

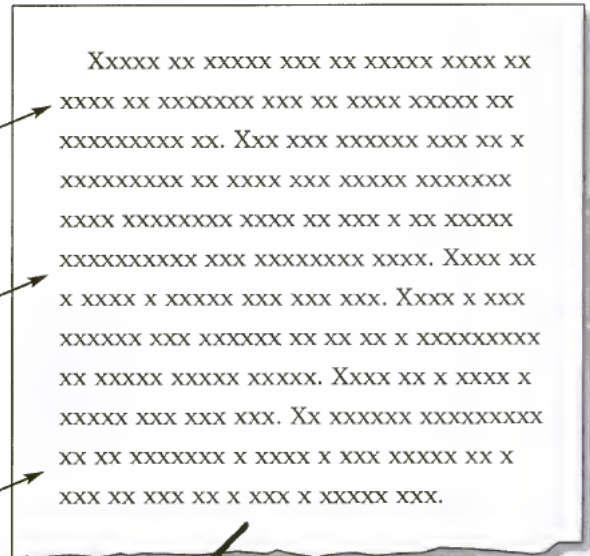
## The writing process (Drafting)

### **Paragraph organisation**

#### ○ What makes a paragraph?

A paragraph has three 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.



### **The topic and the main idea**

#### ○ The topic sentence ...

- usually comes first in a paragraph.
- gives the writer's main idea or opinion about the topic and helps the reader understand what the paragraph is going to talk about.

The topic sentence contains two parts: the topic and a controlling **idea**. The topic is **WHAT** the paragraph is going to be about, and the controlling **idea** explains **WHY** the paragraph is being written. The topic sentence helps your reader understand the purpose of your paragraph.

A good topic sentence should include either of the following:

- one clear topic  
weak: *It's important to have friends, and also to do well in school.*  
strong: *I don't think I will ever have a better friend than Heather.*
- an opinion or idea about the topic  
weak: *I have been studying karate.*  
strong: *Studying karate has given me strength and self-confidence.*

A good topic sentence should **not** be:

- too *broad* (too much to write about)  
weak: *Australia is an interesting country.*  
strong: *On my visit to Australia, I saw many unusual animals.*
- too *narrow* (not enough to write about / is just a fact)  
weak: *School starts at 8.30 a.m.*  
strong: *Getting ready for school in the morning is more difficult than any of my classes.*

- **What are supporting sentences?**

They come after the topic sentence, making up the body of a paragraph.

- **What do they do?**

They give details to develop and support the main idea of the paragraph.

- **How do I write them?**

You should give supporting facts, details, and examples.

## Supporting Sentences

The middle sentences of a paragraph are the **supporting** sentences. Supporting sentences explain or prove the idea in the topic sentence. They are the "filling" in a paragraph "sandwich."



← Supporting Sentences

# Hamburger Writing

Opening Sentence:
Supporting Sentence #1:
Supporting Sentence #2:
Supporting Sentence #3:
Closing Sentence:

### Concluding sentences

#### ⇒ How to end a paragraph

The final sentence of a paragraph is called the *concluding sentence*. It sums up the main points or restates the main idea in a different way. A sentence that sums up the paragraph reminds the reader of what the writer's main idea and supporting points were. A sentence that restates the main idea should give the same information in a slightly different way, perhaps by using different words or by using different word order. A concluding sentence should not introduce a new point.

## Example 1



**Topic Sentence:** it states the main idea of the paragraph.

**The most important problem in our city is its poor public transportation system.** Thousands of residents rely on the city's buses and taxis to travel throughout this large city, while the Metro Transportation System's daily schedules are totally unreliable. A bus or taxi that should arrive at 7:45 may not arrive until 8:00 or later. Moreover, it is not unusual for a bus driver to pass up groups of people waiting for the bus because he wants to make up for lost time. Unfortunately, people often end up going to work late or missing important appointments. **In order for people to get to their destinations on time, people must allow for waiting time at the bus and taxis stops.**

**Concluding Sentence**

**Supporting Sentences**

### Revising and Editing Processes

**Revising and editing** are the stages of the **writing process** in which you improve your work before producing a final draft. ... During **editing**, you take a second look at the words and sentences you used to express your ideas and fix any problems in grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure.

**Revision** is the stage in the **writing process** where the author reviews, alters, and amends their message, according to what has been written in the draft. **Revision** follows drafting and precedes editing. Drafting and **revising** often form a loop as a work moves back and forth between the two stages.



## **Peer editing**

### ☞ **What is peer editing?**

Showing your work to another student is a very useful way to improve your writing. This is called *peer editing*. You read your partner's writing and your partner reads yours. You comment on your partner's writing and your partner comments on yours. You might talk together, write comments on a sheet that your instructor gives you, or write directly on your partner's work.

### ☞ **How do I peer edit?**

- Read your partner's work several times. The first time, just read from the beginning to the end. Ask yourself, 'What is it about? What is the writer's purpose?'
- On your second reading, go more slowly and look at specific parts of the writing and make notes.
  - Look for topic sentences and concluding sentences.
  - Note places where you have trouble understanding something, where there seems to be unnecessary information, or where there is not enough information.
  - Let the writer know which parts of the text are especially strong or interesting.
  - Ask questions. This is a good way to let the writer know where he or she could add more information.
  - Circle or underline words, phrases, and sentences that you wish to comment on.

### ☞ **Why do writers use peer editing?**

There are two reasons for peer editing. The first is to get a reader's opinion about your writing. A reader can tell you that ...

- you should add more details or explanation.
- something is not organised clearly.
- you have some information that is not relevant.
- there is something that is hard to understand.

These comments will help you write your next draft.

The second reason to share writing with others is for you to read more examples of writing. Other people will have had experiences that you haven't. They may show you fresh ways of writing about experiences. Reading their paragraphs and essays can give you good ideas to use yourself in the future.