

Writing Effective Paragraphs

Paragraphs are distinct blocks of text which section out a larger piece of writing—essays, articles, creative writing or professional writing pieces—making it easier to read and understand. “In its simplest and most basic form, a paragraph is a group of sentences about one topic. Paragraphs are the fundamental building blocks of texts. Their purpose is to inform, give an opinion, state facts or explain. An effective paragraph is logical and well structured and clear” (Courtald, 2008). Good writers can greatly enhance the readability of their news, essays, or fiction writing when constructed properly.

How to Write a Well-Structured Paragraph: A Step-by-Step Guide

A well-Structured paragraph is composed of a topic sentence (or key sentence), relevant supporting sentences, and a closing sentence (or concluding sentence). This structure is key to keep your paragraph focused on the main idea and creating a clear and concise image.

The following is a guide on how to draft, expand, and explain your ideas so that you write a clear and a well-developed paragraph :

°/Once you select a topic, limiting the scope of what you will cover, and generating potential content, then you are ready to begin writing, to organize and develop your ideas.

1/Develop a topic sentence (Make clear what your paragraph will be about) : The topic sentence is the first sentence in a paragraph. It introduces the main idea of the paragraph. The topic sentence introduces what the paragraph is talking about and limits the information that can be given in the other sentences . **Example:**

Canada is one of the best countries in the world to live in. First, Canada has an excellent health care system. All Canadians have access to medical services at a reasonable price. Second, Canada has a high standard of education. Students are taught by well-trained teachers and are encouraged to continue studying at university. Finally, Canada's cities are clean and efficiently managed. Canadian cities have many parks and lots of space for people to live. As a result, Canada is a desirable place to live.

2/Provide the supporting details (sentences): After stating your topic sentence, you need to provide supporting facts, details, examples, information to prove, develop, and support the main idea of the paragraph. **Example:**

Canada is one of the best countries in the world to live in. **First, Canada has an excellent health care system. All Canadians have access to medical services at a reasonable price. Second, Canada has a high standard of education. Students are taught by well-trained teachers and are encouraged to continue studying at university. Finally, Canada's cities are clean and efficiently managed. Canadian cities have many parks and lots of space for**

people to live. As a result, Canada is a desirable place to live.

3/Make the closing sentence (concluding sentence): After providing the supporting details, add a concluding sentence. The concluding sentence is the last sentence of the paragraph. The function of the concluding sentence is to signal the end of the paragraph. Concluding sentences can either be a restatement of the topic sentence, a summary of the supporting sentences, or contain a final comment about the topic. The concluding sentence in a paragraph should be a general statement that relates to the idea expressed in the topic sentence, and not another fact or detail of support. If restating the topic sentence, it should be expressed in different words, not an exact copy of the topic sentence. **Example:**

Canada is one of the best countries in the world to live in. First, Canada has an excellent health care system. All Canadians have access to medical services at a reasonable price. Second, Canada has a high standard of education. Students are taught by well-trained teachers and are encouraged to continue studying at university. Finally, Canada's cities are clean and efficiently managed. Canadian cities have many parks and lots of space for people to live. **As a result, Canada is a desirable place to live.**

NOTE!! : Paragraphs should be :

- Unified – All the sentences in the paragraph should be related to the main idea. Related to your thesis.
- Coherent – The sentences should proceed in a logical manner.
- Well Developed – Every idea discussed in the paragraph should be explained and supported with evidence.

Unity, Coherence, and Development are essential features of strong paragraphs. The categories work together to serve the reader's needs. Together, these three features of a strong paragraph reflect the writer's understanding of the audience's expertise, interest, and experience. The three features show that the writer is writing for the audience and knows that the document is not written for her/himself. They appear when a writer understands that the meaning has to be in the words on the page. Good paragraphs say what they mean. Readers will treat each paragraph as if it says exactly what you intended, so it is important to be precise.

Activity: Read the paragraphs below. Choose and write the best topic sentence for each paragraph

- a. _____ . Firstly, living in a foreign country helps you learn another language faster than studying it at school. Secondly, you can learn directly about the history, geography, and culture of a country. Thirdly, you become a more tolerant person because you experience different ways of living. The last,

living in a foreign country makes you appreciate your own country better.

1. You can learn by living in a foreign country.
2. We should live in a foreign country for a while.
3. Some benefits you can get by living in a foreign country.

b. _____ . There are some private colleges and universities in the United States. Private colleges and universities are usually more expensive because they do not get money from taxes. Meanwhile, some other colleges and universities are public. It means the citizens of each state pay some of the costs through their taxes so that public colleges are cheaper for students to attend. However, you can get a good education no matter which type of college you attend – public or private.

1. Two main types of colleges and universities in the United States are private and public.
2. Private colleges and universities get money from taxes.
3. There are only some colleges and universities in the United States.

c. _____ . First, the classes in small college are small. There are approximately twenty students in average class in a small college. Second, it is easy to meet with professors. Almost all professors in small colleges have time to help students and are usually happy to do so. Third, small colleges are friendly, so new students make friends quickly. Thus, small colleges are better than large universities for many students.

1. Small colleges are friendlier than large universities.
2. Some reasons are stated for attending a small college instead of a large university.
3. An excellent education you can get at a small college.

Activity: Choose a topic and write an original and well-developed paragraph.