larger problem. Insects in the European Russia do not seem to be such of a problem as in Siberia (Shorohova et al., 2009). In North America, insects are an important disturbance factor but there are regional differences. The only province experiencing severe attack from mountain pine beetle is British Columbia, but its range is projected to expand. Spruce budworm is present over all of Canada. In Fennoscandia the European spruce bark beetle is the most important insect, but it has so far not shown the same severe damage to large regions as the outbreaks of mountain pine beetle in Canada.
If this is the topic sentence, what do you expect to come next?

1. Even small changes in the physical components of an ecosystem such as soil acidity or moisture content can have significant effects on individual species.
2. In a changing climate a functioning green infrastructure has a dual purpose.
Local Coherence

1. Topic sentences– what’s the point?

2. Readers should easily recognize the “main character” in a passage, and that character is often the grammatical subject.

Williams, Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace & Booth, et al, The Craft of Research
Principle #2: paragraph level

Consistent ideas toward the beginnings of sentences, especially in their subjects, help readers understand what a passage is generally about. A sense of coherence arises when a sequence of topics comprises a narrow set of related ideas. But the context of each sentence is lost by seemingly random shifts of topics. Unfocused, even disorganized paragraphs result when that happens.

Williams, Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace
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Principle #2: paragraph level

Consistent ideas toward the beginnings of sentences, especially in their subjects;
Readers;
A sense of coherence;
a sequence of topics;
the context of each sentence;
Unfocused, even disorganized paragraphs;
that
Principle #2: paragraph level

Consistent ideas toward the beginnings of sentences, especially in their subjects, help readers understand what a passage is generally about. A sense of coherence arises when a sequence of topics comprises a narrow set of related ideas. But the context of each sentence is lost by seemingly random shifts of topics. Unfocused, even disorganized paragraphs result when that happens.

Williams, Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace
Principle #2: paragraph level

Readers understand what a passage is generally about when they see consistent ideas toward the beginnings of sentences, especially in their subjects. They feel a passage is coherent when they read a sequence of topics that focuses on a narrow set of related ideas. But when topics seem to shift randomly, readers lose the context of each sentence. When that happens, they feel they are reading paragraphs that are unfocused and even disorganized.
Principle #2: sentence level

Readers expect the grammatical subject of the sentence to be its topic

It is impossible for your claim to be proved.

In regard to this question, I believe more research is needed.

It is likely that our proposal will be accepted.

Williams, Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace
Principle #2: sentence level

Readers expect the grammatical subject of the sentence to be its topic

*Your claim* cannot be proved.

In regard to this question, I believe more research is needed.

It is likely that our proposal will be accepted.

Williams, *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*
Principle #2: sentence level

Readers expect the grammatical subject of the sentence to be its topic

Your claim cannot be proved.

This question needs more research (to be answered).

It is likely that our proposal will be accepted.
Readers expect the grammatical subject of the sentence to be its topic

*Your claim* cannot be proved.

*This question* needs more research (to be answered).

*Our proposal* will likely be accepted.
Local Coherence (sentence level)

When starting sentences, avoid “throat-clearing” that pushes the topic/subject further away.

And therefore, it is important to note that, in Eastern states since 1980, acid rain has become a serious problem.
Local Coherence (sentence level)

When starting sentences, avoid “throat-clearing” that pushes the topic/subject further away.

And therefore,
it is important to note that,
in Eastern states since 1980,
acid rain has become a serious problem.
Local Coherence (sentence level)

When starting sentences, avoid “throat-clearing” that pushes the topic/subject further away

Since 1980, therefore, acid rain has become a serious problem in the Eastern states.

or

Acid rain, therefore, has become a serious problem in the Eastern states since 1980.
To Diagnose & Revise: Concrete Subjects

1. Underline the first few words of every clause, both main and subordinate.
2. Are the subjects concrete characters?
3. If not, move the REAL subject (the main source of the action) to the beginning of the sentence and rephrase. Avoid “throat clearing”.
4. Make sure your topic sentence introduces this subject/character clearly. If it doesn’t, rewrite.

