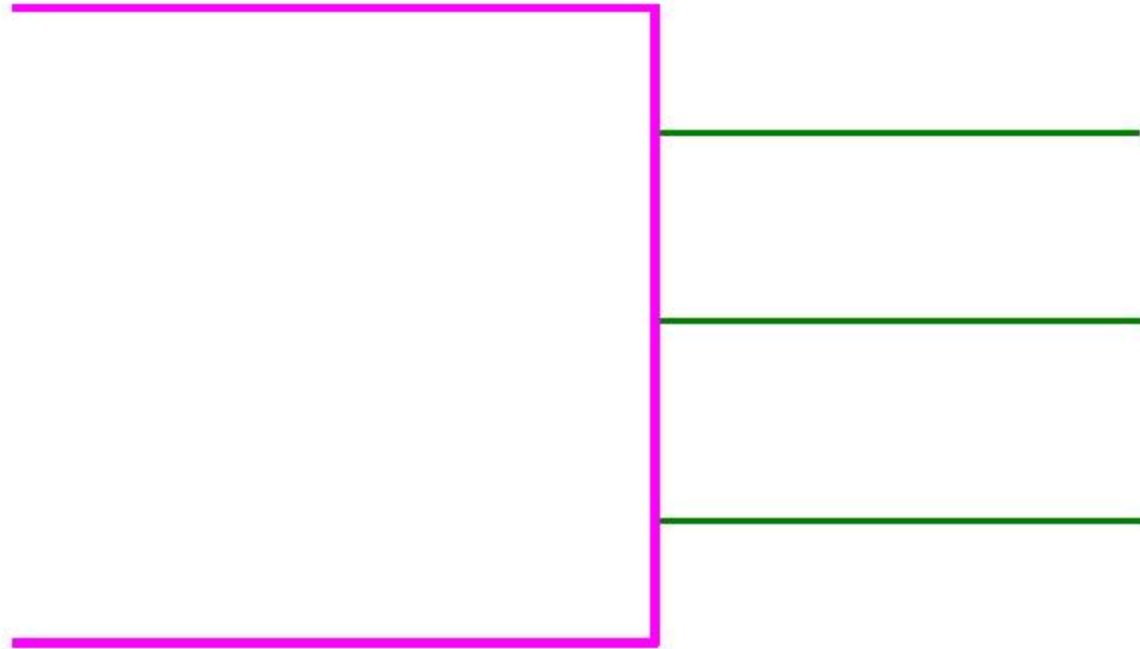


# Paragraph Writing and Web Mapping

Please make sure to review the following points on how to write a basic paragraph. This should help your writing to unfold more clearly and logically. Let's begin with the paragraph. Consider the diagram below. It stands for the five sentence paragraph.



The top line refers to the opening sentence. This is your Main Idea Sentence. It should be made clear at the beginning of your paragraph, and it should be restated in some form in your concluding sentence. The green lines on the right refer to your Supporting Detail Sentences, and the final pink line at the bottom refers to your concluding sentence. See below:

