

Noncredit ESL Level Five
Writing Workbook

Title V Gateways Grant
Winter 2012

Note to User: This manual is a work in progress. Please submit your feedback for improvements and corrections via email to psmayer@glendale.edu

Thank you!

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Paragraphs: Punctuation and Capitalization

EXERCISE 1. Put periods, commas and capital letters where necessary. Add a title for the paragraph.

while there are many different styles for raising children throughout the world a number aspects of parenting can be found everywhere parenting is the process of promoting and supporting the physical emotional social and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood parenting refers to the aspects of raising a child aside from the biological relationship in the case of humans it is usually done by the biological parents of the child although governments and society take a role as well in many cases orphaned or abandoned children receive parental care from non-parent blood relations others may be adopted raised by foster care or be placed in an orphanage the goals of human parenting are debated usually parental figures provide for a child's physical needs protect them from harm and impart in them skills and cultural values until they reach legal adulthood usually after adolescence.

(adapted from Wikipedia.org)

General Capitalization Rules:

- first letter of the first word in every sentence
- first letter of proper nouns
- the pronoun "I"
- content words of a title

General Punctuation Rules:

- End Marks:
 - Period: (1) at the end of a statement
 - (2) at the end of an abbreviation
 - Question Mark: at the end of a question
 - Exclamation point: at the end of a sentence to show strong emotion
- Comma: (1) within a sentence to separate more than 2 items in a list
- (2) when an adverb clause precedes a main clause
- (3) when 2 or more independent clauses are connected by a conjunction
- (4) when a phrase precedes the subject of the main clause (optional)

**There are other punctuation marks (e.g. semi-colon, hyphen, colon, etc.) which we are not going to focus on here. **

General Rules for a Title:

- center on the page
- capitalize first letter of first word and important words
- do not capitalize articles, conjunctions, or short prepositions unless they are first
- do not use a complete sentence
- do not use a period

EXERCISE 2. Copy the previous paragraph on a piece of college-rule lined paper.

Remember to:

- Position your paper with the margin at the top and the holes on the left.
- Put your name (first and last) at the top right corner.
- Skip a line and put a title in the center.
- Capitalize each important word in the title, and do not make a sentence.
- Under the title, skip a line, indent, and begin copying the paragraph, always skipping a line.
- Leave some space for the right margin.

Prewriting and Outlining

Prewriting strategies use different types of fast writing to generate ideas and forms for your paragraphs. Many times when you begin to write your mind is blank and you need a little help to get started. Prewriting techniques assist you in beginning the process.

Brainstorming

Also sometimes called List Making, Brainstorming is gathering as many ideas, good or bad, about some topic. You can do this alone or in groups. First, you write down all ideas, words or phrases that come to your mind when thinking about a given topic. Many of the ideas you will later throw out, but at this point just write them down. After you feel you have exhausted the possibilities, look at your list and see if there are any natural groupings for your ideas. Give each group a label. You might have ideas which don't fit into any of your groups, so it is good to make a miscellaneous group. The group which has the strongest points is a good candidate for an essay. In review, these are your steps for Brainstorming:

1. Gather ideas in list form
2. Look for similarities in your list
3. Choose a group or groups which can become your paragraph

Building a Paragraph Step 1: Brainstorming

If you are given the topic of Glendale, you notice it is too general to write about so you begin to limit it by writing as many ideas the come to mind about Glendale:

<i>good weather</i>	<i>Alex Theater</i>
<i>crowded downtown</i>	<i>traffic</i>
<i>Americana</i>	<i>transportation</i>
<i>college</i>	<i>many immigrants</i>
<i>Verdugo Park</i>	<i>close to Downtown L.A.</i>
<i>galleria</i>	<i>hillside homes</i>

As you can see, these ideas might not appear to have any relation to one another, but after looking at them for a moment or two, you can see that they can be limited to use in a paragraph. A paragraph is simply a group of sentences which express one idea. Looking at the list of ideas about Glendale, we can see there are a number of places in Glendale: Americana, Verdugo Park, the galleria, and the Alex Theater. All of these are interesting places in Glendale. Now you have your main idea for your paragraph: interesting laces in Glendale. The next step is to organize, which is the outline.

Outlines

An outline shows your main ideas and the order you are going to write about them. It can be as detailed or simple as you want it. Basically it provides the framework for your paragraph, and focuses your mind to the topic you wish to explore while giving you an indication as to the "writability" of your essay. It looks like this:

Paragraph:

main idea _____

Detail #1 _____

Detail #2 _____

Detail #3 _____

Building a Paragraph Step 2: the Outline

Our outline might look something like this:

Paragraph: *Glendale*

main idea: interesting places in Glendale

Detail #1: the Americana

Detail #2: Verdugo Park

Detail #3: the Alex Theater

EXERCISE 3. Brainstorm by making a list of as many ideas that come to mind for the topic in 3 minutes.

Topic: life in the U.S.

EXERCISE 4. Choose a main idea for the brainstorming you did in Exercise 3 and make an outline for it.

Paragraph: *living in the U.S.*

main idea _____

Detail #1 _____

Detail #2 _____

Detail #3 _____

The Paragraph

A paragraph is the basic unit of a composition. Plainly put, a paragraph is usually a group of sentences (although it could be only one word) united by one main idea (topic). In the academic style in the U.S., a paragraph consists of three parts: a **topic sentence**, **body sentences** and a **concluding sentence**.

