

# **The Structure of a Paragraph**

**1- Definition of a paragraph**

**2- Parts of a paragraph**

**3- The topic sentence**

# 1- Paragraph : Definition

- ▶ A paragraph is a group of sentences about a single topic.
- ▶ The sentences explain the writer's **main idea**.
- ▶ Number of sentences is ( About 5 - 10)
- ▶ Sentence 1 is **indented**.

# Complete Sentences

- ❖ A sentence is a **group** of words that expresses a **complete thought**.
- ❖ “Complete thought” **does not** mean a specific number of words: A sentence can be short or long:
- ❖ Shortest Sentence = Two Words
- ❖ Long sentence = Too many words
- ❖ Sentence Parts : **Subject** + **Predicate**
- ❖ **Subject** = **What we talk about**
- ❖ **Predicate** = **What we say about the subject**

# Switzerland — Something Interesting at Every Turn

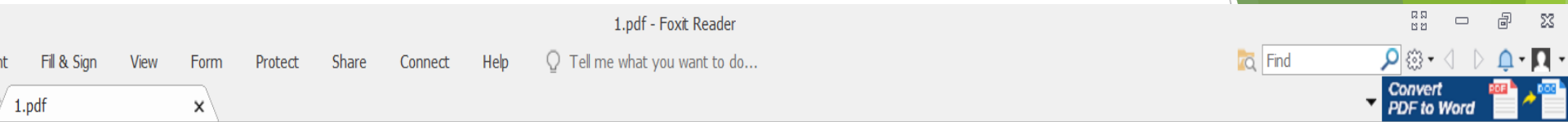
*By Ken Jones*

If you dream of travelling to a country with beautiful mountains, delicious food, wonderful places to go sight-seeing and polite people, you should visit Switzerland. If you look at the map, the first thing you notice is that



Switzerland has many mountains, including some of the highest in Europe. Climbing or skiing down the mountains is great fun. Another thing you will notice is that Switzerland shares its borders with five different countries: France, Germany, Italy, Austria and Liechtenstein. In fact, there are four official languages in Switzerland: German, French, Italian and Romansch. All these groups of people make Swiss culture very interesting. Finally, Switzerland has many cities and interesting places to visit. Cities such as Bern have modern buildings like the Paul Klee Zentrum, yet the traditional alpine refuges in the mountains show that the country's old traditions are still alive. All the people, places and things to see definitely make Switzerland a great place for a holiday.

# Ex. 2



## THE STRUCTURE OF A PARAGRAPH 11

a. What is the topic of the paragraph?

.....

b. What is the main idea about the topic?

.....

c. What ideas help explain the main idea?

.....

.....

2

▶ Answer the question

▶ a) Dream of Traveling

▶ b) The main idea is that Switzerland is one of the best places for traveling.

▶ c) Ideas about the beauty of this country, ideas about different languages is spoken in Switzerland.