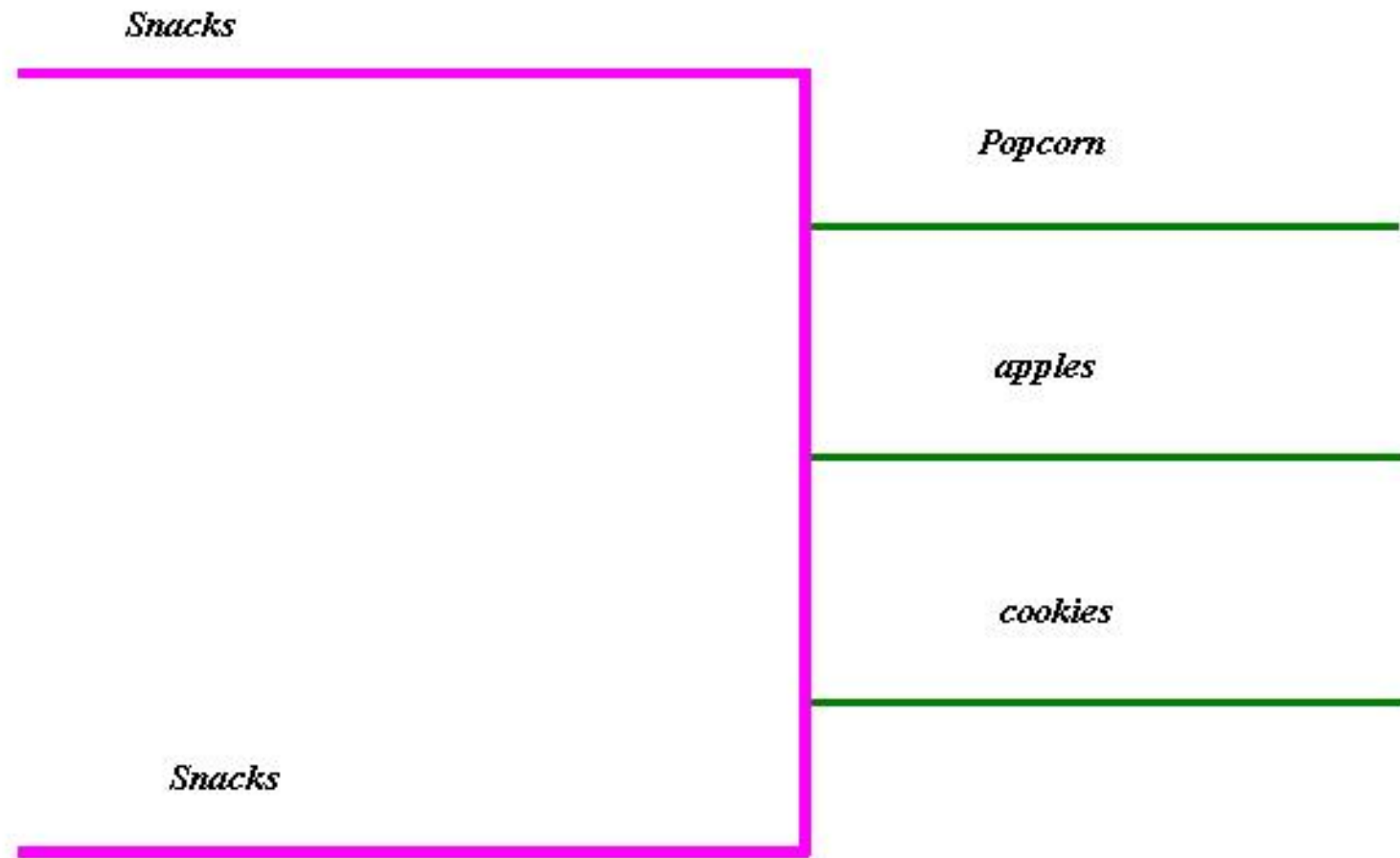
*Opening Sentence*

*Supporting Detail  
Sentence*

*Supporting Detail  
Sentence*

*Supporting Detail  
Sentence*

*Concluding Sentence*



Let's write a paragraph on snacks. The opening sentence should express the main idea, and for our supporting detail sentences we can write about our three favourite snacks. In our conclusion, we return to our main idea.

When I want some snacks to eat, I always look for at least three.

## 5 Sentence Paragraph

First, I look for some popcorn to pop.

Next, I check to see if we have any apples.

Finally, for a dessert snack, I'm pleased if I find some cookies.

I like many snacks, but popcorn, apples, and cookies are my favourite ones.

```
graph LR; A[Sentence Paragraph] --> B[snacks]; A --> C[popcorn]; A --> D[apples]; A --> E[cookies]; B --> F[microwave]; B --> G[chocolate chip]; C --> H[my dad bought]; D --> I[chocolate chip]; E --> J[chocolate chip]
```

## 8 Sentence Paragraph

```
graph LR; A[Sentence Paragraph] --> B[snacks]; A --> C[popcorn]; A --> D[apples]; A --> E[cookies]; B --> F[microwave]; B --> G[chocolate chip]; C --> H[my dad bought]; D --> I[chocolate chip]; E --> J[chocolate chip]
```

In an eight sentence paragraph, we add sub-categories which support and elaborate on the original supporting sentences.

When I want some snacks to eat, I always look for at least three. First, I look for some popcorn to pop. If I find popcorn that I can put in the microwave, I have a fast, easy snack. Next, I check to see if we have any apples. When I'm lucky, I find some that my dad bought at the supermarket. Finally, for a dessert snack, I'm pleased if I find some cookies. My favourite ones are chocolate chip. I like many snacks, but popcorn, apples, and cookies are my favourite ones.

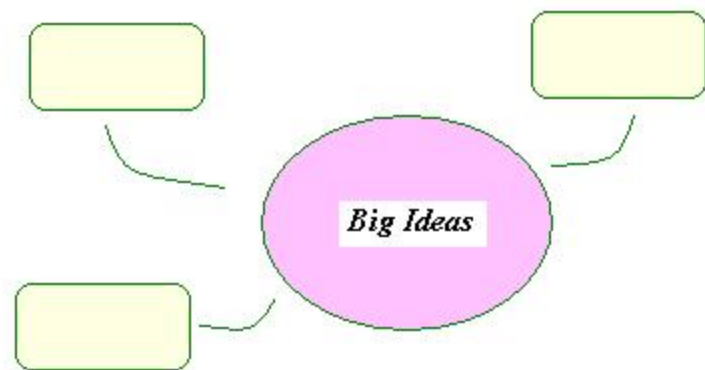
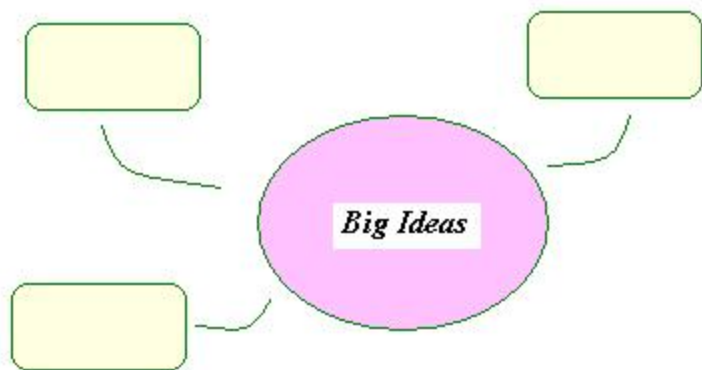
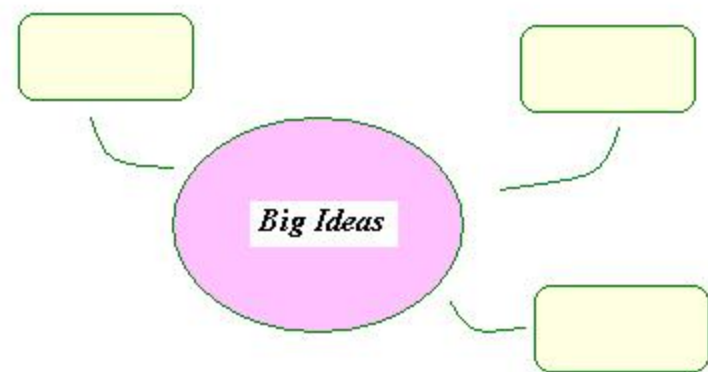
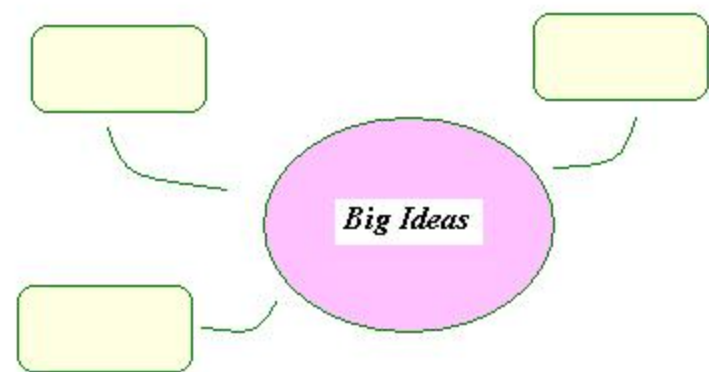
## Transition Words for Supporting Detail Sentences

