Writing a Body Paragraph

Your thesis statement for the essay will be what you wrote on page 3 under “How does Barry characterize scientific research?”

Think about how you want to organize your essay. If, for instance, the devices you are going to discuss are diction, repetition, and antithetical ideas, you could write one paragraph characterizing Barry’s diction, one the repetition, and one the antithetical ideas. Or you could organize your essay according to Barry’s main ideas. However you organize, make sure you connect the devices you are discussing to meaning (how Barry characterizes scientific research.)

A well-developed body paragraph should consist of an assertion, textual evidence, and analysis/commentary.

I. **Claim/Assertion**: a particular insight you have about how Barry characterizes scientific research

II. **Textual evidence**: quotations or paraphrase from the text

III. **Analysis**: further explanation and elaboration of the assertion

Analysis, along with your assertion, is a crucial element in each paragraph. In analysis, you explore the possibilities which connect your textual evidence to the author’s meaning. This is the place to be creative, to allow your mind to forge new ideas which express the author’s intent in using a particular rhetorical device.
Here is a sample body paragraph containing all three of these elements:

Barry uses antithetical ideas to illustrate the uncertainty that the true scientist must learn to accept if he/she is to make sense of the unknown.

In the third paragraph, Barry contrasts the scientist’s work with the possibility that all that work could be lost with one new “laboratory finding.” In paragraph four, he contrasts the idea of the “unknown,” knowledge which “exist[s] on the frontier,” with the “known,” knowledge which has already been tried and tested.

The antithetical ideas Barry uses help portray the characteristics of the true researcher: a person willing to enter into the wilderness and endure the uncertainty and humility required to obtain new scientific information. A true researcher must live on the edge, in a sense—on the edge of new knowledge, on the edge of possible refutation of everything he/she had always believed to be true. To reach the “known,” a researcher will be willing to experience the confusing and frustrating nature of the “unknown.”

Complete the following body paragraph, adding textual evidence and analysis.

In the fourth paragraph, Barry uses an analogy to help explain the precarious nature of obtaining scientific knowledge.