Topic Sentence

A topic sentence, usually found at the beginning of a paragraph, tells the reader what a paragraph is going to be about as well as controls what the writer is going to write. Because a topic sentence expresses what the paragraph is going to be about, it is the most general sentence in the paragraph. This means that there are no specific details in a topic sentence but rather just a general idea. Basically, there are two parts to a topic sentence: the **topic** (the main idea) and a **controlling idea** (what you are going to write about that idea). Look at the following topic sentence:

Building a Paragraph Step 3: Topic Sentence

Topic Sentence: *Glendale has several interesting places to visit.*

We see the **topic**, or main idea, is Glendale. The writer's focus, or **controlling idea**, is the several interesting places to visit. So we can write it as:

Topic: Glendale

Controlling Idea: several interesting places to visit

Furthermore, the controlling idea can have two parts: (1) what you are going to write about the topic (**controlling idea**), and (2) how you are going to limit it, i.e. the number or amount (**limiter**). So we can look at the above topic sentence and break it down to:

Topic: Glendale

Controlling Idea: interesting places to visit

Limiter: several

EXERCISE 5. Looking back at the paragraph in Exercise 1, find the **topic sentence** and write it here:

EXERCISE 6. Find the two parts of the **topic sentence**:

Topic:

Controlling Idea:

Limiter:

EXERCISE 7. In the following **topic sentences**, find a **topic** and a **controlling idea**.

People can prepare against car accidents by taking certain precautions.

Topic:
Controlling Idea:
Limiters:

There are several advantages to growing up in a big city..

Topic:
Controlling Idea:
Limiters:

Many U.S. universities require a minimum SAT score for a number of reasons.

Topic:
Controlling Idea:
Limiters:

Air quality in Los Angeles is improving for a number of reasons.

Topic:
Controlling Idea:
Limiters:

Repairing a broken window is easy if you follow these 5 steps.

Topic:
Controlling Idea:
Limiters:

EXERCISE 8. With a partner, write topic sentences for the following topics. Remember to keep it general but still let your reader know what you are going to write about these topics. If you are having difficulties, look at the topic sentences in Exercise 3 to give you ways to control your topic.

Topic: *Smoking cigarettes*
Controlling Idea:
Limiters:

Topic Sentence:

Topic: *Speaking English*
Controlling Idea:
Limiters:

Topic Sentence:

Topic: *Driving a car*

Controlling Idea:

Limiter:

Topic Sentence:

Topic Sentence Chart: Topic + Limiter + Controlling Idea

Topic	Limiting Phrase	Controlling Idea Starters
	several some one/two/three/etc. a few a number the following	advantages/disadvantages reasons goals functions steps (good/bad) qualities (good/bad) results benefits differences similarities ways difficulties changes precautions

EXERCISE 9. Write Topic Sentences for the following:

1. Exercising
2. Foreign Travel
3. Space Exploration
4. Music

5. Studying a Foreign Language

6. Getting married

7. Parenting

8. Your Favorite Place

9. Finding a Job

Body Sentences

The body sentences are the main part of the paragraph. It is in the body sentences that details are used to support the topic sentence. In fact, they are often called supporting sentences because they help to “prove” the topic sentence. Furthermore, the only sentences which can be used in the body **must** relate directly to the topic sentence. That is to say, any detail that does not fit with the topic sentence should not be used. Ways in which body sentences can support a topic sentence include, but are not limited to: definition, example, explanation, process, etc. Moreover, each sentence needs to be organized in the best possible order whether it be chronological, spatial, importance, or some other way.

EXERCISE 10. Go back at the paragraph in Exercise 1. In a small group, look at the body sentences and determine what type of support they are: **definition, example, explanation, process, or other**. Don’t worry if you have different ideas about each body sentence.

1st Body Sentence:

2nd Body Sentence:

3rd Body Sentence:

4th Body Sentence:

5th Body Sentence:

6th Body Sentence:

The number of body sentences can vary in paragraphs, but a good rule of thumb to use is the number 3. Try to come up with at least three sentences to support your topic sentence. Remember, there are different ways to support your topic such as example, definition, explanation, etc.

Building a Paragraph Step 4: Body Sentences

Remember the brainstorming and topic sentence about Glendale and the interesting places. Now let’s use sentences to support that claim. In other words, let’s write the body.

Glendale has several interesting places to visit. For people who like to shop, find entertainment and eat out, there is the Americana. Here they can find a diverse group of stores from Barnes and Noble bookstore to H&M clothing store to a large movie theater. There are many different restaurants where there is almost any type of food such as The Cheesecake Factory, Frieda, and a hotdog stand. People who like outdoor activities can go to Verdugo Park. Besides playgrounds, the basketball courts and baseball diamond, there is one of the few skateboard parks in the area. There are also many tables, plenty of trees, grass and barbecues for picnics in the park. People who are looking for evening entertainment can go to the Alex theater. It is an historic building with beautiful Art Deco architecture and designs. Some of the entertainment options include concerts, old movies and plays.

EXERCISE 11. Working in a group of 3-4, create an outline and then write body sentences for the following topic sentence:

OUTLINE:

Paragraph: *Studying English in a Classroom.*

Main idea: several advantages to studying in the classroom

Detail #1 _____

Detail #2 _____

Detail #3 _____

BODY SENTENCES

There are several advantages to studying English in a classroom. _____

Not only is it important to have good supporting sentences in the body of the paragraph, but also the order of those sentences is important as well. Some ways to consider ordering your essay are chronological (time), most important to least important (or vice versa), process (first step, second step, etc.) among others.

Concluding Sentence

The purpose of a concluding sentence has two parts: (1) to restate the main idea of the paragraph, and (2) signal the end of the paragraph. The ways to restate the main idea (1) include one of the following:

- restating the topic sentence.
- summarizing key points made in the body.
- drawing a conclusion based on points made in the body.
- making a prediction based on points made in the body.

And ways to signal the end of a paragraph (2) include the following words at the beginning of the concluding sentence followed by a comma:

- *All in all,*
- *In other words,*
- *In any event,*
- *In brief,*
- *In short,*
- *Therefore,*

Building a Paragraph Step 5: Concluding Sentence

Looking back at Step 4 paragraph, we can write different types of concluding sentences for the paragraph.

