

CHARACTERISTICS OF A PARAGRAPH:

1. A paragraph develops just ONE idea
2. Every sentence in a paragraph says just one thing about the topic of the paragraph.
3. The first line of every paragraph is indented.
4. A paragraph's length will vary. It should only be long enough to make its topic clear to the reader.

TOPIC SENTENCE - states in general terms the MAIN IDEA of the paragraph. The remaining sentences explain, discuss, or illustrate the main idea stated in the topic sentence. The topic sentence usually is the first sentence of the paragraph, but it may appear in the middle or the end. A paragraph doesn't always have a topic sentence. Nevertheless, it still must express one central idea.

ESSENTIALS OF A GOOD PARAGRAPH:

1. A good paragraph is *adequately developed*. Thus, you must tell enough about the main idea to make it clear to the reader.
2. A good paragraph has *unity*. All the sentences in the paragraph focus on the topic.
3. A good paragraph has *coherence*. The sentences in the paragraph are arranged in a logical order. Also, all the sentences are linked together using appropriate transitions so that the reader can follow the thoughts as they move from one sentence to another.

PURPOSE OF AN OUTLINE:

1. It tells you what to write
2. It sets out the order in which your thoughts should be written.
3. It tells you how to paragraph your composition.
4. It helps you stick to the subject of the composition from the beginning to the end.

TOPIC OUTLINE - the ideas are noted in brief phrases or words. No punctuation is needed in a topic outline.

- I. The family today
 - A. Size & composition of typical family
 - B. Mobility
 - C. Husband / Wife relationship
 - D. Children
 1. Position of children in family structure
 2. Responsibility for raising children
 3. Adult children - position & responsibilities
 - E. Position & duties of elderly relatives
- II. Changes in patterns of family life
 - A. Causes
 - B. Effects