

topic sentence
evidence for some aspect of the topic
sentence introducing one aspect of topic

analysis / interpretation of evidence → "close reading"
concluding sentence / transition to next paragraph

The Grandmother's understanding of family grows more complex when Bailey is killed by Hiram and Bobby Lee and she faces the Misfit alone. As I have demonstrated, the Grandmother's usual way of relating to Bailey is to nag him. But when he is killed, the Grandmother reacts in a way that reveals deep feelings for her son. Hearing gun shots, she cries out "'Bailey Boy, Bailey Boy!' as if her heart would break" (1947). Up to now, the Grandmother has been calling her son by his first name, "Bailey." The name "Bailey Boy" is a term of endearment she maybe called her son when he was younger. Her use of it suggests a shift in the way she perceives her son, that she sees him not as the grown man she nags, but the little boy she raised and nurtured. Also, the narrator characterizes the tone of her call to Bailey "as if her heart would break." This detail clearly directs readers to see the Grandmother as having a deeper, more caring way of relating to her son than we saw earlier. These tender feelings the Grandmother expresses for her son expand beyond blood ties as she gets deeper into her dealings with the Misfit. The Grandmother at one point calls out to her son "but found she was looking at the Misfit squatting on the ground in front of her" (1944). This significant mistake suggests some recognition that a relationship exists between these two characters. Soon after this moment, something happens that suggests even more strongly a tie between the Misfit and the Grandmother. When Bobby Lee and Hiram return from killing Bailey, they throw Bailey's shirt to the Misfit, who puts it on, and, we are told, the Grandmother "couldn't name what the shirt reminded her of" (1946). The shirt ought to remind her of her son, who was wearing the shirt when she last saw him. But the Grandmother does not think of her son and "cannot name" anything else. She is on the verge of articulating her relationship with the Misfit, who is wearing the shirt, and whom she found herself looking at while she called her son's name mere moments earlier. The Grandmother's view of family is clearly changing at this point, but it is during the most intense moment of her interaction with the Misfit that her view of kinship evolves most significantly.

topic sentence

concluding sentence

sentence introducing new aspect of topic

sentence containing evidence for some aspect of the topic

sentence elaborating or explaining evidence

Josef Fritzl created dangerous situations for many people by secretly holding his own daughter captive for 24 years in his basement and forcing her to have an incestuous relationship with him. Obviously, he endangered his daughter and the children she bore him. In the article we read, author Mark Lander explains that one child died at birth, another became so ill that he took her to the hospital, and Fritzl's daughter needed immediate psychiatric care once she was let out of the basement (1-2). Clearly, Fritzl's desire to hide these people would damaged them physically and mentally. Fritzl's secret also was dangerous to his wife, Rosemarie. Landers reports that Rosemarie "had no inkling of his secret life," but the amount of deception necessary for a secret so large and kept so long surely raised questions in Rosemarie's mind (1). Those questions may not be life-threatening, but they likely caused her pain. She probably wondered what her husband was involved in that made him so secretive and worried about her daughter's life in the cult Fritzl claimed she joined. Finally, Fritzl's secret posed a great danger to himself. He forced his daughter to have his children and played out his incestuous fantasy in secret for so many years, he prevented himself from getting psychiatric help to deal with his unhealthy fantasies. This might be the largest danger of all, because it was Fritzl's secret that hurt so many others. Indeed, Fritzl's secret proved to be a danger that spread like a rash to anyone involved with keeping his secret, whether they were forced to do it or were even aware they were doing it.