

Title: Paragraph Writing

The why!!!

Before going to the details of Paragraph Writing, we need to be clear about why should we learn this particular topic. As you know that a ship without a radar or a captain usually never reaches its destination. If it somehow does, it nothing but a miracle! Again, if the ship doesn't have any specific destination, it will just roam around and ultimately end nowhere!! Thus, both the radar or captain and the destination is important. Here, topic sentence is like the radar or captain, and the destination is like the well-developed supporting details with examples and explanations having a concluding statement at the end! Thus, the radar, the captain and the destination are intertwined in one point and accordingly together they lead the paragraph to its excellence (successful completion)!!!

***So, buckle up, and
let's jump in to
knowing and
exercising them!***

Learning Objective: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to

- learn how to write a well-structured paragraph.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to

- understand different components in a paragraph.
- form a topic sentence with a controlling idea.
- write a paragraph maintaining coherence throughout the paragraph.

Important Vocabulary for this lesson

Words	Pronunciation	Meaning	Example
Control (controlling idea) (Verb)	/kən'trəʊl/	to order, limit or rule something, or someone's actions or behaviour	In a paragraph, a topic sentence has a good controlling idea which raises the curiosity of its reader.
Coherence (noun)	/kəʊ 'hi:ərənts/	Logical, orderly, and consistent relation of parts	The students should maintain coherence while writing paragraph.
Transitional [Transitional words] (Adjective)	/træn'zɪʃ. ə n.əl/	Related to a sentences/ passage that connects a topic to one that follows	The supporting ideas of a paragraph should be well connected with transitional words.
Conclude [Concluding sentence] (Verb)	/kən'klu:d/	Bring to a close	A concluding sentence summarizes the main points of the paragraph or makes a final comment on the topic.

Note: To learn more about these words, look at the other forms of these word in dictionary/corpus.

Structure of a paragraph

1. A topic sentence

2. Supporting details/ideas

a. First supporting idea

Explanation/Example

b. Second supporting idea

Explanation/ Example

c. Third supporting idea

Explanation/ Example

3. A Concluding sentence

PART I: TOPIC SENTENCES

Definition:

The topic sentence is the most important sentence of a paragraph. It states the main idea and introduces the reader to the topic. A topic sentence can also be called the *controlling sentence* of a paragraph.

A controlling idea is an idea that makes a reader ask a question. Any time, a topic sentence has a good controlling idea, the reader will have his or her curiosity raised.

In effect, the reader will say (in the mind) questions such as How? Or In what way? Or What does that mean?

Examples of good controlling idea topic sentences:

It is difficult to read English for someone who has used Farsi. (Why is it difficult? How is it difficult?)

Yesterday, I had an unusual experience on the bus. (What experience did you have? Why was it unusual?)

Example of a topic sentence with NO controlling idea:

“Shakib Al Hasan was born in 1988.” (A fact, but, as reader, I have no question to ask; if you said, *“Shakib Al Hasan is my most favorite cricketer.”* then I would have had questions for you!)

A. Choosing a topic sentence.

As we have understood what a topic sentence is, how does it look like, and what it does, it is high time we chose the best topic sentence for each group of supporting sentences.

1. _____. To begin with, I usually go for hiking every weekend in the winter to enjoy my time even though it is expensive. As an example, I love the feeling of flying down a mountain. Moreover, the views are beautiful from the top of a mountain and along the trails. In addition, even the danger of falling and getting hurt can't keep me away from the slopes on a winter day.

- a) Hiking is expensive.
- b) Hiking is one of my favorite hobbies.
- c) Hiking is dangerous.

2. _____. First of all, people of Bangladesh send cards for many occasions. For example, they send cards to family and friends on birthdays and holidays. They also send thank-you cards, get well cards, graduation cards, and congratulation cards. Secondly, it is very common to buy cards in stores and send them through the mail. Furthermore, turning on the computer and sending cards over the Internet is also popular.

- a) Sending cards is very popular in Bangladesh.
- b) Birthday cards are the most popular kind of card.
- c) It is important to send thank-you cards.

