Two-chunk Paragraphs: Explanation & Example

When writing essay paragraphs, it's helpful to have a formula in mind to write enough detail. In a detailed paragraph, think of writing two "chunks."

A chunk consists of a concrete detail and two sentences of commentary.

 A concrete detail is a fact from a story, or research you've done; preferably, this detail is an exact quote from the text you're analyzing.

 Commentary explains WHY this concrete detail is important. What additional meaning does it add? How does it fit some kind of pattern, universal idea, or theme?

A two-chunk paragraph would follow this formula of at least eight sentences:

1) Topic Sentence (TS) – SUPPORTING CLAIM: Introduce the SUPPORTING. First sentence.

2) Concrete Detail #1 (CD 1) - EVIDENCE: A fact from the story, or the research you have done, like a quote.

3) Commentary (C) – ANALYSIS: Demonstrate the relevance/importance ~ Think: how does the CD #1 proves/supports the topic sentence?

4) Commentary (C) - ANALYSIS: Demonstrate the relevance/importance ~ Think: how does the CD #1 proves/supports the topic sentence?

5) Concrete Detail #2 (CD 2) – EVIDENCE: A fact from the story, or the research you have done, like a quote.

6) Commentary (C) - ANALYSIS: Demonstrate the relevance/importance ~ Think: how does the CD #2 proves/supports the topic sentence?

7) Commentary (C) - ANALYSIS: Demonstrate the relevance/importance ~ Think: how does the CD #2 proves/supports the topic sentence?

8) Concluding Sentence (CS) - A final thought to wrap up the paragraph.

In the below two-chunk paragraph, label the sentences using the following letters: TS, CD1, CM, CM,, CD2, CM, CM, CS.

"Black Bart" Bartholomew Roberts was one of the most successful pirates in the

Golden Age of Piracy in the early 1700's. Roberts created what is now known as the

Pirate's Code, "a list of articles, or rules, that promoted fairness and equality on

board his ship." It could be said that the ideas of democracy could be traced back

to the Pirate's Code. Without the Pirate's Code, America might not have become the

democracy we know it as today. A diary by one of Black Bart's crew members also

state "he was chosen to be captain by monthly vote." Just like the President of the

United States is elected, so was Black Bart. Indeed, the crewmembers were like

happy citizens who got along well; their happiness is inferred because no talk of

mutiny exists in the diary. Although it might be a surprise given that these pirates

were blood thirsty killers, they did bring about the start of democracy and equality

for all for America.