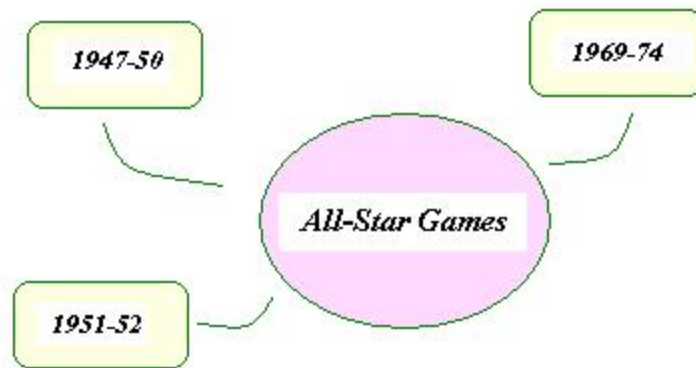
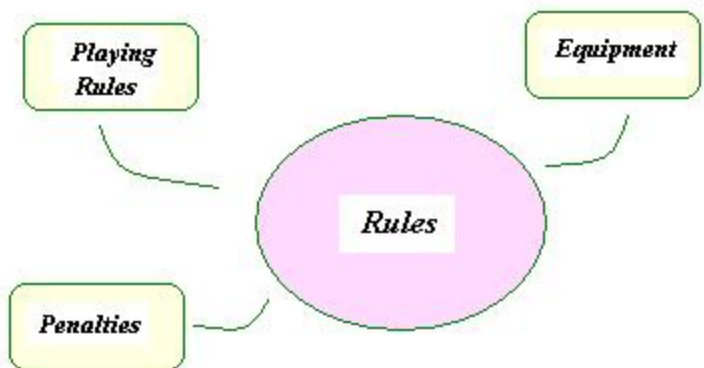
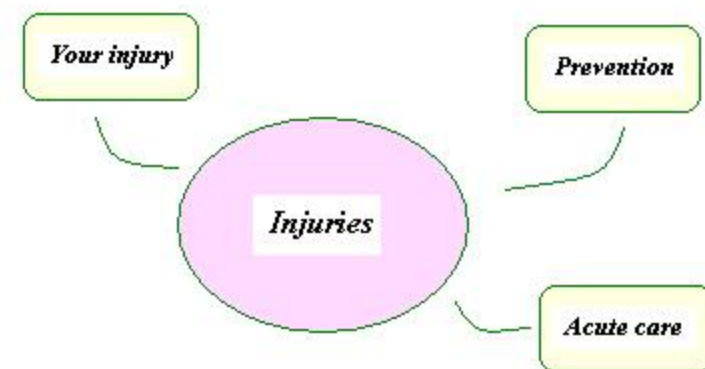
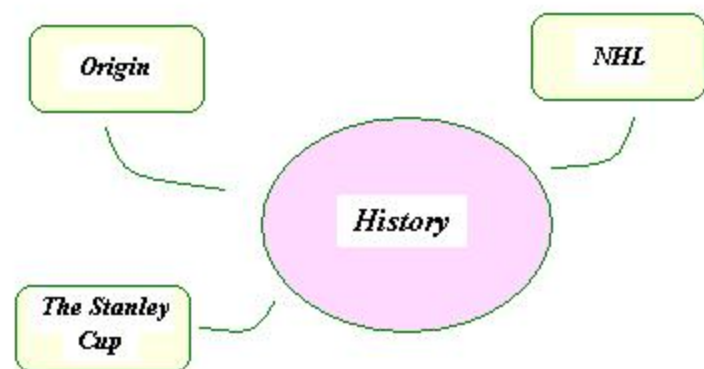
<i><b>First Supporting Detail Sentence</b></i>	<i><b>Second Supporting Detail Sentence</b></i>	<i><b>Third Supporting Detail Sentence</b></i>
<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Third</b>
<b>One</b>	<b>Two</b>	<b>Three</b>
<b>Above all</b>	<b>Then</b>	<b>Last of all</b>
<b>To begin with</b>	<b>Also</b>	<b>Lastly</b>
<b>Firstly</b>	<b>Secondly</b>	<b>Thirdly</b>
<b>First of all</b>	<b>As well as</b>	<b>Finally</b>
<b>Starting with</b>	<b>In addition</b>	<b>In conclusion</b>
	<b>Additionally</b>	<b>At last</b>
	<b>In addition to</b>	<b>As well</b>
	<b>next</b>	



# Essay

When it comes to writing an Essay, brainstorming is very important. Choose what the main idea of your essay is going to be, and then brainstorm on some ideas that center around your main idea. For example, some students want to write about hockey. The main idea is hockey, and some supporting ideas could include *the history of hockey, the rules of the game, penalties, the first all-star team*. Consider the map below:





# Writing an Essay Arguing a Point

Some essays require you to formulate a thesis and argue in defense of the thesis. Here is what such an essay should look like.

Introductory Statement

Thesis Statement

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 2

Paragraph 3

Paragraph 4

Paragraph 5

Paragraph 6

Body

continue

Summary of Supporting Arguments

Restatement of Thesis

Closing Statement

## Introductory Statement

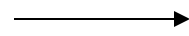
Before you write your introductory statement, you will have to know your **1) topic, 2)** what it is that you are going to **assert** about your topic. Once you have these two, you can formulate your thesis statement. Then you can work on your introductory statement.

So, let's begin with:

## Thesis Statement

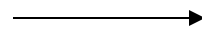
To develop your thesis, you will first want to determine your **topic** and what it is you are going to **assert** about the topic.

Topic



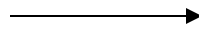
The Importance of Learning How to Think

Assertion



Most people think once or twice a year. But man was made to think.

Thesis



A good life is not possible without knowing how to reason on the basis of first principles.



