# Tips for writing a well-structured, logical archaeological reports

Use well-crafted sentences to create well-structured paragraphs

(delicious hamburgers)
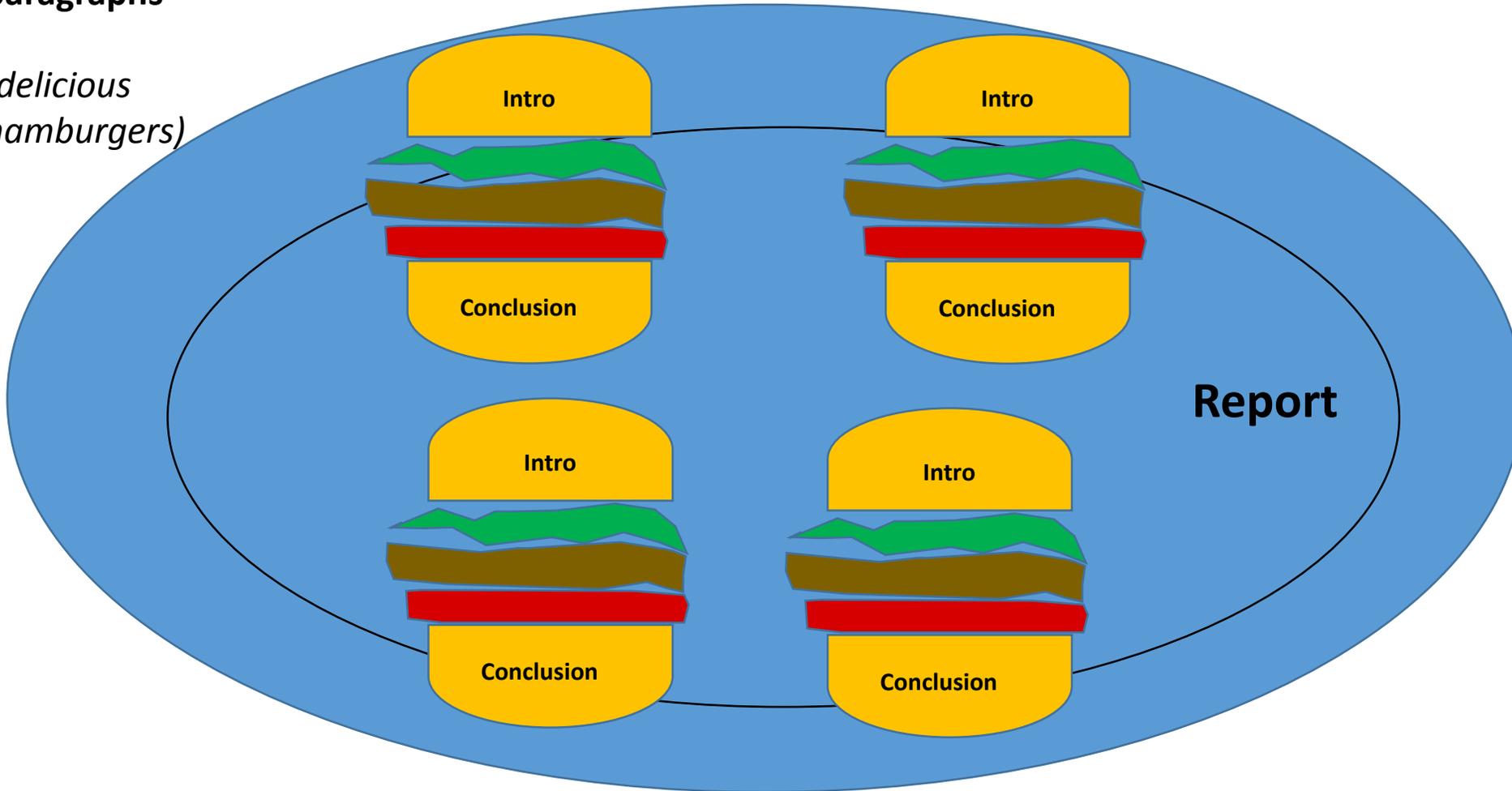
Use well-structured paragraphs to create logical reports

NOTE: this same structure is almost guaranteed to get you an "A" on college papers too.

