

Process writing

When we write, we do more than just put words together to make sentences. Good writers go through several steps to produce a piece of writing.

Pre-writing

Step one: Choose a topic. Before you write, your teacher gives you a specific assignment or some ideas of what to write about.

Step two: Gather ideas. When you have a topic, think about what you will write about the topic.

Step three: Organise. Decide which of the ideas you want to use and where you want to use them. Choose which idea to talk about first, which to talk about next and which to talk about last.

Drafting.

Step four: Write. Write your paragraph or essay from start to finish. Use your notes about your ideas and organization.

Reviewing and revising

Step five: Review structure and content. Check what you have written. Read your writing silently to yourself or aloud, perhaps to a friend. Look for places where you can add more information, and check to see if you have any unnecessary information.

Rewriting.

Step six: Revise structure and content. Use your ideas from step five to rewrite your text, making improvements to the structure and content. You might need to explain something more clearly, or add more details. You may even need to change your organization so that your text is more logical. Together, steps five and six can be called editing.

Proofread. Read your text again. This time, check your spelling and grammar and think about the words you have chosen to use.

Make final corrections. Check that you have corrected the errors you discovered in steps five and six and make any other changes you want to make. Now your text is finished.

Steps five and six can be repeated many times.

The Structure of a Paragraph

A paragraph is a group of sentences about a single topic. Together, the sentences of the paragraph explain the writer's main idea. (most important idea) about the topic. A paragraph is often between five and ten sentences long, but it

can be longer or shorter, depending on the topic. The first sentence of a paragraph is usually indented (moved in) a few spaces.

Paragraph organization

What makes a paragraph?

A paragraph has three main basic parts:

1. **The topic sentence.** This is the main idea of the paragraph. It is usually the first sentence of the paragraph and it is the most general sentence of the paragraph.
2. **The supporting sentences.** These are sentences that talk about or explain the topic sentence. They are more detailed ideas that follow the topic sentence.
3. **The concluding sentence.** This may be found as the last sentence of a paragraph. It can finish a paragraph by repeating the main idea or just giving a final comment about the topic.

1. These sentences are mixed up parts of one paragraph. Number the parts in order:

1. topic sentence, 2. supporting sentence, 3. concluding sentence.

What should I study at university?

- a. *It wasn't an easy decision, but for the reasons listed above, I have decided to study journalism.*
- b. *It can be difficult to choose a subject to study at university because there are so many choices, but by considering my skills and interests, I have decided to study journalism.*
- c. *I have always enjoyed writing, so it is sensible to choose a subject that involves writing. When I begin working, I would like to have the opportunity to travel, and travel is often an important part of a journalist's job. Finally, I am also interested in photography, and pictures are very important in journalism.*

2. Use words or phrases in the box to complete the sentences.

concluding sentence	indented	main idea	paragraph
supporting sentences	topic	topic sentence	

- The _____ is usually the first sentence in a _____. It gives the _____ and the _____.
- The first sentence of a paragraph can be _____.
- The _____ come after the topic sentence, and they explain the topic sentence.
- The _____ comes at the end of a paragraph.

(Answer key a. topic sentence; paragraph; topic; main idea
 b. indented
 c. supporting sentences
 d. concluding sentence)

3. Which of these groups of sentences makes a good paragraph? Why are the other groups of sentences not good paragraphs?

a	
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My best friend has many different hobbies, such as skiing, cooking, and playing the piano, and she is very good at all these activities. For example, she has played the piano for ten years and has won three piano competitions. She also likes to spend time travelling, and she has been to many different countries in the world. She grew up speaking Spanish and English, but now she can also speak French and Italian. I like my best friend very much.

b	
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Classes in literature are useful no matter what job you intend to have when you finish university. Books are about life. People who study literature learn the skill of reading carefully and understanding characters, situations, and relationships. This kind of understanding can be useful to teachers and business people alike.

