

Level 1

Writing Good Paragraphs



Contents:



PARTS OF A PARAGRAPH



THE PARAGRAPH: STRUCTURE



WRITING PRACTICE

- 1. THE TOPIC SENTENCE**
- 2. THE SUPPORTING SENTENCES**
- 3. THE CONCLUDING SENTENCE**



THE ORGANISATION IN A PARAGRAPH

[Acknowledgement: Some of this material has been taken from previous L1 Writing Workbooks: 2007, 2009, 2011.]



RULES:

Most paragraphs have **three main parts**:

- **The topic sentence**

This sentence tells the reader *what the paragraph is about*.

It usually *has an adjective*.

It is the *first sentence* in the paragraph.

- **The supporting sentences**

These sentences *use examples and give more information* about the topic of the paragraph.

- **The concluding sentence**

This sentence is the *last sentence* in the paragraph.

It should have the same idea but be different from the topic sentence.

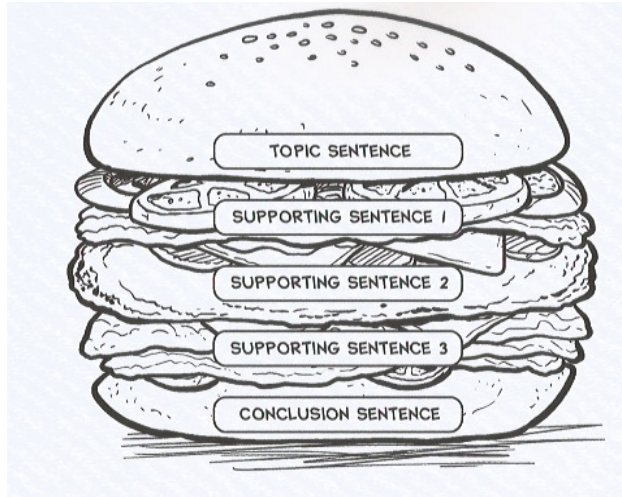


REMEMBER! WRITING A GOOD PARAGRAPH IS EASY.

Imagine that your paragraph is a sandwich. The topic sentence and concluding sentence are the two pieces of bread. The supporting sentences are the salad, meat and cheese in between the two pieces of bread:

You need all food items to make a complete sandwich.





☝ Therefore, you must have a *topic sentence*, *supporting sentences* and a *concluding sentence* to write a complete paragraph.



THE PARAGRAPH: STRUCTURE

Example:

Topic sentence

My Weekend Routine

I usually have a relaxing weekend. I like to wake up late and have my breakfast in bed. After that, I listen to my favorite music and chat with my friends on the phone. I eat ice-cream and play with my younger brothers and sisters before I have a nap in the afternoon. I enjoy my weekend because I can relax and do many things that I like.

Concluding sentence

What is the function of a topic sentence?

A topic sentence tells the reader what a paragraph is about. It is usually the first sentence in a paragraph. It helps the reader understand the paragraph

Example

My Mother

My mother is a wonderful person. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.
XX
XX
XX
XXX.

- What is the title?
- What is the topic sentence?

You expect to read good things about the mother because of the first sentence, the topic sentence.

Look at this paragraph

My Mother

My mother is a wonderful person. I have never heard her say anything angry to my father, or to any of her children, and sometimes when we were little we were quite naughty! She is kind and generous to all of our friends, to all of her brothers and sisters, and to her own friends too, and of course she has lots of friends ...

- What is the topic sentence?
- Is this a good topic sentence? Why / why not?

Now, look at this paragraph.

My Mother's Life

My mother is a wonderful person. She was born in Paris but moved with her family to England when she was a baby, and never went back to Paris again. She became a mathematics teacher in England and worked in other countries too, including the USA, Canada, Peru and Russia. When she was 28 she went to Australia, where she met my father and got married. He was a teacher too, and they worked all over the world, in some very unusual places, but she never went back to England...



TASK 1:

What is the topic sentence? / Is there a topic sentence?

Is this a good topic sentence for this paragraph? Why?/Why not?

Can **you** write a topic sentence for this paragraph?

Write your sentence here.



TASK 2:

Read the paragraph below. Look at the underlined sentence. This is the topic sentence.

My favourite drink is coffee and I drink far too much of it. I always have two cups of coffee with my breakfast in the morning. Then, when I get to campus I have coffee at Gloria Jean's with my best friend. I have another cup of coffee in between classes, then I have coffee at lunch time. At four o'clock, when I go home, I have coffee with my mother. Coffee helps me stay awake when I need to study for a CGE or when I have a lot of homework. I know I should not drink so much coffee but I love it.

Tick the correct information about topic sentences.

A topic sentence is:

- at or near the beginning of a paragraph.
- the main idea of a paragraph.
- a small detail from the paragraph.
- one or two words
- a complete sentence.



TASK 3:

Read the paragraphs below. Underline the topic sentences.

a)

My brothers and sisters all have jobs. My oldest brother, Ahmed, is a businessman in Dubai. He has an advertising agency. My second oldest brother, Fazel, is a pilot for Emirates Airways, so he has travelled to countries like Hong Kong, the USA, the UK and Thailand. My oldest sister, Maitha, is a teacher at a school near our home. Mariam, who is four years older than me, works at the Union National Bank in the centre of Al Ain. I am the only one in my family who is still at university.

b)

I like most types of books but the books I enjoy the most are recipe books. When I go to bookshops I buy recipe books about Italian, French and Indian food. I like reading about different foods from around the world. Sometimes I cook for my family and I try out the new recipes, but often I just lie on my bed and read the recipes for fun.