Williams, Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace & Booth, et al, The Craft of Research
Local Coherence

1. Topic sentences— what’s the point of this paragraph?
2. Clear “main character” in the sentence, which is often the grammatical subject.
3. Concrete language: concrete nouns (where possible), vivid verbs, actions as verbs (not nouns).

See Stylish Academic Writing (Sword 2012)
Concrete Language (Avoiding Abstractions)

1. **Concrete nouns** are nouns that can be experienced with the five senses—things that can be seen, heard, felt, tasted, or touched. Preferable to abstract nouns. Academic texts often use abstract nouns, but keep these to a minimum and balance with...

2. **Vivid verbs**: Try to employ descriptive, specific, and lively verbs where possible.

3. **Action expressed as verbs, not nouns**: (avoid “nominalisation”).
Abstract Nouns
(Don’t try this at home...)

Replicating the post-Mendel application of Lamarck’s apparently superceded scientific theory by non-empirical social scientists, Vernon Lee’s fervent and intellectually original use of scientific paradigms across different fields in order to further a specific literary and creative heuristic offers an exemplary narrative trace, replete with hybridized methodologies and the rhetorical deployment of scientific language in non-scientific discourses.

....????!!
Replicating the post-Mendel application of Lamarck’s apparently superceded scientific theory by non-empirical social scientists, Vernon Lee’s fervent and intellectually original use of scientific paradigms across different fields in order to further a specific literary and creative heuristic offers an exemplary narrative trace, replete with hybridized methodologies and the rhetorical deployment of scientific language in non-scientific discourses.
Play, like sleep and dreaming, puzzles and fascinates biologists.

Most major scientific theories rebuff common sense. They call on evidence beyond the reach of our senses and overturn the observable world. Such major theories tax, affront, and exhilarate those who first encounter them.
A. The stripping of rainforests in the service of short-term economic interests could result in damage to the earth’s biosphere.

B. If rainforests are stripped to serve short-term economic interests, the earth’s biosphere may be damaged.
Our standardization of an index for the measurement of thought disorders has made possible the quantification of response as a function of treatment differences.
Our standardization of an index for the measurement of thought disorders has made possible the quantification of response as a function of treatment differences.

Rewrite: Now that we have standardized an index to measure thought disorders, we can quantify how patients respond to different treatments.
Principle #3: paragraph level

This cognitive component of intention exhibits a high degree of complexity. Intention is temporally divisible into two: prospective intention and immediate intention. The cognitive function of prospective intention is the representation of a subject’s current situation, his similar past actions, and his course of future actions. That is, the cognitive component of prospective intention is a plan. The cognitive function of immediate intention is the monitoring and guidance of ongoing bodily movement. Taken together, these cognitive mechanisms exhibit significant complexity. There is, however, limited capacity for accounting for this complexity found in the folk psychological notion of belief, which therefore misses most of the cognitive component of intention.
This cognitive component of intention is quite complex. Intention is temporally divisible into two kinds: prospective intention and immediate intention. Prospective intention represents a subject’s current situation, how he has acted similarly in the past, and how he will act in the future. That is, the cognitive component of prospective intention lets him plan ahead. Immediate intention, on the other hand, monitors and guides his body as he moves it. Taken together, these cognitive mechanisms are too complex to be explained by folk psychology.

Booth, et al, *The Craft of Research*
Local Coherence

1. Topic sentences—what’s the point of this paragraph?
2. Clear “main character” in the sentence, which is often the grammatical subject.
3. Concrete language: concrete nouns, vivid verbs, actions as verbs (not nouns).
4. “Who’s kicking whom?” Keeping actions and agents (or subjects and verbs) close together where possible.

See Stylish Academic Writing (Sword 2012)
Principle #4: sentence level

In this chapter, a new method for the measurement of vegetation density is discussed.

The knowledge that criminalization of marijuana use can lead to a wide variety of other social ills, including an increased risk of addiction to more dangerous and expensive drugs such as heroin and cocaine, has not prevented lawmakers from supporting criminal legislation...
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This chapter discusses a new method for measuring vegetation density.

