

Structuring writing (Sentences and paragraphs)



1. Introduction



- The process of writing vital to academic environments . It offers students the opportunity to explore many avenues of communication.
- Practising writing skills enable students to express themselves in accurate and interesting manner.
- By practising varied forms of writing (assignments, essays , diaries and letters) will extend your written communication skills

2. Purpose



The purpose of the presentation is to:

- Define a sentence
- Explain the classification of sentences
- Describe how a sentence is structured
- Define a paragraph
- Demonstrate how a paragraph is structured
- Provide hints that enhance writing

3. A sentence



- It is a group of words which express a complete thought.
- It begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop, a question mark or an exclamation mark, depending on the nature and meaning of the sentence.
- It must contain a subject and a finite verb.
- The concord in the sentence must be correct- the subject and the verb must agree with each other

3.1 Classification of sentences



- **The simple sentence**

It has one finite verb and deals with one idea

Example: Medication heals.

- **The compound sentence**

It has two or more finite verbs.

It may be made up of two or more simple sentences joined by a co-ordinating conjunction.

Example: Reading refreshes the mind and expands vocabulary.

3.1 Classification of sentences



- **The complex sentence**

It contains one main clause or thought and one or more subordinating clauses which provide additional information. They are joined by subordinating conjunctions

Example: The student writes an assignment while listening to music, after he had eaten breakfast.

4. A paragraph



- A group of sentences organised around a central topic
- It is comprised of sentences that are focused.
- The ideas in a paragraph should logically fit together. Furthermore, they should flow from one idea to the next.

4. A paragraph (continued)



- Adequate Development
- In order for a paragraph to be considered “adequate” or “sufficient,” the paragraph should be well-developed. The reader should not be left wanting more information.
- Similarly, the paragraph should include enough evidence to support its topic sentence.

Introductory paragraph



- The first part of your essay will be the introduction and it should begin by telling the reader specifically what topic your essay is addressing.
- Near the end of your introduction should be your thesis statement, which is a clear and concise statement that presents your argument.
- The last sentence of the introduction should be a transitional sentence that relates to the first body paragraph of the essay.

Body paragraph



- The next part of the essay is the body comprising of paragraphs
- The first sentence in each paragraph should tie into the transitional sentence in the previous paragraph. Subsequent sentences should describe specific examples that relate to the point you are arguing in the paragraph.
- The last sentence in this paragraph should be transitional and lead into the next paragraph

Concluding paragraph



- The final part an essay is the conclusion.
- This paragraph should restate the thesis statement, but the restatement must not be a duplicate of the thesis statement itself.
- The conclusion should also summarise the major points you addressed in each body paragraph.
- The final sentence of the conclusion should be a clear signal that the essay has ended; it may also include an application to your argument or something that the reader can think about after he has finished reading the essay.

4.1 The structure of a paragraph



A well-structured paragraph comprises of:

4.1.1 Topic sentence

4.1.2 Supporting sentences

4.1.3 Concluding sentence

4.1.1 Topic sentence



- A topic sentence is the first sentence of the body paragraph.
- It sentence introduces the topic of the paragraph.
- It develops a single controlling idea.

4.1.1 Topic sentence



- Readers generally look to the first few sentences in a paragraph to determine the subject and perspective of the paragraph. That's why it is often best to put the topic sentence at the very beginning of the paragraph.
- However, it is more effective to place another sentence before the topic sentence—for example, a sentence linking the current paragraph to the previous one, or one providing background information.

4.1.2 Supporting Sentences



- The supporting sentences of a paragraph are the sentences between the topic sentence and the concluding sentence.
- The supporting sentences “support” the topic sentence. That is, they explain and elaborate the point of the paragraph.

4.1.3 Concluding Sentence



The concluding sentence is the last sentence in the paragraph. It should succinctly end the paragraph and transition to the next paragraph, if appropriate.

4.2 The length of a paragraph



- There is no set length to a paragraph.
- Some paragraphs are only one sentence in length. However, a short paragraph like that should be left only to the expert writer—or a specific style of writing.
- Paragraphs need to be long enough to express any given idea (long enough to thoroughly explain the topic sentence).
- A general rule of thumb is to begin with a topic sentence; develop that topic well with evidence, examples, and explanations; and conclude the paragraph appropriately.

4.3 Elements of a paragraph



4.3.1 Unity

4.3.2 Order

4.3.3 Coherence

4.3.4 Completeness

4.3.1 Unity



- A paragraph must be unified
- The paragraph is unified around the main idea, with the supporting sentences providing detail and discussion

4.3.2 Order



- The order of a paragraph is determined by the way supporting sentences are organised- chronological order or order of importance.
- A solid paragraph has a definite organisation

4.3.3. Coherence



- In a coherent paragraph, each sentence relates clearly to the topic sentence or controlling idea.
- If a paragraph is coherent, each sentence flows smoothly into the next without obvious shifts or jumps.
- A coherent paragraph also highlights the ties between old information and new information to make the structure of ideas or arguments clear to the reader.

4.3.3. Coherence



Techniques to establish coherence

A number of other techniques that you can use to establish coherence in paragraphs are described below.

- ✓ Use transition words or phrases between sentences and between paragraphs.
- ✓ Transitional expressions emphasise the relationships between ideas, so they help readers follow your train of thought or see connections that they might miss.

4.3.3. Coherence



Transition words

- ✓ To show addition: again, and, also, besides, equally important, first (second, etc.), further, furthermore, in addition, in the first place, moreover, next, too
- ✓ To give examples: for example, for instance, in fact, specifically, that is, to illustrate
- ✓ To compare: also, in the same manner, likewise, similarly

4.3.3. Coherence



Transition words

- ✓ To contrast: although, and yet, at the same time, but, despite, even though, however, in contrast, in spite of, nevertheless, on the contrary, on the other hand, still, though, yet
- ✓ To summarise or conclude: all in all, in conclusion, in other words, in short, in summary, on the whole, that is, therefore, to sum up

4.3.3. Coherence



Consistency in point of view

- Be consistent in point of view, verb tense, and number.
- If you shift from past to present tense, or from “a man” to “they,” for example, you make your paragraph less coherent.
- Such inconsistencies can also confuse your reader and make your argument more difficult to follow.

4.3.3. Coherence



- Good paragraphs have transitions between preceding and proceeding paragraphs. These transitions are logical and verbal.
- One paragraph should logically flow to the next. The ideas in a body of work should be organised so each paragraph transitions well to the next. It should not be choppy.
- Additionally, verbal transitions within and between paragraphs should help the reader move seamlessly through the piece of writing.

Completeness



- Completeness means a paragraph is well-developed
- If there are not enough sentences or enough information to support your central idea, then your paragraph is incomplete

Conclusion



Use the following hints to enhance your writing

- Write full sentences .
- Vary sentence lengths in paragraphs.
- Vary your sentence construction.
- Ensure that the concord of the sentence is correct.
- Decide on the most suitable tense for your paragraph.
- Use correct language and punctuation marks