Literature classes are require a lot of writing, so they help students develop the skill of clear communication. Of course, the professional writer needs to have this skill, but it is as equally important skill for an

engineer. Finally, reading literature helps develop an understanding of many different points of view. Reading a novel by a Russian author, for example, will help a reader learn more about Russian culture. For anyone whose job may bring them into contact with Russian colleagues, this insight can help encourage better cross-cultural understanding. Studying literature is studying life, so it is relevant to almost any job you can think of.

c	
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One good way to learn another language is to live in a country where that language is used. When you live in another country, the language is around you all the time, so you can learn to listen to and speak it more easily.

Answer

Paragraph **b** is the good paragraph. It has a clear topic sentence, it has several supporting ideas that connect well to the topic sentence, and it has a clear concluding sentence.

Problems with paragraph **a**:

- Not enough supporting sentences to explain the various hobbies mentioned in the topic sentence;
- The sentence about travelling and speaking different languages are not connected to the topic sentence;

Problems with paragraph **c**:

- Not enough supporting ideas to explain the topic sentence;
- No concluding sentence.

4. For this paragraph, choose the sentence from the list below that would make the best topic sentence.

.....
..... *When Ken wanted to enter a good university, he studied hard to pass the examination. The first time he took the exam, he did not do well, and he felt very discouraged. But he knew he wanted to study at that university, so he studied more. The next year, he tried taking the exam again. The second time, he did very well, and now he is studying engineering. I believe Ken is a good role model for me, and he has taught me that never giving up is the best way to succeed.*

1. One of my closest friends, named ken, is a person I can trust.
2. My friend Ken is a very successful student.
3. I admire my friend Ken because he doesn't give up.

(3 is the best topic sentence.)

The Structure of an Essay

An essay is a group of paragraphs written about a single topic and a central main idea. It must have at least three paragraphs, but a five- paragraph essay is a common length for academic writing.

The Structure of an Essay

The three main parts of an essay

The Introduction

This is the first paragraph of an essay. It explains the topic with general ideas. It also has a thesis a thesis statement. This is the sentence that gives the main idea. It usually comes at or near the end of the paragraph.

The main body

These are the paragraphs that explain and support the thesis statement and come between the introduction and the conclusion. There must be one or more paragraphs in the main body of an essay.

The conclusion

This is the last paragraph of an essay. It summarises or restates the thesis and the supporting ideas of the essay.

Introductions and conclusions

The introduction and the conclusion are the two of the tree main parts of an essay. Without an introduction and a conclusion, an essay is just a group of paragraphs. The introduction and the conclusion work together to make the topic and main ideas of the essay clear to the reader.

The Introduction:

- Is usually five to ten sentences.
- Catches the reader's interest.
- Gives the general topic of the essay.
- Gives background information about the topic.
- States the main point (the thesis statement) of the essay.

How to write a strong introduction

A strong introduction:

- Introduces the topic clearly.
- Gives several sentences of information about the topic.
- States the thesis (the main idea) of the essay.

Any of the following will make an introduction weak:

- It doesn't give enough information about the topic or gives too much information about it.
- It talks about too many different topics.
- It does not state a clear thesis.

How to make an introduction interesting.

To make an introductory paragraph interesting for the reader, you can include...

- Interesting facts or statistics.
- A personal story or example.
- An interesting quotation

1. Read the following introductions. Mark the strong introductions with a tick (✓). Mark the weak introductions with a cross (x).

a	
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Family structure has changed a lot in the last fifty years in Asia. The decrease in the number of extended families and nuclear families has caused several social changes.

b	
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The number of businesses using the Internet for selling products has increased greatly in recent years. Shoppers, too, using the Internet in greater numbers to buy all types of products, such as books, cameras, and clothing. Although e- business has become popular, there are certain risks involved in Internet shopping that are a concern for both businesses and consumers.

c	
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Stargazing – looking at the stars – is something everyone should try. I love it. When looking at the night sky, most people observe that the moon, planets and stars move from the east side of the sky to the west over a period of several hours. In fact, this movement is actually the movement of the Earth rotating on its axis. In addition, as the Earth revolves around the sun throughout the year, different stars are visible at different times.

