

# COMMUNICATION (WRITING)

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1<sup>ST</sup> STAGE/ 2<sup>ND</sup> SEMESTER

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2023-2024

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# **Chapter 3**

## **Paragraph structure**

# Objectives of the week

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- Identify parts of a paragraph
- Construct an appropriate topic sentence
- Support the topic sentence with details and examples
- Use a concluding sentence to complete a paragraph
- Write, revise, and edit a paragraph

# What is a paragraph

- A paragraph is a group of related sentences that discuss one main idea. A paragraph can be as short as one sentence or as long as ten sentences or more. The number of sentences is not important; however, the paragraph should be long enough to develop the main idea clearly.

# Outline



Three Parts of a Paragraph

The topic Sentence

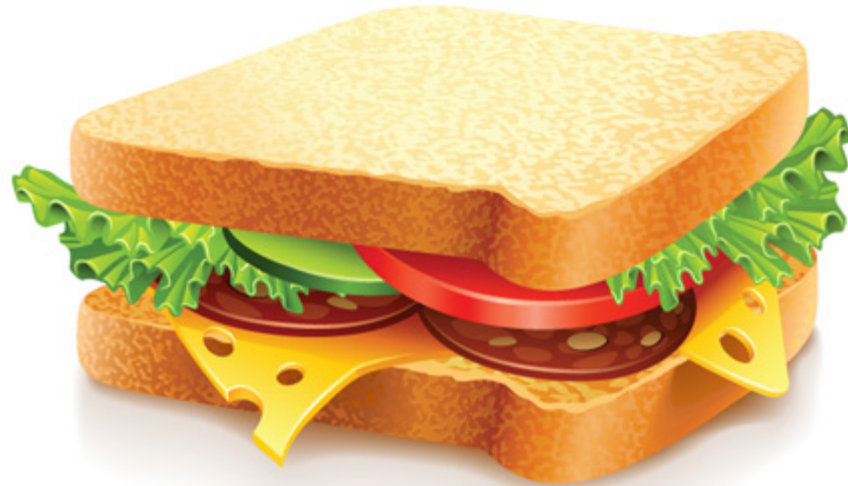
Supporting Sentences

The Concluding Sentence

# Three parts of a paragraph

- A paragraph has three parts: **a topic sentence, several supporting sentences,** and **a concluding sentence.**
  1. The topic sentence tells what the paragraph is going to discuss.
  2. Supporting sentences give details about the topic.
  3. The concluding sentence ends the paragraph by **summarizes the main points or restates the topic sentence in different words.** It may also give a final comment about the topic (Zemach & Rumisek, 2007)

# A paragraph is like a sandwich



# The Topic Sentence



The topic sentence indicates what the paragraph is going to discuss. It is a helpful guide both for the writer and for the reader. The writer can see what information to include and what information to exclude. The reader can see what the paragraph is about.



# Topic Sentence

Topic sentence is a complete sentence with at least one subject and one verb.

Incomplete      Communicating with colleagues.

Communicating with colleagues is a good way to improve your speaking skills.

Incomplete      How to improve online social networks.

There are three ways to improve your social networks.

# Topic Sentence

- A topic sentence contains two parts:

A topic                      it names the paragraph

A controlling idea      it limits the topic to a specific area

e.g.

topic

controlling idea

Communicating with colleagues requires sensitivity and understanding.

Topic

Controlling idea

Improving online social networks can help professionals communicate.

# Examples

1a. <sup>TOPIC</sup> Some marriages <sup>CONTROLLING IDEA</sup> are a union of two families.

1b. <sup>TOPIC</sup> Some marriages <sup>CONTROLLING IDEA</sup> are a union of two individuals.

2a. <sup>TOPIC</sup> Some weddings <sup>CONTROLLING IDEA</sup> are very elaborate.

2b. <sup>TOPIC</sup> Some weddings <sup>CONTROLLING IDEA</sup> are very simple.

2c. <sup>TOPIC</sup> Some weddings <sup>CONTROLLING IDEA</sup> take place in unusual locations.

# Topic Sentence

Immigrants have contributed many delicious foods to U.S. cuisine.

The reader of this paragraph expects to read about various ethnic foods popular in the United States: tacos, egg rolls, sushi, baklava, pizza, and so on.

Practice 4 Identifying the topic and controlling idea  
P.9



A topic sentence should not have controlling ideas that are unrelated.

