

# LEARNING DEVELOPMENT

## Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)



### Write with purpose: what do you want your paragraph to do?

#### Purpose

#### Paragraph Breakdown

##### ARGUE

A paragraph can be used to argue for or against a point of view. Each paragraph should focus on developing one main point for or against the position.

##### Topic Sentence -

introduce the argument and position for or against

##### Supporting Sentences –

develop the reasons for your position and presents facts and examples to support this; address any counter-arguments

##### Conclusion –

restate position

#### Useful transitional words and phrases

**For giving reasons:** first, second, third, another, next, last, finally, because, since, for

**For counter-argument:** but, however, of course, nevertheless, although, despite

**For concluding:** therefore, as a result, in conclusion, thus

##### CLASSIFY

This paragraph structure can be used to organise information, items, or ideas into categories. The organisation of information will depend on your purpose and subject area.

##### Topic Sentence -

Introduce the items being classified and/or the categories for classification

##### Supporting Sentences –

provide more information about the items, and how their characteristics fit into a particular category

##### Conclusion –

repeat what classification the item or category belongs to

#### Useful transitional words and phrases

Can be divided, can be classified, can be categorised  
the first/second/third

##### COMPARE or CONTRAST

Use this paragraph structure if you need to examine similarities and differences. This paragraph structure is useful for literature reviews and reports.

##### Topic Sentence -

introduce the items to be compared or contrasted, noting similarity or difference

##### Supporting Sentences –

identify, describe, and discuss any similarities or differences

##### Conclusion –

summarise and interpret the similarities and differences discussed

#### Useful transitional words and phrases

**For comparison:** similar to, similarly, in the same way, like, equally, again, also, too

**For contrast:** in contrast, on the other hand, different from, whereas, while, unlike, but, although, however, conversely, yet, unlike



<p><b>DEFINE</b></p> <p>Use this paragraph structure when you need to define a concept, and demonstrate an understanding of how it relates to a particular context or discipline.</p>	<p><b>Topic Sentence -</b> provide a simple definition of a concept</p>
	<p><b>Supporting Sentences –</b> provide more information through description, explanation, and examples; makes links between the concept and how it applies to a particular context or field</p>
	<p><b>Conclusion –</b> not necessary; can transition to the next paragraph if related to the concept</p>
<p><b>Useful transitional words and phrases</b> for example, for instance, an illustration of this, another example, firstly, the first step, secondly, the second step, finally, the final step</p>	

<p><b>DESCRIBE</b></p> <p>Use this paragraph structure if you are asked to provide information about something.</p>	<p><b>Topic Sentence -</b> introduce the item to be described</p>
	<p><b>Supporting Sentences –</b> provide specific and detailed information about the item's characteristics and functions</p>
	<p><b>Conclusion –</b> not necessary; can transition to the next paragraph if related to the item described</p>
<p><b>Useful transitional words and phrases</b> In the foreground, in the middle distance, in the background, in the far distance, next to, near, up, down, between, beneath, above, below, on top of, beneath, left/right, centre, front, back, middle, in the interior, on the exterior, on the inside, on the outside, surrounding</p>	

<p><b>EXPLAIN</b></p> <p>Use this paragraph structure if you need to explain how something works or the steps in a process.</p>	<p><b>Topic Sentence -</b> introduce what will be explained</p>
	<p><b>Supporting Sentences –</b> explain each of the steps involved in the process, in the order that the steps are to be performed. Includes information about how something happens and why</p>
	<p><b>Conclusion –</b> provide a brief summary of the process</p>
<p><b>Useful transitional words and phrases</b> At first, initially, the first step, while, at the same time, the second/third/next step, after, next, finally, eventually, the final/last step.</p>	

<p><b>ILLUSTRATE</b></p> <p>Use this paragraph structure when you need to clarify a particular idea by offering specific examples and showing how they relate to your main point.</p>	<p><b>Topic Sentence -</b> state a general idea</p>
	<p><b>Supporting Sentences –</b> introduce examples to support the idea</p>
	<p><b>Conclusion –</b> make a link between the examples and the general idea</p>
<p><b>Useful transitional words and phrases</b> For example, for instance, an illustration of this, another example</p>	