▶

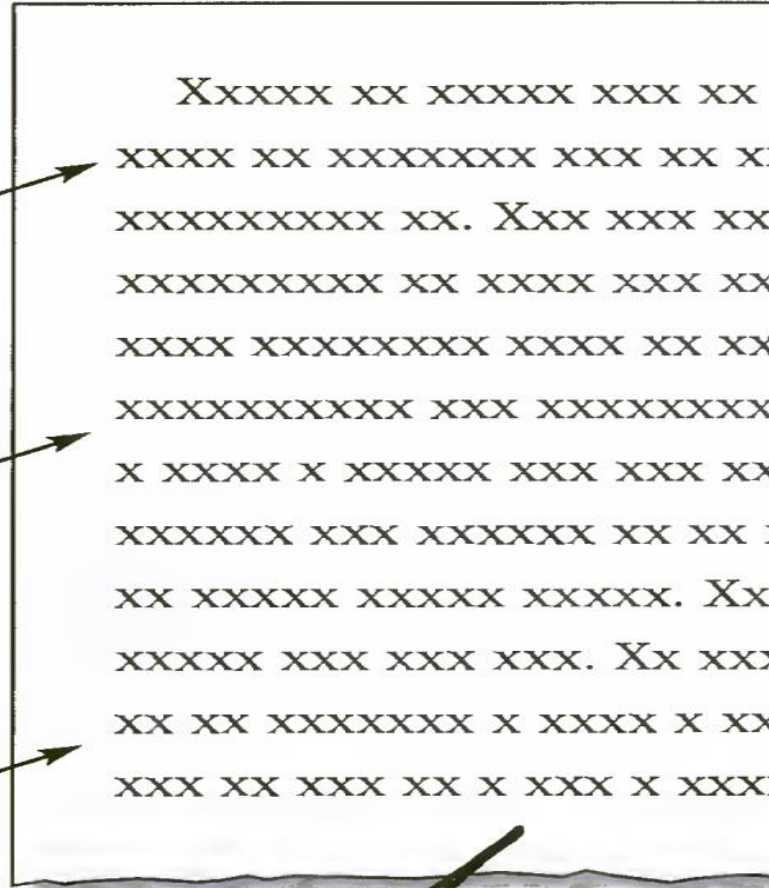
# Paragraph Organisation

- ▶ Paragraph Types: according to structure
- ▶ Independent = self-sufficient (whole text)
- ▶ Dependent Paragraph= part of a bigger text (essay, article, etc,)
- ▶ Parts of Independent Paragraph:
  - ▶ 1- Topic sentence
  - ▶ 2- Support sentences
    - ▶ a- Major support sentences
    - ▶ b- Minor support sentences
  - ▶ 3- Concluding sentence

# Paragraph Organisation

A paragraph has three basic parts:

- 1. The topic sentence.** This is the main idea of the paragraph. It is usually the first sentence of the paragraph, and it is the most general sentence of the paragraph.
- 2. The supporting sentences.** These are sentences that talk about or explain the topic sentence. They are more detailed ideas that follow the topic sentence.
- 3. The concluding sentence.** This may be found as the last sentence of a paragraph. It can finish a paragraph by repeating the main idea or just giving a final comment about the topic.





▶ Ex. 2

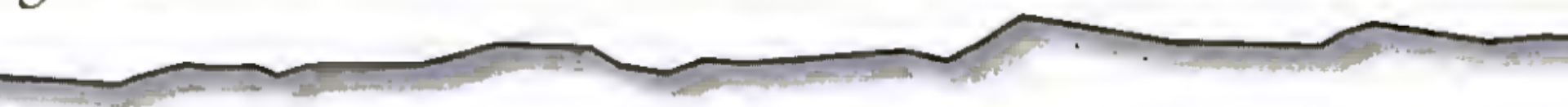
▶ Topic sentence- If you dream of travelling....

▶ Supporting sentences- If you look at the map....

▶ Concluding sentence- All the places, people and things....

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friend has many different hobbies, such as skiing, cooking, and playing the piano. She is very good at all of these activities. For example, she has played the piano for ten years and has won three piano competitions. She also likes to travel and she has been to many different countries in the world. She grew up speaking Spanish and English, but now she can also speak French and Italian very much.



in literature are useful no matter what job you intend to pursue. Books are about life. People who study literature learn carefully and understanding characters, situations, and relationships. This understanding can be useful to teachers and business people. Writing classes also require a lot of writing, so they help students improve their communication. Of course, a professional writer needs to be able to write, but reading is an equally important skill for an engineer. Finally, reading helps you develop an understanding of many different points of view. Reading a book by a Russian author, for example, will help a reader learn more about Russian culture. Engineers whose job may bring them into contact with Russian colleagues can benefit from this help encourage better cross-cultural understanding. Studying literature is about studying life, so it is relevant to almost any job you can imagine.