Restating the topic sentence: *All in all, Glendale offers some entertaining places to see.*

Summarizing key points: *In brief, the Americana, Verdugo Park, and the Alex theater are all fun place to go to.*

Drawing a conclusion: *Therefore, anyone who comes to Glendale will have plenty fun things to do.*

Making a prediction: *In any event, Glendale will remain a destination for many people who want an entertaining lifestyle.*

Any one of these sentences could be a conclusion for the paragraph.

EXERCISE 12. Write two different types of **concluding sentences** for the following paragraph:

Going to a movie theater is sometimes more work than it's worth. First of all, just getting to the theater presents difficulties. Leaving a home equipped with a TV and a video recorder isn't an attractive idea on a humid, cold, or rainy night. Even if the weather cooperates, there is still a thirty-minute drive to the theater down a congested highway, followed by the hassle of looking for a parking space. And then there are the lines. After hooking yourself to the end of a human chain, you worry about whether there will be enough tickets, whether you will get seats together, and whether many people will sneak into the line ahead of you.

Concluding Sentence 1: _____

Concluding Sentence 2: _____

Now write the **concluding sentence** at the end of this paragraph.

I have experienced a number of problems since moving to the U.S. First, I have had difficulties making friends. Because I don't speak English well and all my neighbors are Americans, I haven't been able to communicate enough to start any meaningful conversations, so I have created only very superficial relationships with anyone. Next, I don't drive; therefore, I have had a hard time getting around this city. In fact, the simple task of grocery shopping takes me a couple of hours because I have to take the bus to the store since there isn't one within walking distance of my house. Finally, I don't have enough money to do anything other than go to school. I like to go out and do different things, but since everything fun seems to require money, I'm unable to enjoy my free time. Furthermore, I can't work because I don't have a work visa. _____

Writing a Paragraph: Steps to Writing a Paragraph

EXERCISE 13. Complete the following information.

Outline

Topic: Moving to the US.

Controlling Idea: Three Reasons

Reason #1 _____

Reason #2 _____

Reason #3 _____

EXAMPLES:

S-2 1st Reason (complete sentence) :

S-4 2nd Reason (complete sentence) :

S-6 3rd Reason (complete sentence) :

EXPLANATIONS

S-3 Explanation for 1st Reason (complete sentence(s)) :

S-5 Explanation for 2nd Reason (complete sentence(s)) :

S-7 Explanation for 3rd Reason (complete sentence(s)) :

S-1 TOPIC SENTENCE (topic + controlling idea):

S- 8 CONCLUDING SENTENCE (topic + controlling idea + result):

EXERCISE 14 . Notice these sentences are out of order for a paragraph. Write the paragraph on a separate piece of paper. Start with the Topic Sentence (**S-1**) and continue with all the other sentences in order (e.i. **S-2, S-3, S-4, ...**) ending with the concluding sentence (**S-8**).

Make sure your paragraph has:

- a topic sentence at the beginning which includes the topic and a controlling idea.
- body sentences which give examples and details to support the topic sentence.
- a concluding sentence which expands on the topic sentence with some kind of result.

Remember to:

- Position your paper with the margin at the top and the holes on the left.
- Put your name (first and last) at the top right corner.
- Skip a line and put a title in the center.
- Capitalize each important word in the title, and do not make a sentence.
- Under the title, skip a line, indent, and begin copying the paragraph, always skipping a line.
- Leave some space for the right margin.

Proofreading and Editing

Correction Symbols

In this class the teacher as well as your classmates will be using certain symbols to help you find common mistakes made in writing. These symbols include mistakes with word usage, punctuation, sentence structure and paragraph/essay continuity. Here is a list of the symbols we'll be using in this class:

Correction Symbols

art	article needed/or wrong article (a, an, the)
cap/uc	should be a capital letter
conj	conjunction (and, but, so, or)
cs	comma splice: your sentence is not correct with only a comma
frag	fragment (not a complete sentence) needs a subject or verb
lc	should be a small (lower case) letter
pos	possessive ('s or s' or)
prep	preposition (in, on, at, about, etc.)
pron	pronoun needed/ or wrong pronoun (he-him etc.)
s	singular noun
pl	plural noun
non	non-count noun
sp	spelling
vb t	wrong verb tense (ex. Go-went or eats-is eating)
vb f	wrong form of the verb (ex. Have-has)
wc	word choice (use another word)
wf	word form (ex. Happy-happiness or boring-bored)
wm/mw	word missing/missing word (you need to add a word)
incomp	incomplete sentence
[awk]	awkward structure or expression
subverb	subject verb agreement issues
ger	gerund
infin	infinitive
comp	comparative

Exercise 15. With a partner, try and make all the indicated corrections on the next page.

cap cap
| |
Christmas in my country

I have celebrated many different holidays in my life. They are all interesting and important to me. However Christmas is my favorite for three different reasons.

First of all, It is important for me because I grew up in a Catholic family. Since I was a child, I have learned about love and respect people like Jesus did. I remember my grandparents talking about Jesus every time. On Christmas, we celebrate his life by going to church and praying. This has been important tradition in my family for many years.

In addition, Christmas is a big holiday because all the people in my family are together. I see my relatives from different parts in the country. I don't usually see them at ~~the~~ other times of the year. We are celebrating together in December 24th with a big meal. We usually eat turkeys or pigs with potatoe salad, or mashed potatoes, fruit cake, and hot chocolate. It's wonderful to be with them and celebrate. Because I love them very much.

