

Paragraphs Level 2

Name: _____

Date: _____

How to Guide

Skills Check

Rate how confident you feel about the skills tested in this section:

Skill	Not a clue!	I know a little	I feel okay with this	I feel quite confident	I feel very confident
Structure a paragraph correctly					
Use the correct number of paragraphs					
Know when to start a new paragraph					
Know how to start a new paragraph					

When you have finished the booklet, use a different colour to mark your confidence levels again.

Paragraphs

Introduction

Paragraphs are a crucial element of any type of writing. There will be marks available for using paragraphs correctly in your texts. We recommend that you have completed the module on planning before this one.

Paragraph Structure

You may already be familiar with the PEE structure, which tells you how to structure your paragraph.

P

Make your **point**

E

Give **evidence** of your point

E

Explain what it means

If you follow that structure each time you write a paragraph, you will generally have a good piece of work. If you can conclude the paragraph with a sentence that brings it all together, you will have an excellent piece of work.

Example

I feel the council should provide more disabled car parking spaces. There are currently only 15 disabled spaces within the central car park and I feel this is not enough. Whenever I visit the town with my disabled niece, the spaces are always full. Last week we had to wait for twenty minutes for someone to leave so we could get a space. Disabled people have a right to access the shops and facilities in the town and the council should be doing all they can to ensure they can do this easily.

The first sentence makes the point. It's called the **topic sentence**.

From *There are* to *enough* is the evidence.

From *Whenever* to *space* is the explanation.

The final sentence brings the whole paragraph together.

Try it Out

Question 1

In this paragraph, one of the sentences does not belong.

Note in the box underneath which sentence does not belong.

The pineapple is a spiky-skinned, tropical, compound fruit with aromatic, sweet-sour juicy yellow flesh and a fibrous core. Miniature varieties have a tender, edible core. Pineapple flesh is eaten raw in salsas, desserts and sweet or savoury salads. Pineapple juice or purée is also good in exotic fruit drinks such as smoothies, especially those made with coconut water. It is also excellent cooked, especially griddled, fried or baked in cakes. Mango juice is another popular addition to recipes. Rum, cherry or orange liqueurs taste good with pineapple, as do citrus fruit and spices, including fresh chilli. It can be the basis of a number of interesting recipes.

Question 2

Read the paragraph below and then decide which of the four sentences underneath would be the best topic sentence to start the paragraph with.

There are no facilities in college for students to use to keep fit in their own time if they are not studying a sport course. It would be great to be able to book the tennis courts or football pitch in our spare time. Alternatively, an exercise hour could be on our timetables where we could choose what we wanted to do. We all know that exercise is important to our health, so I think the college should be doing more to help us stay healthy.

- a) The college should be providing us with healthy options.
- b) Students should have more access to keep fit options at college.
- c) The college should allow us to use the football pitches in our own time.
- d) Exercise is very important for our health.

Using the Correct Number of Paragraphs

There are no rules about the number of paragraphs you should use. However, a minimum of four paragraphs is recommended. If you only write one paragraph, you will lose some marks. There is no maximum length for a piece of writing in the exam, but we wouldn't suggest trying to write more than two sides of A4 as you will either be rushing or not being specific enough.

Plan to have an introduction and conclusion, which will be two short paragraphs. Sometimes you might combine your first point with the introduction.

You then want to make each new paragraph a clear point of its own. Try to plan about 5 or 6 points but you may not choose to use all of them as separate paragraphs.

Example

Read the following extract from a piece of writing. What issues with paragraphing do you think it has?

I am writing to complain about the planned roadworks on the main street through the centre of Denston.

Firstly, the roadworks will mean that nobody will be able to use the main street during rush hours. The traffic is already horrendous so where will everyone go when the road is closed?

Secondly, the diversions are all along residential streets. This will create a great deal of noise for residents.

Lorries will be driving down narrow streets along the diversion and may cause damage to the road and disrupt residents.

People will be forced to drive miles out of their way to get to work and school everyday. I will have to set off an hour earlier in the morning just to get to work on time.

Each paragraph makes a new point but there is not enough detail in each one. There are too many separate paragraphs where points could have been linked together. This shows a lack of planning as it looks as if the student has written whatever came into their head without considering how to link ideas together.

