



Writing Help Sheet: Paragraph Writing

Always indent the first word of each composition and of each paragraph.

Whenever you change topics in writing, start a paragraph. Each sentence of a paragraph should point to the topic or subject of the paragraph itself. For example, if you write about the people in the circus, put all that pertains to the people in one paragraph. Then, when you begin writing about the animals, start a new paragraph.

There are several different ways to organize your paragraph. Read the following examples.

Paragraph Developed by Detail

Our grocery store sells many kinds of foods. The fresh vegetables consist of tomatoes, potatoes, celery, lettuce, onions, squash, green beans, and cabbage. You may purchase either corn on the cob or canned corn. The supply of canned peas, beets, beans, fish, pears, peaches, and cherries is abundant. The meat department sells steaks, roasts, chickens, rabbits, bacon, hams, and fish; you will find the bacon lean and the rabbits fat. Our store carries everything to eat, from mushrooms to canned chicken.

Paragraph Developed by Negation

The boy our boss hired last week is lazy and shiftless. He never comes in on time. He will not help any of us unless the boss tells him to do so. When he starts a task, you may as well do it yourself because he does not finish what he starts. His manner and his careless appearance prove that he does not take an interest in his work.

Paragraph Developed by Repetition

Tuberculosis is a treacherous disease. It strikes children as well as adults. One must be constantly on the alert to avoid contracting it. Tuberculosis slowly destroys body tissue and bones and often it does arouse its victim until the disease is too far advanced for a cure. Truly, tuberculosis is a treacherous disease.

Paragraph Developed by Contrast

Christmas is not what it was when I was a child. We used to prepare for Christmas weeks in advance. Mother made goodies and Dad got together the tree trimmings for Christmas Eve. We would go into the bedroom and wrap our homemade gifts for Mother and Dad. People today do everything at the last minute for a Christmas that has been highly commercialized.

Paragraph Developed by Specific Details

One sees many humorous things in the course of a day if one looks for them. While I was sitting on my porch feeding nuts to a friendly squirrel the other day, I noticed that he was burying them. I also noticed a blue jay in a tree near by. Each time the squirrel buried a nut, the blue jay dug it up and ate it. It didn't take the squirrel long to "catch on". The very next time I threw him a nut he repeated the procedure of digging a hole, but instead of putting the nut in, he refilled the hole, keeping the nut. He then went over to the trunk of the tree and, while the blue jay was digging where he thought the nut was buried, the squirrel buried it in another place.