

WRITING BODY PARAGRAPHS

Body Paragraphs support the claim (thesis statement) or main idea of an essay.

Effective body paragraphs have four features:

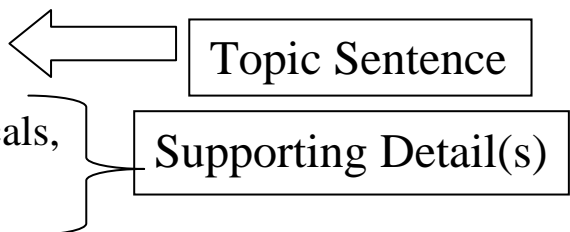
1. **Transitional Sentence/Clear Topic Sentence** — A topic sentence tells the reader what the paragraph is about. It develops a new but related idea of the central thought of the whole paper. An effective topic sentence should have a definite purpose or point of view and should be the first or second sentence of a paragraph.

2. **Strong Supporting Details** -- Because a topic sentence is seldom explicit enough by itself to fully convey the supporting point that a writer intends, strong supporting details are needed in every “body” paragraph. The evidence should inform and explain the topic sentence’s idea or opinion. Where the topic sentence is precise and straight-forward, support is detailed and clear.

EXAMPLE:

Benjamin Franklin accomplished many things in his eighty-four years.

Franklin gave to the world the stove, bifocals, and the lightning rod.



3. **Order** —Order is represented through a main idea that is both described in a concise topic sentence and developed via the supporting details. **The order of the supporting details should follow the order in which they are mentioned in the topic sentence of a paragraph.**

4. **Coherence** —Coherence is a technique of connecting ideas smoothly and logically. The writer leads the reader clearly and logically from one idea to another in developing thought.