

WRITING ELEMENTS

Topic Sentence

A **topic sentence** supports or develops the theme or main idea of a paragraph.

A topic sentence is usually the **first sentence** in a paragraph. It gives the reader an idea of what the paragraph is about.

Example:

If a paragraph was written about how hard it is to learn to play the piano, the topic sentence of the paragraph could be: Learning to play the piano isn't easy.

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Concluding Sentence

A **concluding sentence** is usually the **last sentence** of a paragraph. This sentence summarizes what was talked about in the paragraph.

A concluding sentence wraps up the main idea in the paragraph and may also lead readers into the next paragraph.

Think of a paragraph as a sandwich:

- Top piece of bread = topic sentence
- Middle of sandwich = supporting sentences/details
- Bottom piece of bread = concluding sentence

Transitional Words and Phrases

Transition words include:

next then after first finally
last

Transition phrases include:

in the meantime at the same time in the beginning

Using transition words and phrases helps you move from one step to the next when writing about a process or event that took place.

Sequencing: Writing the Steps to a Process in Order

When you write the steps to a process, the steps should be written in the correct order, or in the correct sequence.

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Next, you spread jelly on the other piece of bread.

Lastly, you put the pieces of bread together, so that the peanut butter and jelly touch.

Enjoy your sandwich!

Notice all the transition words are in **bold** print above. They help your reader know when directions for the next step begin.

Try This!

Write the directions on how to tie a shoe for your younger sibling or friend. Write the steps in order, so the person can complete the task of tying his or her shoe. If you write the steps out of order, the person who is following your directions will not be able to tie the shoe correctly.

A graphic showing a row of diverse children standing on a green grassy field. Above them are four thought bubbles containing various educational icons: a cube, microscope, and protractor; a globe, beaker, and compass; an atom, pie chart, and 'ABC' on a laptop; and a bar chart, pencil, and math symbols (+, -, ×, =).

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