## Introductory Statement

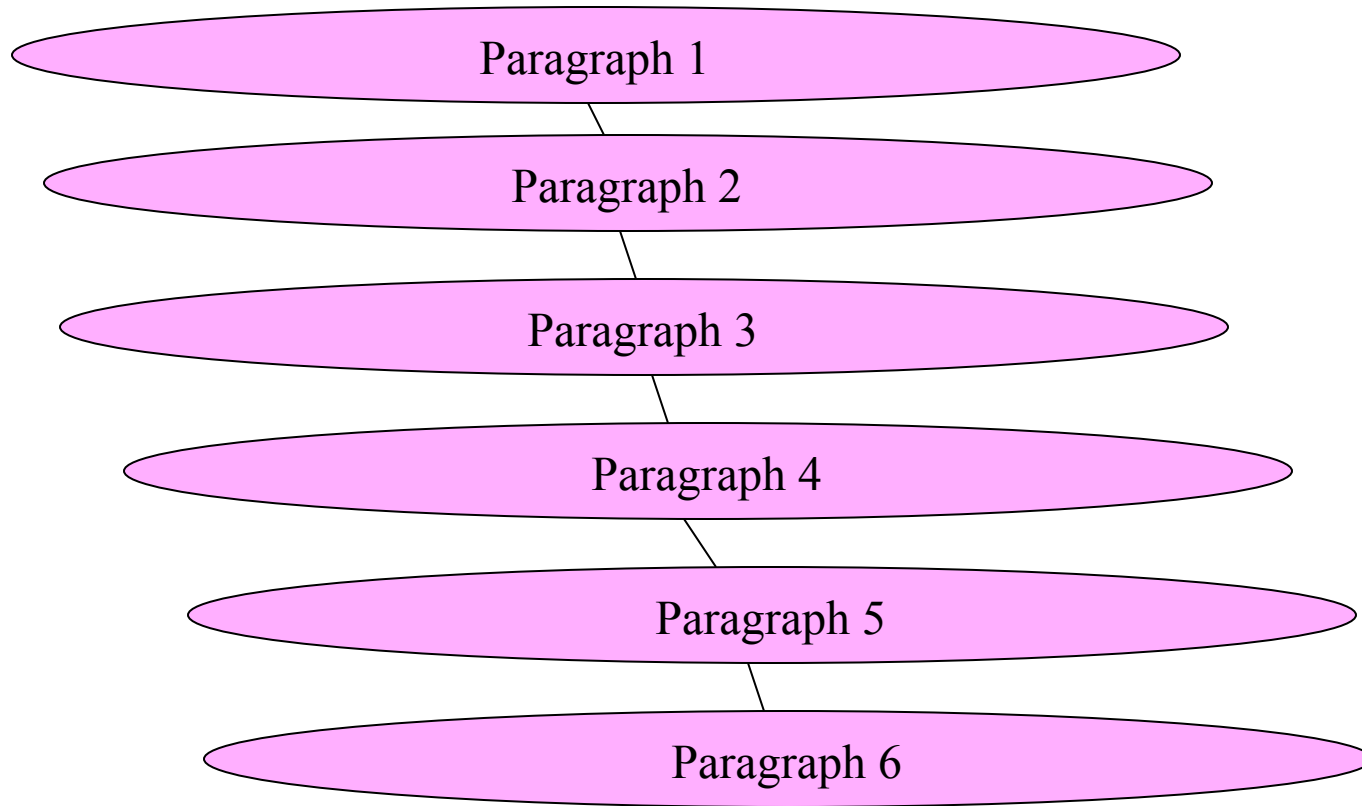
An Introductory Statement catches the interest of the reader, and is related in some way to the Thesis. A quotation may sometimes be used.

George Bernard Shaw once said that “few people think more than once or twice a year. I have made an international reputation for myself by thinking once or twice a week”. There is a great deal of truth in Shaw’s humour. In fact, I will argue that this aversion to thinking is the reason there is so much misery in the world. The human person is superior to brute animals in that he has the power to reason and choose acts that are in accordance with his nature. I will argue that a good life is not possible without knowing how to reason on the basis of first principles. Hence, the importance of philosophy.