I also enjoy Christmas because we can give presents to everyone. I have many aunts, uncles, cousins, and other family which celebrate with us. Our family is very big so we put our names in hat and choose the name of someone in my family. Then we buy a gift for that person. I like to give special presents. I usually can make or buy different amazing gifts. I also like receive presents. My favorite gift was a gold necklace. The children are very exciting to get presents, and I love to see all of them happy.

Now it is a little different for me because I am far from my family, but I am trying to teach the same ideas of religion, family, and gifts to my new family. I am thinking we will enjoy Christmas together many years.

Just as organizing your writing is a step you should never forget, proofreading and editing should never be overlooked. Here is a checklist you should use every time you write:

A. Checklist for your essay

Name:	
1. There is a title centered at the top of my paragraph.	
2. My paragraph is indented.	
3. I checked spelling when I wasn't sure.	
4. Grammar is good.	
5. I read my paragraph aloud.	
6. I checked for punctuation mistakes.	
7. There is a topic sentence.	
8. There is a concluding sentence.	
9. I have skipped a line or double spaced	
10. I have done my best work.	

Peer Editing

The first step in rewriting will start with peer editing, which involves your reading a classmate's writing and a classmate's reading your writing with the purpose of commenting and helping each other. Having another set of eyes looking at your writing will help you realize some errors. These are the steps to peer-editing :

1. Read through your partner's writing completely without changing anything. Ask yourself: Does the writing make sense? Can you summarize the main points without reading it again?
2. Find the topic sentence. Where is it? Is it in a good place? Is it stated clearly? Is there reasoning behind the main point? Do you understand the author's position?
3. Look at the body sentences. Is there evidence or support for the topic sentence in the body sentences? Is that support detailed enough? Is there a logical progression in the body?
4. Look at the concluding sentence. Does the conclusion refer back to the topic sentence? Does it restate the topic sentence using different words?
5. Check for coherence and clarity. Is the purpose of the paragraph clear? Who is the audience? Are there any ideas which seem vague or out of place?
6. Proofread the essay. Are there many mistakes with form and format?

B. Checklist for your classmate's paragraph:

Name:	Excellent	Good	Needs Work
1. Writing holds the reader's interest.			
2. Writing is well organized, with A topic sentence, body, and conclusion.			
3. Grammar and spelling are correct			
4. Sentences are punctuated properly.			
5. Sentences are clear and concise.			
6. Handwriting or typing is neat.			
7. Piece of writing is the required length			
8. There is a clear point.			

EXERCISE 16. First complete checklist A for your own paragraph, and then switch papers and do checklist B for your partner's paragraph. Hand the paper in to your teacher with your paragraph.

This is for _____'s paragraph

A. Checklist for your paragraph

	Name:
	1. There is a title centered at the top of my paragraph.
	2. My paragraph is indented.
	3. I checked spelling when I wasn't sure.
	4. Grammar is good.
	5. I read my paragraph aloud.
	6. I checked for punctuation mistakes.
	7. There is a topic sentence.
	8. There is a concluding sentence.
	9. I have skipped a line or double spaced
	10. I have done my best work.

Switch with your partner

B. Checklist for your classmate's paragraph:

Name:	Excellent	Good	Needs Work
1. Writing holds the reader's interest.			
2. Writing is well organized, with A topic sentence, body, and conclusion.			
3. Grammar and spelling are correct			
4. Sentences are punctuated properly.			
5. Sentences are clear and concise.			
6. Handwriting or typing is neat.			
7. Piece of writing is the required length			
8. There is a clear point.			

Longer Writing

Multi-Paragraph Writing: The 3 Paragraph Essay

An essay is a multi-paragraph writing which has a similar structure as a paragraph: an introduction (like the topic sentence) body paragraph(s), and a conclusion. However in an essay, each of those parts is a separate paragraph. That is to say in an essay, there are an introductory paragraph, body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph. The body paragraphs have the same structure as the paragraphs you've already done (topic sentence, body sentences, and a concluding/transitioning sentence). However, the introductory paragraph has a different structure which includes a thesis statement. The structure of most essays is:

- 1st Paragraph: Introduction
 - General Statement
 - Bridge
 - Thesis Statement
- 2nd Paragraph: Body
 - Topic Sentence
 - Body Sentence
 - Transitioning Sentence
- 3rd Paragraph: Body
 - Topic Sentence
 - Body Sentence
 - Concluding Sentence

*** There is often a concluding paragraph in an essay, but you won't be using one in this class. Instead, you will be writing a concluding sentence in the last body paragraph.***

Introductory Paragraph: An introductory paragraph usually starts out general with a statement which piques the reader's interest. After the general statement, the sentences should narrow the focus so your specific topic begins to become clearer. Finally, you end the first paragraph with your thesis statement. Therefore, your introductory paragraph should go from general to specific.

Thesis Statement: A thesis statement is the one sentence in the essay which tells your reader what your essay is about. It is usually placed at the end of the introductory paragraph.

Concluding Sentence: A concluding sentence is the last sentence of an essay. It can be found in the last body paragraph or as its own one-sentence paragraph at the end of the essay. Note: in most academic essays, the concluding sentence is in fact a whole paragraph, but for our uses here, you will not be writing a concluding paragraph, only a concluding sentence.

EXERCISE 17. Look at this 3-paragraph essay. Answer the questions after the essay.

18th Century European Colonialism of Africa

Colonialism occurs when a country takes control of other lands, regions, or territories outside of its borders by turning those lands, regions into a colony. Usually, it is a more powerful, richer country that takes control of a smaller, less powerful region or territory. In the 1700s and 1800s, many of the richer, more powerful European countries established colonies in the continents of Africa. Two of the strongest reasons that Europeans colonized Africa were for the land and for the cheap labor in the form of slaves.

