



Academic Writing

from paragraph to essay

Unit 3

Paragraph Development

1- Methods of development

2- Concluding sentences

3- Peer Editing

*Development: how we **clarify** the Main Idea*

- How to develop a paragraph?
- Three common ways:
 - 1-Giving **Details**
 - 2- Giving an **Explanation**
 - 3- Giving an **Example**

Look at the following example

You'll love working out at the Atlas Health Centre, and you'll love what it does for you! We have state-of-the-art exercise equipment in large, air-conditioned rooms. You can work alone or with the help of one of our professional personal trainers. If you like exercising with friends, join an aerobics or swimming class- or even try kickboxing! Our staff nutrition experts are always on hand to talk with you about health issues. When you've finished, you can relax with a whirlpool bath or a sauna. **Come and exercise with us at Atlas, and you'll soon be feeling strong and looking good.**

You'll love working out at the Atlas Health Centre, and you'll love what it does for you! We have state-of-the-art exercise equipment in large, air-conditioned rooms. You can work alone or with the help of one of our professional personal trainers. If you like exercising with friends, join an aerobics or swimming class- or even try kickboxing! Our staff nutrition experts are always on hand to talk with you about health issues. When you've finished, you can relax with a whirlpool bath or a sauna. Come and exercise with us at Atlas, and you'll soon be feeling strong and looking good.

Explanation

- It is another way to develop a paragraph
- It tells the reader *what something means* or *how something works*.
- *Underline the topic sentence of the following paragraph. Then answer the questions:*

‘A stitch in time saves nine.’ My mother, who likes sewing used this simple saying to teach me the value of working on problems when they are still small. Originally, the saying referred to sewing – if you have a small hole in a shirt, you can repair it with one stitch. But if you wait, the hole will get larger, and it will take you nine stitches. This simple sentence reminds me to take care of small problems before they become big problems.

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A- What is the writer trying to explain?

B- Is she successful? Do you understand the explanation? Yes/no

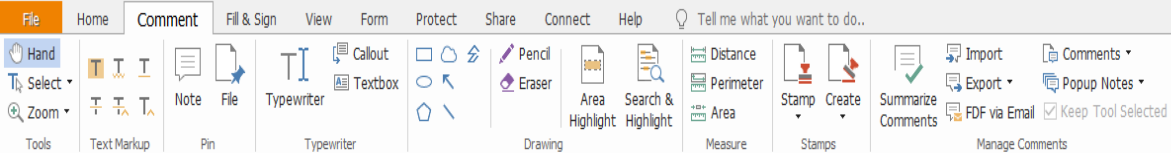
A- She is trying to tell us to solve small problems before they get larger and larger.

B. Yes, she is. I understand the explanation.

Example

An example is a specific person, place, thing or event that supports an idea or statement.

The following paragraph includes an example from the writer's own experience. Underline the topic sentence.



Even when a first date is a disaster, a couple can still become good friends. For example, my first date with Greg was terrible. I thought he was coming to pick me up at 6.30, but instead he came at 6.00. I didn't have time to do my hair, and my make-up looked messy. When I got into his car, I scraped my leg against the car door and tore my tights. Next, he took me to an Italian restaurant for dinner, and I accidentally dropped some spaghetti on my shirt. Then we went to a film. Greg asked me which film I wanted to see, and I chose a romantic comedy. He fell asleep during the film, and I got angry. Now that Greg and I are good friends, we can look back and laugh at how terrible that first date was!

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5- Why do you think the writer chose an example to develop the paragraph in exercise 4 above?

Write your reason here , end then compare with a partner.

First because the explanation is not a suitable strategy since everybody knows what the phrase ‘first date‘ means, and second because the date is a real activity and it would be better to use your own examples, especially if they are funny and interesting.

Choosing a means of support

6 Would you develop each of these topics with details, an explanation, or an example?

Explain your choices to a partner. (More than one answer is possible.)

- a. what freedom means to me
- b. an unusual holiday
- c. weddings in my country
- d. why I don't like swimming
- e. the ideal job

7 Develop your own paragraph. Look back at the topic sentences you wrote in Unit 2, exercise 6 on page 15. Follow these steps.

a.

Freedom is one of the best things people have. To be free means to do what you want and like, to go where you want, live where you want and communicate with everyone you want. People can do things they like and nobody can impose on them what to do and what no to do. They go wherever they like whenever they like.

b.

An unusual holiday for me is Halloween. It is such a curious and strange holiday as it has some interesting details. Halloween is the holiday of vampires, witches, ghosts and other evil spirits. This unusual holiday charms by its traditions and customs, which have gone through many centuries and come down to us. Typical Halloween activities include trick-or-treating (or the related "guising"), attending costume parties, decorating, carving pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns, lighting bonfires, apple bobbing, visiting haunted attractions, playing pranks, telling scary stories and watching horror films.

C.

The Wedding ceremony is so wonderful, rich and bright event in my country. Kazakh people are very generous. They spend a lot of money to celebrate this day at a high level. They start planning their weddings a year before. They plan everything: starting from ceremony in registry, suits for bride and groom, decoration flowers for cars and finishing with making a list of invited guests.

d.