**Purple = Introductory Statement**

**Green = Thesis Statement**

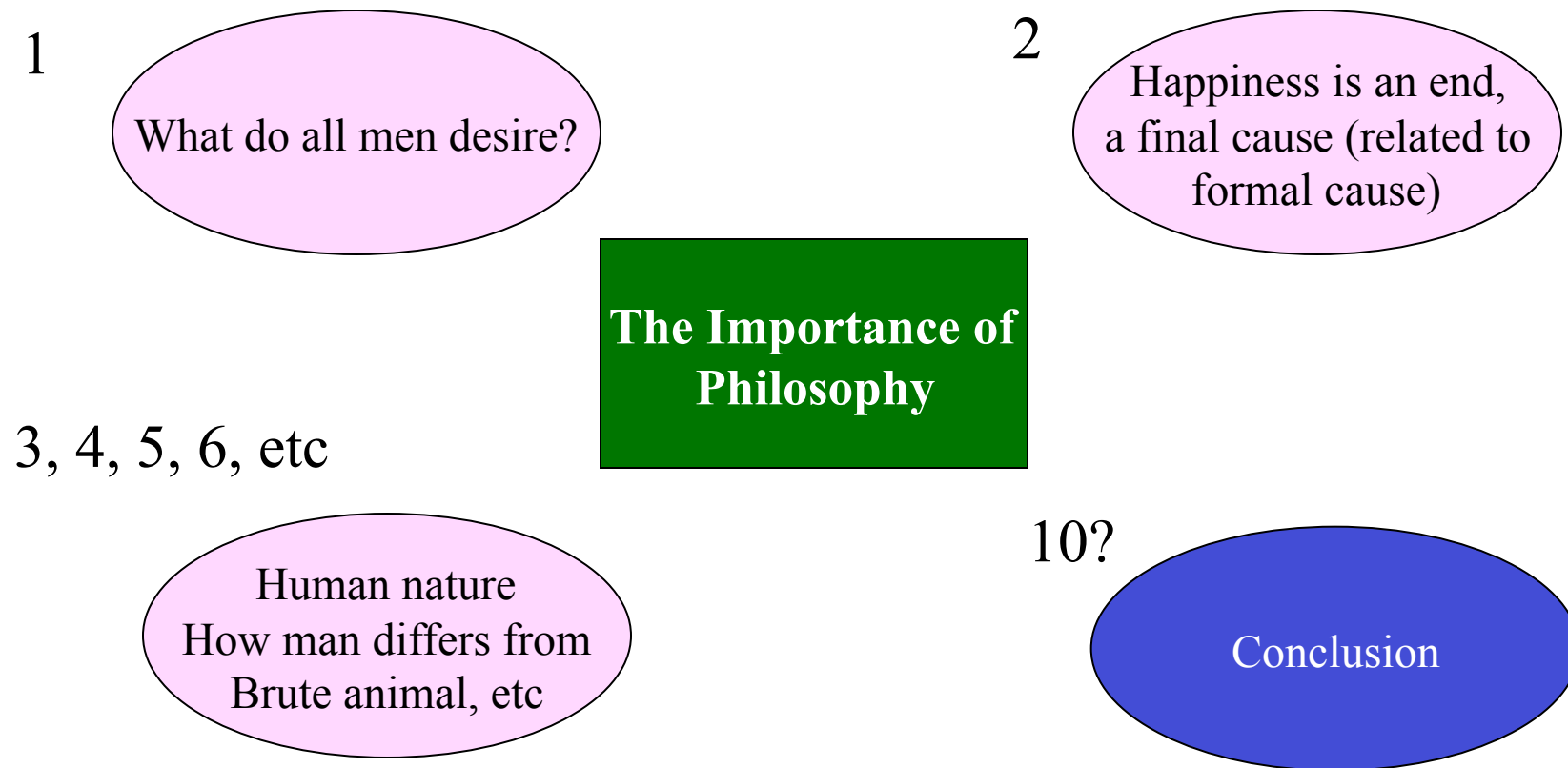
# Body



Your body need not consist of six paragraphs. You might need only three or four, or you might need more.

In the Body of your essay will be found the supporting arguments that will prove your thesis, or argue persuasively for your thesis.

This is what a short essay on Protagoras would look like:



## Paragraph 1

Socrates was the first to note that all men seek happiness as their ultimate end. But not everyone agrees as to what it is that constitutes happiness. Contemporary culture hasn't changed since Socrates' time, for most people regard pleasure as the chief end that is alone worthy of pursuit. Others regard power and honour, and a small minority regard wisdom or virtue to be the way to human well-being.

**Purple = Opening Sentence**

## Paragraph 2 and 3.

The key to unlocking the secret of happiness is in the fact that happiness is an end. The end of a change is the final cause. Now the final cause of a change is the cause of all the other causes, that is, the material cause, the formal cause, and the agent cause. Without a purpose, there would be no agent of change, and thus no form to impose on matter, and hence no material cause.

Now the agent cause is that by which there is coming to be. The material cause is that out of which there is coming to be. The formal cause is that for the sake of which there is coming to be. All change takes place for the sake of the form. Now, Aristotle's definition of the final cause is the same as the formal cause, namely "that for the sake of which". The reason is that the end of the change is reached when the form, after emerging out of the matter by the agent, finally exists in the matter. But there is also an end of the generated, and this is the ultimate end. For example, the end of the generated in the coming to be of a knife is "to cut food".

## Paragraph 4 and 5

Now, happiness is a final cause in that all our actions are for the sake of happiness. Since the final cause coincides with the formal cause, human happiness is going to have something to do with the nature of man (his form). A happy life, that is, a good life, will be a life guided by the highest powers in man's nature.

What distinguishes man from brute animals is the power of human reason. Now reason is the ability to deduce conclusions from given premises. Premises are judgments, and judgments are made up of simple apprehensions (concepts). In other words, man is essentially different from brute animals in that he has the ability to apprehend universal natures.

The argument continues to build on the foundation of philosophical principles (for example, the essay will continue by explaining the relationship between the passions and reason, and it will explain what the virtues are, why prudence is so important, what justice is, etc. Since good means fullness of being, choosing in accordance with virtue promotes the fullness of one's being.

## Paragraphs remaining

These ideas should then be carefully applied to a modern problem. How do most people make their choices? On the basis of reason, or emotion (feeling, passion)? How do you know that? What evidence? Why are your ideas in this essay important?

Proceed to write a concluding paragraph.

## Basic Points to Remember

- Do not write an opinion piece.
- Argue a point or two—not more—using philosophical ideas learned throughout the course of the semester.
- Know your philosophical ideas well.
- Don't be Platonists—universals are not real things. Forms exist in matter.
- Do not be colloquial.
- Do not exceed the length of the essay so much as 1 word (1, 200 – 1, 600 words, not 1, 601).
- Have a plan and follow it (Intro, philos. ideas, application to a problem and resolution of the problem, conclusion).
- If you footnote, do so properly (APA format).



## Basic Points to Remember *continued*

- Know what you want to say and argue your point step by step.
- Ask yourself: How am I going to demonstrate my point? *Do not just state your point, do not just assert your point.* Reason to your conclusion. Do not just offer a little sip of philosophy here and there and then proceed with an opinion piece. Offer a full mug of philosophy and then carefully apply it to a problem.
- Do not generalize (i.e., “Teachers today just spoon feed everyone...” Or, “People don’t think anymore because of technology...”)
- Proof read your work (you’ll discover all sorts of mistakes, and you’ll know if it reads properly. Read it out loud so you can hear how you sound).

**The following is another example of a short Philosophy essay. Please read it carefully and be mindful of the order and structure, and how the essay unfolds.**

Topic

→ Protagoras of Abderra

Assertion

→ That “man is the measure of all things” is absurd and untenable.

Thesis

→ The idea that “everyone has a right to his own opinion” is self-refuting and leads to the absurd conclusion that contradictories can be true at one and the same time.