TASK 4:

[The exercise below has been adapted from Headway Plus Elementary Writing Guide]

Read the through the topic sentences in the box below. Then read the paragraphs that follow. Write the number of the topic sentence next to the correct paragraph.

1. I lived in a small town when I was young.
2. When I have my own children I want to move to a small town.
3. The town I live in is very small.
4. There are two main advantages to living in a small town.

Paragraph A: Topic Sentence _____

First, there are very few cars so it is quiet. Because there is so little traffic, there is not much pollution. I feel I can relax in the peaceful, clean environment. Secondly, people are very friendly. Everybody seems to know everyone else. I greet almost everybody I meet and I know all the shopkeepers and business owners so I feel safe here.

Paragraph B: Topic Sentence _____

It was a very nice place to live then. Now it is much bigger than it was when I was a child. Now, it has a cinema and a shopping mall. There is also a small industrial area. My parents still live there but they say it was better in the past when there were not as many people and shops.

Paragraph C: Topic Sentence _____

I don't want my children to live in a big city because a big city is not as peaceful, clean and safe as a small town. I want to move to the village where my grandparents live. In their village it is safe to walk around at night and the children can play in the streets because everybody knows each other. People know their neighbours and everybody is friendly.

Paragraph D: Topic Sentence _____

There are very few shops and only two schools here. I go to Ras Al Khaimah if I want to shop for clothes or if I need to see a dentist. There is a small clinic with some excellent nurses but if I need to see a doctor it means I have to drive into the city. However, our town is quite peaceful and there are a lot of trees so I feel closer to nature.

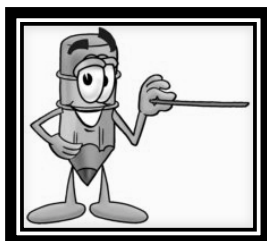
 **TASK 5:**

1. Read the paragraph below and tick (✓) the best topic sentence

<p>Topic Sentence</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A. South Africa is a beautiful country.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> B. South Africa, for example, grows wheat, vegetables and citrus fruits.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> C. South Africa is a very important country.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> D. South Africa is an agricultural country.</p>	<p>Paragraph:</p> <p>_____ . It produces many crops. Maize is most widely grown, followed by wheat, sugar cane and sunflowers. Citrus and deciduous fruits are exported, as are locally produced flowers. South Africa is not only self-sufficient in almost all major agricultural products, but is also a food exporter.</p>
--	---

2. What is wrong with the other topic sentences? Match them to the problems.

Problems:	Topic Sentence
It is an example	_____
It is a smaller idea, not a main idea	_____
It is about something different to the other sentences.	_____



Grammar Tip: Capital Letters and Articles

Look at the short texts in this section. Notice the use of capital letters.

Capitalization:



Watch this clip on when to use capital letters
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDUFI-Pr9Yk>



Go back and review Task 32 in the 'Writing Good Sentences' booklet.

Articles

ENGLISH GRAMMAR

A - AN

Woodward's ENGLISH

The difference between A and AN

A and **AN** have the same meaning. **A** and **AN** are indefinite articles. The difference depends on the sound at the beginning of the next word.

When the next word starts with a CONSONANT SOUND	When the next word starts with a VOWEL SOUND
A	AN
a book a frog	an apple an orange
a car a lemon	an egg an umbrella
a dog a truck	an insect an actor

BE CAREFUL! The **SOUND** of the letter is important

a house BUT **an** hour The **H** at the beginning of **hour** is **silent**.

an uncle BUT **a** university The **U** at the beginning of **university** sounds like **YOU**.

This rule applies to all words after **A** or **AN** (including adjectives, adverbs...)

a cold day	an easy lesson
a very crazy person	an interesting class

www.grammar.clwww.woodwardenglish.comwww.vocabulary.cl



Watch this clip on when to use Articles - A, An, The & Zero articles)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBrUgUpjMjU>



TASK 6:

Choose the correct definite or indefinite article: "the", "a", "an" or "x" (zero article)

1. I bought _____ pair of shoes.
2. I saw _____ movie last night.

3. They are staying at _____ hotel.
4. Look at _____ man over there! He is _____ famous soccer player.
5. I do not like _____ basketball.
6. That is _____ girl I told you about.
7. Do you want to come for _____ dinner?
8. _____ price of petrol keeps going up..
9. Ahmed traveled to _____ Turkey.
10. Juan is _____ Spanish.
11. I read _____ amazing story yesterday.
12. I read _____ most amazing story yesterday
13. My brother doesn't eat _____ junk food.
14. I live in _____ villa. _____ villa is new.
15. I went to _____ Indian restaurant yesterday. _____ restaurant served good food.
16. Hamda can play _____ guitar.

 **WRITING PRACTICE**

1. THE TOPIC SENTENCE

 **TASK 7:**

The three paragraphs below do not have topic sentences. Look at the topic sentences in the box and choose one for each paragraph. Write the topic sentence at the beginning of each paragraph.

