Writing Effective Paragraphs
Discuss

• What is paragraph?

• Why are paragraphs important in writing?

• What does a good academic paragraph consist of?
What is a paragraph?

“In its simplest and most basic form, a paragraph is a group of sentences about one topic. Paragraphs are the fundamental building blocks of texts. Their purpose is to inform, give an opinion, state facts or explain. An effective paragraph is logical and well structured and clear” (Courtald, 2008).
Why are paragraphs important?


- Writing
- Paragraphs
Essay Structure

The Structure of an Essay

Introduction

- Introduce the topic
- Provide background information
- Limit the scope of discussion
- Define/ state the topic/question
- Present the plan of coverage including your line of argument/viewpoint/conclusions

Note: You can set your own agenda to avoid over generalisation or too broad a focus

Body

- Each paragraph should have one main point
- Topic sentence
- Link
- Topic sentence
What should an effective paragraph consist of?

Structure
• topic *sentence*, explanation of ideas, support to theories, elaboration or comment on ideas, a concluding sentence (at times)

Unity and coherence
• how ideas link together, transition and linking words

Cohesion
• reference back to topic and to previous paragraphs
Paragraph Structure

Writing an assignment for academic purposes may be a difficult process for the beginning writer. As well as understanding how to interpret what is required in the assignment, the student needs to have efficient and planning strategies. It also helps to realise that it is very useful to write several drafts, rather than attempting to write the final version in one step. Another important strategy is managing time, so that there is sufficient time for reflection and getting feedback. In this way the final version will have advanced from the initial ideas to an edited and more polished version. Understanding how to manage the parts of the process is therefore an important part of assignment writing.
Where do you get ideas for paragraphs?

From brainstorming:
- Key words/phrases can become main ideas in paragraphs

From question:
- Key words/phrases can become main ideas in paragraphs

From reading/notetaking:
- Key words/phrases can become main ideas in paragraphs
Example Bubble / Ideas Plan

Source: studyskills.com
Topic - International students in Australia face communication problems with Australians

Paragraph outline

A. Australians are difficult to understand.  
   1. incomplete sentences  
   2. unclear expressions  
   3. talk too fast  
   4. slang and idiom

   SUPPORTING POINT  
   Supporting Detail

B. Intl’ Studts. have poor verbal skills.  
   1. lack vocab  
   2. poor pronunciation

   SUPPORTING POINT  
   Supporting Detail
Purpose of Paragraphs

On the topic of sharks

- to explain under what circumstances sharks eat people
- to compare and contrast sharks; man-eating Vs. other sharks
- to suggest how endangered shark species can be protected
- to compare different theories on why sharks eat people
- to introduce the essay on sharks
- to conclude the essay on sharks
Introduction Definition

In the context of a university, an essay is a written argument that is supported by evidence. The evidence is derived from a range of sources, and integrated according to a prescribed convention of referencing. Essays are divided into paragraphs (an introductory paragraph, body paragraphs and a concluding paragraph) and include a list of references on a separate page. Unlike a report, an essay does not use subheadings. The purpose of an essay is to present a position on a subject and develop it via a carefully staged argument, through reasoning and judicious selection of source material. It is mostly students who write essays, to display their subject knowledge and proficiency in academic writing.
The idea that nuclear energy is a perfectly clean alternative to coal is false, because the inevitable waste of nuclear reactors can have devastating, long lasting consequences for society and the environment. For example, the chronic health complaints caused by the explosion of the nuclear reactor in Chernobyl persist today, despite the fact that this catastrophe occurred over 20 years ago. Notwithstanding major reactor malfunctions, nuclear energy has other substantial drawbacks. As Stoett (cited in Gonzalez 2005) points out, “the production of nuclear energy and the disposal of nuclear wastes both have significant environmental costs, which in the long term could be just as environmentally degrading as climate change.”
The expansion of cities in China, such as Shanghai, is leading to considerable loss of agricultural land. This could result in serious problems, such as food shortage because much of the land being used by urban development is fertile farmland. Apart from this, China is developing an automobile industry, which worsen existing environmental and social problems. Instead of this, the Chinese government should support the development of a transport system that is regulated, and relies more on public transport.
Types of Paragraphs: Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated that while high-intensity exercise is the most efficient means of achieving peak physical condition for events such as triathlons, it is inappropriate for people aged 45 and over, or with certain conditions or injuries. Low-intensity exercise has longer lasting benefits on physical and psychological health, and presents a lower risk of injury. Teachers of physical education should therefore consider designing exercise programs that combine low and medium intensity to build strength and injury resistance. Doing this would guarantee ‘controlled preparation’ and a foundation which athletes could build on leading to performance without risk of injury.
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