**PARAGRAPH WRITING**

**What is The Topic Sentence?**

**The topic sentence** is the most important sentence of a paragraph. It states the **main idea** of the paragraph. It states the writer’s idea, point, or opinion.

**A topic sentence;**

1. must tell what all the other sentences in the paragraph are about. It must be covering all the following information.
2. mustn’t be a general fact. It must give a piece of **new information** so that the readers can find it interesting enough to read.

Look at this example;

‘*There are many bright stars in the sky.’*

This cannot be a good topic sentence, since everybody knows that *there are many bright stars in the sky* .

1. mustn’t be too long. The reader can simply understand what is going to be

said or written by looking at the topic sentence.

*For example: ‘There are many reasons why people migrate to big cities.’*

Here it is quite clear that the writer is going to talk about the causes of migration to big cities.

1. is generally the **first sentence** of the paragraph. However, it can come at the **end** or in the **middle** in some cases.

EXAMPLE:

Students require more recreational time in order to better focus on lessons in class. In fact, studies have shown that students who do recreational activities for more than 45 minutes consistently score better on tests immediately after this period. Clinical analysis further suggests that physical exercise greatly improves the ability to focus on academic materials. Longer periods of free time activities offer more chances to the students to be more successful in their studies. Clearly, physical exercise is one of the things that is necessary to improve student scores on tests.

**Write topic sentences for the paragraphs below.**

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Cats are animals which are easy to look after and cheap to feed. They don’t make a lot of noise and they don’t need a lot of exercise. They are very clean animals and they are happy living inside. A cat can be a good friend for a child or an old person who lives alone. In conclusion, cats can be regarded as one of the best pets among the others.

………………………………………………………………………………………………….. …………….…… . For one thing, you can never get bored in a large city; there are always films and plays to see, large stores for shopping or at least for window-shopping. Large cities provide educational facilities and health care for citizens. Another thing is that if you are in a large city, it’s not so difficult for you to find a job. All in all, large cities facilitate people’s life because of various opportunities they have.

**What are the supporting sentences?**

Supporting sentences **provide explanations and support** for the topic sentence (main idea) of your paragraph. They provide the **evidence for your topic sentence**. Supporting sentences that include **facts, statistics and logical reasoning** are much **more convincing**.

In other words;

•They are sentences used to **support the main** idea stated in the topic sentence.

***Topic****: Knowing English has become very important for several reasons.*

***Supporting sentence****:* ***At first****, with the development of globalization, English has become the dominant language in international trade, conferences and many important events. Therefore, for job applications, knowing* ***English has become almost the first requirement.***

•They give more information about the main idea **through examples**.

***Topic****: Globalization affects the world’s economies in a very negative way.*

***Supporting sentence****:* ***First of all****, because of the cheap labor in* ***China*** *or* ***India****, the rate of unemployment has risen sharply* ***especially in Europe****.* ***For instance****, according to last year’s*

*figures, 400,000 more people have become unemployed in EU countries.*

To introduce an example in your paragraph you can use the following phrases:

For example, …

For instance, …

To illustrate, …

•They say in **details** what the topic sentence says in general.

***Topic****: Globalization affects the world’s economies in a very positive way.*

***Supporting sentence****:* ***To begin with****, globalization has contributed to the world’s economies in many beneficial ways. The advances in science and technology have allowed businesses to easily cross over territorial boundary lines. Consequently, companies have become more productive, competitive, which has raised the quality of goods, services and the world’s living standard.*

•They should give **clear evidence** about the topic sentence.

***Topic****: Globalization affects the world’s economies in a very positive way.*

***Supporting sentence****:* ***It*** *simply* ***means that*** *the world has become integrated economically, socially, politically and culturally through the advances of technology, transportation and communication: Numerous western companies have factories and super markets in China or Russia now. In the past those countries were thought to be enemies.*

•They should be **strong convincing points** on which the topic sentence can rely upon.

