

ENGLISH COMPOSITION & COMPREHENSION

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PARAGRAPH WRITING

WHAT IS A PARAGRAPH?

A **paragraph** is a series of sentences that are organized and coherent, and are all related to a single topic.

Almost every piece of **writing** you do that is longer than a few sentences should be organized into **paragraphs**.

Regardless of the kind of information they contain, all **paragraphs** share certain characteristics.

RULE OF THUMB

The Basic Rule: Keep One Idea to
One Paragraph

If you begin to transition into a
new idea, it belongs in a
new paragraph

PARTS OF A PARAGRAPH

A paragraph has four major structural parts:

A Topic Sentence (TS)

Main Points (MP)

Supporting Details (SD)

A Concluding Sentence (Cncl)

TOPIC SENTENCE

A well-organized paragraph supports or develops a single controlling idea, which is expressed in a sentence called the topic sentence.

A **topic sentence** states the main idea of a paragraph and it limits the topic to one or two main areas that can be discussed completely in a single paragraph.

A topic sentence is a complete sentence. It contains a subject, verb, and (usually) a compliment.

A topic sentence contains both a topic and a controlling idea.

It is always the first sentence of a paragraph.

For example:

- Driving on freeways requires skill and alertness.
- Gold, a precious metal is prized for two important characteristics.
- The biggest problem is the city's unreliable public transportation.

MAIN POINTS

Inform

Explain

Elaborate TS

Example: Driving on freeways requires skill and alertness. (TS)

It can be dangerous for the novice drivers. (MP)

SUPPORTING DETAILS

Supporting details explain the topic sentence by giving

Reasons

Examples

Facts

Statistics

Quotations

CONCLUDING SENTENCE

A Good Concluding Sentence

- Should be concise
- Signals the end of the paragraph
- Summarizes the important points briefly
- Or restates the topic sentence in different words

End of the Paragraph Signals

- Finally, in conclusion, in summary, therefore, thus, as a result, indeed, in brief, in short,
- We can see that...
- It is clear that...
- These examples show that...
- There can be no doubt that...



Activities

Activity #1:

Identify Topic sentence, Main ideas, and Concluding sentence

Why Teenagers Take Drugs

There are several reasons why teenagers take drugs. First of all, it is easy for young people to get drugs. Drugs are available almost anywhere, from a school cafeteria to a movie line to a football game. Teens don't have to risk traveling to the slums or dealing with shady types on street corners. It is also easy to get drugs because today's teens have spending money, which comes from allowances or earnings from part-time jobs. Teens can use their money to buy the luxuries they want—music, makeup, clothes, or drugs. Second, teens take drugs because the adolescent years are filled with psychological problems. For a teenager, one of these problems is the pressure of making important life decisions, such as choosing a career path. Another problem is establishing a sense of self. The teen years are the time when young people must become more independent from their parents and form their own values. The enormous mental pressures of these years can make some people turn to drugs. A final, and perhaps most important, reason why teenagers take drugs is peer pressure to conform. Teens often become very close to special friends, for one thing, and they will share a friend's interests, even if one interest is drugs. Teenagers also attend parties and other social events where it's all-important to be one of the crowd, to be "cool." Even the most mature teenager might be tempted to use drugs rather than risk being an outcast. For all these reasons, drugs are a major problem facing teenagers.

Activity #2:

Fill in the blanks with an appropriate transitional signals.

Gold, a precious metal, is prized for two important characteristics.

_____, gold has a lustrous beauty that is resistant to corrosion. _____, it is suitable for jewelry, coins, and ornamental purposes. Gold never needs to be polished and will remain beautiful forever. _____, a Macedonian coin remains as untarnished today as the day it was minted twenty-three centuries ago. _____

characteristic of gold is its usefulness to industry and science. For many years, it has been used in hundreds of industrial applications. The most recent use of gold is in astronauts' suits. Astronauts wear gold-plated heat shields for protection outside spaceships. _____, gold is treasured not only for its beauty but also for its utility.

THANK YOU!