



Note the clear and direct topic sentence. You know exactly what this paragraph is about



Model paragraph (from Vitousek (1991) Biogeochemistry 13: 87-115)

The physiology of nitrogen limitation is relatively well understood. Producers require larger quantities of nitrogen than of other nutrients, and nitrogen is more costly (energetically) to obtain and use (Gutschick 1981). A large fraction of the nitrogen in primary producers functions directly in capturing energy in photosynthesis (Evans & Seemann 1989), and there is a strong correlation between the amount of nitrogen in terrestrial plants and their photosynthetic capacity (Field & Mooney 1986).



Notice how the writer ties together the results from two studies in a sentence that is clear and easy to read. You know what each study found and how the results are related to each other

At first glance, this paragraph may seem like a simple one to write - that's because it has been so well-written. The author has a very specific purpose in writing this paragraph and that clarity comes through in the writing. The topic sentence is clear and direct. The author chooses studies whose results are relevant to the topic and that provide support to his assertion in the topic sentence. The summary of the results is crafted so that the reader can easily transition from reading the results of one study to the next. This is a result of careful, thoughtful writing and organization. The results are presented in a logical way which helps the reader to process the overall meaning of the paragraph.