Answers

- a. **x** – Too short. The writer could add one or two more sentences with information about changes in families. Also, there is no interesting information to draw the reader in. Some statistics or examples could be added at the beginning.
- b. **v**–
- c. **x**- The introduction doesn't have a thesis statement. A possible thesis statement: *Stargazing is a valuable way to learn about our world as well as outer space.*

The conclusion

The importance of a conclusion

The conclusion is the final paragraph of the essay. A good concluding paragraph...

- Summarises the main points of the essay.
- Restates the thesis (using different words).
- Makes a final comment about the essay's main idea.
- May emphasise an action that you would like the reader to take.

Don't introduce new ideas in a conclusion. A conclusion only restates or gives further commentary on ideas discussed in the essay.

1. Match each of these introduction thesis statements with its rewritten version for a conclusion.

a. Supermarkets are the	1. People can learn many things
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best places to buy food because of their convenience and lower prices.	by travelling to other countries.
b. Travelling abroad is a valuable learning experience.	2. Despite the challenges, being an entrepreneur can offer more benefits than other types of employment.
c. Learning to play a musical instrument is very beneficial for children.	3. The fact that larger supermarkets offer cheap prices and a large selection of products makes them the best place for shoppers.
d. Creating and owning a business offers more advantages than working as an employee in a company.	4. The World Wide Web gives access to a huge amount of knowledge, but users shouldn't believe everything they read there.
e. More houses should be adapted to use solar energy because it is clean and renewable.	5. When children are exposed to music and are taught to play instruments such as the piano or violin, there are many positive effects.
f. The World Wide Web can be very useful for research, but it is also contains a lot of incorrect information.	6. The sun gives the constant, free supply of clean energy, which more homes should take advantage of.

2. Read the extracts below and say which are beginnings and which are endings.

A. Do you fancy yourself as a handyman or handywoman? For people who are good with their hands, home decorating is certainly an option. With the wide range of materials available in the shops, and the increasingly high cost of professional decorating, the trend is towards DIY. So what are the advantages and disadvantages of 'do it yourself'?

B. More and more couples today choose to have only one child. Most of us imagine that being an only child must be terribly lonely, but is that really the case? Having no brothers or sisters has both advantages and disadvantages.

C. To sum up, although there are many points against being a reporter, I believe there are certainly aspects in favour of IT. Besides, as John Hersey once said, "Journalism allows ITS readers to witness history.

D. All things considered, I believe that there are more disadvantages than advantages to dieting. Perhaps that was why writer and journalist Geoffreyannon believed that "Dieting makes you fat" After all, if you eat sensible, well-balanced meals and keep fit and active, you are more likely to stay slim

3. Read the essay and label the paragraphs with the headings below.

second viewpoint & examples • subject & opinion • restate opinion • opposing viewpoints • first viewpoint & examples

English and Maths are more important subjects than Art and Music

Isn't it unfortunate that in today's society there are so many people who cannot read, write or even do arithmetic? I strongly believe that, although subjects such as Art and Music are important, English and Maths are the most fundamental part of our education.

In the first place, when you know how to read, write and do simple calculations, you have the tools required in order to deal with everyday matters. For example, being able to read and write can help you communicate and express yourself clearly. Moreover, you need basic Maths for such daily chores as doing your shopping, paying your bills and managing your money.

Furthermore, it is essential to have a good knowledge of English and Maths in order to find even the simplest job. Reading, writing and mathematical skills are the minimum requirements that most employers demand.

On the other hand, it can be argued that Art and Music are just as significant as English and Maths. For instance, learning how to draw or play an instrument can introduce a child to a whole new world. In addition to this, subjects such as Art and Music can provide children with a well rounded education rather than just basic skills.

All things considered, though, it seems to me that English and Maths are vital subjects. Without learning to read, write or do arithmetic, people may have difficulties coping with even the simplest tasks in daily life.

Unity and Coherence

You have already learned that an essay should be organized into an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The next step is to make sure that all three parts of the essay work together to explain your topic clearly.

Unity in writing is the connection of all ideas to a single topic. In an essay, all ideas should relate to the thesis statement, and the supporting ideas in a main body paragraph should relate to the topic sentence.

Coherence is related to unity. Ideas that are arranged in a clear and logical way are coherent. When a text is unified and coherent, the reader can easily understand the main points.