European countries used colonialism to get more land. One reason was that the African continent had rich natural resources that Europe needed for industrialization. For example, some of these resources included: diamonds, gold, copper, oil, and silver. Europeans used these resources to produce goods they could sell. Another reason Europeans wanted to colonize Africa was that they wanted rich tropical soil to raise plants that they could not raise in Europe. These plants included rubber-trees, tobacco, and sugar-cane, which were important because they could sell them to make money. They could also use them to make other products. In fact, without the African land, Europe's industrialization would not have had the necessary resources to fuel the rapid growth of that time.

Furthermore, European countries used colonialism so that they could get workers from the poorer country to work in factories or farms in their countries. Europeans also needed people to work the land in Africa which they had colonized, as well. Because this work was difficult, painful, and dangerous, Europeans were not willing to do this type of work. These people who did this work had a short life-expectancy. As a result, Europeans needed more workers, and Africa was able to supply them. Therefore, the need for workers, the wonderfully fertile farmland and the rich natural resources of the land that Europeans needed were the two main reasons they were interested in forming colonies in Africa.

Adapted from Wikipedia

Questions:

1. What is the first paragraph?
2. How is it organized?
3. Underline the **thesis statement**. Where is it in the essay? Why?
4. What is the second paragraph?
5. Underline the **topic sentence** for the second paragraph. Where is it?
6. What is the third paragraph?
7. Underline the **topic sentence** for the third paragraph. Where is it?
8. Underline the **concluding sentence**. Where is it? What word(s) help show it's the conclusion.

Introductory Paragraph

Thesis Statement

A thesis statement is a claim which your essay supports written in a sentence or two. It is the controlling idea for the whole essay, and tells your reader what he/she is going to be reading in the essay. Many have called it the road map for the essay. Since you need a road map at the beginning of the trip, usually the thesis statement is found in the introduction, often the last sentence of that paragraph.

Good thesis statements are hard to write because they have to: (1) control the whole essay, (2) give your point of view, (3) be specific enough without details, and (4) be written in one sentence (sometimes more). That is a tall order.

Because the thesis statement controls the whole essay, it is usually the first sentence that is written after an outline has been made. After you have written your thesis statement, you can begin your introductory paragraph.

Do's and Don'ts for Thesis Statements

A thesis statement should:

1. Be limited to only those points in your essay
2. Relate directly to the given topic
3. Be an assertion
4. Explain how you will support your assertion

A thesis statement should NOT:

1. Be an open ended question
2. Be so broad that it is too difficult to discuss in one essay
3. Contain two conflicting ideas without a position
4. Contain only factually information without a position

A thesis statement has the formula:

LIMITED TOPIC + PRECISE OPINION + REASONS/RESULTS/EXAMPLES

EXERCISE 18. Work with a partner. Find the limited topic, precise opinion, and reasons/results for the following thesis statements.

Dogs make good pets because they can provide both security and companionship.

Limited Topic:

Precise Opinion:

Reasons/Results/Examples:

I want to become an astronaut so I could possibly explore other planets and find new life forms.

Limited Topic:

Precise Opinion:

Reasons/Results/Examples:

The typical life of a college student includes studying, going to classes, and socializing with other students.

Limited Topic:

Precise Opinion:

Reasons/Results/Examples:

EXERCISE 19. If an essay has an introductory paragraph and body paragraphs, how many paragraphs would each of the essays which included the thesis statements from exercise 16 have.

Writing Thesis Statements

EXERCISE 20. For the following topics, work together with a partner and write **thesis statements** for a three-paragraph essay (Remember that includes an introductory paragraph and two body paragraphs). First fill out the information, and then write your **thesis statement**.

1. Topic: Life in the U.S.

Limited Topic:

Precise Opinion:

Reasons/Results/Examples:

Thesis Statement:

2. Topic: Marriage

Limited Topic:

Precise Opinion:

Reasons/Results/Examples:

Thesis Statement:

3. Topic:

Limited Topic:

Precise Opinion:

Reasons/Results/Examples:

Thesis Statement:

Introductory Paragraph: The First Sentence

The first sentence is often the most difficult to write. To begin an introductory paragraph, there are several techniques. We are going to focus on three of those techniques: general statement, question, or quote. Each of the following examples will highlight each of these techniques.

General Statement:

Today smoking is an issue which is on everybody's mind. The whole country is divided on this issue. Some people believe that smoking should be banned everywhere while others are not so harsh. However, I believe that tobacco should be outlawed because smoking endangers everyone's health and pollutes the environment.

Question:

What do you think about banning smoking? The whole country is divided on whether smoking should be banned. I firmly believe smoking should be outlawed because it endangers everyone's health and it pollutes the environment.

Quotation:

In The Monitor it was recently stated that, "Smoking is the greatest threat to our health." The whole country is divided on this issue. I believe that tobacco should be outlawed because it endangers everyone's health and pollutes the environment.

EXERCISE 21. Choose one of the thesis statements you wrote in exercise 18, and write three introductory paragraphs with each of the techniques.

Brainstorming and Outline for an Essay

Brainstorming

Brainstorming for an essay is done the same way as you brainstormed for a paragraph. That is, you begin writing any ideas that come to mind about a given topic (See Brainstorming pg ?).

EXERCISE 22. For the following topic, you will be given 5 minutes to write down as many ideas which come to mind. Remember this is not the organizing phase, but rather the idea generating part.

Topic: Your Life Now

EXERCISE 23. Work with a partner. Explain what your ideas you wrote in the box are about.

Outline for an Essay

You need to expand from an outline for a paragraph to an outline for an essay. You will add to the outline a place for an introductory paragraph, a thesis statement, two body paragraphs, and a concluding sentence. The new outline looks like this.