Try it Out

Question 3

a) Look back at the piece of writing on the previous page. Create a plan for the piece of writing that makes two clear points.

b) Now rewrite the information so that it has an introductory paragraph and two clear paragraphs afterwards. You may need to add in some additional details. You can make changes to the sentences that are already there to link them together.

Starting a New Paragraph

Each paragraph should be about one thing so one theme, one idea, one person, one event etc. You generally have one opening paragraph that introduces what you are writing about and one closing paragraph that summarises what you have said and comments on what you would like to happen next. The other paragraphs then contain the main points you want to make.

Try not to write about too many different things. Pick a few things to talk about in detail rather than just briefly listing a few ideas. It's important to plan your work so you know what you want to say before you start writing.

Try it Out

Question 4 – Split the text below into four clear paragraphs. Use \ to show a new paragraph.

Tick where you would start a new paragraph.

I am writing to complain about the service we received at your restaurant on Friday 3rd April 2020. We visited for a birthday meal for my sister and had a terrible experience. We had booked a table for seven people at eight pm and arrived just before eight. The waiter told us that there was no record of our booking and that the restaurant was full. We were understandably quite upset at this and insisted he looked again. After about five minutes of worry, he realised he had made a mistake and we were shown to a table. The waiter did not appear again until eight thirty to take our order. I understand the restaurant was busy but that is an unacceptable amount of time to wait. When the food did eventually arrive, one dish was missing, and my sister's lasagne was stone cold. We asked the waiter if it could be warmed up and he did take it back to the kitchen. It took a further fifteen minutes for the lasagne and the missing dish to arrive back at the table; the waiter did not apologise for the issues and was quite abrupt when he put the dishes down making us feel that it was our fault. At the time, I did not feel it was appropriate to complain to the manager as I did not want to further ruin my sister's birthday meal. However, I do not want anyone else to have the same experience and encourage you to look at your staff customer service training. I also feel that we should not have had to pay full price for the dishes that were late.

Knowing How to Start a New Paragraph

At level two, it is a good idea to plan interesting ways to start each new paragraph. This will help your work to flow and ensure the order is sensible.

Time words

Firstly,

Secondly,

First,

Finally,

Next,

These are easy ways of showing your points in order. You always put a comma after the time word.

Transition words

Additionally,

Furthermore,

Similarly,

However,

Again, the comma goes after the transition word.

Transition phrases

As well as x,

In addition to x,

Even though x,

Despite the fact that x,

Another reason for x,

In contrast,

If you consider x,

This time the comma goes after the initial phrase.

Concluding phrases

Overall,

In conclusion,

To conclude,

In summary,

To summarise,

It is a good idea to make your conclusion very obvious to the examiner by using a concluding phrase.

Always make sure your word or phrase is appropriate for the paragraph and flows from the paragraph before. For example, if you use *In contrast*, then the paragraph must be saying an opposite point from the paragraph before.

You don't use a transition word or phrase for your introduction.

Try it Out

Question 5

This text shows a piece of writing about a dream career. Add in paragraph openers where appropriate using some of the words from the list on the previous page or your own choice of words or phrases. You can change the opening sentences slightly to ensure they flow.

My dream career would be an astronaut because I love everything to do with space. I'm also very interested in technology and science and think that I have all the qualities an astronaut might need.

I've always loved space. I was given a telescope for my ninth birthday and I would spend hours looking at the moon and the stars. I memorised all the constellations and would ask for books on space whenever we went shopping. When I was younger, I used to make up stories about the moon and what it would be like to walk on its surface. It would be amazing to be up amongst the stars with nothing but space around you.

I have always been interested in science and I have always got high grades in school in physics and chemistry. As I love rockets and space travel, I really enjoyed experiments about speed and forces. I used to annoy my teachers by asking them lots of questions about space even when it wasn't relevant to the lesson! I'd love to find out all about the rockets and learn how to operate them.

I have other qualities that an astronaut would need. As I play basketball every week, I have a good level of fitness and my coach says I have very good stamina. I don't have any medical problems and definitely don't get travel sick, which would be terrible in space! I'm very good at following instructions and I joined the army cadets to help me become more disciplined.

I think that being an astronaut would be an amazing career. I realise that it would be difficult and there would be a lot of work and study, but I think it would be very rewarding. I love everything to do with space and I think I would make a great astronaut.