B. Writing a topic sentence

Write a topic sentence for each paragraph. Make sure your topic sentence expresses the main idea of the paragraph.

1. _____. Firstly, it is always sunny and warm. Besides, the beaches are gorgeous, with soft white sand and beautiful water. Moreover, there are many fine restaurants in the Cox's bazar area, and most of the hotels offer terrific entertainment nightly. Therefore, there is no wonder that Cox's bazar is my first choice for a vacation destination.

2. _____. First and most importantly, the work is very interesting. I learn new things every day, and I get to travel a lot. In addition, my boss is very nice. She is always willing to help me when I have a problem. I have also made many new friends at my job. Last, but not least, the salary is fantastic.

PART II: SUPPORTING DETAILS & EXPLANATIONS

The supporting sentences develop the main idea in the topic sentence. They add details to the topic by providing relevant examples and explanations that will nicely support the topic sentence that you have written for your paragraph.

For example:

Topic Sentence: *Canada is one of the best countries in the world to live in.*

Supporting Details:

1st Supporting Idea: Firstly, Canada has an excellent health care system.

Explanation of 1st Supporting idea: For example, all Canadians have access to medical services at a reasonable price.

2nd Supporting idea: Secondly, Canada has a high standard of education.

Explanation of 2nd Supporting idea: For instance, students are taught by well trained teachers and are encouraged to continue studying at university.

3rd Supporting idea: Finally, Canada's cities are clean and efficiently managed.

Explanation of 3rd Supporting idea: Canadian cities have many parks and lots of space for people to live.

RECOGNIZE & UNDERLINE SUPPORTING SENTENCES & EXPLANATIONS

Jealousy

1. Jealousy is the worst characteristic of a man that destroys all his virtues. First of all, it makes a person short-tempered. For instance, whenever he sees someone doing better than him, he gets angry and an attitude of defeating the other person grows in his subconscious mind. Secondly, jealousy makes a person self-centered. For example, a jealous person does not think about anything else except himself. Everything he does; he does for his own good only disregarding the other people around him. He does not even think if someone else is suffering in any way because of his self-centeredness. Moreover, jealousy leads one to violence. To exemplify, if a person is jealous and his anger is beyond his control, it might lead him to

commit heinous crimes. In this way, jealousy brings no good for him. -----

Summer Vacation

2. Our first vacation of this summer was just as I had dreamed it would be. Our first stop was at Foy's Lake which was an amazing place. For example, the children enjoyed the rides, and spent the biggest part of the day waiting in line and riding one after the other. My wife and I were more interested in seeing the shows and eating. Then, we traveled to the Cox's Bazar Beach for having lot of fun activities. Such as, we all relaxed in the sun and enjoyed the carefree life. We also built a huge sandcastle and swam in the ocean. Next, we enjoyed very much watching exciting 9D Movies. As an example, everyone was amazed at the sights and the splendid colors and the fireworks in the movies were horribly exciting. -----
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PART III: CONCLUDING SENTENCES

A concluding sentence states the main idea of the paragraph again using different words. It summarizes the main points of the paragraph or makes a final comment on the topic. Concluding sentences are not always necessary. In fact, short paragraphs that are part of longer pieces of writing often do not have concluding sentences.

For example:

Concluding sentence of paragraph about *Jealousy*: These, in short, are the major characteristics of a jealous person which destroy him, the society and eventually, the whole world.

Concluding sentence of paragraph about *Summer Vacation*: As we traveled home, everyone agreed that it was indeed the best vacation we had ever had.

Writing Concluding Sentences:

1. Now, read the paragraph about *Canada* from **PART II: SUPPORTING DETAILS & EXPLANATIONS section**. And, write Concluding sentences to them.

Write suitable concluding sentence to the following paragraph.

2. I like wearing a uniform to school very much. First of all, it saves time. For example, I do not have to spend time picking out my clothes every morning. Secondly, wearing a uniform also saves money. Such as, it is cheaper to purchase a new uniform than to go out and buy lots of school clothes. In addition, I do not have the pressure of keeping up with the latest styles. Most importantly, wearing a school uniform gives me a sense of where I belong to. Therefore, you can tell that I really think that it adds to the feeling of school spirit and community.

