

## Lecture 07: Introduction to Paragraph

### Introduction to the Paragraph

A paragraph is a group of related sentences that develop a main thought, or idea, about a single topic. The structure of a paragraph is not complex. There are usually three basic elements: (1) topic sentence, (2) supporting details, and (3) concluding sentence. The topic sentence states the main, or controlling, idea. The sentences that explain this main point are called supporting details. These details may be facts, reasons, or examples that provide further information about the topic sentence.

**Chocolate** has been shown to *improve cardiovascular health*. Cocoa, from which chocolate is made, contains flavonoids. The main flavonoids present in cocoa have been shown to relax blood vessels and lower blood pressure (Stresing 2004). When blood pressure is lowered, there is a reduced risk of health problems such as stroke and coronary heart disease. A study (Taubert et al. 2007) into the body's response to the low consumption of cocoa found that these health benefits are comparable to those achieved through the use of conventional blood pressure medicine. Therefore, research indicates that small amounts of chocolate can indeed offer heart health benefits.

The topic sentence is the core sentence in a paragraph and occurs after the attention getter. It introduces the main idea of the paragraph and provides an indication of the points/ideas that will be used to prove the topic/thesis statement. A controlling idea indicates the specific area which the content of the discussion is about.

Look at the following example

(Throughout history, gold has always been one of the most used materials.)  
Gold, a precious metal, is prized for two important characteristics. **First of all**, gold has a lustrous beauty that is resistant to corrosion. **Therefore**, it is suitable for jewelry, coins, and ornamental purposes. Gold never needs to be polished and will remain beautiful forever. **For example**, a Macedonian coin remains as untarnished today as the day it was made 25 centuries ago. **Another important characteristic of gold is its usefulness to industry and science.** For many years, it has been used in hundreds of industrial applications, **such as** photography and dentistry. The most recent use of gold is in astronauts' suits. Astronauts wear gold-plated heat shields for protection when they go outside spaceships in space. **In conclusion**, gold is treasured not only for its beauty but also for its utility. (For these reasons, we can foresee its long-lasting popularity in different industries.)

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