Topic _____

I. Introductory Paragraph

ThesisStatement _____

II. Body Paragraph#1

mainidea _____

Detail#1 _____

Detail#2 _____

Detail#3 _____

III. Body Paragraph#2

mainidea _____

Detail#1 _____

Detail#2 _____

Detail#3 _____

Concluding Sentence:

EXERCISE 24. Using the brainstorming from exercise 20, create an outline for an essay using the template above. You must narrow your topic, create a thesis statement, find details to support your thesis and come up with a conclusion. Remember that only the thesis statement and possibly the conclusion should be sentences now. All the details should be a word or phrases.

EXERCISE 25. At home, write a 3 paragraph essay from the outline you created.

EXERCISE 26. First complete checklist A for your own essay, and then switch papers and do checklist B for your partner's essay. Hand this paper in to your teacher with your essay.

This is for _____'s essay.

A. Checklist for your essay

Name:	
1. There is a title centered at the top of my paragraph.	
2. My paragraphs are indented.	
3. I checked spelling when I wasn't sure.	
4. Grammar is good.	
5. I read my essay aloud.	
6. I checked for punctuation mistakes.	
7. There is an introductory paragraph with a thesis statement.	
8. There are two body paragraphs which begin with topic sentences.	
9. There is a concluding sentence.	
10. I have skipped a line or double spaced	
11. I have done my best work.	

Switch with your partner

B. Checklist for your classmate's essay Partner's Name:

Name:	Excellent	Good	Needs Work
1. Writing holds your interest.			
2. Writing is well organized, with an introductory paragraph with a thesis statement, 2 body paragraphs, and a concluding sentence.			
3. Grammar and spelling are correct			
4. Sentences are punctuated properly.			
5. Sentences are clear and concise.			
6. Handwriting or typing is neat.			
7. Piece of writing is the required length			
8. There is a clear point.			

EXERCISE 27. After your teacher gives back your essay, look at the correction symbols your teacher has put on your essay. Make the necessary correction and turn your essay back in to your teacher. You do **not** need to rewrite the entire essay, only make the indicated changes. If you don't understand the teacher's correction symbols, ask your partner or the teacher.

Improving Your Writing: Sentence Transitions and Varying Sentences

Transitions

Transitions are words between sentences or paragraphs that logically connect the two. Usually it is put at the beginning of the second part (either the second sentence or the next paragraph) that you are connecting together. There are other places you can put sentence transitions, but the most common place is at the beginning of the second part. Notice the punctuation is to separate the transition with commas. Here are some categories and examples of transitions:

1. To Add Information

Transitions that add information:

	furthermore,
also/too	additionally,
as well	in addition,

Here are some examples.

- (a) An elephant is a mammal. **Also**, humans are mammals.
- (b) Hydropower is a green form of energy. **Furthermore**, wind can be harnessed to provide an energy source which has little pollution.

2. To Show an Effect or Result

Transitions that indicate an effect or result:

	consequently,
thus,	as a consequence,
therefore,	as a result,

- (a) Hydrogen and helium are the most abundant elements in the universe. **Thus**, they are easily found.
- (b) Photosynthesis is a biological process which changes light to energy. **As a consequence**, plants need access to light
- (c) There is no atmosphere on the moon. **Therefore**, life as we know it cannot exist on there.

3. To Give an Example

Examples connect one idea to a fact or illustration. Transitions:

for example,	to illustrate,
one/an example	for instance,

- (a) Computers touch almost every aspect of our lives. **To illustrate**, they can be found in cars, classrooms, and hospitals to name a few.
- (b) To be an astronomer, math classes are required. **For instance**, a knowledge of algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and calculus are needed.

4. To Contrast Ideas

When we want to indicate that one idea is opposite another, we use these transitions.

however,

nonetheless,

on the other hand,

- (a) Exercising every day can benefit your health. **On the other hand**, the many injuries can occur.
- (b) Many couples look forward to having their first child. **However**, few of them think about how having children will impact their lives negatively.
- (c) Water is vital to life. **Nonetheless**, too much water can be devastating to life.

5. To Summarize Ideas

These transitions indicate that a paragraph or essay is about to reach a conclusion.

in sum, in conclusion,

in brief, in summary,

in short, to summarize,

- (a) **In short**, Glendale offers a number of options for entertainment.
- (b) **To summarize**, dogs make good pets because they are protective, faithful and entertaining.

EXERCISE 28. For A and B, rearrange the following sentences (1, 2, 3, 4) so that they form logical paragraphs.

A

- ___ (a) On the other hand, in the convection process, the transfer of energy between an object and its environment is due to fluid motion, not contact.
- ___ (b) In sum, the ways that heat travels are quite varied.
- ___ (c) In the conduction processes, for instance, the energy transfers between objects in physical contact.
- ___ (d) The ways heat travels can be classified by the four mechanisms: conduction, convection, radiation, and advection.
- ___ (e) Finally, the transfer of energy from one location to another as a side effect of physically moving an object containing that energy is the process of advection.
- ___ (f) Similarly, the transfer of energy to or from a body by means of the emission or absorption of electromagnetic radiation, not contact, is radiation.

EXERCISE 29. Read the following paragraph and choose the correct transitions.

Radio waves are a form of energy that travel in low frequency. They are a part of every day life. (However, In short) we cannot see radio waves. (On the other hand/For instance) radio waves can travel long distances around many obstacles. (As a result/In addition), these waves are used for long distance communication. Radio frequency energy has been used in medical treatments generally for minimally invasive surgeries (as well/however). (To summarize,/Yet) radio waves make our lives better.

EXERCISE 30.

A. Combine these pairs of sentences using transition words.

1. Retirement is a time which many people look forward to.
Some people see it as a sort of punishment.

2. Experiments show that viruses cause cancer in mice, cats, and even in some primates.
It is possible that they can cancer in humans.