Intro

Conclusion

Intro

Conclusion

Intro

Conclusion

Intro

Conclusion

Report

Basic anatomy of a well-crafted sentence

Well-structured Paragraph

Intro Sentence

The project area is in the Sonoran desertscrub lifezone.
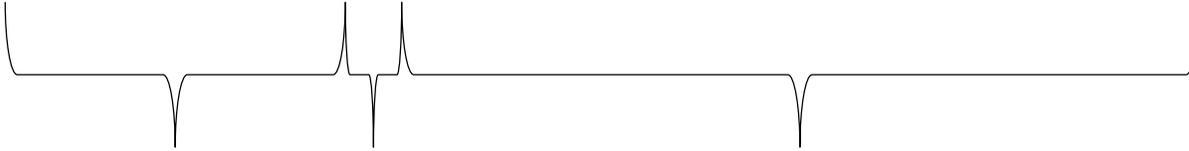
Subject:
-Who is doing the action
-The doer

Predicate:
-What is being done
-Usually a verb

Object:
-What the sentence is about

Body

Plants located in this zone include saguaro, mesquite, ironwood, and cottonwood along washes.

Subject: "Plants" **Predicate:** "located" **Object:** "in this zone include…"

Conclusion

Desertscrub plants are unique because they have evolved to survive with little rainfall.
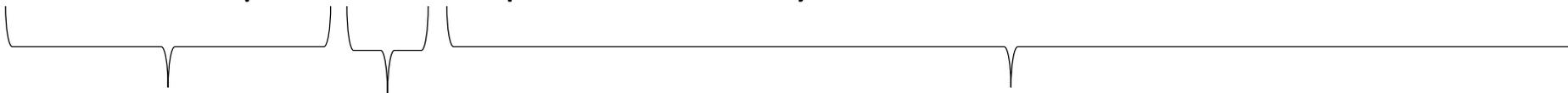
Subject **Predicate** **Object**

Build each paragraph like a hamburger

Two buns + toppings = delicious hamburger
Intro sentence + Support sentences + conclusion sentence = well-structured paragraph