The knowledge that criminalization of marijuana use can lead to a wide variety of other social ills, including an increased risk of addiction to more dangerous and expensive drugs such as heroin and cocaine, has not prevented lawmakers from supporting criminal legislation...

Lawmakers know that criminalization of marijuana use can lead to a wide variety of other social ills, including an increased risk of addiction to more dangerous and expensive drugs such as heroin and cocaine. Yet they continue to support criminal legislation...
To Diagnose & Revise: Concrete Language + Who’s kicking whom?

1. Ensure that at least one sentence per paragraph includes a concrete noun or human entity as its subject, immediately followed by an active verb (“Scientists believe,” “Smith argues,”).

2. Animate abstract nouns with vivid verbs (“Mann’s theory invigorates the debate...”)

3. Avoid nominalisations strung together with loads of prepositions (“the measurement of soil quality in an area characterised by the stripping of pine trees”). This might happen occasionally, but limit it as much as possible. Express actions as verbs!

4. Keep main subjects and verbs as close together as possible, at the beginning of the sentence.
Local Coherence

1. Topic sentences— what’s the point of this paragraph?
2. Clear “main character” in the sentence, which is often the grammatical subject.
3. Concrete language: concrete nouns, vivid verbs, actions as verbs (not nouns).
4. “Who’s kicking whom?” Keeping actions and agents (or subjects and verbs) close together where possible.
5. Managing connections between sentences

See Stylish Academic Writing (Sword 2012)
Managing connections (cohesion): the text flows well

Well-connected sentences: largely dependent on how one ends and the next one begins.

1. Often uses old-to-new information structure.
2. Shouldn’t be faked with connection words.

Williams, Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace & Booth, et al, The Craft of Research
A or B?

A. The quality of our air and even the climate of the world depend on healthy rain forests in Asia, Africa, and South America. But these rain forests are now threatened with destruction by the increasing demand for more land for agricultural use and for wood products used in construction worldwide.

B. The quality of our air and even the climate of the world depend on healthy rain forests in Asia, Africa, and South America. But the increasing demand for more land for agricultural use and for wood products for construction worldwide now threatens these forests with destruction.

Booth, et al, *The Craft of Research*
A. The quality of our air and even the climate of the world depend on healthy rain forests in Asia, Africa, and South America. But these rain forests are now threatened with destruction by the increasing demand for more land for agricultural use and for wood products used in construction worldwide.

B. The quality of our air and even the climate of the world depend on healthy rain forests in Asia, Africa, and South American. But the increasing demand for more land for agricultural use and for wood products for construction worldwide now threatens these forests with destruction.
Old to new structure

• Creates “flow” in a paragraph
• Some try to use logical connectors like “moreover” and “however” to establish flow… but these don’t work on their own
• Instead, follow a progression from old information (in the subject position or toward the end of the previous sentence) to new information (toward the end of the next sentence).
According to a recent survey, 26% of all American adults, down from 38% 30 years ago, now smoke. This _________ can be partly attributed to the mounting evidence linking smoking and fatal diseases, such as cancer.
Sayner, Wisconsin, is the snowmobile capital of the world. The buzzing of snowmobile engines fills the air, and their tank-like tracks crisscross the snow. The snow reminds me of Mom’s mashed potatoes, covered with furrows I would draw with my fork. Her mashed potatoes usually make me sick—that’s why I play with them. I like to make a hole in the middle of the potatoes and fill it with melted butter. This behavior has been the subject of long chats between me and my analyst.
Old to new structure

• Creates “flow” in a paragraph

• Some try to use logical connectors like “moreover” and “however” to establish flow….but these don’t work on their own

• Instead, consider following a progression from old information (in the subject position or toward the end of the previous sentence) to new information (toward the end of the next sentence).

