

# ***DukeWrites* Enrichment Suite**

## **Essay structure, part one (1B)**

*With Margaret Swezey, Assistant Director of Writing Studio*

Paragraph 3: Amputation functioned as one of the most widely used weapons of terror during the civil war; an estimated four to ten thousand of the nation's four and a half million people lost limbs during its eleven-year span. Several ideas explain why amputation likely came to be such a prominent tool of war. To begin, it appears "that the practice was self-consciously designed to export the war to the global community by exploiting the Western media's appetite for sensationalism" and further, that victims were often figurative messengers [that] served a symbolic role to broadcast the power of the perpetrator." Whatever the rationale behind its use, amputation produced more than a severing of limbs. "Severed hands, ears, and limbs became testaments to attempts to remove the self from self-conceptions, separating people from their previous experiences of living in their bodies." In other words, amputations tore individuals away from their communities by marking them as disabled members of society. It destroyed their senses of personal autonomy, a reality necessitating certain rehabilitative efforts focused on communal healing".

This paragraph is about amputation, a widespread practice during in the war. It talks about the impact that amputation had on individual people and society as a whole. And I particularly see that fear from amputations tore individuals away from their communities by marking them as disabled members of society. It destroyed their senses of personal autonomy, a reality necessitating certain rehabilitative efforts focused on communal healing".

And what I'm going to write up here as the main idea is amputation ~ again we're trying to be brief ~ encapsulate the main idea of the paragraph but in a brief form. Amputation very destructive. You could just say in many ways or you could say what some of those ways are. Physically, socially, and psychologically, points made by this paragraph.

Paragraph 4: Sierra Leone's civil war particularly impacted the nation's children, who experienced it as soldiers, refugees, orphans, and victims. Children constitute nearly 42 percent of Sierra Leone's population, and the war exerted a far-reaching, destructive influence on the lives of these youth. Child amputees provide one of the most visually striking images of this influence, as their bodies both bear the physical marks of war and symbolize the permanent damage it has inflicted on individuals, communities, and the nation as a whole.

These children and their dramatic losses constitute a unique lens through which to view the war and the people's response to it. As anthropologist Mariane Ferme states, "Because they do not yet embody distinct social identities, children can cross boundaries between ordinary and ritual practices, and between public and secret discursive domains, which adults are more reluctant to transgress."

With this unique capability to maintain a more fluid presence in society, children seem distinctively equipped to confront their past experiences, redefine their senses of self, and reestablish their places within the community following the war."

This paragraph is about children, particularly child amputees and makes the argument that children are more socially flexible and therefore better able to "confront their past experiences, redefine their senses of self, and reestablish their places within the community" because of this kind of social flexibility.

So what I would say here, you might say this a little differently. There's certainly the possibility of lots of variation here. But I would say: Children are more socially flexible and so they're able to confront the past ~ and redefine self. That's kind of long and you might come up with a shorter way to say that that encapsulates the main idea of this paragraph.