***Topic****: Living in a foreign country is advantageous in many ways.*

***Supporting sentences****: One of the main advantages of living in a foreign country is that people have better economic conditions. For example, they may get a good job and a high salary so they can buy what they want and they may live how they desire. In addition, they may benefit from well-developed education and health systems. Moreover, one is given the chance to learn and become fluent in another language through everyday use. Furthermore, one can participate in lots of social activities.*

In general **there are** **at least two supporting sentences**, because one makes the paragraph less convincing and not worth the effort done to build it. Therefore, you are strongly advised to provide at least **two strong details which can support the main idea**. You can use all the writing techniques necessary to write a good and eligible paragraph: ***descriptions***, ***definitions***, ***examples***, ***sequencing***, ***details*** and ***explanation***. If any of the supporting details doesn’t support or correlate with the main idea, it will break the unity of the paragraph.

Supporting sentences must be written in a well-organized order. To do so, we can use the following sequence words or phrases:

• First, next, then, ...

• Firstly, secondly, the last, …

•First of all, moreover, in addition to this, in addition, furthermore, besides…

•To begin with, next, finally, ...

•The first reason is that, another reason is that, there is also …

•Primarily, what’s more, in addition to this, …

•In the first place, in the second place, …

•For one thing, for another thing, …

EXAMPLE:

There are many reasons why people all over the world enjoy watching movies. **To begin with**, they offer an escape. For that reason, some people go to the movies to see how others live. If you get bored, it is a way to escape from life for a few hours. **Next,** movies provide entertainment, since they are fun to watch and let you imagine what other people's lives are like. **Finally**, movies are available everywhere. Movie theaters can be found in almost every town, all over the world. If there is no theater, there is usually a video store. **As a result**, watching movie is one of most the important activities of people.

**Write supporting sentence(s) for the following paragraph.**

I would prefer to live in a dormitory for a number of reasons. **First of all**, …………...……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………...……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………...………………………………………………………………………………………………………. **Moreover**, there is usually a laundry room in the basement so you don’t have to go anywhere else to do laundry. Furthermore; the dormitory is usually very safe since almost all dormitories have security guards. Overall, I prefer to live at a dormitory because I do not need to cook and wash my clothes for myself and there will be a lot of people around me.

**The Concluding (closing) Sentence**

The concluding (closing) sentence is the last sentence in a paragraph. It summarizes the information that has been presented in the paragraph. A proper concluding sentence;

- should start with a proper transition word: ***To sum up, in brief, in short, briefly, all in all,***

***as a conclusion, as a result, to conclude*** …,

- should restate the main idea of the paragraph. However, to do this it should not repeat the topic sentence, instead it should rephrase (rewrite) it.

EXAMPLE:

Watching movies can be a viewer's nightmare. **First of all**, we could hear cell phones ringing although viewers are not allowed to switch on their cell phones in the cinema. The ringing is very distracting to us especially when we are trying hard to concentrate on the movie. **Secondly**, some viewers are restless. They keep shifting the position of their body when they are seated, and sometimes they accidentally touch you. This is very annoying indeed when your viewing is suddenly disrupted by your inconsiderate neighbor. **Finally,** some viewers often love to talk about the movie even while the movie is playing. They make comments and they even predict how the movie would end. They are directly annoying other viewers who are trying to listen to the dialogues. **For these reasons**, going to the movies is sometimes not pleasurable.

**Complete the paragraph by writing a proper concluding sentence.**

There are lots of advantages of having jobs while studying at a university. First of all, students can learn things not only from the school but also from the society by working. Knowledge can be reinforced through real life; they will know more real cases than those only described in the text books. Secondly, by practicing in the real life, students can verify what exactly the books tell them, and whether there is another way to solve. As a result, more and more inventions can be created. For example, Einstein practiced more cases in his father's work shop while he was still a student. Thirdly, students can be more independent. They can earn some money to pay their study in case their family cannot afford. ……………….……………… .……………………………………………….…………………………………………………………….……