



How to Write Paragraphs

Paragraphs and their contents are so important that your paper or essay can't exist without them. But what is the purpose of existence when there is no reason for being? This question can be applied directly to paragraphs. What must a paragraph do to meet expectations? The contents of your body paragraphs, specifically, are more responsible for the success of your essay than nearly any other aspect of the assignment.

What should a paragraph be?

While this may seem like quite the philosophical question, the answer is quite simple. A paragraph should be 3 things: supportive, strong, and coherent. Lacking in any of these three things will cause your paragraph to fall short of being effective.

Supportive

Think of your essay as consisting of two parts. First, you have your thesis; second, your body paragraphs. This is the simplest breakdown of an essay, and you can see that these two parts are dependent on one another. Without a thesis, the paragraphs have no reason to exist. Without the paragraphs, the thesis seems useless. So, your paragraphs must first be supportive. You have used your thesis to claim a stance on a subject. Now, you must use the paragraphs to support your thesis (proof, if you will).

Strong

In being supportive, a paragraph must support with reasonable facts and research. If you claimed to have found a cure for cancer, and you used a research study conducted in a third-world country, then you may not find convincing your reader to be an easy task, and the reason is because your support was weak. On the other hand, if you choose a research study that had been conducted in a first world country (more than once), and the statistics and information was factually documented, then you will find your supporting evidence to be strong and your reader more likely to believe you.

Coherent

However strong or supportive your paragraph may already be, it means nothing if it is not coherent. If your reader can't understand what you are trying to say, then your words will essentially be meaningless. Here is an example: Why not go to the Writing Center your paper needs work work on this until you understand it's important. This doesn't really make any sense because it isn't coherent. You might write a sentence and understand what it means, but would others know what it means? Your job is to make sure the words on the paper make sense to everyone; accessibility is key. Here is the same sentence written coherently: Why not go to the Writing Center? Your paper needs work; work on this until you understand. It's important. Punctuation might not always be the problem; you should make sure you are using the right words and conveying your message effectively.