3. We aren't used to being alone.
If we find ourselves in solitude, we find ways to fill that time.

4. You shouldn't avoid responsibility.
You need to do whatever is necessary.

6. Some people know very little about sacrifice.
They are ignorant about self-denial.

7. They ate at a restaurant.
They went to a movie.

B. Now put transition words into this paragraph.

Glendale has several interesting places to visit. _____, for people who like to shop, find entertainment and eat out, there is the Americana. _____, they can find a diverse group of stores from Barnes and Noble bookstore to H&M clothing store to a large movie theater. _____, there are many different restaurants where there is almost any type of food such as The Cheesecake Factory, Frieda, and a hotdog stand. _____, people who like outdoor activities can go to Verdugo Park. Besides playgrounds, the basketball courts and baseball diamond, there is one of the few skateboard parks in the area, _____. _____, there are also many tables, plenty of trees, grass and barbecues for picnics in the park. _____, people who are looking for evening entertainment can go to the Alex Theater. _____, it is an historic building with beautiful Art Deco architecture and designs. Some of the entertainment options include concerts, old movies and plays. _____, Glendale offers a number of diverse options to enjoy.

C. Go back to pg 20 and circle the transitions in the essay about colonization and discuss their functions.

EXERCISE 31. Now look at your 3 paragraph essay, and put in at least 5 transition words. If you already used some transitions, circle them and count them in your 5. Check your work with your partner.

Varying Sentences

Varying sentence length and type will provide interest and also give your writing rhythm. A short sentence following several longer ones can emphasize a point. A longer sentence can provide a sense of flow, or enrich or extend an image. There are basically four types of sentences.

Simple Sentence

A **simple** sentence, also called an independent clause, contains a subject and a verb, and it expresses a complete thought.

- A. Some students like to study in the morning.
- B. Juan and Arturo play football every afternoon.
- C. Alicia goes to the library and studies every day.

Compound Sentence

A **compound** sentence contains two independent clauses joined by a coordinator. The coordinators are as follows: *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*. Except for very short sentences, coordinators are always preceded by a comma.

- D. I tried to speak Spanish, and my friend tried to speak English.
- E. Alejandro played football, so Mary went shopping.
- F. Alejandro played football, for Mary went shopping.

Complex Sentence

A **complex** sentence has an independent clause joined by one or more dependent clauses. A **complex** sentence always has a subordinator such as *because, since, after, although, or when* or a relative pronoun such as *that, who, or which*. Commas in **complex** sentences vary depending on the type.

- G. The students are studying because they have a test tomorrow.
- H. After they finished studying, Tom and Pam went to the movies.
- I. Tom and Pam went to the movies after they finished studying.
- J. The woman whom my mom talked to sells cosmetics.
- K. The town where I grew up is in the United States.

Compound-Complex Sentence

A **compound-complex** sentence has two independent clauses joined by at least one dependent clause. A **compound-complex** sentence has both a coordinator such as *and, but, or, nor, for, yet, or so* as well as a subordinator such as *because, since, after, although, or when* or a relative pronoun such as *that, who, or which*.

- L. I'm going to cook dinner and my husband is going to wash the dishes because it's his turn.
- M. When he arrived, she'd already left, so he decided to leave immediately.
- N. Tom and Pam want to go to the movies if they're not too tired, but they have to finish their homework first.

EXERCISE 32. Identify the following sentences as S=simple, CP=compound, CX=complex, CC=Compound-Complex. To make this easier, circle the subjects, underline the verbs, and cross out the prepositional phrases.

_____ 1 Winter the coldest season of the year in temperate climates, between autumn and spring.

_____ 2. The start of an astronomical winter remains constant in each hemisphere regardless of weather conditions, but varies with culture.

_____ 3. Some authorities attempt to define an astronomical winter, which is based solely on the position of the Earth in its orbit around the sun.

_____ 4. Meteorological winter, a term which is used by meteorologists, is the method of measuring the winter season based on "sensible weather patterns" for record keeping purposes, so the start of meteorological winter can change depending on how far north one lives.

_____ 5. This corresponds to the months of December, January and February in the Northern Hemisphere, and June, July and August in the Southern Hemisphere.

_____ 6. A rare meteorological phenomenon encountered during winter is ice fog, which comprises ice crystals suspended in the air; it occurs only at very low temperatures, below -30°C

_____ 7. Astronomically, the winter solstice, being the day of the year which has fewest hours of daylight, ought to be the middle of the season, but seasonal lag means that the coldest period normally follows the solstice by a few weeks.

_____ 8 In the UK, meteorologists consider winter to be the three coldest months of December, January and February.

_____ 9. The three-month period associated with the coldest average temperatures typically begins somewhere in late November or early December in the Northern Hemisphere and lasts through late February or early March.

_____ 10. Cultural influences such as Christmas creep may have led to the winter season being perceived as beginning earlier in recent years, although high latitude countries like Canada and Russia are usually well into their real winters before the December solstice.

EXERCISE 33. This paragraph has only simple sentences and is monotonous. Work with a partner to rewrite this paragraph and vary the sentences. You do not need to add more information, just use other sentence types. You can add transitions if you want to. Keep in mind that shorter sentences are often used for important points. Ask yourselves which sentences might be effective as simple sentences and which would be better as compound, complex, or compound-complex.

The ideal teacher has three qualities. First, he should be patient. Sometimes students ask many questions. He should not get upset at students. Students don't always understand quickly. He shouldn't mind repeating the explanation a number of times. Second, he should be knowledgeable about his topic. He might not know enough about a topic. He should research. He should prepare. He should continue to

expand his knowledge. Finally, he should have interesting lessons. Bored students don't learn as well. Interested students learn better. It is the responsibility of the teacher to make good lesson. Teachers without these qualities are less effective.