PART IV: USING TRANSITIONAL WORDS IN PARAGRAPH:

Transitional words are those words used to connect one idea with other of a paragraph. Without cement and sand, a well-constructed building is impossible with bricks only. Similarly, the transitional words are the cement and sand that keep the ideas interlinked!

Look at the well-constructed paragraph with the excellent use of Transitional words.

Locate the italicized words/phrases in the paragraph.

Summer Vacation

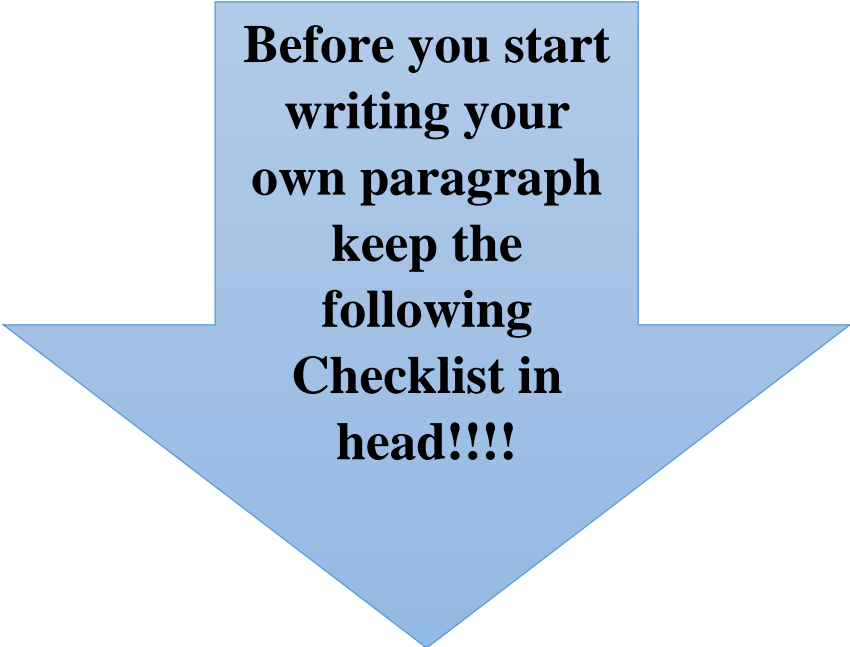
Our first vacation of this summer was just as I had dreamed it would be. Our *first* stop was at Foy's Lake which was an amazing place. *For example*, the children enjoyed the rides, and spent the biggest part of the day waiting in line and riding one after the other. My wife and I were more interested in seeing the shows and eating. *Then*, we traveled to the Cox's Bazar Beach for having lot of fun activities. *Such as*, we all relaxed in the sun and enjoyed the carefree life. We *also* built a huge sandcastle and swam in the ocean. *Next*, we enjoyed very much watching exciting 9D Movies. *As an example*, everyone was amazed at the sights and the splendid colors and the fireworks in the movies were horribly exciting. *To cut short*, as we traveled home, everyone agreed that it was indeed the best vacation we had ever had. There are many more transitional words like them.

<i>To show Contrast</i> but, however, although, on the other hand, in contrast	<i>To show similarity</i> similarly, like, equally, In a similar way, likewise	<i>To give examples</i> for example, e.g., such as, for instance
<i>To express result</i> so, then, consequently, therefore, as a result, thus,	<i>To express reasons</i> because, since, due to, that is why, as, for this	<i>To express sequence</i> First of all, firstly, first, to start with, secondly, thirdly, then, after this, afterwards, finally, lastly
<i>To clarify/explain</i> in other words, that is to say, i.e. to put in, another way, that means	<i>To conclude</i> in short, briefly, to sum up, to summarize, in conclusion, therefore, lastly, at last, finally	<i>To add information</i> and, also, in addition, besides, not only.... but also, both... and, in addition to that, furthermore, moreover

