

Lesson Three : Writing Paragraphs

I / What is a paragraph ?

A paragraph is the basic unit of composition , it consists of a group of related sentences that develops one main idea . It has three (03) main parts :

- 1- Introduction 2- the body of the paragraph 3 - Conclusion

In other words , it has a **topic sentence** , **a few supporting sentences** and **a concluding sentence** .

II / Characteristics in the paragraph :

1. **Unity** : means that you discuss only one main idea in your paragraph . The main idea is stated in the **topic sentence** , then every **Supporting sentence** develops that idea . if , for example if you announce in your topic sentence that you are going to discuss the important characteristics of **Money** , discuss only those , do not discuss any other ideas .

2. **Coherence** : means that your paragraph is easy to read and understand because :

- Your supporting sentences are in some kind of logical order .
- Your ideas are connected by the use of the appropriate transition signals (conjunctions)

For example : there are two (02) supporting ideas : Money is countable , Money is useful .

Each of these supporting ideas is discussed , one after the other and an example is given for each one .

3. **Well – developed** : Check that your paragraph is developed with sufficient supporting details (don't leave gaps) and give **examples** .

Give the reader enough information to understand the main idea .

4. **Concluding sentence** : you give a sentence that include all your ideas .

The topic sentence : When you write in English , the most important thing you need to do is to express your main points , this should be written in one clear **sentence** .

The topic sentence is usually placed at the beginning , it is the first sentence of paragraph . it is the most important part in your paragraph because it controls all other sentences . It state **the topic** (main idea) and **the focus** .

For example :

1 – Corruption inhibits individual growth .

Corruption : **the topic**

Inhibits individual growth : **the focus**

Remark : A good topic sentence should not be too general or too specific . If it is too general you will not be able to support it in one paragraph . If it is too specific , you will not have enough to write about the rest of the paragraph .

Examples : of topic sentences :

- 1- The number of free people who are full educated have decreased . (Good topic sentence)
- 2- Human wants are generally insatiable . (too general)
- 3- The means of ensuring these wants are limited because the world has limited amounts of resources . (too specific)

The components of a paragraph :

Example :

- 1- The topic sentence**
- 2- Supporting sentences**
- 3- The concluding sentence**

[Unemployment is major problem which many countries are facing . First of all ,a person needs to be employed in order to satisfy his needs. He needs to work and to improve himself in the society . Also he has a big responsibilities more than ever . Because a person who has the capacity to work but refuses or fails to obtain work, can be referred to as unemployed . For example , most urban unemployment in developing countries like India takes the form of underemployment , in which the people are obliged to undertake any available economic activity , however , poorly paid and unproductive . In addition , this condition occurs mainly because there are no social safety nets , and no alternatives in the form of unemployment insurance or job training for formal sector work in these countries . Furthermore , finding employment in urban setting can be extremely challenging , and whenever possible , networks of relatives

and friends are used to help seek jobs . millions of people are unemployed or underemployed and this issue is rating very dramatically these days . All in all , unemployment can very serious widespread phenomenon that needs to be solved .

- Notice that this paragraph also contains the following important features :
 - The first sentence is indented
 - The first word of every sentence is capitalized
 - Each sentence ends with a period

- As you draft your paragraph , remember that you need to do several things :
 - State your point in a topic sentence
 - Support your point
 - Develop a single focus
 - Organize sentences logically and add transitions

III / Methods of paragraph development (Types of paragraphs) :

1- Compare and contrast method :

Very often in your writing , you will want to show how ideas , people , things are similar or different . In these cases , you will use a **compare and contrast method** . when you compare two (02) things , you look for how they are similar . When you contrast two things you look for how they are different . It is important that the things you compare and contrast belong to the **same general class** .

For example : you probably wouldn't compare and contrast between **a house and an organization** .

You could ; however, compare and contrast **an Algerian organization and American organization** .

2- Cause and effect method :

It is to reveal reasons and results . Paragraphs of cause and effect reveal why something happened or explain what happened as a result of something else . it concentrates on effects of a given cause and only question remains is **what happened as a result** .

3- **Classification method :**

Is another way to organize a topic for a paragraph . A broad topic is often easier to write about when you divide it into individual parts and then classify the parts into groups that have something in common . In other words , you divide a topic into groups of things that share similar features . To write a classification paragraph , you should begin by :

- Divide your topic into three (03) or more complete and separated groups :
E.g : You may divide the topic of **Systems** : - The political system – the economical system - social system .
- Remember to give examples of typical things , so the reader can see how each group is different from others .

4- **The process method :**

To analyse something is to break it into its constituent parts . in the process analysis , you explain the steps in a process (explain how to do something) or how something works . In the first type you expect your reader to follow a set of instructions , so use sentences with ‘you’ as the stated subject and command verbs with ‘ you’ as implied subject . In the second type you show the reader how process works . In any type of process analysis , the details are arranged in chronological order .

5- **The definition process :**

One kind of definition is the dictionary definition which provides a synonym or show how a word fits into general class . Writing a paragraph long definition might begin by identifying a term . it will differentiate from other members of the class . It might also include synonyms , illustrate the word with examples , discuss the word origins , compare it to similar words .

6- **The argument method :**

An argument paragraph presents a point of view and provides evidence of the writer . An argument is an opinion supported by facts . Writers refer to opinions as **Claims** and facts as **evidence** . The claim clearly states a position or stance on a topic or issue . Evidence to

prove this claim can include reason , personal experience , statistics , facts , expert research .

So , in argument paragraph , we have :

- 1- The claim (stance) : your position : with or against
- 2- Data (statistics / evidence) and discuss it
- 3- Contrast : Counter (argument) you mention the argument
- 4- Refute (you show the weaknesses)