**PARAGRAPH WRITING**

*A paragraph is a group of sentences that develop one topic or idea. It has three main parts. The first part is the topic sentence. It is called the topic sentence because it states the topic or the subject of the paragraph. The second main part is the supporting sentences. The supporting sentences develop the topic. This means that they explain the topic sentence in detail. The last part is the concluding sentence. The concluding sentence summarises the paragraph and/or adds a final comment. A clear academic paragraph requires all of these parts.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Problems in Big Cities**  (1) **All around the world living in big cities creates serious problems for people.** (2a) **The first problem** is air pollution. For example, in Istanbul, many people have cars and cars are one reason why the air is polluted. (2b) **Secondly**, traffic is an important problem for the people living in big cities. Nowadays there are more and more cars on roads, and this causes traffic jams in many parts of the cities. For this reason, many inhabitants waste their time in traffic, and they are negatively affected by this situation. (3) **To sum up**, air pollution and traffic jams are two important problems that people living in big cities have. | 1 THE TOPIC SENTENCE  2 SUPPORTING SENTENCES  Concluding sentence |

**A. PARTS OF A PARAGRAPH**

**I. THE TOPIC**

*A topic is the general idea of a paragraph. It is what gives the answer to the question “What is the paragraph about?” For example,* Biochemistry*,* Physiology *and* Anatomy *are all examples of the topic* Medical subjects*.*

**Exercise 1:** Circle the topic of the words below.

1. Mercury Venus Planets Saturn Mars

2. German Italian English Languages Spanish

3. wheel tire car door seat

4. apple banana grape strawberry fruit

5. fan basketball coach scoreboard player.

**II. THE TOPIC SENTENCE**

*The topic sentence is usually the first sentence of a paragraph. It contains the main idea which is developed in the rest of the paragraph. A topic sentence must be a complete sentence, a statement of intent, opinion or a mixture of both. It should be neither too broad (Football is very popular in the world) nor too narrow (Gold is very valuable). The topic tells us the subject (what the paragraph is about) and the controlling idea makes a specific comment about the topic (what the paragraph is going to say about the topic / the writer’s attitude or idea about the topic). In other words, the controlling idea shows the reader what the rest of the paragraph will say about the topic; it limits the topic to a specific area to be discussed in a single paragraph.*

*A topic sentence has two main parts: topic and the controlling idea.*

**Topic Sentence = topic + controlling idea**

Caffeine has several harmful effects on health.

*In this example the topic is “caffeine”. A specific comment is then made about the topic: “it has several harmful effects on health”. From this topic sentence, the reader immediately knows that the supporting sentences will explain or prove how harmful caffeine can be.* **The controlling idea may be found:**

 *at the beginning of the topic sentence*

There are two main advantages of working at home.

Controlling Idea Topic

 *at the beginning and at the end of the topic sentence, separated by the topic*

The two main advantages of working at home are its flexible hours and its comfort.

Controlling Idea Topic Controlling Idea

 *at the end of the topic sentence*

Working at home is advantageous because of its flexible hours and its comfort.

**III. SUPPORTING SENTENCES**

*The supporting sentences in a paragraph explain or develop the topic sentence. The supporting part can be narratives, details, facts, examples, explanations or statistics. All of the supporting sentences relate to the main idea stated in the topic sentence and show why it is true.*

**Exercise 6**: Write a list of things that fit each of the topics below

**IV. THE CONCLUDING SENTENCE**

*The conclusion of a paragraph signals the end of the paragraph; summarizes the main points of the paragraph and relates them to the topic sentence; gives a final comment on the topic and leaves the reader with the most important ideas to think about; can make a suggestion or a prediction.*

*A concluding sentence is not absolutely necessary, but it is very helpful to the reader since it signals the end of the paragraph and reminds the reader of the important points. The concluding sentence often closes the paragraph by returning the main idea of it. They do this by repeating a keyword or phrase from the topic***e.g.**:

Topic sentence: There are many good reasons for why people live in the country but not in cities.

Conclusion : In conclusion, living in the country is much better than living in the city.

Topic Sentence: Forests are important for life on earth.

Conclusion : To sum up, if there were no forests, there would be no life on this planet.

Topic Sentence: There are some important qualities of a good boss.

Conclusion : All in all, a qualified boss should be fair, should be a good leader and should act with

consistency.

**BASIC PARAGRAPH FORMAT** TOPIC SENTENCE

SUPPORTING DETAIL 1 (+ Minor Detail 1)

SUPPORTING DETAIL 2 (+ Minor Detail 2)

SUPPORTING DETAIL 3 (+ Minor Detail 3)

THE CONCLUDING SENTENCE