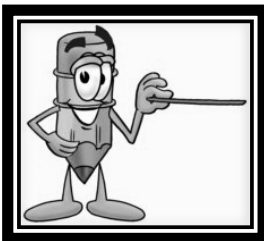
- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The internet is difficult to use.2. It is nicer to live in the countryside than in the city.3. The internet is very useful.4. It is more expensive to live in the countryside than in the city.5. It is difficult to learn how to type.6. It is important to know how to type. |
|--|

A. _____
_____. We can use it to find all kinds of information quickly. We can also use it to buy things, for example airline tickets. Finally, it allows us to communicate with each other quickly and cheaply. Everybody should be connected to the internet.

B. _____
_____ The countryside has far less traffic than the city, so it is much quieter and less polluted. Also, the people are friendlier in country places because they have more time to get to know each other. Finally, the countryside is usually more beautiful than a city. So, it's not surprising that more and more people are moving from cities to the countryside.

C. _____
_____. All computers have keyboards, so if we know how to type we can make better use of computers. Students who can type quickly can make all their homework assignments and class projects look nicer. Students who learn how to type quickly have a big advantage over students who don't know typing.

Language Tip: The grammar in Topic Sentences



Look back at some of the topic sentences in the examples we have used in this booklet.

Sentence Patterns with **BE**

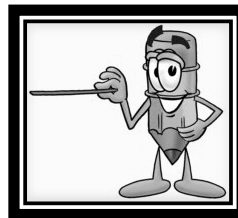
Many of the topic sentences use similar patterns:

SUBJECT	+	BE	+	NOUN
I		am		a student.
South Africa		is		a (beautiful) country.
My favourite drink		is		coffee.
Cats		are		animals.
The UAE and Jordan		are		countries.
Burj Khalifa		is		a skyscraper.

SUBJECT	+	BE	+	ADJECTIVE
My brother		is		untidy.
The students		are		hardworking.

Subject	+	BE	+	LOCATION
Wafi Mall		is		in Dubai.
We		are		at the mall.

Sentence Patterns with **HAVE**



SUBJECT	+	HAVE	+	NOUN
I		have		a dog.
My brothers and sisters		have		jobs.
My father		has		an (expensive) car

 **TASK 8:**

Write a topic sentence for the following titles:

A. The ILC

B. SASP.

C. The Student Cafeteria

 **GRAMMAR FOCUS**

Adjectives

 **TASK 9**

Read through the two paragraphs below. Find five different adjectives in each paragraph. Work in pairs. Use these adjectives to complete the crossword.

a)

My Mother

My mother is a wonderful person. I have never heard her say anything angry to my father, or to any of her children, and sometimes when we were little we were quite naughty! She is kind and generous to all of our friends, to all of her brothers and sisters, and to her own friends too, and of course she has lots of friends.

b)

c)

Paragraph C: Topic Sentence _____

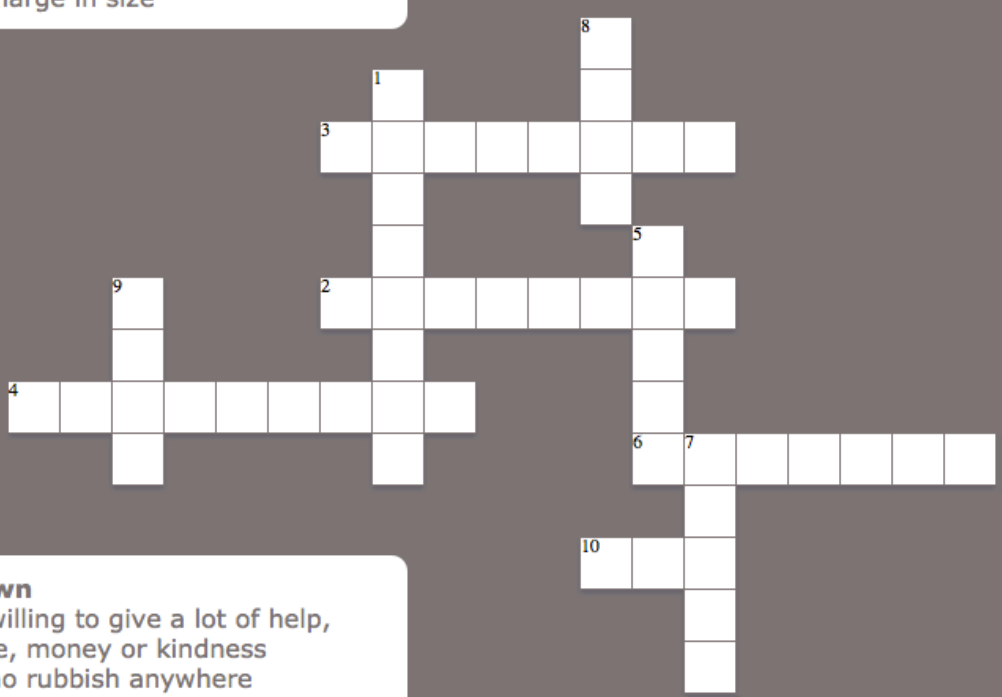
I don't want my children to live in a big city because a big city is not as peaceful, clean and safe as a small town. I want to move to the village where my grandparents live. In their village it is safe to walk around at night and the children can play in the streets because everybody knows each other. People know their neighbours and everybody is friendly.

