

Boost Free Lessons - Year 7 English

Lesson 10: Paragraph Structure

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Worked Example 1

Identify the topic sentence and the supporting detail.

Cycling to school has clear benefits. Students who ride arrive more alert than those who travel by car. Regular riding also builds fitness without needing extra time for exercise.

1. The **topic sentence** states what the paragraph is about, and usually comes first.
2. Here it is the opening sentence: cycling to school has clear benefits.
3. The remaining sentences are **supporting detail**, giving reasons and evidence.
4. Every sentence in a paragraph should connect back to the topic sentence.

Topic sentence: *Cycling to school has clear benefits. The other two sentences support it.*

Worked Example 2

Which sentence does not belong, and why?

Libraries do more than lend books. They offer free internet access, run homework clubs, and provide a quiet place to study. My local library is painted blue.

1. Find the topic sentence first: libraries do more than lend books.
2. Check each remaining sentence against it. Internet access, homework clubs and study space all fit.
3. The colour of the building has nothing to do with what libraries offer.
4. A paragraph needs **unity**: every sentence must relate to the one idea.

The last sentence does not belong, because the colour of the building is unrelated to what libraries offer.

Remember: Every paragraph needs a **topic sentence** stating one idea, **supporting detail** that develops it, and **unity**, meaning every sentence relates to that idea. Start a new paragraph for a new idea.



Question 1: Answer each question briefly.

1. What is a topic sentence?

2. Where in a paragraph does it usually appear?

3. What is meant by paragraph unity?

4. Roughly when should you start a new paragraph?

5. What does a concluding sentence do?

6. Name one linking word that adds a similar idea.



Question 2: Read the passage below, then answer the questions.

Australia's deserts are far from empty. More than six hundred plant species grow in the Simpson alone, and many animals shelter underground through the heat of the day, emerging only after dark. Deserts are also found in Africa and Asia.

1. Write out the topic sentence of the passage.

2. Name two pieces of supporting detail.

3. Which sentence breaks the unity of the paragraph?

4. Write a suitable concluding sentence for the paragraph.

5. Where should a new paragraph begin in this passage? Explain.



Question 3: Answer the following questions.

1. Write a paragraph of four sentences about school uniforms, beginning with a topic sentence.

2. Explain why a paragraph with no topic sentence is hard to follow.

3. Explain the difference between a topic sentence and a concluding sentence.





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Answers and Model Responses: Paragraph Structure**Question 1**

1. A sentence that states the main idea of the paragraph.
2. Usually first, though it can appear last.
3. Every sentence in the paragraph relates to the same single idea.
4. When you move to a new idea, a new time, a new place or a new speaker.
5. It sums up the idea or links forward to the next paragraph.
6. Model response: also, furthermore, in addition.

Question 2

1. *Australia's deserts are far from empty.*
2. Model response: more than six hundred plant species grow there; many animals shelter underground by day.
3. *Deserts are also found in Africa and Asia.* It moves away from Australia entirely.
4. Model response: Far from being lifeless, these deserts support a rich and well adapted community.
5. At the sentence about other continents, because that starts a new idea about deserts elsewhere in the world.

Question 3

1. Model response: School uniforms remove a daily source of pressure. Students do not have to decide what to wear or worry about being judged for it. Families also spend less over a year than they would on everyday clothes. For both reasons, uniforms make school mornings simpler.
2. The reader has to work out the main idea for themselves, and the detail feels like a list of unconnected facts.
3. A topic sentence introduces the main idea at the start. A concluding sentence closes the paragraph by summing up that idea or linking to the next one.

