

## *How to Write a Perfect Paragraph*

### What is a paragraph?

A paragraph is a group of sentences about one topic or idea. Paragraphs form the building blocks of an essay or any piece of academic writing. In academic essays, a paragraph should introduce one main idea and provide supporting evidence that elaborates the main idea. This supporting evidence needs to be referenced with intext referencing.

The main idea is often called a *topic sentence*, and provides the reader with a map of what is coming next in the essay. A paragraph should have a beginning (topic sentence), a middle (**evidence**), and if it is a long paragraph, a summary sentence at the end.

An essay that flows well is easier to read. Student should use linking words and sentences to link their paragraphs.

### **I. Topic Sentence**

What is the topic sentence? The topic sentence is the first sentence in a paragraph.

What does it do? It introduces the main idea of the paragraph.

How do I write one? Summarize the main idea of your paragraph. Make clear what your

paragraph will be about.

### **II. Supporting Details**

What are supporting sentences? They come after the topic sentence, making up the body of a paragraph.

What do they do? They give details to develop and support the main idea of the paragraph.

How do I write them? You should give supporting facts, details, and examples.

### **III. Closing Sentence**

What is the closing sentence? The closing sentence is the last sentence in a paragraph.

What does it do? It restates the main idea of your paragraph.

How do I write one? Restate the main idea of the paragraph using different words.

#### **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.

**Activity:** The following paragraphs have been adapted from Rolls and Wignell (2013, p 63). Find the topic sentence, supporting sentences and evidence according to each type.

### **Topic sentence /Supporting sentences with evidence**

Adults should read to infants. Smith and Brown (2010) explain that this helps them to read at a later stage because it helps them to see the association between words on the page and language. It should also help infants to view books and reading as a positive experience because ‘story-time’ is usually a cosy, one-to-one experience between a parent and child.

### **Topic sentence & link sentence**

### **Supporting sentences with evidence**

Another reason that global warming is a major concern is its effect on habitats. This will occur as melting ice caps increase water levels around the globe. Low-lying countries will be the most seriously affected. A study by CSIRO (1999) had projected that by 2020 a number of Pacific Island countries will need to be evacuated. As human habitats will be affected, so too will be the habitats for plants and animals