(c) Use the clues to fill in the crossword puzzle with adjectives from Task 9

Adjective Crossword

Across

- 2. acting in a way that shows you like people
- 3. calm and quiet
- 4. extremely good
- 6. behaving badly
- 10. large in size



Down

- 1. willing to give a lot of help, time, money or kindness
- 5. no rubbish anywhere
- 7. very cross
- 8. not in danger
- 9. helpful and nice

2. THE SUPPORTING SENTENCES

The sentences that follow the topic sentence should support the main idea. These sentences **use examples and give more information** about the topic of the paragraph.



TASK 10:

Read through the following text. There are two main ideas here

Fix typo in original

Jumbled Paragraphs

Huda's Life

Huda gets up at 7:00 am every morning. She lives in a big house. When she is finished with her homework in the evening, she watches television or plays computer games. Then she has breakfast, takes a shower and gets ready for classes. There are twelve children, Huda's parents, and her grandparents in her family, so they need a big house. On the weekends, Huda and her family like to go to the beach and have picnics. It has 7 bedrooms and 5 bathrooms. Her father drives her to school at 8:30. First, she studies in the library, and then she goes to her first class at 10 o'clock. Huda is also a very hardworking girl. Also, they like to have big dinners and invite their friends and family over for dinner during the week. She enjoys her family. She takes classes from ten to one, then she has lunch. Her last classes are from two to four. She has a very active life and she loves it. She goes home, sleeps for a couple hours and then visits friends. Sometimes her friends come to dinner with her family. Usually she is in bed and asleep by midnight.

A:

Look at the above writing and decide which sentences belong in a paragraph about Huda's family and which sentences belong in another paragraph about her daily schedule.

Underline all the family sentences in blue put all the schedule sentences in brackets ([...]).

B:

Rewrite the new paragraphs on this page. Remember to leave a line between paragraphs. The topic sentence for each paragraph has been written for you.

*My friend, Huda, has large family and they live together in her wonderful home in Um Al Qwain.*_____



TASK 12:

Read through the following paragraph. Note how the supporting sentences all relate to the topic sentence.

Example

My friend Saad often gets **angry**. When he plays video games, if he does not reach a high score, he gets very angry. He says the machine is broken. He jumps up and down, screams and hits the machine.

This is a great paragraph because the writer gives examples.

Giving “examples” in your supporting sentences:

My Life at University

I love life at university. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
 XX. *For example,*
 XX. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
such as XXXXXXXX.XX. I work
 very hard but my life is very interesting and I enjoy every day at university.

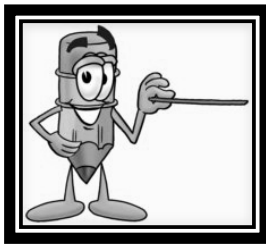
Now, rewrite this paragraph and make it more interesting by giving examples.

A. *I love life at university.* _____

Practice writing sentences to support the following *topic sentences*:

- Use time expressions and connectors where possible.

B. The students are very **hardworking**. _____



Language Tip: Prepositions of Place

Look at the picture below and notice the words that are underlined in the text. . These are prepositions of place – words used to describe where one thing is in relation to another thing.

A colorful illustration of a bedroom. A wardrobe is on the left with clothes hanging inside. A sofa is in the middle with a teddy bear on it. A bookshelf is next to a window. A desk with a computer and a chair is on the right. A rug is on the floor. Arrows with numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 point to specific items: 1 points to the wardrobe, 2 points to the desk, 3 points to the bookshelf, and 4 points to the sofa.

My bedroom.

1. In my bedroom my clothes are in the wardrobe and there is a computer on the table.
2. There is a table next to the window and my bag is under the table.
3. The bookshelf is next to the window and there are 4 pictures on the wall.
4. There is a sofa between the wardrobe and the bookshelf.

