

From Paragraph to Essay

1. The Paragraph and the Basic Essay Format

In an essay, a paragraph discusses one idea in detail that supports the thesis of the essay. Each paragraph in the body of the paper should include a topic sentence, supporting details to support the topic sentence, and a concluding sentence. The paragraph's purpose and scope will determine its length, but most paragraphs contain at least two complete sentences.

The table below shows how the structural parts of the paragraph correspond to the elements of the essay.

Table1. Paragraph and Essay Components

PARAGRAPH	ESSAY
<i>Topic sentence</i>	<i>Introduction</i> (general statements + thesis statement)
<i>Supporting detail 1</i>	<i>Body paragraph 1</i> (Topic sentence + supporting details + concluding sentence)
<i>Supporting detail 2</i>	<i>Body paragraph 2</i> (Topic sentence + supporting details + concluding sentence)
<i>Supporting detail 3</i>	<i>Body paragraph 3</i> (Topic sentence + supporting details + concluding sentence)
<i>Concluding sentence</i>	<i>Conclusion</i> (restatement of the thesis statement + restatement of the main points + final comment)

1.1. Topic Sentence

The main idea of each paragraph is stated in a topic sentence that shows how the idea relates to the thesis. Generally, the topic sentence is placed at the beginning of a paragraph, but the location and placement may vary according to individual organization and audience expectation. Topic sentences often serve as transitions between paragraphs.

1.2. Supporting Details

Supporting details elaborate upon the topic sentences and thesis. Supporting details should be drawn from a variety of sources determined by the assignment guidelines and genre, and should include the writer's own analysis.

1.3. Concluding Sentence

Each paragraph should end with a final statement that brings together the ideas brought up in the paragraph. Sometimes, it can serve as a transition to the next paragraph.

2. Unity and Coherence

Proper essay and paragraph format not only helps to achieve unity and coherence but also enhances the reader's understanding. Well-worded topic sentences and concluding sentences will also help maintain unity throughout the essay.

- *Unity* is the continuity of a single idea (the thesis) throughout the essay. Each detail and example should develop logically and refer back to the original focus.
- *Coherence* means that each point should be linked to the previous and following points to help the essay flow and progress logically and clearly. An easy way to link paragraphs together is through transitions in each paragraph's topic sentence.

3. Sample Paragraph :

Paragraph Topic : The Importance of Exercise

Regular exercise is essential for maintaining good physical and mental health. It helps to strengthen muscles, improve cardiovascular health, and boost the immune system. Additionally, exercise releases endorphins in the brain, which can improve mood and reduce stress levels. Overall, incorporating exercise into one's daily routine is crucial for leading a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

Expanded Essay :

Essay Topic : The Benefits of Regular Exercise

Regular exercise is crucial for maintaining overall well-being, encompassing both physical and mental health benefits. Firstly, engaging in physical activity strengthens muscles and improves cardiovascular health. When we exercise, our muscles work harder, leading to increased strength and endurance over time. This not only enhances physical performance but also reduces the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

Furthermore, exercise plays a vital role in boosting the immune system. Studies have shown that regular physical activity can enhance the body's ability to fight off infections and illnesses. This is particularly important in today's world, where maintaining a strong immune system is essential for staying healthy and preventing the spread of diseases.

In addition to its physical benefits, exercise also has significant mental health advantages. When we engage in physical activity, our bodies release endorphins, often referred to as "feel-good" hormones. These endorphins interact with receptors in the brain to reduce feelings of pain and trigger a positive feeling in the body, similar to that of morphine. As a result, exercise is known to alleviate symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression, promoting overall mental well-being.

Moreover, regular exercise can improve cognitive function and enhance mood. Studies have shown that physical activity stimulates the production of chemicals in the brain that help improve memory, concentration, and overall cognitive abilities. Additionally, exercising regularly can lead to better sleep quality, which is essential for mental clarity and emotional stability.

In conclusion, the benefits of regular exercise are vast and encompass both physical and mental aspects of health. From strengthening muscles and improving cardiovascular health to boosting the immune system and enhancing mood, exercise plays a crucial role in promoting overall well-being. Incorporating regular physical activity into one's daily routine is essential for leading a healthy, balanced lifestyle.

4. Basic Essay Structure

A basic essay consists of three main parts: introduction, body, and conclusion. Following this format will help you write and organize an essay. However, flexibility is important. While keeping this basic essay format in mind, let the topic and specific assignment guide the writing and organization.

4.1. . Introductory Paragraph : The first paragraph of an essay should introduce the reader to the essay topic. It should create interest in the essay, outline the writer's main ideas, and suggest how these ideas will be presented within the body of the essay. The introduction consists of three main elements: a hook, building sentences, and a thesis statement.

a. Hook : The first sentence (or sentences) of an essay should catch the reader's attention. It introduces the topic of the essay in an interesting way.

b. Building Sentences: After the hook, the following sentences should provide background information to give readers some context about the topic. They should "build" towards the thesis statement.

c. Thesis Statement : The thesis statement comes at the end of the introduction. It is the most important sentence in the entire essay because it presents the essay topic and the writer's position on that topic. It also indicates the main ideas that will be discussed in the body paragraphs.

4.2. Body Paragraphs : The body of an essay consists of three paragraphs. Each body paragraph explains in detail one of the main ideas expressed in the thesis statement. There are three parts to a body paragraph: a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence.

a. Topic Sentence : The first sentence of a body paragraph expresses the topic of the paragraph and provides a controlling idea about the topic. All information in the paragraph supports the controlling idea.

b. Supporting Sentences : Supporting sentences explain and develop the topic sentence. They present logical thoughts, evidence, and explanations in support of the controlling idea.

c. Concluding Sentence : The paragraph may end with a concluding thought on the paragraph topic. It may also show a transition to the next paragraph.

4.3. Concluding Paragraph :

The concluding paragraph ends the essay by reviewing the main ideas from each body paragraph and leaving the reader with a final thought. The conclusion consists of three elements: a restated thesis, a summary of main ideas, and a final thought.

a. Restated Thesis : At the start of the conclusion, the thesis is restated in words different from those in the introduction.

b. Summary of Main Ideas : The main ideas from each of the body paragraphs are summarized as a reminder to the reader.

c. Final Thought : The writer ends the essay by presenting a final thought on the topic for example, by stating an opinion, a solution, or a prediction. The final thought should leave a strong impression and encourage the reader to think further about the topic.

5. Basic Essay Format

To format an essay the writer should:

- Double space the essay.
- Leave one inch (2.5 centimeters) on the top, the bottom, the left and the right sides of the page.
- Indent the first sentence of each paragraph with one tab (5 spaces) when in typing and about 2 centimeters when in writing by hand. Otherwise, paragraphs can start with no indenting unless separated with one line space between a paragraph and another.
- Center the title of the essay on the top of the page.