

Paragraphs

paragraph = three or more sentences about 1 idea

sentence = one complete idea

Every paragraph has 2 parts. The **first** part is the **topic sentence**. The topic sentence tells the topic of the paragraph, i.e. what the paragraph talks about.

The rest of the paragraph, the **second** part, tells supporting **details**. Details can be more information, reasons, or examples. They tell more about the topic.

Read these short paragraphs. Answer the questions.

Everyone should finish high school. Being in high school gives adolescents skills they will need as adults. A high school diploma helps graduates get jobs that pay more money. If a person wants to change jobs to make more money, the diploma will let them into many training programs.

Write the topic sentence here: _____
Are the details more information, reasons, or examples? _____

The United States of America includes several biomes. In the southwest is a dry desert biome. There are great forest biomes in the east and west. Grasslands cover most of the middle of the country.

Write the topic sentence here: _____
Are the details more information, reasons, or examples? _____

George Washington was the first President of the United States. He was born in Virginia. He grew up in a rich family. In the Revolutionary War, he was a great general.

Write the topic sentence here: _____
Are the details more information, reasons, or examples? _____

What is a paragraph? _____
What are details? _____

A topic sentence must tell a **big** idea. “Big” means you can write at least 3 supporting details about it.

Bad topic sentence: My dog is brown. What else can you say about the color brown? Not much! Reasons he's brown? No. Information about the color brown? No. Examples of the color brown? No.

Good topic sentence: My dog is my best friend. What can you say about the dog being your best friend? A lot! You can give **reasons** he is your best friend. You can give **examples** of how he acts like a friend. You can give **information** about the type of dog he is.

Are these good or bad topic sentences? Drag them to the correct place.

Good

Bad

| | |
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| | |
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Water is wet. Fruit is good for you. I love Disney movies.
Hawaii is an amazing place. My broken arm hurts. Walmart opens at 9:00.

Write a paragraph about your native country. Give information about it.

What was your topic sentence? _____

Write a paragraph about visiting your native country. Give reasons for it.

What was your topic sentence? _____

Write a paragraph about foods in your native country. Give examples of them.

What was your topic sentence? _____

Why must your topic sentence be a “big” idea? _____

What makes an idea “big”? _____