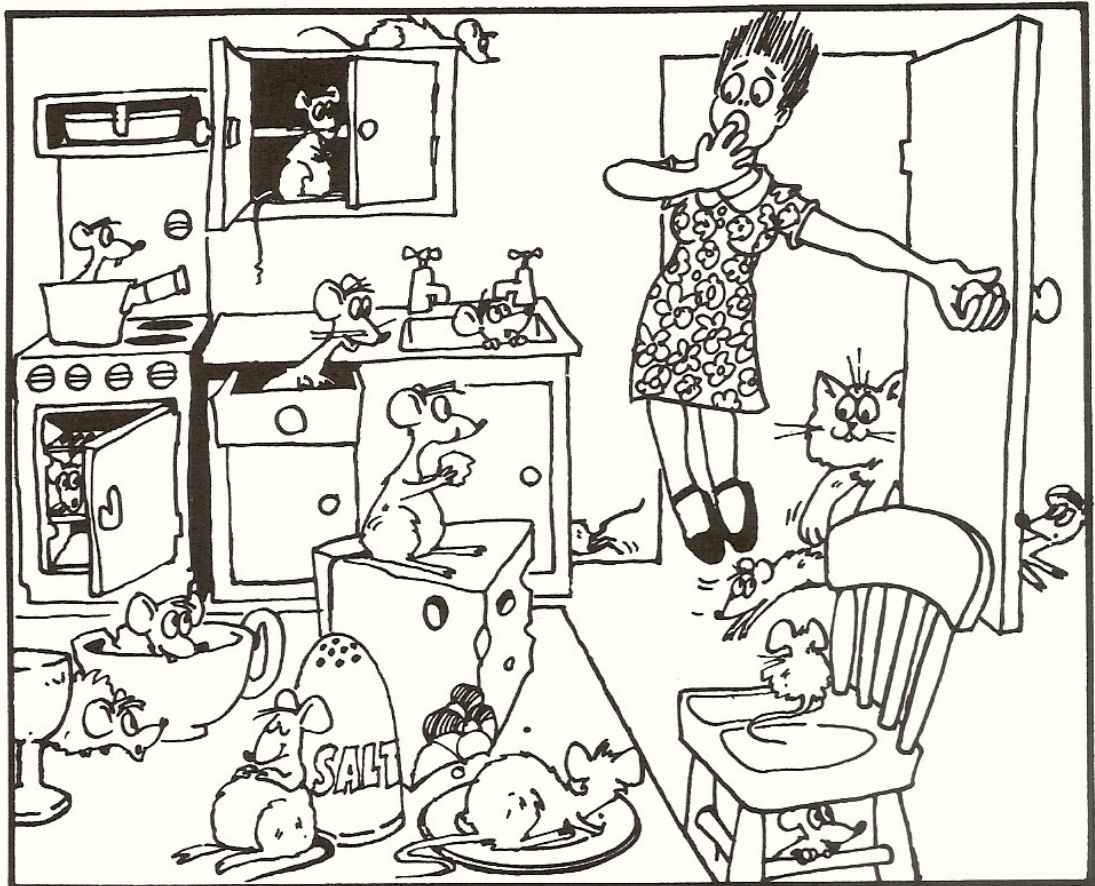


TASK 13:



Work with a partner. Study the picture. See if you can find all 14 mice. Use the prepositions of place in the box below to describe exactly where the mice are.

in front of	in	on	under	behind
between	next to	on top of	inside	



1. Now write five sentences about the mice in the picture. Begin your sentences with 'There is ...', or 'There are ...'. Use prepositions to describe exactly where the mice are.

- a) _____
- _____
- b) _____
- _____
- c) _____
- _____
- _____

- d) _____

- e) _____

Now write supporting sentences for the paragraph below. Use prepositions of place in your writing.

2. My bedroom is very **untidy**. _____



TASK 14:

Now put a suitable **adjective** in the following topic sentence and write some **supporting sentences** to describe the topic sentence:

