

Paragraphs

What is a Paragraph?

Paragraphs are a way to organize written language. A *paragraph* is a group of related sentences. Sentences that deal with the same idea or topic are put into one paragraph. When you want to change topics or ideas, start a new paragraph.

Each paragraph begins on a new line.
Paragraphs can be written in:

indented style or *block form.*

Note:
When you are writing dialogue, start a new paragraph every time the speaker changes, even if the speaker says only one word. e.g.

*Maurice and Annie had been invited to the celebration.
"Are you going to the party?" asked Maurice.
"Yes," replied Annie.*

An expository paragraph is often composed of a group of sentences expressing one central idea. A paragraph may be complete in itself, and yet also a subdivision or part of something larger, such as an essay or report.

Unless it is at the beginning of a piece of writing, a paragraph can begin with a space called an *indentation*. A piece of writing composed of several paragraphs will have several indentations — making it easy for the reader to see where each new paragraph begins.

Usually a paragraph is a group of sentences about one event or idea. This event or idea is called the topic. There are several different kinds of paragraphs. Those that basically describe or paint a picture of a particular person, place, thing, or event are known as *descriptive paragraphs*. Paragraphs that mainly tell a story are *narrative paragraphs*. Paragraphs that tell how to do something or that explain something are *expository paragraphs*.

In a block form paragraph, the first line is not indented. Instead, a space is left between paragraphs.

Parts of a Paragraph

The Topic Sentence

A paragraph usually begins with a topic sentence. The topic sentence tells the reader what the rest of the paragraph will be about.

All cats are meat eaters.

The Developing Sentences

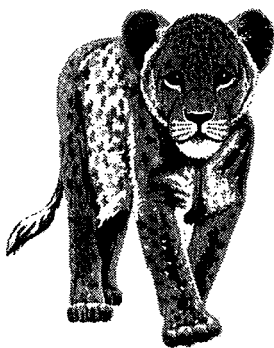
These sentences carry the cargo of the paragraph. They provide the reader with the information needed to understand the topic.

All are hunters, and most of them hunt at night. They seldom hunt in packs like dogs or wolves. They stalk their prey alone.

The Closing Sentence

A paragraph ends with a closing sentence. This sentence wraps up or sums up what the paragraph has been about.

If you look at your pet cat closely, you will see how well nature has prepared it to be a hunter.



Building Paragraphs
Topic Sentences

The topic sentence introduces or announces what is coming next.

Choose three topics from the following list.
For each one, write a topic or opening sentence for a paragraph dealing with that topic. Don't write the rest of the paragraph; concentrate on a clear topic or opening sentence.

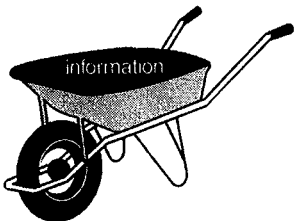
- *perfect meal*
- *best holiday*
- *the best music group today*
- *an interesting hobby*
- *our pet*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

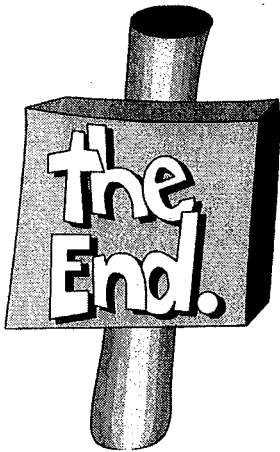
Developing Sentences



Choose one of the following topic sentences.
Add a few developing sentences that will carry information about the topic.

- *When I am older, there is one thing in particular that I intend to do.*
- *Would you like to know what I dislike doing most on weekends?*
- *One of my relatives told me all about it.*

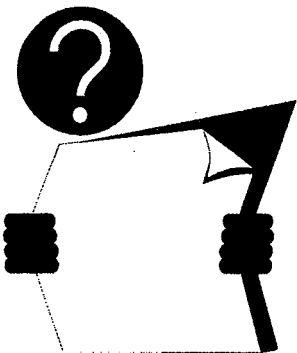
Closing Sentence



Use one of the following sentences as the *closing* sentence in a paragraph. Add a *topic* or opening sentence and a few *developing* sentences to make a paragraph.

