

## A Brief Guide to Writing Paragraphs

well organized paragraph does wonders to make writing clear and help guide a reader through all the important ideas. What follows is a general breakdown of different types, parts, and examples of academic paragraphs to help illuminate what makes a paragraph work.

- **Topic Sentence:** The topic sentence is often ( but not always) the first sentence in a paragraph . It introduces the main idea of the paragraph. This sentence is basically a summary of the argument you're making in the paragraph. Though it doesn't necessarily have to go at the beginning of a sentence, that is often where your reader is looking for it, and putting it at the beginning will definitely make your intentions clear. Make clear what your paragraph will be about.
- **Evidence:** (supporting details) In an analytical paper, evidence usually comes in the form of information or examples gathered from sources, often presented as quotes. Though evidence is a key part of paragraphs, it should not be the main focus or take up more real estate than your argument. This is your paper, and your ideas are the most important part. They come after the topic sentence making up the body of a paragraph.
- **Development:** Your idea should be fully developed within the paragraph. In this sense, paragraphs that have only three or four sentences probably don't fully consider your idea. Analysis, description, data, and examples are all ways that ideas can be developed.
- **Cohesion:** Paragraphs should also be unified and coherent. That is, they should be their own developed unit of writing.
- **Transitions:** These can be a great way to flow from one paragraph to the next. Personally, I like to have my topic sentence as the first sentence, so I try to use the last sentence of the previous paragraph to prep my reader for the next idea I'm going to cover.
- **concluding sentence** (Closing sentence): is the last sentence in the paragraph. It is often similar to the topic sentence and reminds the reader of the topic and focus of the paragraph, but it should use different words, if possible. It restates the main idea of your paragraph using different words

## Topic sentences : Exercises

Choose a topic sentence Look at the supporting sentences in these short paragraphs and choose the best topic sentence.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Mine is ten years old, and it is always breaking down when I need it. It costs a lot of money for repairs each year. Also, the heater doesn't work anymore, so it is cold in the winter. I really wish I could change it.

### **Choose the best topic sentence:**

- A. My car is very old.
- B. I wish I could buy a new car.
- C. My car costs a lot of money.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ The teachers are all very old and boring. The courses are not good. The buildings are old and dirty and there is no heating in them. Worst of all, it takes me two hours to get there. I wish I had gone to a different college

### **Choose the best topic sentence:**

- A. My college is too old.
- B. I don't like the teachers at my college.
- C. I really hate my college

**Example:**

Canada is one of the best countries in the world to live in. First, Canada has an excellent health care system. All Canadians have access to medical services at a reasonable price. Second, Canada has a high standard of education. Students are taught by well-trained teachers and are encouraged to continue studying at university. Finally, Canada's cities are clean and efficiently managed. Canadian cities have many parks and lots of space for people to live. As a result, Canada is a desirable place to live.