1. My mother is a cook. _____

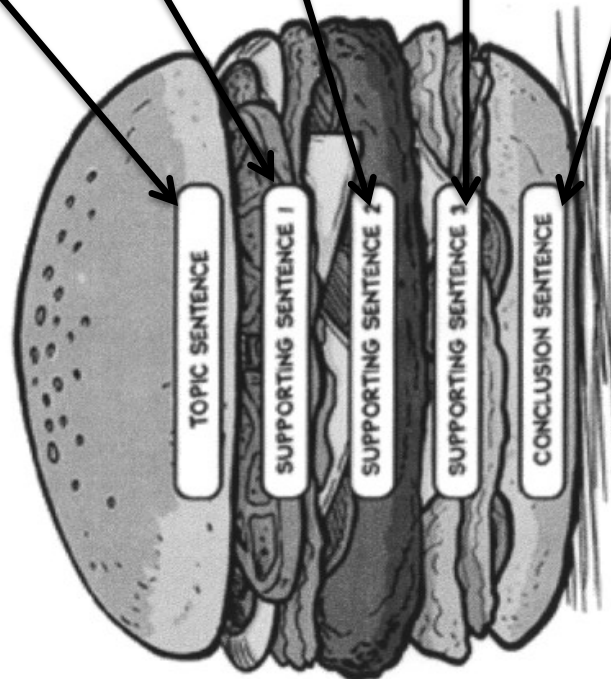


TASK: 15

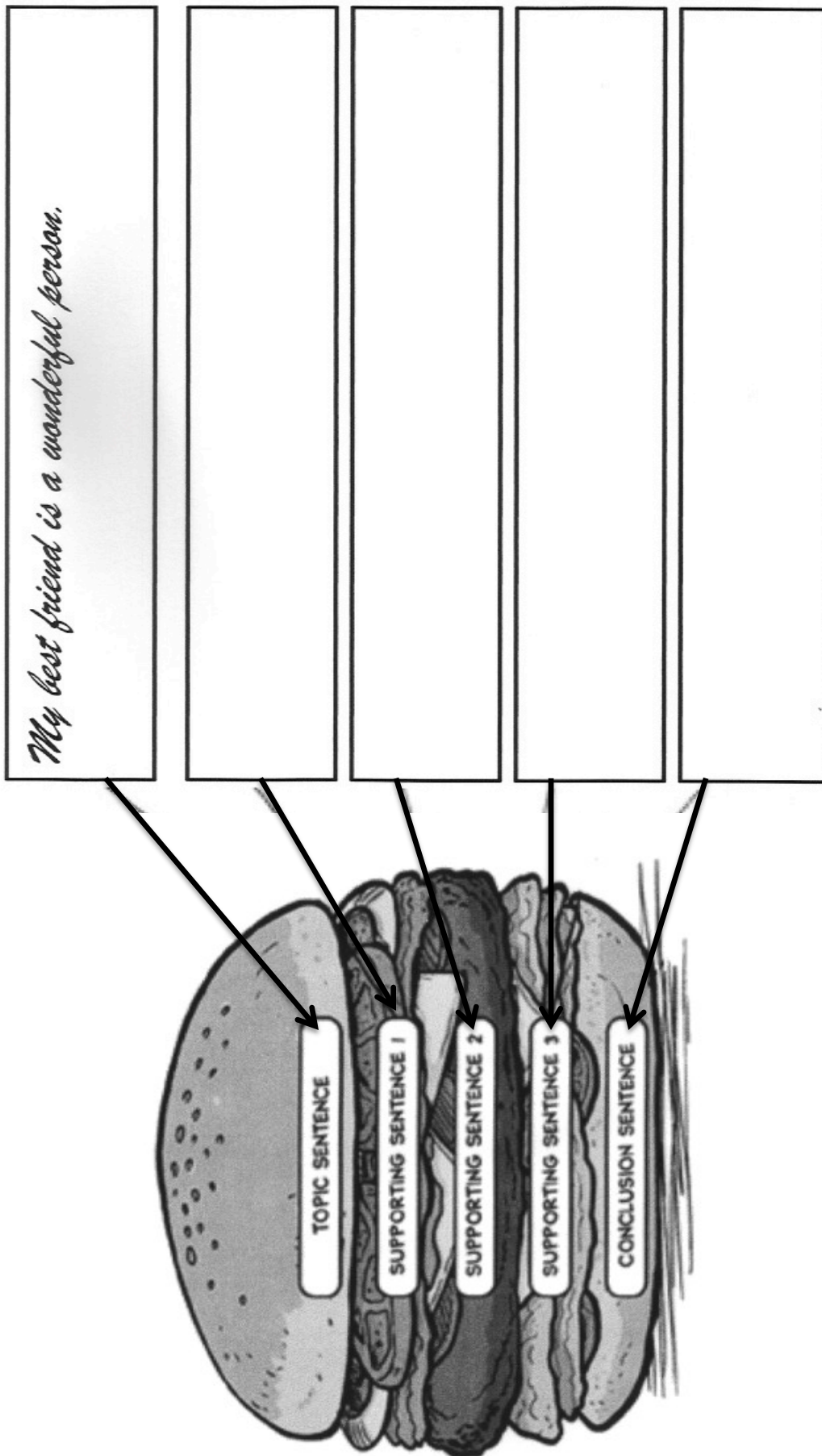
Here are the topic sentences for two paragraphs. Write a few sentences to complete each paragraph.

(a)

<i>There are many interesting places to visit in my hometown.</i>				
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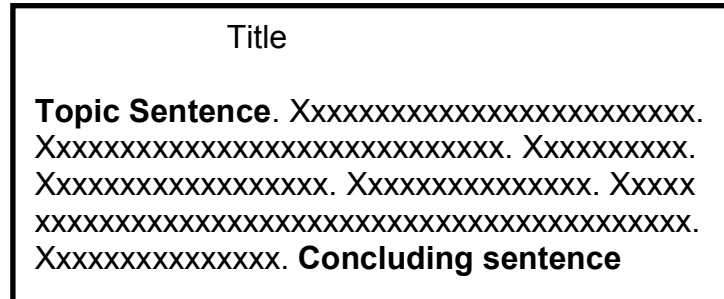
(b)



3. THE CONCLUDING SENTENCE

Every paragraph needs a topic sentence. It also needs a **concluding sentence**.

So a paragraph looks like this:



The concluding sentence has the same idea in it as the topic sentence, and usually adds something extra. The reader then knows that the paragraph is finished.



TASK 16:

Read the following paragraphs:

- **Circle all the connectors. Underline time expressions. Put a box around adverbs of frequency.**
- **choose a suitable concluding sentence from the box below the paragraphs.**

A. My favorite hobby is swimming. I try to swim every day because it helps me to relax and is good for my health. I love swimming in the morning because it is cool and quiet. I usually swim in the pool but sometimes I swim in the sea. _____

B. The Writing Center is a very helpful place for me to improve my writing. I visit it regularly because there is always a teacher available who can help me with my writing. I show my writing to the teacher and we talk about how I can improve it. The teacher also gives me interesting topics to practise my writing at home. _____

C. My brother has a balanced life. He works hard because he has to support a young family. However, he also takes time to relax, by reading, playing tennis or listening to music. In the evening, he always spends time with his children. _____

D. We often go on holiday in the summer. In 2017 we went to Thailand and visited beautiful cities like Chiang Mai and Bangkok. The shopping was great. I bought lots of gifts for my friends at the night markets. It was very hot but the scenery was wonderful.