In-Class Writing

In-class essays are a little different from take-home essays. One of the big differences is the time constraints of the in-class essay, so time management is very important. If you don't pay attention to the time, you might have an incomplete or unedited essay. Another difference is the introduction. Because time is limited, you don't want to spend too much time on the introduction. In fact, the introductory paragraph is usually only the thesis statement. You can write more in your introductory paragraph, but it shouldn't be more than one or two sentences. Here are the general steps to in-class essays:

1. **Read and understand the prompt.** The prompt is the topic you will be given to write about. Read through it, and make sure you understand what it is asking for.
2. **Figure out your time management.** You will be given one hour to write your essay during which you'll have to understand the topic, brainstorm, make an outline, write a thesis statement, write topic sentences, write the body paragraphs, concluding sentence, and proofread and edit. Therefore time management is key. Here is a possible timeline to follow:
 - 5 minutes** to think about the prompt. There is no writing at this time, only organizing your thoughts in your head.
 - 10 minutes** to write an outline. This can include your thesis statement and topic sentences.
 - 35 minutes** to write your body paragraphs.
 - 10 minutes** to proofread and edit.This is not a rigid schedule that you must keep to, but a guide line to help you manage your time.
3. **Write!** Be sure to provide specific examples and details to support each point you make. Your reader will be persuaded by your essay if you include lots of "for instances" and "for examples," supporting your claims rather than just listing them. You will not have time to rewrite your whole essay, so corrections or changes need to be made in the margins or on the spaces above and below your writing.

Prompt Examples

Understanding what you need to write is important to writing a good essay. There are certain techniques that can be applied to reading and understanding the prompts. There are some questions to ask yourself to help you figure out what the prompt is asking for.

1. What are the structural limitations? Are there length limitations? Does the prompt ask for a certain format or number of paragraphs? Does it ask for a special type of essay?
2. Are there key words that tell you what you need to write? Does the prompt ask you to "discuss," "compare," "contrast," "summarize," "explain," or "relate"? Note that some key words give you more freedom than do others. The words "contrast" and "summarize," for instance, are very precise. You must obey these words by doing exactly what they say. However, the word "discuss" gives you some freedom.
3. Can you restate the prompt in your own words? Restating the prompt in your words will help you think clearly about the prompt and absorb it.

Example of a Prompt:

In a three paragraph essay which includes a thesis statement with two body paragraphs and a concluding sentence, write an essay for the following topic:

In life there are leaders and followers. Write about someone you know personally among your peers who is a leader, perhaps someone you grew up with, identifying the qualities and narrating incidents which illustrate the leadership qualities.

Make sure you skip lines, indent properly, and have a title. Remember to use transitions and vary your sentences.

What are the structural limitations of this essay?

Are there any key words? What are they?

Restate the prompt in your own words.

EXERCISE 34. Look at the following prompts with a partner and using the questions above, explain the prompt.

1. In a three paragraph essay which includes a thesis statement with two body paragraphs and a concluding sentence, write an essay for the following topic:

In our society there seems to be a constant disagreement about the point at which a person becomes an adult. Traditionally, age has been the determining factor; however, there are many other factors which could be considered. What are the characteristics and responsibilities you believe demonstrate that an individual has become an adult?

Make sure you skip lines, indent properly, and have a title. Remember to use transitions and vary your sentences.

What are the structural limitations of this essay?

Are there any key words? What are they?

Restate the prompt in your own words.

2. . In a three paragraph essay which includes a thesis statement with two body paragraphs and a concluding sentence, write an essay for the following topic:

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? People should sometimes do things that they do **not** enjoy doing. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

Make sure you skip lines, indent properly, and have a title. Remember to use transitions and vary your sentences.

What are the structural limitations of this essay?

Are there any key words? What are they?

Restate the prompt in your own words.

EXERCISE 35. You will be given 10 minutes to make an outline for one of these prompts. Include in your outline a thesis statement, a topic sentence for each body paragraph and a concluding sentence.

Introductory Paragraph:

Thesis Statement:

1st Body Paragraph Idea:

Topic Sentence :

2nd Body Paragraph Idea:

Topic Sentence :

Concluding Sentence:

EXERCISE 36. For homework, write an essay from the outline above. Try to limit your time to 30-40 minutes of writing and 10 minutes of proofreading and editing to simulate test conditions. Bring your essay to class tomorrow for peer editing.

EXERCISE 37. Use the following checklist to edit your partner's essay.

	Partner's Name	Yes	No
1.	Does the essay have a title in the correct place?		
2.	Are there 3 paragraphs?		
3.	Is there a thesis statement in the introduction?		
4.	Is the thesis statement clear?		
5.	Is there a topic sentence in the 1 st body paragraph (the 2 nd paragraph in the		

	essay)?		
6.	Is there good support (examples, explanations, etc) for that topic sentence?		
7.	Is there a topic sentence in the 2 nd body paragraph (the 3 rd paragraph in the essay)?		
8.	Is there good support (examples, explanations, etc) for that topic sentence?		
9.	Is there a concluding sentence for the whole essay in the 3 rd paragraph		
10.	In your opinion, is this a well-written essay with transitions and varying sentences?		

Discuss with your partner your answers to these questions. If the answers are “Yes”, show your partner where in the essay you find these parts. If the answers are “No”, discuss with your partner possible solutions.

In-Class Writing Assignment

Which one quality or characteristic (honesty, courage, luck, good looks) do you think is most important for leading a successful and happy life? In a well-constructed essay, citing several arguments, explain why you think this quality or characteristic is most important.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? With the help of technology, students nowadays can learn more information and learn it more quickly. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

What do you want **most** in a friend — someone who is intelligent, or someone who has a sense of humor, or someone who is reliable? Which **one** of these characteristics is most important to you? Use reasons and specific examples to explain your choice.