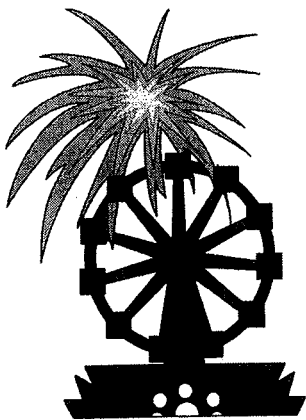
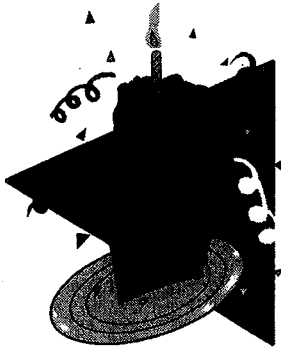
- *All he knew was that he still felt hungry.*
- *That's the one thing we had forgotten about.*
- *It took a lot of work, cooperation, and plenty of patience.*
- *That's the one thing I could do expertly.*
- *I guess it was all caused by that toothless old dog.*

Who Am I?



Think of a character in a television series or movie. Write a paragraph that provides information about your character. Find out if someone else can figure out who the character is.

A New Holiday!



Create a holiday you think we need -- to celebrate a person, or event, or just because you think we should have it.

Write a paragraph for each of the following topics concerning your new holiday.

Name of Holiday _____

What are we celebrating?

When should we have this holiday?

What special ways of celebrating would there be?

Kinds of Paragraphs



There are four kinds of paragraphs.

- To describe something or someone, write a *descriptive paragraph*.
- To tell a story, write a *narrative paragraph*.
- To express your opinion, write a *persuasive paragraph*.
- To explain how to do something, write an *expository paragraph*.

Descriptive Paragraph

A *descriptive* paragraph describes a person, place, thing, or idea. When you write a *descriptive* paragraph, you should use words that help your readers feel as if they are right there with you, seeing and feeling what you do.

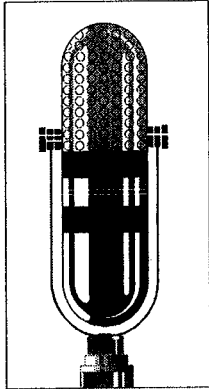
Choose one of the following topics.

- *an interesting member of my family*
- *a pet*
- *a beautiful view or scene*

Write a *descriptive* paragraph about your topic. What *descriptive* words will you use to paint your word picture?

Remember:
topic sentence, developing sentences, concluding sentence.

Narrative Paragraph



In a *narrative* paragraph, you tell a story by sharing the details of an experience. A *narrative* paragraph often answers:
Who? What? When? Where? Why?

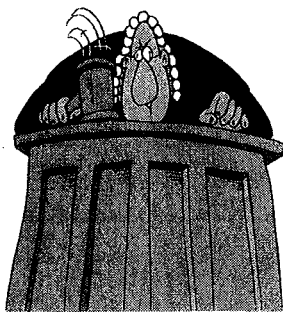
Choose one of the topics below. Write a narrative paragraph about your choice.

Remember:

topic sentence, developing sentences, concluding sentence.

- *a most embarrassing moment*
- *the best day of last summer*
- *a proud moment*

Persuasive Paragraph



A *persuasive* paragraph gives the writer's opinion on a topic, and tries to persuade the reader to agree with it. Facts and examples are important in a *persuasive* paragraph.

Choose one of the topics below.

Write a persuasive paragraph about your topic.

Remember:

topic sentence, developing sentences, concluding sentence.

- *school should not be extended to include the summer months*
- *school should be extended to include the summer months*
- *the age to be eligible for a driver's license should be changed*