## Introductory Statement

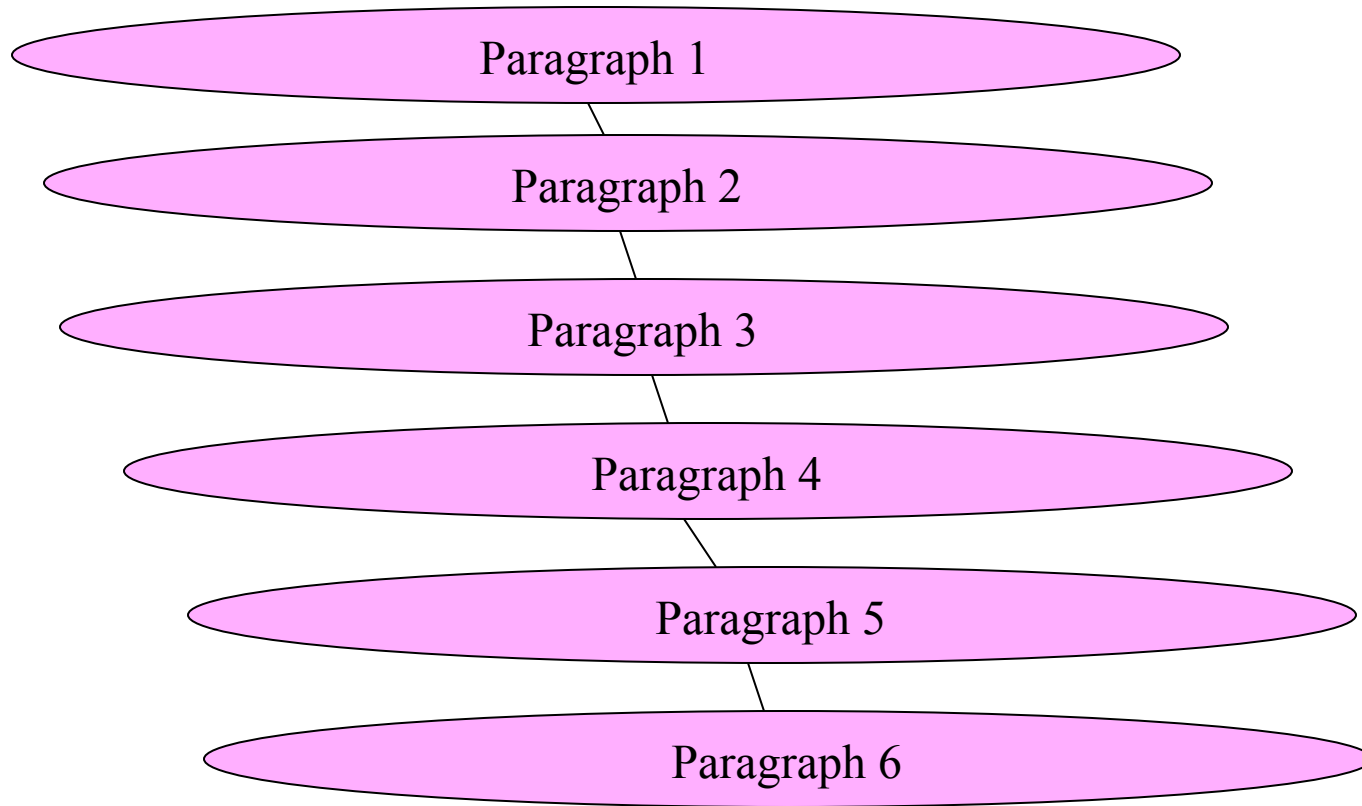
An Introductory Statement catches the interest of the reader, and is related in some way to the Thesis. A quotation may sometimes be used.

Very few of the philosophers who lived before the time of Socrates are dead. Protagoras, who attempted to prove that man is the measure of all things, is alive and well in today's post-modern world. For almost everyone accepts, without question, the premise that "everyone has a right to his own opinion". This is Protagoras all over again. But such a premise is self-refuting and leads to the absurd and untenable conclusion that contradictories can be true at one and the same time.

