**Writing Paragraphs**

A paragraph is a group of sentences which deal with the same subject or topic. The paragraph can be divided into three parts (introduction, development, conclusion).

1. The introduction: it introduces the topic and gives a general idea about it. Most of the time, the introduction is composed of one sentence or two sentences.

The sentence of the introduction is called “the topic sentence”.

1. The development: it speaks about the topic in details. It supplies the readers with arguments and examples concerning the topic. It is composed of several sentences.

The sentences of the development are about what the topic deals with.

1. The conclusion: it gives a sort of summary concerning what was said before or an opinion concerning the topic. Most of the time, it involves just one sentence or two sentences. When the sentence of the conclusion gives a summary to the idea discussed in the whole paragragh, it is called “a restatement sentence”. When the sentence of the conclusion gives an opinion of advice, it is called “ a terminator sentence”.

Thus, the paragraph is a group of related sentences dealing with one central idea. As far as the form of the paragraph is concerned, it should be mentioned that the first line is indented. The length of a paragraph ranges between 50 words and 250 words. A paragraph shouldn’t be too long (most of the time, the average is 100 words in length).

The central idea of a paragraph is often stated at the beginning (mainly the first sentence). Sometimes, the central idea is stated in the last sentence but this is done only when the writer progresses from a particular idea to a general one. When the main or central idea is not stated in the topic sentence, it is implicitly stated (the idea is implied from the context).

The student can develop a paragraph by using different methods. A method used is related to the topic which has to be developed. Among these different methods, one can list the following:

1. Paragraph development by examples: examples are used to develop and explain the idea of the paragraph.
2. Paragraph development by definition: The sentences of the paragraph provide a definition for the word or concept which is stated in the topic sentence.
3. Paragraph development by classification: the idea of the paragraph is developed by classifying the elements which are related to this idea (it provides a sort of listing to those elements).
4. Paragraph development by comparison: the paragraph is developed by drawing a comparison between two different persons, places or ideas.
5. Paragraph development by contrast: two opposite elements are described by showing the type of contrast that lies between them.
6. Paragraph development by cause or effect: here, the paragraph is developed by stating the causes or consequences of a certain phenomenon or problem.

Sometimes, the paragraph may include not only the causes, but also the results of the problem or event stated in the main idea.

Here is an example of paragraph development by definition:

Weather is the heat we feel on a summer day. It is the rain that delays our ball game. It is the wind that leaves off the trees. It is all this and more. Weather is the state of the atmosphere at any given time. It is experienced everywhere on earth, it varies considerably from place to place, day to day, and season to season.