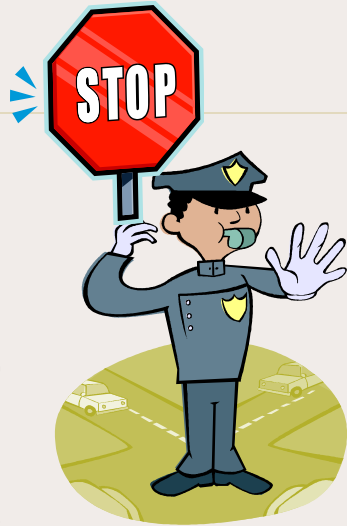


Jane Schaffer Writing Strategy

How to Write an Effective Paragraph



The Prompt



Before writing anything, know your assignment— **READ THE PROMPT!**
What are you being asked to do?

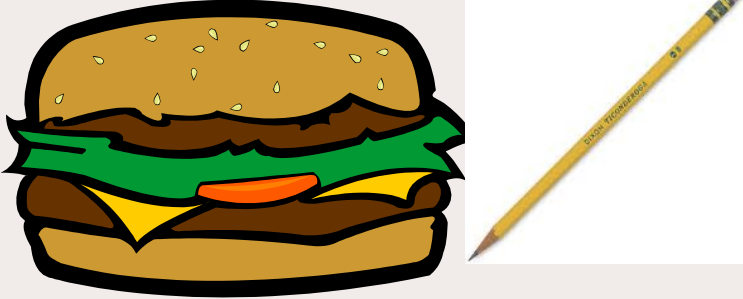
Get Ready to Color Your World!

How to Write an Effective Paragraph

- Materials: When we write, we will use blue, red, and green colored pencils.
 - **BLUE** is for Topic Sentences (**TS**) and Concluding Sentences (**CS**).
 - **RED** is for Concrete Details (**CD**).
 - **GREEN** is for Commentary Sentences (**CM**).



Step 1: TOPIC SENTENCE

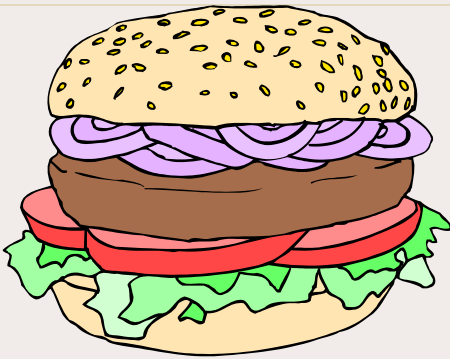
- A Topic Sentence (TS) is the top bun of a hamburger. 
- TS = first sentence of the paragraph. It shows the main idea.
- Usually a mildly controversial statement--something that you have to prove. It can be as brief as 3 words!

Example Topic Sentence (TS)

- 1) My life is made up of moments and memories.



Step 2: CONCRETE DETAILS



- Concrete Details (**CD**) are the meat of the hamburger.
- **CD**s = *Support* for your **TS**. (facts, quotes, examples, etc. from text)
- **CD**s can't be argued with—a **CD** is evidence that supports your point!

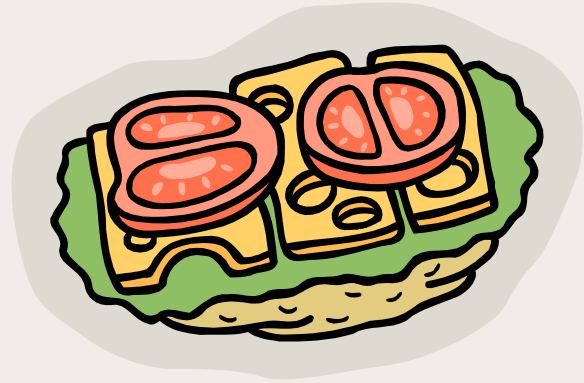
Example Concrete Detail (CD)

2) For example, remembering my mother's warning about failing in school, I build an inner voice who tells me to always do my best.



Step 3: COMMENTARY

- Commentary Sentences (**CM**) are the “extras” on the hamburger—the tomato, cheese, lettuce, mayo—they make it **delicious!**



- **CMs** = your analysis, interpretation, explanation, or insight into the text.

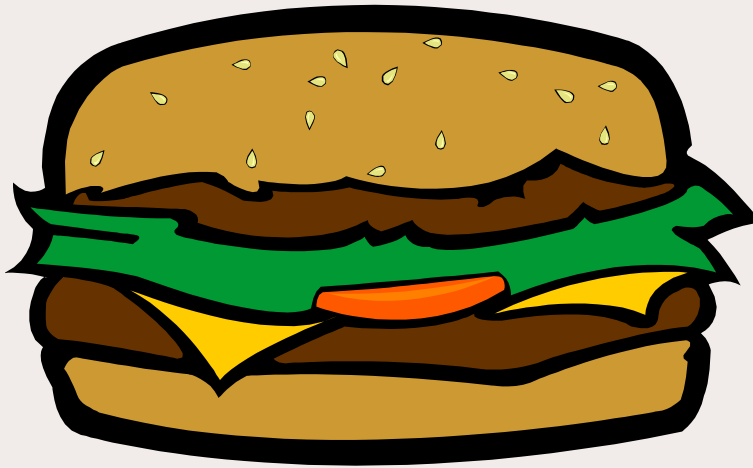
Example Commentary Sentences (2 CMs)

2) For example, remembering my mother's warning about failing in school, I build an inner voice who tells me to always do my best.

3) My mom no longer tells me what to do in life now that I am older. 4) This shows that she trust me to make smart decisions.



Step 4: CONCLUDING SENTENCE



- A concluding sentence (**CS**) is the bottom bun of the hamburger.
- A **CS** wraps up the paragraph. It rephrases the main idea.



Example Concluding Sentence (CS)

5) In conclusion, the memory of my mother pushing me to be successful will never be forgotten.



TS, CD, CM, CS—Now What?

- **CHUNKING**



A combination of CDs and CMs is called a *chunk*.

One Chunk: 1 CD + 2 CM

2) For example, remembering my mother's warning about failing in school, I build an inner voice who tells me to always do my best.

3) My mom no longer tells me what to do in life now that I am older. 4) This shows that she trust me to make smart decisions.

Ratio = 1:2

Transitions



- A good paragraph will also use transition words. These are words or phrases that help readers connect your ideas.
- Example transitions:

For example,

Thus,

In summary,

For instance,

Because of this,

Hence,

Consequently,

As a result,

Therefore,



Does It Flow?



Now you know how to write
a one- chunk paragraph...

LET' S EAT!



Step 6: A Whole Paragraph



My life is made up of moments and memories. For example, remembering my mother's warning about failing in school, I build an inner voice that tells me to always do my best. My mom no longer tells me what to do in life now that I am older. This shows that she trust me to make smart decisions. In conclusion, the memory of my mother pushing me to be successful will never be forgotten.