• **Must be balanced with some repetition of the main “character” in the passage.**
### Linking words & transition phrases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USE</th>
<th>TRANSITION WORDS</th>
<th>TRANSITION PHRASE</th>
<th>TRANSITION SENTENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td>again, also, further, furthermore, in addition, moreover</td>
<td>In addition to X, we... Besides X,...</td>
<td>Further experiments showed that...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversion</td>
<td>clearly, evidently, obviously, undesirably</td>
<td>As seen in... In the same way</td>
<td>Granted that X is...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison</td>
<td>also, likewise, similarly, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrast</td>
<td>but, however, nevertheless, nonetheless, still, yet</td>
<td>In contrast to A,... On one hand, or the other hand... Despite X,... Unlike X,... On the contrary,...</td>
<td>One difference is that... Although X differed...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example</td>
<td>for example, specifically</td>
<td>To illustrate X,...</td>
<td>An example of X is that..., That is,...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>here, therefore, in short</td>
<td>Because of X,... In this experiment,...</td>
<td>One reason is that... Because X is... The purpose of X was to...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>for this purpose,</td>
<td>For the purpose of... To this end,... To determine XYZ, we...</td>
<td>Evidence for XYZ was that... Analysis of ABC showed that...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result</td>
<td>consequently, generally, hence, therefore, thus</td>
<td>As a result of...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence/ time</td>
<td>after, finally, first, last, initially, meanwhile, next</td>
<td>After careful analysis of X,...</td>
<td>After X was completed,...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>in brief, in conclusion, in fact, in short, in summary</td>
<td>During centrifugation,... When we determined X,...</td>
<td>As a summary of our results shows...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Hofmann's *Scientific Writing and Communication* (p. 110)
The biological clock functions regardless of the normal 24-hour cycle of light and darkness. Light is involved in resetting and regulating the clock.

Although the biological clock functions regardless of the normal 24-hour cycle of light and darkness, light is involved in (or: plays an important role in) resetting and regulating the clock.
To Diagnose & Revise

1. Underline the first 6 or 7 words of sentence.
2. Is there something in those words that connects to the previous sentence?
3. If not, is it because the main character is repeated instead (often you will refer to the previous sentence and repeat a character simultaneously)?
4. Do you rely on a linking word to fake a transition?
5. Revise so that the first 6 or 7 words refer to familiar information, either a new idea from the previous sentence and/or a character.

Modified slightly from Williams, Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace & Booth, et al, The Craft of Research
Animals, particularly domestic animals, are important reservoirs and sources of diseases to humans. Salmonella species are normally found in the intestinal tract of animals such as poultry and cattle. When humans ingest contaminated food, the salmonellae can cause disease called Salmonellosis. In terms of animal disease transmission, humans often represent a dead end because the disease cannot be transferred from human to human. Salmonellosis may be acquired from animals, but the infected human can also serve as a source of disease to other humans.
Animals, particularly domestic animals, are important reservoirs and sources of disease to humans. *Salmonella* species are normally found in the intestinal tract of animals such as poultry and cattle. When humans ingest contaminated food, the salmonellae can cause disease called *Salmonellosis*. In terms of animal disease transmission, humans often represent a dead end because the disease cannot be transferred from human to human. *Salmonellosis* may be acquired from animals, but the infected human can also serve as a source of disease to other humans.
Problems with old-to-new, character repetition, & linking words?

Handout:

Revise this paragraph so that the topic is clearer and create a balance between topic/subject repetition, old-to-new info structure, and linking words.
Animals, particularly domestic animals, are important reservoirs and sources of disease to humans. Animals such as poultry and cattle, for example, often carry *Salmonella* species in their intestinal tracts. When these animals become contaminated food for humans, the salmonellae can cause disease called *Salmonellosis*. Although humans often represent a dead end for animal disease transmission, a human infected with *Salmonellosis* can serve as a source of disease to other humans.
Degree to which errors bother readers

- Word choice
- Word location
- Sentence structure
- Sentence location
- Paragraph structure
- Paragraph location
- Section Structure
- Section Location

From Scientific Writing and Communication (Hofmann)
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