Intro

Supporting sentence 1

Supporting sentence 2

Supporting sentence 3

Conclusion
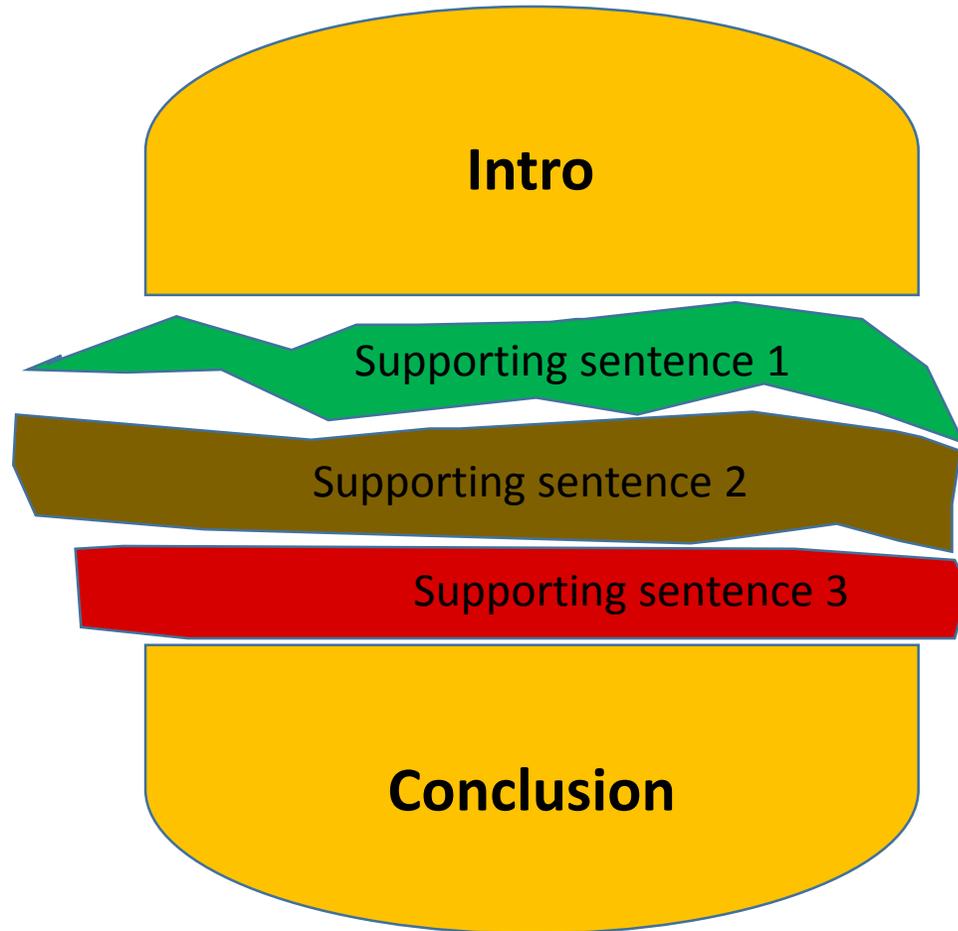
What are you going to tell me about?
What is this thought about?

First support sentence

Second support sentence

Third to sixth support sentence

Show me you are at the end of this thought

Build each report section like a hamburger

Intro paragraph + Support paragraphs + conclusion paragraph = logical essay
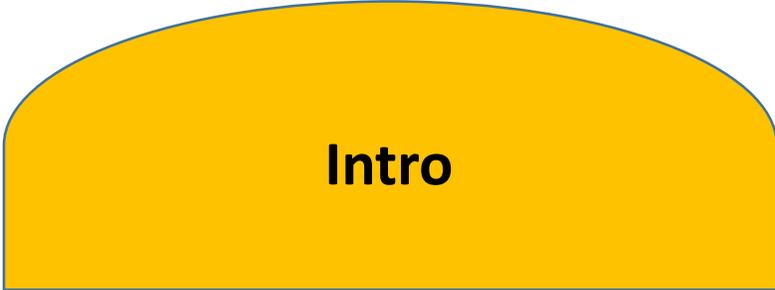
Intro

What is your paragraph about?
Ex. The plants of the Sonoran desertscrub lifezone.

Supporting paragraph 1

First support paragraph
Ex. To what climate are these plants adapted?

Supporting paragraph 2

Second support paragraph
Ex. What are the overstory plants?

Supporting paragraph 3

Third support paragraph
Ex. What are the understory plants?

Supporting paragraph 4

Fourth support paragraph
Ex. What sort of grasses can be found there?

Conclusion

What did you just tell me about?
Sequentially recap what you've just written

Well-structured paragraphs have similar characteristics:
- 4-7 sentences
- Each paragraph represents a single concept
- Introduction sentence supported by following sentences
- Concluding sentence ends thought concept

Logical reports also have similar characteristics:
- Introduction section tells the reader what to expect
- Other sections support what is announced in the introductory paragraph
- Concluding section recaps what was reported

The best essays follow this structure while also following the SHPO guidelines and your company's style guide:
- Proper report structure
- Proper citations
- Proper formatting
- Proper report sections
- Address the research design

Diagram labels (top to bottom):
- **Cover Sheet/ Intro**
- Project Background/ Regulatory Context
- Environmental and Cultural History
- Previous Research/ Research Methods
- Results/ Synthesis
- **Recommendations**

Good archaeology technical report writing is designed to make it easy for the reader to understand your message.

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