**Purple = Introductory Statement**

**Green = Thesis Statement**

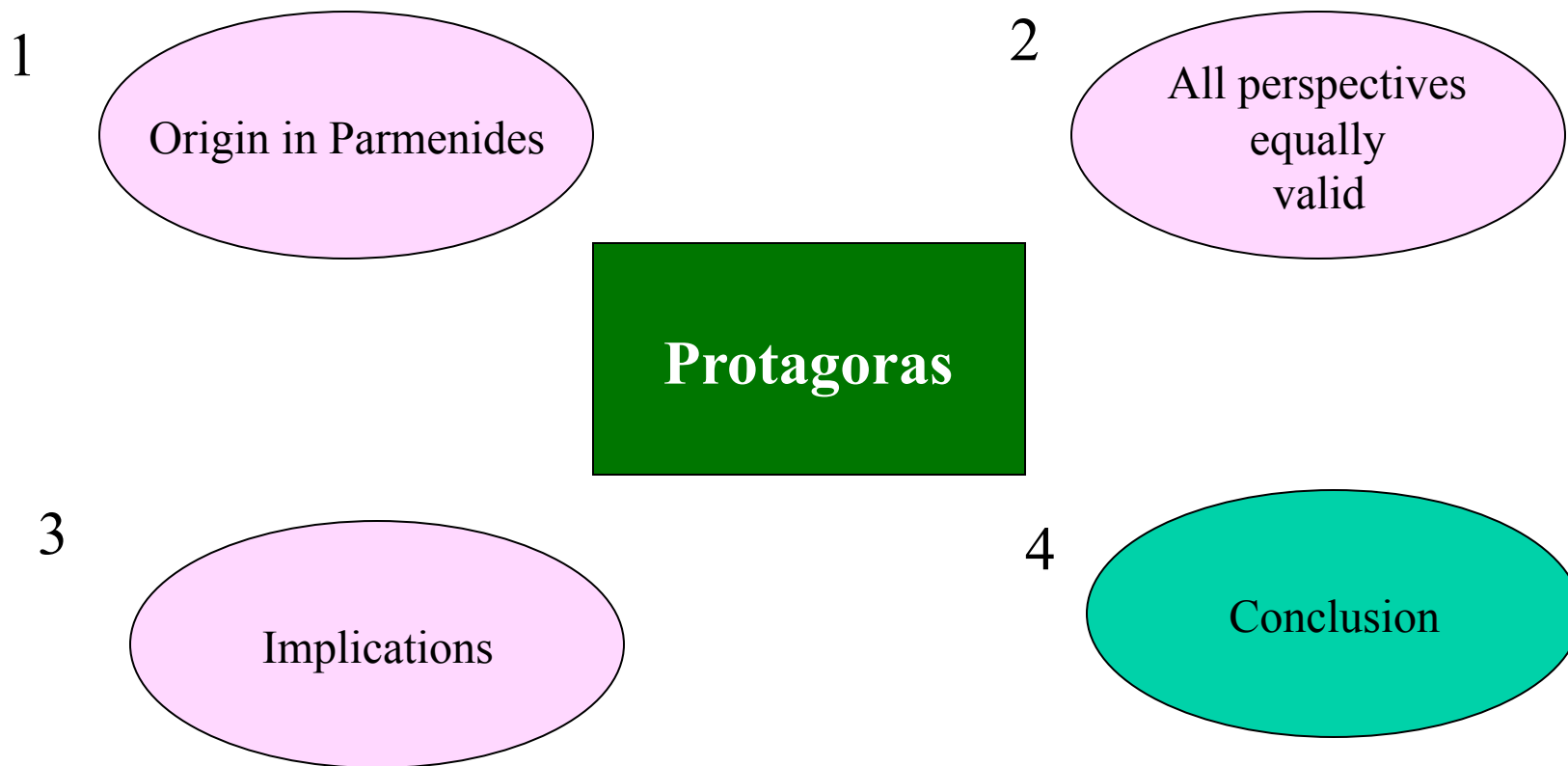
# Body

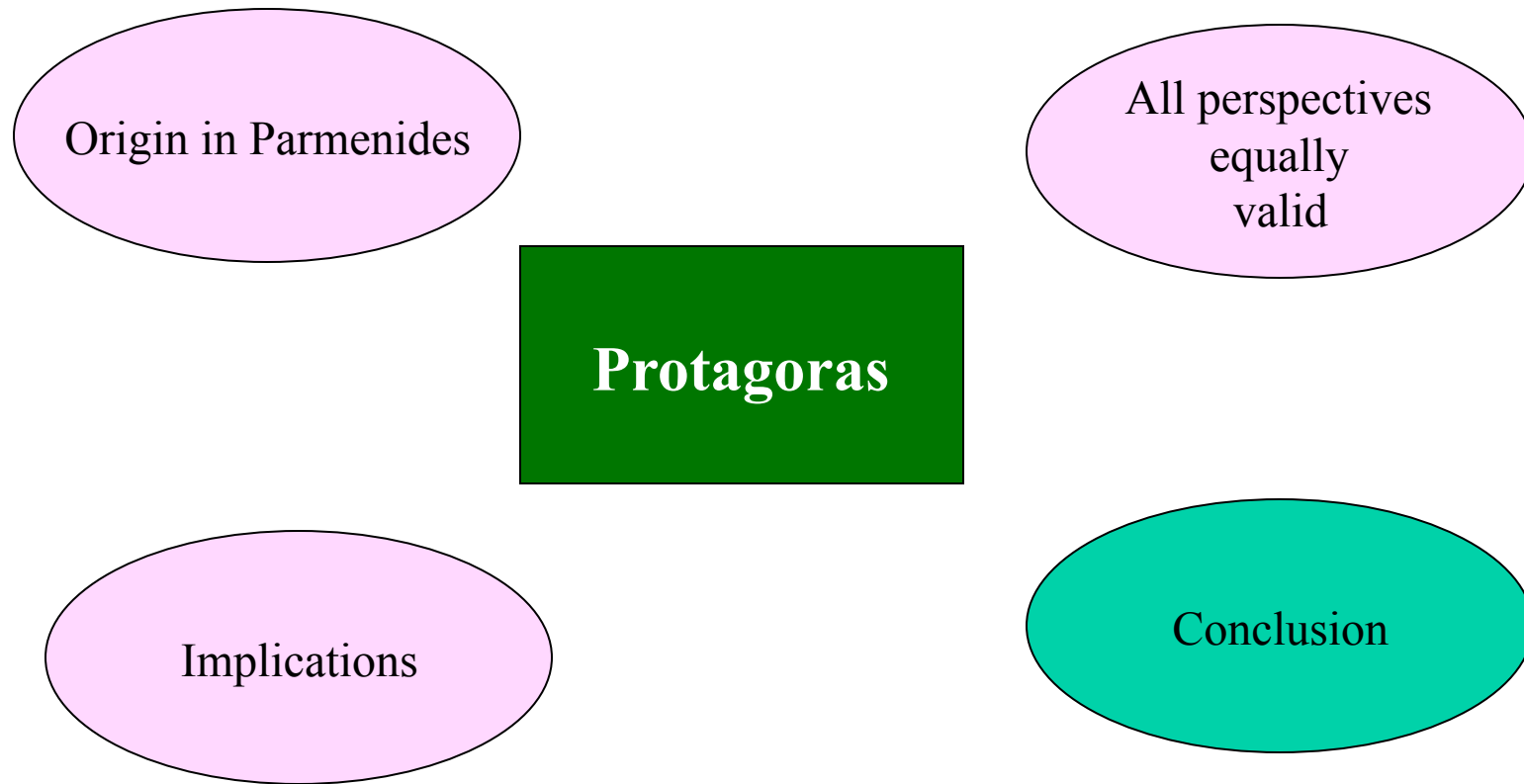


Your body need not consist of six paragraphs. You might need only three or four, or you might need more.

In the Body of your essay will be found the supporting arguments that will prove your thesis, or argue persuasively for your thesis.