1. *I don't like swimming if the waves are big.*
2. *Next summer we will go to Switzerland.*
3. *My brother enjoys his life.*
4. *I need to improve my punctuation and grammar.*
5. *My writing has improved since I started visiting the Writing Center.*
6. *His eldest child is called Zainab.*
7. *I enjoy swimming during my free time.*

To Sum Up



TASK 17:

Below is a jumbled paragraph. Rewrite the paragraph putting the topic sentence, supporting ideas and the concluding sentence in the correct



ORGANISATION IN A PARAGRAPH

There are several ways to organize sentences in a paragraph. Three of the most common ways that we learn about in Level 1 are time order, list order and space order.

- In Chapter 3 we will look focus on time and list order paragraphs to describe routines
- In Chapter 4 we will focus on space order paragraphs to describe places
- In Chapter 5 we will focus on time, list and space order paragraphs to complete an essay describing an event in the past tense.

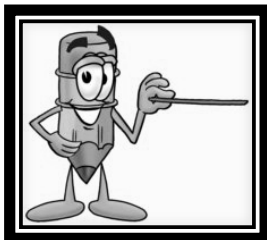
We need to use accurate grammar for each type of paragraph. In each chapter we will focus on **specific** grammar points that you need to use for each of your writing projects.

Time and List Order paragraphs

When you tell a story you organize events in the story by time. You tell what happened first, at the beginning of the story. Then you say what came next. In writing, we often do the same thing. We organize events in chronological (time) order.

For this type of paragraph we will focus on

- Prepositions of time and time signal words (Chapter 3)
- Phrasal verbs
- List order words



Grammar Focus: Phrasal verbs

Now that you know what verbs and prepositions are, you're ready to start putting them together into phrasal verbs – verb + preposition.

Phrasal verbs work by changing the verb's meaning based on the preposition that follows them. What is the difference in meaning between these two examples:

“Come.”

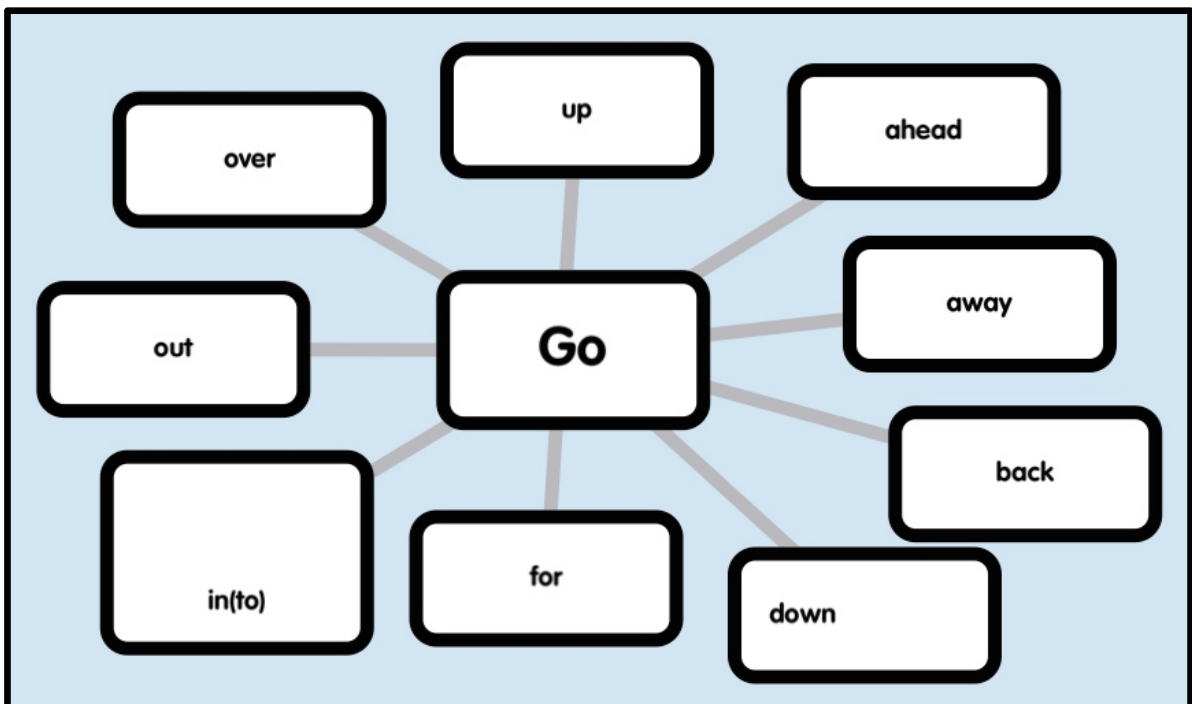
“ Come on!”

The word “come,” on its own, means ‘to move towards something’. However, if we put it together with the preposition “on,” the phrase “come on” can be a phrase of encouragement, or it could mean “Hurry up!”