Cohesive devices are words and phrases that connect sentences and paragraphs together, creating a smooth flow of ideas. There are many transition words and phrases in English that are used to connect sentences together or relate ideas to one another. Here are several types of writing and some common transitions that are used with them.

Chronology: *before, after, next, since, first, second, while, when*

Comparison: *likewise, compared to, similarly, as...as, and*

Contrast: *however, on the other hand, but, yet, in spite of, in contrast, although, Instead*

Additional information: *and, also, in addition, in fact, furthermore, moreover, Another..., is/was*

Examples: *for example, in general, generally, for instance, specifically, in particular*

Cause and effect: *therefore, so, thus, as a result, since, because*

Concluding ideas: *in conclusion, in summary, finally, therefore, to conclude, to summarize*

1. Use the linking words/phrases from the list below to fill in the table that follows, as in the example.

in the first place, a/so, for example, to sum up, moreover, firstly, although, to begin with, all things considered, such as, therefore, on the other hand, however, apart from this, in other words, in particular; for instance, in addition, because, taking everything into account, furthermore, for one thing, since, lastly, secondly, nonetheless, while

1. To list points: _____ *in the first place.*

2 To add more points: _____

3 To introduce opposing viewpoints: _____

4 To introduce
examples/reasons:

5 To conclude:

2. Underline the correct linking word/phrase.

1 *Besides/Despite*, television affects the way we think.

2 Many people *are against/argue* that we need advertisements in order to keep up to date with the latest products on the market.

3 One point of view *against/in favour* of travelling is that it allows you to meet people from different cultures.

4 *Even though/Nevertheless* most people nowadays use a computer at work, it will be a while before we stop putting our ideas down on paper.

5 *For instance/Still*, people who know how to play a musical instrument are usually popular and make friends more easily than others.

3. Read the paragraph below and underline the correct linking word/phrase

There are many advantages to having children at an early age. 1) To begin with/In addition to this, when you are young, you have a lot of energy. This means you can cope quite easily with children's demands for constant care and attention. 2) To conclude/Secondly, young parents can relate to their children and 3) therefore/nevertheless understand them better. 4) Yet/Finally, when you become a parent at an early age, you are still young enough to enjoy life when your child becomes independent.

4. These pairs of sentences need to be joined together to form English proverbs. Choose the best transition word or phrase to connect each pair.

- a. Don't count your chickens They hatch
1. before 2. so 3. because

- b. life gives you lemons, make lemonade.
1. Before 2. When 3. Because

- c. Time flies you're having fun.
 1. after 2. although 3. when
- d. You can lead a horse to water, You can't make it drink.
 1. and 2. but 3. or
- e. Laugh, The world laughs with you. Cry, you cry alone.
 1. and, but 2. and, and 3. but, but
- f. You don't know what water is worth your well is dry.
 1. because 2. after 3. until

Useful words and phrases

5. Match each group of words and phrases 1-9 that can be used in an essay with one of the purposes a-i

1. Firstly,... To begin with,...	a. giving examples
2. In addition,... Moreover,... Second(ly),...	b. expressing the result of an action
3. Finally,... Lastly,...	c. introducing a conclusion
4. On the one hand,... On the other hand,...	d. expressing an opinion
5. As a result,... Because of this,...	e. introducing a further point in a list of points
6. Although,...	f. presenting two contrasting (different) views

..but... However,...	
7. For example,... ...such as...	g. introducing the final point in a list of points
8. I believe (that)... In my opinion,...	h. expressing contrast (a different view)
9. In conclusion,... In summary,...	I. . introducing the first point in a list of points

Expressing advantages and disadvantages

1. Read the question below. Then answer the questions.

Portable entertainment devices, such as MP3 or DVD-players, which allow people to listen to music or watch films on the move, are now commonplace. What do you think are the main advantages and disadvantages of this development?

- A Which part of the question states the general subject?
- B Which part of the question contains the organizing words?

2. Decide whether each idea below is advantage or disadvantage.

- A It helps people to relax.
- B It allows people greater freedom.
- C It reduces communication.
- D It makes life more enjoyable.
- E It makes entertainment more accessible everywhere.
- F It makes people more isolated.
- G It is a nuisance for other travelers.
- H It makes people less sociable.

