

# Organization

Organization is the internal structure of the piece. Think of it as being like an animal's skeleton, or the framework of a building under construction. Organization holds the whole thing together. That's why it's such an important trait. Many students say it is also one of the hardest traits to master. Maybe so. Isn't it hard sometimes to organize your room? Attic? Garage? Closet? Or to organize your time? A party? A trip? Absolutely! Organizing your writing is much the same. You have to ask, Where do I begin? What comes next? After that? Which things go together? Which can be left out? How do I tie up the loose ends?

## 1 Just beginning

- ☐ My writing doesn't have a real shape or direction yet.
- ☐ I'm not sure where to begin or where to go next.
- ☐ What goes with what?
- ☐ How does my information connect to the main idea?
- ☐ Ideas seem jumbled, scrambled. It's just a list of stuff.
- ☐ How do I end this?

## 3 On my way -- ready for serious revision

- ☐ It's partly smooth, partly bumpy. Some shape. Some direction. You won't feel lost if you pay attention!
- ☐ I have a beginning, but I'm not sure if it's a grabber. How many readers will keep going?
- ☐ Usually, you can see how I got from point to point, but you might need to make some leaps.
- ☐ Most things are in the right spot. Some things might need to be moved.
- ☐ I have a conclusion. It might not be as punchy or insightful as I'd like.

## 5 That's it! Clear and compelling, easy to follow!

- ☐ I give my reader a strong sense of direction. The structure of my paper helps make the meaning clear.
- ☐ My opening gets a reader's attention and gives a clue about what's coming.
- ☐ Everything seems in order. You won't feel like reshuffling the deck.
- ☐ I've made the connections so clear you'll see just how details link to the main idea.
- ☐ The pacing is just right. I sped along when there wasn't much to tell, but slowed down when details and close-ups were needed.
- ☐ I didn't stop suddenly or drag the paper out. I ended in a good spot—and with a good thought. My conclusion will make you linger a moment.