This is what a short essay on Protagoras would look like:





Our Main Idea is Protagoras. We've got our Introductory Statement and Thesis Statement. We have at least three paragraphs that can act as supporting arguments. Recall how to write a paragraph (above). Let's begin:

## Paragraph 1

Protagoras begins with Parmenides' fundamental premises about being. Parmenides argues that "is not" is unthinkable, and that it is absurd to propose that "is not" is. For "is not" refers to non-being, and non-being is nothing. Hence, everything is. As a result, change is not possible, and multiplicity is a deception.

**Purple = Opening Sentence**



## Paragraph 2

Protagoras takes this to its logical conclusion. If non-being (is not) is required to explain change, consider that it is also needed if we are to explain falsity. We often speak of something being false. For instance, it is false, says Parmenides, that being is multiple and changing. Why? Because that would imply that non-being **is** (that 'what is not' actually 'is'), which is absurd.

## Paragraph 3

Now a false statement, in order to be false, also implies that non-being **is**. A false statement affirms "what is not". For example, if it is warm and sunny out, it is false to say that it is cloudy and rainy. You are saying that "what is not" (cloudy and rainy) in fact "is". But as we have seen in Parmenides, "is not" is unthinkable. Only "is" is real. Hence, it is impossible to make a false statement. Thus, every statement is true. There is ultimately no difference between the true and the false. Therefore it follows that the truth can be anything that I want it to be. Every individual perspective is just as true as any other individual perspective. This is where the idea that “everyone has a right to his own opinion” comes from.

## Paragraph 4

Hence, contradictories can be true at one and the same time. And so it is not possible to tell the difference between a just person and an unjust person, a brutal dictator and a just and prudent Prime Minister, or an honest businessman and a crook. In fact, there is no difference between an “A” on your report card, and an “F”. For if contradictories can be true at one and the same time, then getting an “F” on your report card means you’ve passed, and getting an “A” means that you’ve failed. Furthermore, everything in the area of ethics is only a matter of private opinion and personal taste. For man is the measure of virtue, because he is the measure of what is true.

Summary of Supporting Arguments

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graph TD; A[Summary of Supporting Arguments] --> B[Restatement of Thesis]; B --> C[Closing Statement];
```

Restatement of Thesis

Closing Statement

It is ultimately on the basis of Parmenides' premise that 'is not' is the equivalent of 'non-being' that Protagoras was able to argue that no one can make a false statement and that since any opinion is just as valid as any other, everyone has a right to it. But if everyone is right, then contradictories can be true at one and the same time, and thus the search for truth becomes meaningless and argument pointless. But this is absurd and self-refuting. For if it is true that everyone has a right to his own opinion, because no one can be wrong, then it is equally true that no one has a right to his own opinion and that not every opinion is just as valid as any other. The relativism of Protagoras, if consistently applied, will only lead to social chaos.

Red = Summary of Supporting Arguments

Blue = Restatement of Thesis

Purple = Closing Statement

Very few of the philosophers who lived before the time of Socrates are dead. Protagoras, who attempted to prove that man is the measure of all things, is alive and well in today's post-modern world. For almost everyone accepts, without question, the premise that "everyone has a right to his own opinion". This is Protagoras all over again. But such a premise is self-refuting and leads to the absurd and untenable conclusion that contradictories can be true at one and the same time.

Protagoras begins with Parmenides' fundamental premises about being. Parmenides argues that "is not" is unthinkable, and that it is absurd to propose that "is not" is. For "is not" refers to non-being, and non-being is nothing. Hence, everything is. As a result, change is not possible, and multiplicity is a deception.

Protagoras takes this to its logical conclusion. If non-being (is not) is required to explain change, consider that it is also needed if we are to explain falsity. We often speak of something being false. For instance, it is false, says Parmenides, that being is multiple and changing. Why? Because that would imply that non-being **is** (that 'what is not' actually 'is'), which is absurd.

Now a false statement, in order to be false, also implies that non-being **is**. A false statement affirms "what is not". For example, if it is warm and sunny out, it is false to say that it is cloudy and rainy. You are saying that "what is not" (cloudy and rainy) in fact "is". But as we have seen in Parmenides, "is not" is unthinkable. Only "is" is real. Hence, it is impossible to make a false statement. Thus, every statement is true. There is ultimately no difference between the true and the false. Therefore it follows that the truth can be anything that I want it to be. Every individual perspective is just as true as any other individual perspective. This is where the idea that "everyone has a right to his own opinion" comes from.

Hence, contradictories can be true at one and the same time. And so it is not possible to tell the difference between a just person and an unjust person, a brutal dictator and a just and prudent Prime Minister, or an honest businessman and a crook. In fact, there is no difference between an "A" on your report card, and an "F". For if contradictories can be true at one and the same time, then getting an "F" on your report card means you've passed, and getting an "A" means that you've failed. Furthermore, everything in the area of ethics is only a matter of private opinion and personal taste. For man is the measure of virtue, because he is the measure of what is true.

It is ultimately on the basis of Parmenides' premise that 'is not' is the equivalent of 'non-being' that Protagoras was able to argue that no one can make a false statement and that since any opinion is just as valid as any other, everyone has a right to it. But if everyone is right, then contradictories can be true at one and the same time, and thus the search for truth becomes meaningless and argument pointless. But this is absurd and self-refuting. For if it is true that everyone has a right to his own opinion, because no one can be wrong, then it is equally true that no one has a right to his own opinion and that not every opinion is just as valid as any other. The relativism of Protagoras, if consistently applied, will only lead to social chaos.

## Connecting Words That Add Coherence

Purpose	Suggested Connectors		
Adding ideas	again besides firstly, etc. in addition like similarly	also correspondingly further in like manner likewise too	and equally furthermore in the same way moreover
Contrasting ideas	but in contrast otherwise still yet	conversely instead on the contrary unlike	however nevertheless on the other hand whereas

## Connecting Words That Add Coherence

<b>Showing order in time</b>	afterwards earlier immediately now thereafter	at the same time eventually later presently thereupon	before henceforth meanwhile then
<b>Making a conclusion</b>	accordingly finally in conclusion so therefore	as a result for this reason indeed it follows that thus	consequently hence in fact then