I don't like swimming. I had a terrible accident related to it when I was a little girl. I was walking by the river side near my uncle's house when I suddenly slipped into the deep river. I did not know how to swim well, so I started shouting and I was really scared. Ever since that day, I never liked water.

e.

I would describe the ideal job as a job that makes the most of my qualifications and abilities, and gives me a chance to constantly challenge myself. I look for a stable job with quality supervision, a positive work at a successful company that will encourage me to work at my best.

LECTURE 3, PART 2

9:

IS THE MAIN IDEA DEVELOPED BY
DETAILS, AN EXPLANATION, OR AN
EXAMPLE?

IS THERE A CONCLUDING SENTENCE?

Even simple *habits* can improve your marks. At university I learned how important it is to get enough sleep. When you are well-rested, it is easier to learn. Research shows that when people don't get enough sleep, their memories aren't as effective. If students are really tired, they might even fall asleep in class! It is easy to see how getting enough sleep can improve your performance at university

Means of support is **EXAMPLE**
(sleeping is one of the habits)

The concluding sentence
restates the topic sentence

My favourite subject is Psychology. I enjoy learning about ways people think and interested behave. I am also in learning about the way children's minds develop.

Means of support is **DETAILS**

-No concluding sentence is found

-A possible concluding sentence :

Psychology will remain an interesting topic for me to study.

I am too nervous to sing karaoke songs with my friends. The last time I tried was on my birthday, when my friends took me to karaoke club. I told my friends I didn't want to sing, but they encouraged me until I said yes. When I stood up in front of the microphone, I was so scared, I felt dizzy. It was hard to hear the music, and my mouth was too dry to make a sound. I just stood there until a friend jumped up next to me and finished the song.

Means of support: an **example** (The Birthday accident)

No concluding sentence

A possible C.S.: I will never sing karaoke songs again!

I will never eat dinner at The Little French Bistro again. The restaurant is not very clean. You can see dust in the corners and on the shelves. The food is expensive , but the portions are small. I never feel full after I've finished eating. In addition, the waiters are not very friendly. **For these reasons, I will never visit this restaurant again.**

Means of support is **details**.

Concluding sentence **sums up** the details and **restates** the main idea at the same time.

For me, a friend is someone who accepts you the way you are. A friend doesn't want you to change your personality or your style. I like people who don't care if the people they are with are wearing popular clothes or listening to trendy music.

Means of support is **explanation**

No concluding sentence

A possible C.S.: Anyone who accepts me as I am is a good friend for me.
(restatement of the topic sentence)

Other Examples

The skill of structuring paragraphs and building effective connections between them is one that will allow you to develop and sustain a compelling argument in your written work. By setting out your ideas and evidence with a natural flow, you will make your work much more readable. This important technique will help you work towards higher levels of attainment in assignments and help to improve the quality of your everyday writing. Flow and connectivity allow the reader to follow the thread of the argument from one sentence to the next and from one paragraph to the next.

If you are thinking of buying a laptop, try to buy one with an SSD. The acronym means solid state drive. This kind of processor is much more efficient than the older HDD. It does not have mechanical parts, which are the ones that usually break down in the older processors. This gives it a longer life span. Furthermore, it tolerates higher temperatures and can function for longer periods without any of the HDD common problems. For these reasons, it is the best option to buy.

Peer Editing

3

Peer editing

What is peer editing?

Showing your work to another student is a very useful way to improve your writing. This is called *peer editing*. You read your partner's writing and your partner reads yours. You comment on your partner's writing and your partner comments on yours. You might talk together, write comments on a sheet that your instructor gives you, or write directly on your partner's work.

Here is the first draft of the paragraph about the writer's first date with Greg. The writer has shown the paragraph to another student, who wrote some comments.

Example of Peer Editing

Topic sentence

Even when a first date is a disaster, a couple can still

Developed by example

become good friends. For example, my first date with

Can you make this stronger?

Greg wasn't very good. I thought he was coming to pick

When did he come?

me up at 6.30, but he didn't. When I got into his car,

Explain how you tore them.

Tell me more about this.

I tore my tights. Next, I accidentally got some spaghetti on

What kind of film? How did you feel about that?

my shirt. Then we went to a film. He fell asleep during the

Concluding sentence

film. Now that Greg and I are good friends, we can look

Good!

The same as the topic sentence

back and laugh because even when a first date is a

disaster, a couple can still become good friends.

10 Look at the handwritten comments on the paragraph above, and answer these questions with a partner.

- a. How many of the comments are statements? How many are questions?
- b. Why do you think the peer editor sometimes wrote questions instead of statements? For example, why did she write 'Can you make this stronger?' instead of 'Please make this stronger'?
- c. Why do you think the peer editor marked the topic sentence and the concluding sentence?
- d. Do you agree with the peer editor's comments?
- e. What do you think the writer will do next?
- f. Go back to exercise 4 on page 18 and read the paragraph about the date again. Did the writer use the reader's suggestions?

A- Seven comments are statements; four are questions.

B- Questions are softer and more polite; questions let the writer decide what to do.

C- to let the writer know that they could be easily identified.

D- The writer should read the comments, make some changes, and rewrite the paragraph.

E- Yes, the writer did use the suggestions.