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*A good way to learn another language is to live in a country where that language is spoken. When you live in another country, the language is around you all the time, so you learn to listen to and speak it more easily.*



THE STRUCTURE OF A PARAGRAPH

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▶ Ex.3

- ▶ A. Not Good paragraph ( More than one Topic)
- ▶ B. Good paragraph
- ▶ C. Not good paragraph (There are few information, there aren't supporting sentences)

## Ex.4

4 Circle the topic of the sentence. Underline the main idea about the topic.

a. (Switzerland) is a very interesting country to visit.

b. (Dogs) make excellent pets.

c. A really good (place to study) is the library at my school.

d. Learning a (foreign language) creates job opportunities.

e. (Football) is my favourite sport because it is exciting to watch.

f. One of the most (valuable tools) for students is the computer.

g. (My sister and I) have very different personalities.

h. (Summer) is the best time to travel in my country.

i. (My hometown) is a friendly place to live.

5 For each of these paragraphs, choose the sentence from the list below that would make the best topic sentence.

a.

.....  
..... When Ken wanted to enter a good university, he studied hard to pass the examination. The first time he took the exam, he did not do well, and he felt very discouraged. But he knew he wanted to study at that university, so he studied more. The next year, he tried taking the exam again. The second time, he did very well, and now he is studying engineering. I believe Ken is a good role model for me, and he has taught me that never giving up is the best way to succeed.



1. One of my closest friends, named Ken, is a person I can trust.
2. My friend Ken is a very successful student.
3. I admire my friend Ken because he doesn't give up.

b.

..... Many children begin learning to play football when they are very young. You can often see them playing at school or in the streets around their houses. At secondary school, students may play football in a team and compete in championships. If a player is very good, he might go on to play for a professional team. People in my country love watching football on television and also go to matches whenever they can. Many people have a favourite team or player, and everyone loves to talk about matches and competitions. Football is really like a national sport in my country.



1. I love playing football, and I hope I can become a professional player one day.
- 2. There are many popular sports in my country, but the most popular sport is football.
3. Football is a difficult sport to learn to play well.



**6 Write a topic sentence for three of these topics.**

- a. a favourite place to relax
- b. a grandparent
- c. a pet I have known
- d. a favourite food to eat
- e. playing a musical instrument

topic: .....

.....  
.....

topic: .....

.....  
.....

topic: .....

.....  
.....

Ex. 6

A. There are many places to relax, but the beach is the best for me

B. I have never thought of becoming a grandparent.

C. I have always liked to have a pet.

D. Falafel will always be my favourite fast food meal

E. Playing a guitar has been my childhood dream.

## Review

- 7 These sentences are mixed up parts of one paragraph. Number the parts in order: 1. topic sentence, 2. supporting sentences, and 3. concluding sentence.

*What should I study at university?*

- a. .... *It wasn't an easy decision, but for the reasons listed above, I have decided to study journalism.*
- b. .... *It can be difficult to choose a subject to study at university because there are so many choices, but by considering my skills and interests, I have decided to study journalism.*
- c. .... *I have always enjoyed writing, so it is sensible to choose a subject that involves writing. When I begin working, I would like to have the opportunity to travel, and travel is often an important part of a journalist's job. Finally, I am also interested in photography, and pictures are very important in journalism.*

## Ex.7

a. concluding sentence

b. topic sentence

c. supporting sentence

**8** Use words or phrases in the box to complete the sentences.

concluding sentence    indented    main idea    paragraph  
supporting sentences    topic    topic sentence

- a. The ..... is usually the first sentence in a ..... . It gives the ..... and the .....
- b. The first sentence of a paragraph can be .....
- c. The ..... come after the topic sentence, and they explain the topic sentence.
- d. The ..... comes at the end of a paragraph.

## Ex.8

a. topic sentence/paragraph.

Topic/main idea

b. intended

c. supporting sentences

d. concluding sentence