

6. Using the overhead projector or blackboard, go through the process of selecting details for the topic sentence, "Fast food is not as varied and nutritious as home-cooked meals" (or another topic sentence more relevant to the class). Write in columns details students suggest for the key phrases "fast food," "real home-cooked meals," and the attitude words, "varied" and "nutritious."

Start by suggesting several of the following details:

Fast Food

- hot dogs—always greasy with mustard on a bun
- hamburgers—full of fat
- tacos—hard to eat, high in calories
- French fries—full of salt, fried in fat
- no side dishes of vegetables or fresh fruit
- rich desserts with few vitamins

Real Home-cooked Meals

- hot vegetables, properly seasoned
- fresh seafood, baked or broiled
- lean meat or turkey
- pasta with tomato sauce
- side dishes—rice or baked potatoes, fresh vegetables, salads
- wheat breads, yogurt, fruit

When a satisfactory list has been compiled, cross off any details that are irrelevant and point out that they do not support the topic sentence.

7. Have students complete **Handout 40** with partners.

Dancing Defeat

Directions: Read this paragraph carefully and answer the questions that follow.

My vibrant grandmother is a determined person who seldom gives up a course of action once she has embarked on it. Last spring, after she had heard that ballroom dancing was becoming the rage again, she got it into her head that she should become my dancing teacher. Consequently, one Sunday evening she took me aside and talked very seriously and frankly with me. "Mick," she said, "I want you to have grace, charm, and poise." I countered that I already possessed these qualities in super-abundance. Without raising an eyebrow, she proceeded with her argument. "I want my grandson to know all the dances popular when I was a girl: the waltz, the polka, the foxtrot." I assured her I was content being an expert in the dances that are popular right now. It was as if she hadn't heard a word I said. She turned on the stereo, placed a record on the turntable, and whirled me to my feet. My ears and feet, unaccustomed to the rhythm of a waltz, did not respond. She expertly set us into position. "One, two, three, four," she counted. "Step, together; step, together; turn," she commanded. So intent was she on helping me float about the floor, I desperately tried to oblige. Unfortunately, my size elevens kept colliding with her size sixes. In my vain effort to spin around gracefully, I began losing my balance. I knew the lesson was almost over when one of the legs of the coffee table collapsed after receiving a vicious blow from one of my larger-than-life hiking boots. When her prize antique vase crashed to the floor, strewing it with green and white pieces in several shapes and sizes, my elegant grandmother gave up in despair, but not in disgust. Even in defeat she maintained a gentle dignity, indicating that her determination had been dealt a blow but remained indestructible, nevertheless.

1. What is the limited topic of the paragraph?
2. What is the attitude?
3. List the specific details that support the topic sentence.
4. Is the closing sentence a good one? Why?

