

Writing effective paragraphs essay sample



Writing has always been a channel of expressing thoughts. Things we cannot articulate correctly verbally can be asserted through the use of pen and paper. And as a matter of fact, there are things which are better when written than said.

Who didn't perceive writing an essay as a burden? Who didn't experience the daily depositing of an entry to a journal? Who didn't compose reaction papers? How about formal and informal themes? Who didn't fail to impress their teachers with the introduction of their research paper? Writing is just so essential to every student's life—from elementary to high school and extending through college—from the simplest to the most complex. In line with the fact that no student can escape from writing, this aims to give them knowledge on how to compose an effective written piece through the use of effective paragraphs. THE PARAGRAPH

A successful, good or effective paragraph is not merely an amalgamation of related units of thoughts called sentences. It serves as a building block of an argument, an instrument of persuasion, a stirrer of a narrative, or a distinctive of a descriptive. It is the framework that provides and develops the main or the controlling idea, or the central topic of a composition called the thesis. Thesis is the object or the topic the writer is to focus on.

A paragraph functions in two ways. First, it is a partition that the reader can see. As the reader reads, he/she can recognize that each paragraph is set apart from each other by spacing and indentation; and appears as a division of the whole. Second, a paragraph is the stage where the writer showcases his/her thoughts. A paragraph may be lengthy, depending on the notion it

tries to develop. An effective composition is constituted by operative paragraphs. These paragraphs that build up a writing piece (e. g. essay), may be introductory, body, transitional or concluding paragraphs. 1.

Introductory Paragraphs

These paragraphs hold the reader's attention and interest using a powerful opening sentence. This sentence must be a "moving" statement that it can engage the reader smoothly to the thesis. One may use a rhetorical question, a quotation, or an anecdote as an introduction. It gives significant background information and context, such as important facts and theories. The introductory paragraph introduces the thesis statement and thereby, focuses the readers notice on the central idea of the composition. 2. Body Paragraphs

If the readers are already fully engaged in reading using the presentation of the thesis in the introductory paragraph, the body paragraph functions as the developer of this controlling idea. This is found in the middle of a composition. 3. Transitional Paragraphs

If the writer wants to shift from one sub-topic of the thesis to another, he/she may use transitional paragraphs for smooth alteration. It guides readers to connect one paragraph to other paragraphs. Readers may find them in a composition or they may not see any. 4. Concluding Paragraphs

These paragraphs reassert and reinforce the thesis of the composition. Everything in a concluding paragraph is drawn from the ideas developed in the preceding paragraphs. Its goal is to leave the readers satisfied or

persuaded with the proposition made by the writer. This is usually found at the end of the composition. **WRITING AN EFFECTIVE PARAGRAPH**

Having been acquainted with the 4 kinds of paragraphs, we shall now discuss how to write an effective one.

A good paragraph has three major characteristics: unity, development and coherence. 1. Unity

A paragraph is united when it has only one topic sentence to be discussed. The topic sentence names the main point of a paragraph, gives the reader a sense of direction, and condenses the paragraph's main point. A compelling topic sentence makes the reader read more. It may or may not be in the beginning of a paragraph, although it ordinarily comes from there. As a unit, the paragraph must not contain sentences that can demolish its unity. Any unrelated sentence should be taken out and perhaps be put in other paragraphs. The supporting sentence/s, as the name implies, must support the central idea expressed in the topic sentence; and the conclusion sentence, should be based on the topic and supporting sentences. In other words, ALL sentences in a paragraph must be closely related to each other, pointing to the main idea; and should be concisely built. Any unconnected sentence can cause logical absurdities that distract the reader and may cause him/her to cease from reading.

Consider this united introductory paragraph from an article written by Jeffrey Pascua entitled A Secret to Success, published December 7, 2008 on the Philippine Panorama. Most people, understandably so, are afraid to fail. In whatever endeavor they get themselves into, they would love to think of

nothing else but to attain success. Failing may mean not giving your best shot. It may also mean having to suffer from painful consequences and enduring embarrassing moments. Also, to fail could translate to having to accept mistakes and finding ways to rectify them, a task most difficult to accept to those who don't have bravest of hearts. The topic sentence is the first sentence. The main idea is about failure. Supporting and concluding sentences are also about failure. Hence, the paragraph is united. 2.

