

## Exercise 7

### Rewriting and Paragraphing an Essay

**Directions.** Below is a student-written essay without any paragraphing. In addition, it lacks adequate transitions, and, finally, some of the sentences are out of order. Rewrite the essay remedying these problems. Be ready to explain your changes to your group.

The United States of America is often called a melting pot. My mother is Mexican-American, and my father is Pakistani. People from around the world make up the population of the United States. When I look in the mirror, I see two cultures embodied within me. These two individuals came together to create one person, and although they came from two very different backgrounds, their religion, culture, and values are very similar. My father is of the Muslim faith while my mother is Catholic. Muslims celebrate the month of Ramadan, during which they fast. They wake up before sunrise and feast. Throughout the day there is absolutely no consumption of food or drink until sunset. One may wonder how Islam and Catholicism can be similar. The fasting usually continues for approximately forty days. At the end of the forty days there is a big celebration called Eid Day. This day is filled with monetary gifts, lots of food, and fancy dresses. Many years ago, fasting was common among Catholics. Over the years the rules and customs have slightly changed. Catholics have a similar practice. Lent is a time of fasting. When Lent has come to an end, Easter is celebrated. Easter is a day filled with Easter egg hunts, barbecues, and family gatherings. During Lent Catholics may choose to sacrifice a particular habit, and on Fridays they do not eat meat. Some Catholics choose to fast like the Muslims do. Muslim and Catholic practices are done in order to build tolerance and self-control. They are offered as sacrifices to show God appreciation. Catholics and Muslims share many of the same beliefs, only interpreted somewhat differently. Both religions believe in a supernatural being called God or Allah. Both accept Jesus. The difference is that Muslims do not accept the holy trinity. They do not believe Jesus was the Son of God; they believe he was simply a prophet. Muslims do not eat pork because the Koran forbids this action. Many Catholics do eat pork; the Jewish tradition also forbids this action. Catholics read from the Bible; Muslims read from the Koran. Pakistani culture and Mexican culture may appear dissimilar; if one were to dig a little into each culture, one would find surprising similarities. When it is time to eat, Pakistani women serve the men and allow them to eat first and socialize. After the men have filled their bellies, the women and children sit down and eat. The role that men and women play in each society is surprisingly parallel. Mexican families do the exact same thing. The only difference is that Pakistani families eat on the floor while Mexican families usually eat at tables. Men are the “breadwinners,” and women must be submissive to their husbands, waiting on them hand and foot. Most Pakistani women feel this treatment is honorable. There is a strong sense of sex roles within both cultures. Marriage in both cultures is also similar. In most Pakistani marriages, the parents of the girl and boy to be engaged arrange the union of these two individuals. The biggest secret in my mother’s family is that my grandparents were first cousins. It is not uncommon for first cousins to join in marriage. In Mexico, many years ago parents suggested suitable life-long partners for their children. Marriage between first cousins was also common. My father’s family openly accepts the union of my uncle and my aunt who are first cousins. Since Pakistan is on the other side of the world from Mexico, one might wonder what values Pakistani and Mexican people could share. There is usually a family function every week, whether it be a brunch or dinner. They share many of the same values. For example, both are extremely family-oriented. Close contact

between aunts, uncles, and cousins is common. Both cultures have similar moral codes. Fidelity is a moral value shared by both cultures. Pre-marital sex is forbidden. There are those who choose not to accept this particular moral, but for the most part this is a moral shared by both cultures. If a woman became pregnant out of wedlock she would face extreme consequences. In Pakistan, she could be put to death. Today, family values usually out-weigh this moral value. Most families tend to be understanding, especially when there is a child involved. It is unheard of to be unfaithful in a relationship. Today, cultures from around the world mingle freely. Mexican culture is a descendant of Aztec and Spanish cultures. Aztec culture was descended from an earlier group of people, and the pattern continues. Basically, we all originated from the same group of people, and the way things are going, some day there will be no distinction among races. We will be the human race. I am an example of what is to come.