3. Complete each sentence a-f with a word from the box.

Help	difficult	interfere	benefits	ideal	enable
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- a. These devices bring a number of _____
- b. The main one, in my opinion, is that they _____ people relax, for example, while they are studying or working in cafes or on trains.
- c. Some people find it _____ to do so when it is completely quiet outside their homes.
- d. So these devices _____ people to relax and create a familiar environment.
- e. Sometimes, however, they do _____ with others if the volume is too high, hence the quiet zones in many trains.
- f. Nevertheless, laptops, etc are _____, because they allow people to do things where they want to rather than being restricted to working at home.

4. Decide whether the words in 3 express advantage or disadvantage.

5. Complete the paragraph with the words from the box.

Even if	likewise	for example	though
consequently	and	although	

The main drawback is, in my opinion, quite obvious. Take (1) _____ people of all ages who are travelling on trains nowadays. (2) _____ they are reading, they are plugged into the radio, talking on their mobiles, or listening to music on their MP3-players. (3) _____. others are playing games, watching a film, and working simultaneously, even (4) _____ they have friends next to them to talk to. (5) _____ this allows people greater freedom and flexibility (6) _____ takes away the boredom of journeys, people are becoming more and more isolated in their own worlds. (7) _____, the art of communication is being lost.

6. Answer the questions about the paragraph in 5.

- a. Does this paragraph concentrate on an advantage or disadvantage?
- b. Which ideas does this paragraph mention from the list in 2?
- c. Underline the main advantage and disadvantage in the paragraph.

7. Decide whether each adjective in the box expresses advantage or disadvantage

Advantageous	beneficial	useful	worthless	invaluable
difficult	helpful	convenient		

Advantage: _____

Disadvantage: _____

8. Complete sentences a-e with words from the box.

Nevertheless however despite although but

- a. _____ listening to music on CDs is very pleasant, it is not as good as a live concert.
- b. Documentaries are invaluable sources of knowledge. _____ , they need to be entertaining as well as informative.
- c. _____ the large numbers of tourists, ancient buildings and temples are still inspiring places to visit.
- d. Sculptures can make gardens and public spaces attractive. _____ , they are expensive to look after.
- e. Arts exhibitions show the public artefacts they would not normally see, _____ at a price.

Essay writing

Linking expressions

1. Fill each space with a linking expression. Use each expression only once.

Although	Furthermore	The first advantage
As a result	In addition to this	The main advantage
Consequently	In conclusion	There is a great deal of debate
Even though	Many people are talking	These days
For example	Moreover	To conclude
For instance	Nowadays	To sum up
For this reason	On the other hand	What is more

Introduction

- 1. a Nowadays there is a lot of traffic on the roads.
- b these days

2. a _____ about the advantages and disadvantages of having a car.
b _____

Advantages paragraph

3. a _____ of owning a car is the freedom that it gives you.
b _____
4. a _____, it allows you to go wherever you like, whenever you like.
b _____
5. a _____, you can carry passengers and luggage.
b _____
c _____
d _____

Disadvantages paragraph

6. a _____, owning a car does have disadvantages
7. a _____ cars are useful, they also cause pollution
b _____
8. You have to pay for petrol and repairs, and pay tax and insurance.
a _____, owning a car can be very expensive.
b _____
c _____

Conclusion

9. a _____, for many people, a car is an expensive luxury.
b _____
c _____

2. Fill the gaps with a suitable expression. Use each expression only once.

The advantages and disadvantages of television.

1_____ it seems that we are watching more television than ever before, and doctors argue that we are getting lazier. 2_____ there is a great deal of debate at the moment about the advantages and disadvantages of television.

3_____ of television is its educational value.4_____, many people learn about science by watching documentaries. 5_____, television provides company for people (the elderly, 6_____) who are unable to go out to meet friends.

7_____, television does have disadvantages. 8_____, it discourages people from taking exercise. Why go and play sport when you can sit on your sofa watching interesting programmes? 9_____, television discourages children from developing their imaginations. They can spend all day watching cartoons or playing computer games and 10_____ they do not invent their own games or play with other children.