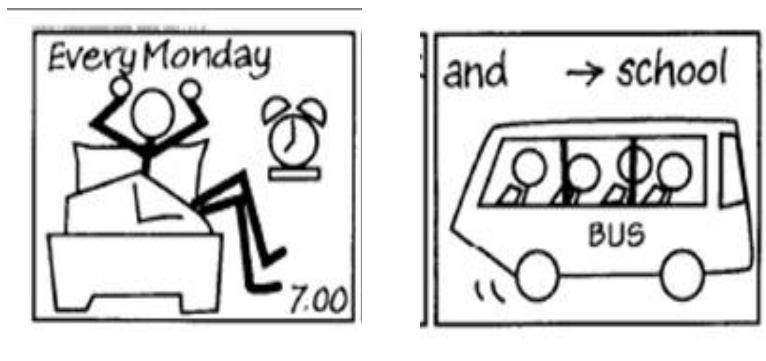
TASK 18:

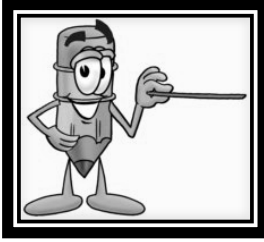
Some verbs can go together with many different prepositions. Look at the diagram below. Work with your partner. How could you use these in sentences?



When we write about daily routines we need to use a lot of phrasal verbs.

What phrasal verbs could you use to describe these pictures?





Grammar Focus: List order words

List Order paragraphs are similar to Time Order paragraphs. Connecting words (ربط كلمات) , like the ones below, can show the order (ترتيب) that activities happen:

- ❖ first, firstly
 - ❖ second, secondly
 - ❖ third
 - ❖ finally
- These words help you write a paragraph that has information in a list (قائمة).

Look at the example below. Here, the sentences are in the correct order, but they do not connect well. There are no sequence markers to connect the sentences. Also, we do not really know what the main idea is.

Example:

Write the topic in the centre of your page, inside a circle. Write general ideas about the topic around the circle. Write more ideas about each general idea. Continue until you can think of no more ideas.

(Source: http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/sample/beginner/wt/wt_22.htm)

Now look at how this paragraph has been improved by adding sequence markers to connect the sentences. We have also added a topic sentence at the beginning that tells us what the main idea is.

Improved example:

*There are four steps to making a cluster map.
First, you write the topic in the centre of your page, inside a circle. **Secondly**, you write general ideas about the topic around the circle.
Next, you write more ideas about each general idea. **Then** you continue until you can think of no more ideas.*



The sentences in this paragraph are in the correct order, and there are sequence markers connecting the sentences in a logical way. (There is also a clear topic sentence)

 **TASK 19:**

Look at the planning diagram below. Use the diagram to write a full paragraph. Use time order words so that a reader can understand **when** something happened.



- First action:** Took a plane to Istanbul in Turkey.
- Second action:** Got a taxi from the airport to my hotel in the city.
- Third action:**
 - Checked into hotel.
 - Had dinner at a great restaurant.
 - Walked along the Bosphorus.
 - Visited the famous Spice Market.
 - Returned to the hotel and went to bed.
 - Had breakfast in hotel.
 - Took a tour of the beautiful Blue Mosque.
 - Visited Hagia Sophia.





TASK 20:

- You can also use these connecting words to write a **list of reasons** or a **list of examples**, to show clearly **how many reasons** or **examples** are in a text, and to give **instructions in the right order**.

Read this paragraph to learn why Marwa likes her major.

- ❖ How many reasons are there in the paragraph?

Example:

Marwa's major is medicine and she likes it many reasons. First, she loves her courses. Her favourite subject is biology because she thinks learning how the body works is very interesting. Second, Marwa believes that good health is important. She plays a lot of different sports and she always eats healthy food. Third, she likes helping people to become healthy. Marwa often cooks and takes food to sick people's homes. Finally, she hopes to work in a hospital. She thinks that she will become a nurse, or maybe a doctor. Marwa is sure that she will use her major in medicine to succeed in her future job.

Example:

- ❖ How many reasons are there in the paragraph?

- ❖ Write the correct number in the blank space in the topic sentence in the example below.

My Hometown

There are _____ advantages to living in my hometown. First, there are very few cars so it is quiet. Because there is so little traffic, there is not much pollution. I feel I can relax in the peaceful, clean environment. Secondly, people are very friendly. Everybody seems to know everyone else. I greet almost everybody I meet and I know all the shopkeepers and business owners. I know all my neighbours and their children play together in the street. Dikka is peaceful and a safe place to live.

Space Order paragraphs

When you describe a place, you use space order to explain where things are located. The easiest way to do this is to choose a starting point. Then you can describe things in relation to your starting point.

Using signal words

The signal words in space order paragraphs are often prepositions of place. Look at the list below

Prepositions of place						
at	in	next to	on the right	on	at the end	in the back
	on top of	behind	in front of	on both sides	beside	
	between	in the middle	outside	inside	on the left	
under	on the right	in the centre	next to			



TASK 21:

- Write a topic sentence for the following paragraph.
- Circle all the prepositions of place in this paragraph.

My Favourite Restaurant.

_____ . From the outside, the restaurant doesn't look very special. It has large glass windows at the front, and chairs and tables outside for people to sit on when the weather is cool. There is a large sign with the name of the restaurant written on it in big letters. Inside, there are lots of square wooden tables with comfortable chairs around them. Every table has a bowl of flowers on it. On both sides of the room there are beautiful Arab paintings on the walls. In the middle of the restaurant there is a fountain. At the back of the room there is a door to the kitchen but this is hidden from the diners by big pot plants. The restaurant is on two levels. I prefer to go upstairs to the first floor because sometimes we get a window seat and sit and watch people as they go past in the street below. The owner put a lot of time and effort into designing this wonderful restaurant.