### Too many ideas

Advanced communication technologies have improved dramatically, and they have also enhanced business relationships and nurtured social interactions.

### Good

Advanced communication technologies have improved dramatically.

# Not Too General, Not Too Specific

- A topic sentence gives only the topic and the controlling idea. It should neither be too general nor too specific.

English has been influenced by other languages. **Too general**

The slang expression so long (meaning “goodbye”) is probably a corruption of the Arabic *salaam*. **Too specific**

# Not Too General, Not Too Specific

- Marriage is an event in a person's life.
- The average age for people in the United States to marry in the year 2000 was 25 for a woman and 27 for a man.
- The average age for people in the United States to marry has changed during the past 100 years.

## □ Answer

- This is too general because there is no specific controlling idea. The reader has no idea what the paragraph will say about marriage except that it happens.
- This is much too specific. It gives details that should come later in the paragraph.
- This is a good topic sentence because it gives the reader a hint that the paragraph will discuss changes in the ages when people marry. A good topic sentence tells something about the contents of the paragraph but none of the details.



# Position of Topic Sentence

- The topic sentence is usually the first sentence in a paragraph.
- Experienced writers sometimes put it in other places.
- Reader would like to know what they are reading as soon as they begin reading.

# Developing Topic Sentences

## Listing

Make a list of every word or phrase that come to your mind in relation to your topic.

If you are asked to write about *Friends*, you have to narrow it down. One way to do this is listing.

In the next slide it is shown how *Friends* have been narrowed down.

# Listing

## Friends

kinds of friends

new friends

Old friends

What is a friend?

friends from school

casual friends

how to make friends

# Listing

The student chose “what is a friend?” and he used listing again to choose smaller topic.

What is a friend?

Have fun with

is loyal

Hang out with

can depend on

Play sports with

help each other

Can trust

# Listing

- Any of the idea in the second list can be a controlling idea

e.g.

A friend is a person you have fun with.

A friend is someone you can trust.

A friend is a person who enjoys the same activity.

# Try out



Work with your friend or in a small group. Use listing technique to write topic sentence for five of the following

Ways to meet people in a new place

Kinds of game/ television/ programs you enjoy

Advantages of being bilingual

Advantages of living in a small town

Disadvantages of living in a small town

# Supporting sentences

They explain the topic by giving more information about it. They list the main points of the paragraph. They also explain or prove the topic sentence. You need to use specific details to be thorough and convincing.

Supporting details can be:

Examples

Facts

Statistics

Quotations

# Paragraph development

## ➤ Paragraph development

After you have chosen a topic and written a topic sentence, you *develop* your main idea by adding more information to explain what you mean. This unit will explain three common ways to develop a paragraph: giving *details*, giving an *explanation*, and giving an *example*.



# Using Examples as Support

- Examples are easy
- They are from your knowledge or experience
- You don't bother searching the library or the internet
- Examples are memorable and make writing lively

# examples

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Examples explain the supporting point sentences. They are good support because they are specific. They make your meaning clear.

**Signal phrases** are important to introduce your examples.

**For instance,**

**such as**

**For example**

# Supporting sentences/ Practice



Look at P. 63 to see a paragraph

# Concluding sentence

It serves two purposes:

1- It signals the end of a paragraph

2- It reminds the reader of the main ideas by:

A- summarizing the main points of the paragraph.

B- repeating the topic sentence in different words (paraphrasing).

# The concluding sentence

- A paragraph does not always need a concluding sentence. Not every paragraph in a multi-paragraph essay needs one.
- A concluding sentence is helpful in single long paragraphs to remind the reader of important points.
- Never introduce new ideas in the concluding sentence.

# Concluding sentence

- In conclusion, we now have a greater variety of greeting cards to choose from, but **they are also becoming very expensive.**

## Conclusion Signals

Followed by a Comma	No Comma
<p>1. All in all, In brief, In conclusion, Indeed, In short,</p> <p>In summary, To conclude, To summarize, To sum up,</p>	<p>2. It is clear that . . . These examples show that . . . You can see that . . .</p>
<p>1. <b>To summarize</b>, Japanese food is both beautiful to look at and delicious to eat. Indeed, many U.S. cities and regions have a special food for everyone to enjoy.</p> <p>2. <b>It is clear that</b> fad diets don't work and may even damage a dieter's health.</p>	

Lastly, Finally, Therefore, Thus, To sum up,

The evidence suggests that...

There can be no doubt that...

These examples show that...

We can see that...



Thank you