11_____, probably the best that we can do is to watch television sensibly. 12_____, all its disadvantages, there is no doubt that it is here to stay.

As a result, consequently, firstly, for example, for instance, in addition, in spite of, on the other hand, secondly, the main advantage, to sum up, today.

3. Read the question and the model answer below. For each of 1-6, two options are possible and one is incorrect. Delete the incorrect option.

Some people feel that young people face more pressure today than the equivalent age groups did in previous generations. Others think that they have a much easier life than their parents did. What is your opinion?

Model text.

Life for the young in today's world is in some ways certainly more comfortable than for those in previous generation. (1) However/Moreover/Even so, one cannot deny the fact that in a number of areas life is much more demanding than it used to be.

Take the workplace, for example. Competition for every job is now fierce in all parts of the world, not just developed countries, (2) while/because/as young people are more qualified than previous generations. (3) Furthermore/Likewise/And, there is increased mobility of people in the international job market. Skilled workers move from the Far East to Europe. India (4) for instance/also/in particular, has a large pool of mobile skilled

workers. This globalization of job has (5) consequently/however/as a result put intense pressure on young people as they search for work in their home countries. (6) Thus/So/Subsequently, it is no longer a case of just being good: young people are expected to be top rate.

4. Decide which functions are indicated by the correct linking phrases in the text.

- | | | |
|----------------|------------|--------------|
| 1. a contrast | b result | c addition |
| 2. a. contrast | b reason | c result |
| 3. a addition | b contrast | c result |
| 4. a contrast | b addition | c example |
| 5. a result | b contrast | c reason |
| 6. a example | b reason | c conclusion |

5. Fill in the gaps with words and phrases from the list.

But, Finally, Firstly, For example, However, In conclusion, Also, what is more, On the other hand,

The Pros and Cons of Using the Internet

Advertisements for the Internet promise you a word of information, entertainment, on-line shopping and e-mail services.

{1}_____ the real world of the Internet may not be as perfect as the advertisements suggest.

Using the Internet offers many advantages. {2}_____

_____, all of the latest information is available to you, in your home, at any hour of the day or night. It is much faster and easier to surf the net in search of information from all over the world than to travel to libraries in dozens of countries. {3}_____, on-line shopping makes it possible to search through catalogues to find exactly what you want at the best price, saving both time and money. By joining a newsgroup or chat group, you can share your hobbies and special interests, and perhaps make friends all over the world. {4}_____, e-mail is popular because it is faster than sending a letter and cheaper than a telephone conversation.

{5}_____, the Internet has several disadvantages. {6}_____, with so much information available, finding what you want can take you hours. Multimedia web pages with photographs, music and video are attractive,

{7}_____ they make downloading slow and boring.

{8}_____, there is too much advertising

instead of real information. As for Internet friendships, sitting at home in front of a computer making \chat friends\ is not the same as actually meeting people. {9}_____, the Internet deviously has both good and bad points. Fortunately, the system is improving all the time, and any problems which still exist can be solved. Whether we like it or not, the Internet is here to stay, so we have to make the best possible use of it.

Managing your time

Before you write an essay, write a quick outline, including the thesis statement and main ideas.

Example:

Topic: At university, would you rather live alone, with your family, or with a flatmate?

Give reasons to support your answer.

Sample outline 1:

- I. *I would you rather live with my family to save money.*
- II. *No rent.*
- III. *Save money on food.*
- IV. *Don't have to pay bills*
 - A. *electricity*
 - B. *water.*
 - C. *Phone.*
- V. *Conclusion: If I save on my living expenses, I will have enough money to pay for tuition and books.*

Sample outline 2:

- I. *Living alone is the best way for me to learn independence while I am at university.*
- II. *Will learn to take care of myself.*
 - B. *Cook my own food*
 - C. *Do my own housework and washing*
- III. *Will learn to manage my money.*
- IV. *Conclusion: University is a time not only to study, but to learn to be independent adult. Living alone will help me to learn how to handle this responsibility.*

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