

## Writing Paragraph

There are several things we need to notice when we write a paragraph (description, cause-effect, narration, comparison-contrast):

1. Topic sentence
2. Supporting sentences
3. Development of single focus
4. Organization of logical and cohesive sentences

### I. Topic Sentence

Look at the following sentences:

- a. Swimming is fun. (too general)
- b. I swim laps for 30 minutes every morning. (too specific)
- c. Exercising every morning has several positive effects on my health. (not too general and not too specific)

### Analyzing topic sentence

**For each statement below, underline the topic and draw a circle around the focus.**

1. Mahatma Gandhi was an influential leader.
2. E-mail is a great way to stay in touch with your family and friends.
3. The clothes we wear often reflect a lot about our personality.
4. The Japanese subway system is very efficient.
5. Television commercials are often insulting women.
6. My older brother is a perfectionist.
7. The laws on child abuse should be strictly enforced.
8. Being a twin has both advantages and disadvantages.
9. The new shopping mall has brought many economic benefits to our community.
10. Golf is a difficult sport to master.

### Evaluating topic sentences

**Discuss whether the following topic sentences are good or not because they are either too general or too specific. Rewrite the improved topic sentences!**

1. My round-trip plane ticket to Ankara, Turkey, cost over \$950.
2. The topic of this paragraph is learning new things.
3. American music reflects the native music of many of its immigrant groups.
4. Everyone needs hobby.
5. American music is the subject of this paragraph.
6. The first published collection of African-American music, *Slave Songs of The United States*, appeared in 1897.
7. Vacations are very expensive.
8. Russian is a difficult language to learn.
9. Learning how to write in English can be a frustrating experience for many foreign students.
10. The Chinese language has over 50.000 characters.

## Writing Topic Sentences

Write a topic sentence for each of the paragraphs below!

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Most often, they keep them for pleasure and companionship. In fact, many people consider their pet to be part of the family. In addition to their value as loved and loving companions, pets serve practical purposes, such as protecting homes and property, destroying insects, and even providing means of transportation. They may also serve as emotional outlets for the elderly or the childless. Recently, the benefit of pet-facilitated psychotherapy has been demonstrated. Finally, some people keep pets for their beauty or rarity or, in the case of birds, for their songs.

2. \_\_\_\_\_

For instance, climate affects the kinds of clothes we wear and even the colors we choose to wear. Since it affects the kinds of crops we can grow successfully, it influences our eating habits. Architecture is also affected by climate. Engineers and architects must think about climate when they make decision about the construction, materials, design, and style of buildings. Even our choices in transportation are determined by the climate in which we live. Climate also plays a big part in economic development. A climate that is too hot, too cold, or too dry makes farming, industry, and transportation difficult and slows down economic development.

3. \_\_\_\_\_

We were there for two weeks, and not a day went by without something unusual happening. On our second day a boa constrictor swam right in front of us while we were rafting down the Rio Claro. Another day, spider monkeys threw branches at us deep in the rain forest. Hiking on the primitive trails in Corcovado National Park, we saw brilliant scarlet macaws and toucans with huge yellow beaks. Whenever we look at the pictures from our trip, we all agree that it was the most exciting one we have ever taken.

## Writing Topic Sentence

Write a topic sentence based on the following topics.

1. Smoking cigarettes \_\_\_\_\_.

2. The spread of AIDS \_\_\_\_\_.

3, The average Indonesian teenager \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Global warming \_\_\_\_\_.

5. Pollution \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Evaluating Support**

Par 1: My chemistry course is very difficult and time consuming. The professor doesn't seem to realize that chemistry isn't the only course we're taking. He gives lots of homework and too much reading. The worst thing is that his lecturers are really boring. I'm not interested in chemistry, so I hate reading the textbook. I know I'm not the only student complaining about this course.

Par 2: My chemistry course is very difficult and time consuming. First of all, we're responsible for two labs every week, which means a minimum of ten hours a week in the lab. To make matters worse, the professor gives at least three tests per month. The questions are very tricky, and we have to memorize long, complicated formulas. Finally, the reading load is also quite heavy – as much as twenty-five pages a night. I often spend all my free time doing the required reading.

- a. Which paragraph provides more specific support?
- b. What four supporting details does the author include in that paragraph?

### **Analyzing Paragraph for Single Focus**

**As you read it, decide which sentences do not belong in the paragraph because they do not support the topic sentences. Cross out the irrelevant sentences.**

Every year on New Year's Eve, the city of Boston hosts a community celebration called First Night so people can celebrate the new year together. Boston was the first city in the United States to launch a special event to celebrate New Year's Eve. First Night attracts over 1,5 million people. For the \$20 cost of a first night button, people gain general admission to many different events. Boston is the higher education capital of the United States. The two largest universities within the city itself are Boston University and Northeastern University, and in nearby Cambridge are Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The evening begins with a grand costumed parade around the Boston Common and ends at midnight with fireworks over Boston Harbor. In between, there are more than 250 performances of international music, dance, and theater, as well as puppetry and many films to choose from. Boston is also host to the well-known Boston Marathon, which is run in April. Two hundred cities and towns in the United States, Canada, Australia have now launched celebrations like the one in Boston for New Year's Eve.