

Consider the following example:

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Narrative Paragraph

A *narration* is also a type of writing in which the details or the ideas in a sequence of events or the steps of the process are arranged on the basis of time. The details are arranged in chronological order. Here, the transitional words or phrases expressing time such as: soon, immediately, afterwards, as soon as, are commonly used.

The Day I Almost Drowned

When I was twelve years old, I almost drowned in the river near my village. One Sunday morning, my cousin, Ahmad, and I were playing with a raft. Suddenly he let go and the raft started to drift out to river. It was a windy day as I swam toward the raft. The wind took it out further and further. Soon I was out to far. Everyone was screaming, but I could not hear them. Suddenly, an old fisherman saw me and came out to rescue me. When I got back to the river, my mother and Ahmad both were crying. Finally, we all thanked the old fisherman who had saved me from drowning.

To narrate is to tell a story or describe an incident. In a narrative, the topic is the incident or story and the controlling idea is the writer's attitude or feeling about the event. A strong controlling idea helps to focus the paragraph and helps the reader understand the writer's purpose.

Topic Sentence

- The topic sentence tells the reader what the story will be about.
- It may also tell when and where the story took place.
- The topic sentence should capture the reader's interest.

Supporting Sentences

- The supporting sentences tell the details of the story, including the sequence of events.
- They also include sensory details, such as what the author saw, heard, smelled, or tasted.
- Supporting sentences may also tell about the writer's feelings during the events.

Concluding Sentence

- The concluding sentence summarizes the main idea of the paragraph.

Sometimes you can feel grateful not to get something you thought you really wanted. When I was 16, a local Italian-American organization offered a travel scholarship to three students. It sounded like an incredible opportunity. I immediately submitted my application for the scholarship. The three lucky students would go to Italy to study for the summer. They would live with Italian families and study Italian and other subjects at a local university. The scholarship would cover all the expenses including food. This was very important to me because my father was a factory worker and my mother was a hairdresser, so money was tight. In addition, I was studying singing and loved opera. I was very excited about getting the chance to attend opera performances in Italy. In the end, a lot of students applied, so it was very competitive. When I found out I hadn't won a scholarship, I was so disappointed I almost cried. All of my dreams vanished. In order to make me feel a bit better, my mother bought tickets for the two of us to attend the performance of a local opera company. One of her clients from the hair salon arranged for us to go backstage after the performance. There I met the head of the opera company. When he heard that I wanted to be an opera singer, he invited me to audition for a summer internship with the company. I got the internship. Because of that, I got a scholarship to a great music school and finally got to Italy. But this time, I was actually singing in the opera rather than just watching it. I am so glad that I didn't get what I thought I wanted.

In this paragraph, the incident is applying for a travel scholarship, and the controlling idea is made me feel grateful. Now look at an analysis of the incident. Notice how the events and details support the controlling idea.

ANALYZING AN INCIDENT

Events	Details
A scholarship was offered.	Students would study in Italy for the summer.
I applied for the scholarship.	It covered all expenses, including food.
My family didn't have a lot of money.	My father was a factory worker.
	My mother was a hairdresser.
I didn't win the scholarship.	I was so disappointed that I almost cried.
My mother bought tickets for the opera.	Her client arranged for us to go backstage.
I met the man who ran the opera company.	I told him I wanted to be an opera singer.
He invited me to apply for a summer internship.	I auditioned and got the internship.
I won a scholarship to music school.	The school was prestigious.
I traveled to Italy.	I sang in the opera in Italy.

When I Refused to Listen to My Parents

When I was young, I often felt that my parents were overprotective. I usually didn't pay attention to their advice, until one day I almost paid a heavy price. In my country, Saudi Arabia, I used to go out with my brother, friends, or relatives to popular places on the weekends. I went to school from Saturday to Wednesday. Then, the weekend was from Wednesday night to Friday. One Wednesday, after working hard at school, I had to do something fun. In the evening, I washed my father's car and called some of my friends to go out that night to King Fahad Park. At nine o'clock, I told my parents about my plans, but they didn't want me to go. They said it was too late, but I didn't listen to them. I went out anyway and drove to my friends' house to pick them up. While we were driving on the main road in the park, there was another car in the middle lane. Suddenly, the driver of that car turned into my lane without giving a signal. I switched on the bright lights, pounded on the horn, and stepped on the brakes, but nothing worked. The other car forced me to hit the wall on the side of the main road. When the car stopped, my friends and I got out. It was a miracle that nobody was hurt. My father's car was in bad condition; it looked like a pancake. At that moment, I remembered my parents' words when they didn't want me to go out. Later, the police came, and I arranged with a garage to fix my father's car. After three days, I told my father about everything. First, he wanted to know if anyone was hurt. Then he told me to be careful next time and scolded me. From then on, I have taken my parents' advice; I know they are only trying to help me.

Chronological Order

A narration is a type of writing in which the details or the ideas in a sequence of events or the steps of the process are arranged on the basis of time, chronological order. It refers to the time sequence of the story. Many writers prefer to narrate a sequence chronologically; starting at the beginning and stopping at the end. Others choose to recognize time in flashbacks. Here, the end of the story might be told first, with the beginning and middle added on to make the ending understandable.

Consider the following paragraph:

Read the paragraph above and extract the events following the chart below

Topic Sentence	
Background information	
Story	
Event 1	
Event 2	
Event 3	
Event 4	
Comment (Conclusion)	

Transition Signals

Transitions of words, phrases, or sentences are all important in

narration. We are familiar with such ordering expressions as first, second, third, finally, later, next, last, etc. We can use them to direct the traffic in our stories. When we use flashbacks, we need words and phrases like: earlier, all at once, and so on.

Your Turn: Writing Task

Write a narrative paragraph about something happened while you were in your summer

holiday. In your writing follow these steps:

1. Brainstorm: *Brainstorm ideas, memories, and time and place.
*Brainstorm vocabulary (use it in clear sentences about the topic.

2. Organize your writing (Planning)

Topic sentence:

What is the story about? Where and when did it take place?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Supporting sentences

What happened first?

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.....
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.....
.....

What happened next?

.....
.....

What else happened ?

How did the experience end?

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.....
.....
.....
.....

Concluding sentence

What was important about the experience? How did it affect you?

.....
.....
.....

1. Write your first draft.

2. Edit your draft using the checklist

Editor's Checklist

Put a check (✓) as appropriate. Write answers in complete sentences in the lines provided.

- 1. Does the paragraph have a topic sentence that tells what the story will be about?
.....
.....
- 2. Do the supporting sentences tell the details of the story?
- 3. Does the writer use sensory and emotional details? If so, what sensory and emotional details are included? _____
.....
.....
- 4. Does the writer use sequence words and transition words to explain the order of the events in the story? If so, which ones? _____
.....
.....
- 5. Does the paragraph have a concluding sentence that "wraps up" the story? Does it include a comment about the experience? If so, what is the comment? _____
.....
.....

3. Write your final version of the paragraph