



Paragraph

by

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Definition of Paragraph

- A paragraph is made of a few sentences that talk about ONE single topic. You should have at least five to seven sentences in your paragraph.
- Your topic can have some evidence or examples to support it, but these should all be related to each other. Do not introduce any new topic.
- Each paragraph should have [coherence and cohesion.](#)

Different Parts of a Paragraph: Topic Sentence

A Topic Sentence is a sentence that tells the reader what your paragraph is about. You can write your topic sentence in the beginning, middle, or end of your paragraph. If you are a new writer, it might be easier for you to start your paragraph with your topic sentence and take it from there.

Remember this formula:

Topic Sentence = Topic + Controlling Idea

Controlling Idea

- As the name suggests, controlling idea controls your thoughts and ideas. The controlling idea tells your reader what specific aspect of this topic you are going to write about. [\(See Example\)](#)

Example of Topic Sentence and Controlling Idea

- Look at the following word:

Raw Vegetables

- If I say raw vegetable, nobody will know what I will write about raw vegetables. I could write about how they are planted, what they are used for, different recipes calling for raw vegetables, the vitamins in them, etc.
- By writing a controlling idea, I can clarify what I am talking about.

Look at the following example:

Raw vegetables might not be as healthy as we thought they were.

- Here I made it clear that I am going to talk about the health related aspect of raw vegetables. So, my topic is “raw vegetables” and my controlling idea is “might not be as healthy as we thought they were”. I also started my sentence with a shocking claim that raw vegetables might actually be harmful!

Different Parts of a Paragraph: Supporting Details

If your paragraph has five sentences, usually the three sentences after the Topic Sentence are called the Supporting Details (Sentences). These sentences give explanation, evidence, and reason for your claim. [\(See Example\)](#)

Example of Supporting Sentence

- Take the example of our paragraph about Raw Vegetables. I can write three supporting sentences bringing evidence to support my claim that raw vegetables might not be as healthy for you.

Read the first supporting sentence below:

We all agree that raw vegetables are full of vitamins and minerals, but some of these raw vegetables can also carry toxic ingredients that can cause severe harm to your health if you don't cook them.

Different Parts of A Paragraph: Concluding Sentence

The last sentence in your paragraph is called a Concluding Sentence. The Concluding Sentence does NOT introduce anything new. It either summarizes what you already talked about or paraphrases the Topic Sentence. [\(See Example\)](#)

Example of Concluding Sentence

- Raw vegetables have always been considered one of our best friends when it comes to our diet, but we should always familiarize ourselves with the ingredients inside them and the best way to eat them: cooked or uncooked.

Narrative Paragraph

- In a Narrative Paragraph, you will share your story or what happened with your reader. Again, to get your readers involved in your story in a better way, try using the Journalists' Questions: why, who, where, what, when, where. Try to write the events in your story chronologically (in order of their occurrence).

Descriptive Paragraph

- In a Descriptive Paragraph, you should try to engage your reader by answering the Journalists' Questions: why, who, where, what, when, where. If applicable, you should also describe how you, as the writer, felt. You should use active voice (normal) verbs in this kind of paragraph. In sentences with active voice verbs we know who the doer of the action is. For example: George washed my car yesterday.

Process Paragraph

A Process Paragraph gives your reader a step by step of how to do things, for example, cooking, building, or assembling something. The kinds of verbs you use in this paragraph, should be imperative. Imperative verbs are the base form of the verbs used to address the person in front of you, such as drink, wash, grate, etc.

Classification Paragraph

In Classification Paragraph, you need to put items into different groups or categories where they belong based on a criteria or rule. You should start by identifying what it is that you are classifying. You can categorize things from the most educational to the least educational, or from the most watched TV show to the least watched TV show, but make sure that your categories are consistent. In this type of paragraph you do both comparing and defining.

Definition Paragraph

- In a Definition Paragraph you explain something to the reader: an unfamiliar term, concept, or a cultural event, etc. You can do this by likening it to something your audience is familiar with, or by giving synonyms and explanations for it.

Coherence vs. Cohesion

- When you write an essay, it should be both cohesive and coherent. An essay is cohesive if the parts in it are linked together. An essay is coherent if it makes sense.

Compare the following sentences

- I am a doctor. A doctor works in a hospital. It is a place where you cure sick people. Patients get medication from a pharmacy. (this paragraph makes no sense-although it seems like the words in it refer to the same things. So, it is cohesive, but not coherent.)
- I am a doctor. I work in a hospital nearby. This hospital is a modern one with good facilities. Our main goal is to serve and care for sick people. At times patients need love and care more than medication. (This paragraph is both cohesive and coherent).

Suggested Reading

Look for the following files at:

http://www.qu.edu.qa/students/services/writinglab/Online_Resources/OnlineResources.php

- Essay
- Be Your Own Editor
- Sneaky Grammar
- Research
- IELTS

If you have any questions or suggestions, please
do not hesitate to contact me at:

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