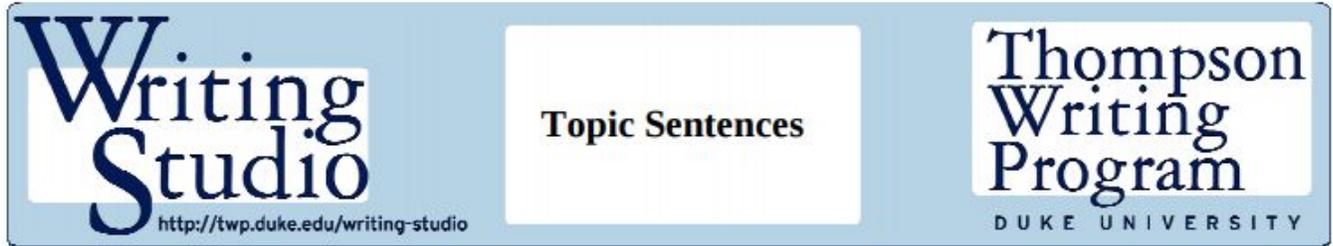


**The topic sentence should identify the main idea
and point of the paragraph.**



An effective topic sentence expresses a paragraph's main idea and can help the reader more readily understand a paragraph's purpose. Without topic sentences, paragraphs often lack coherence and place an increased burden on the reader to determine a paragraph's main point. Although not every well-written paragraph must have a topic sentence, in an academic essay a paragraph's effectiveness often directly relates to the strength of its topic sentence. Keep in mind that the placement of the topic sentence, or even whether a paragraph has such a sentence, is the individual writer's choice for each specific paragraph.

Purposes

- Makes a claim about the topic of the paragraph
- Unifies the paragraph's content
- Provides a road map
- Gives the reader a general sense of how the paragraph will discuss the topic
- Relates the paragraph to the paper's main claim
- Supports the paper's main claim

Placement

- Usually appears as the first or second sentence in a paragraph
- May end a paragraph

When a topic sentence may NOT be necessary

- If the writing is a narration of events
- If a paragraph continues to develop an idea already introduced in an earlier paragraph
- If the paragraph is relatively short and serves a primarily transitional purpose

Examples of Topic Sentences for Body Paragraphs

First of all, Larson uses cause and effect to tell how she became a mountain climber.

Second of all, Larson uses informal, colloquial language to share her stories and challenges.

Flintstone uses a variety of visuals to portray all aspects the life of chimpanzees and habitat, as well as the impact society is having on their future.

Additionally, Flintstone embellishes the text with figurative language to paint a word picture that brings the reader to the Chimp Forest which strongly connects the reader to her cause to champion for saving their habitat.

Using formal language, Jetson explains in great detail the processes used to design, test, and manufacture Sprockets.

Jetson also uses colloquial language to break down ideas and share his personal journey as he encountered setbacks and successes.

To illustrate the scientific method, Goldilocks uses cause and effect as she explains the process of testing her hypothesis for her new theory.

Goldilocks enriches the delivery of this information by infusing it with colloquial language, including humor.

Effortlessly, Brown uses cause and effect to highlight the balancing act between new scientific discoveries and ethical decisions that must be made.

By adding a variety of charts, diagrams, and graphs, Brown makes it clear that she is passionate about visually communicating information.