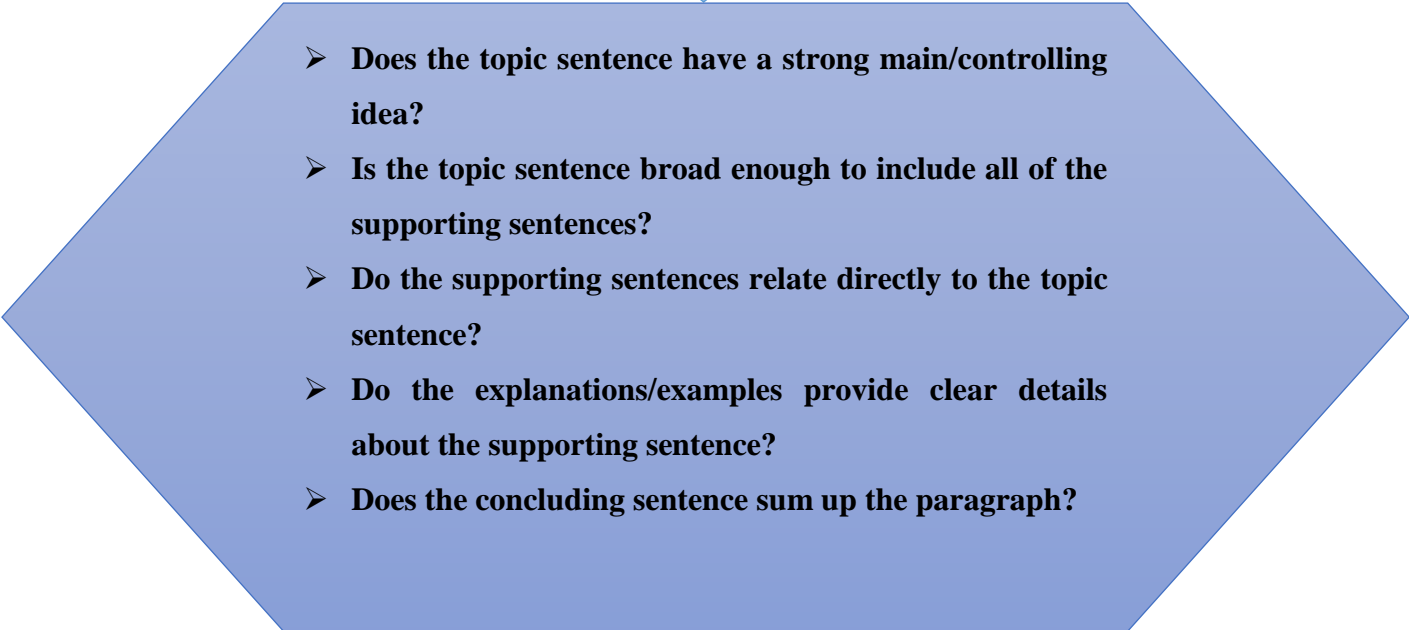
Figure: Table of Transitional Words

Now do the following tasks:

- 1. Read the paragraph from part I & II. Underline the Transitional Words.**
- 2. Identify the classification of the traditional words used in the paragraphs.**
- 3. Write your own paragraph, and share it in the class. Incorporate the techniques that you have learned from this lesson.**



**Before you start
writing your
own paragraph
keep the
following
Checklist in
head!!!!**

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- **Does the topic sentence have a strong main/controlling idea?**
 - **Is the topic sentence broad enough to include all of the supporting sentences?**
 - **Do the supporting sentences relate directly to the topic sentence?**
 - **Do the explanations/examples provide clear details about the supporting sentence?**
 - **Does the concluding sentence sum up the paragraph?**

PART V: ANSWER KEY

PART I:

A.

1. B 2. A

B. Topic Sentence (suggested):

1. Cox's Bazar is the perfect place to take a vacation
2. I have (got) a great job. (Also: I have (got) a fantastic / perfect / a very good job.

PART II: (For answer, discuss with your course teacher.)

PART III: Concluding sentence (suggested):

1. As a result, Canada is a desirable place to live.
2. I am happy that we have to wear a uniform to school.