Development

An effective paragraph is not just unified, it must also be well-developed. It leaves no room for doubts in the reader's mind—every possible question is answered and every potential opposition is addressed. And to attain this, the writer should have a working plan of developing the central idea of the given topic sentence. The plan should stick firmly to the central idea. There are 3 easy ways of developing a paragraph.

- A paragraph may be developed by giving details or examples. A well-developed paragraph provides details for the readers. It must offer sufficient explanations on how the writer ended up with the conclusion. It may also answer the WH-questions a learned reader might ask. Details and examples reduce the ambiguity of the topic sentence, if there is; and make the topic sentence it easier to understand.

Compare these two paragraphs with the same topic sentence: Every member of my family loves to watch movies. (1)Every member of my family loves to watch movies. My father and my brother are inclined to action movies. My sister likes horror movies. My mother wants dramas. (2)Every

member of my family loves to watch movies. My father Rudy, my brother Kier and I are inclined to action movies of Jason Statham, Dolph Lundgreen, Tom Cruise, Jean Claude Van Damme, John Travolta, Sylvester Stallone and many more. My sister Danica, likes horror movies. She loves Japanese, Thai and Taiwanese horror films while my mother Erlinda wants dramas. She loves Filipino drama films, especially the ones which are produced by the Regal Films. We are a family of movie-watchers. Notice how the addition of details and examples augments and develops the paragraph. •A paragraph may be developed by giving reasons.

A well-developed paragraph may contain reasons, especially when a topic is a debatable one. It provides proofs, logical arguments, historical accounts, and statistical data as reasons.

Here's an example of a paragraph developed by giving reasons.

If you enter the primary, then if you can campaign vigorously, then you win the nomination. If you win the nomination and receive the support the party of the regulars, then you will be elected. If you take the party platform seriously, then you will receive the support of the party regulars but will not be elected. Therefore, if you enter the primary, then if you campaign vigorously, then you do not take the party seriously. (Irving Copi, Symbolic Logic, 5th Edition, p. 47)

Notice how the author lays down the argument to develop the paragraph.

•A paragraph may be developed using a right pattern.

The pattern may differ depending on the main idea being discussed and on the purpose of the writer. It may be in a form of a narrative, descriptive,

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procedural, cause and effect, comparison and contrast or definition. It is not necessary that all throughout the composition the writer should use only one pattern. As a matter of fact, a more effective composition is a combination of two or more patterns.

Here's an example of a paragraph with narrative pattern.

Unfortunately, he failed it. Although he was far above average in Mathematics and Science, he did not know enough Latin and Greek. Because of that, the young Einstein was forced to enroll in a lesser-known school and had to spend a year there before earning a diploma which enabled him to finally enter the Federal Polytechnic School without taking an entrance examination. Einstein finished his college education there and became one of the great thinkers who ever lived. (A Secret to Success by Jeffrey Pascua)

3. Coherence

Coherence refers to the natural and smooth flow of ideas composing the paragraph. A coherent paragraph doesn't just have supporting sentences that reinforces the main idea, but also, those sentences “stick” to each other to make sense. •Proper logical arrangement of details—chronologically, spatially and according to importance—is one of the best ways to achieve coherence. Chronological arrangement is the presentation of the order in which events occur or occurred in time. Spatial arrangement is the presentation of sentences according to their position in relation to each other. If time and position and relation are not involved, the order of sentences must be according to the importance details they provide. The order may be from the least important to the most important, or vice versa.

•The use of transitional devices makes a paragraph read smoothly, and thus,

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coherent. They connect words or phrases to show relationship between ideas and details to examples, and sentences to other sentences. In other words, transitional devices function as “ bridges” in the paragraph. A transitional device is not required in every sentence. There are times that it is not proper to use them. •The use of direct references or pronouns also guarantees coherence. Now that you know what an effective paragraph is, you can already produce an effective composition.

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