

Paragraph Writing



In this lesson you will: _____



- write an effective paragraph through the process of pre-writing, drafting, revising and editing



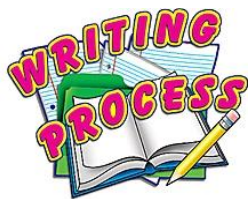
Introduction

A paragraph consists of four to eight sentences about a single topic. Usually, a paragraph begins with a **topic sentence** or a general sentence that introduces the topic and contains the main idea in the paragraph. The topic sentence tells the reader what the paragraph is going to be about. The topic sentence contains words that need to be explained, described, and supported in the sentences that follow in the paragraph. These words are called **supporting details** because they

Throughout your college and working career, you will occasionally need to write single paragraphs – for homework assignment, short essay answers, simple memo, and reports. However, learning to writing effective paragraphs is an important first step in learning to write an effective essay.

present details, facts, examples, and arguments that support the main idea. The sentence that ends the paragraph and summarizes the main idea of the paragraph is called the **concluding sentence**.

Writing is a process that involves at least four distinct steps:



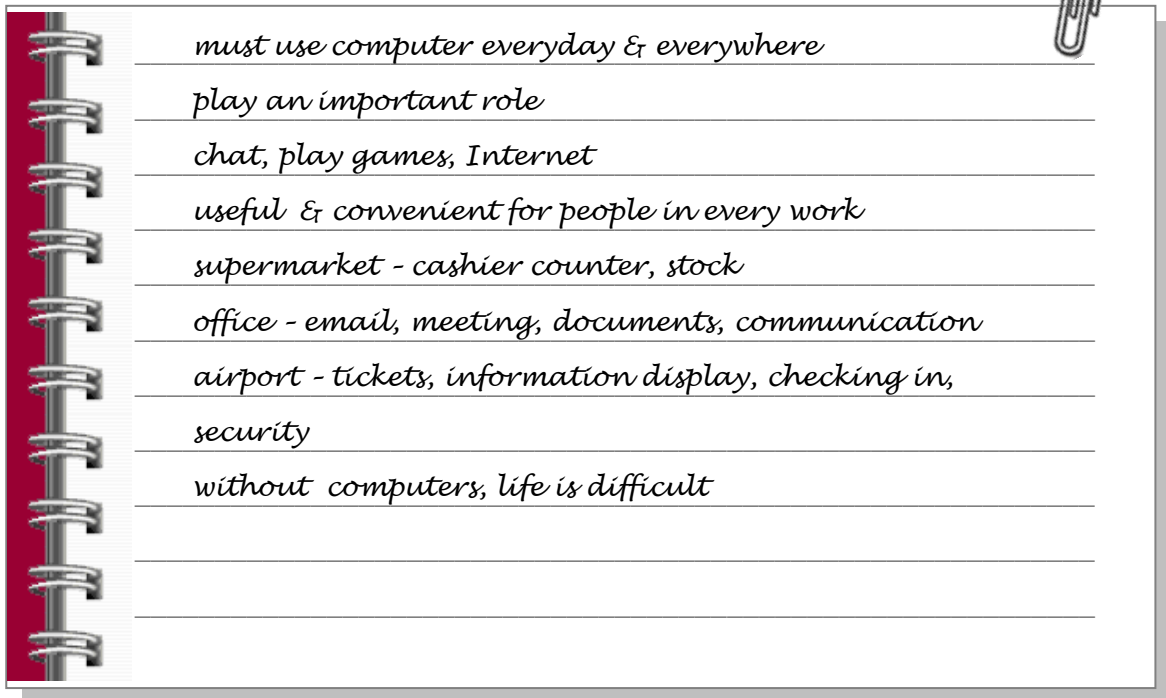
- Pre-Writing
- Drafting
- Revising
- Editing



Pre-Writing:

Pre-Writing is anything you do before you write a draft of your paragraph. It usually includes **generating ideas** (using one or more of these methods: brainstorming, clustering, and free writing) and **outlining**. In this step, don't worry about grammar, exact word choice, spelling, or punctuation, because you'll probably change our mind and your wording later.

Brainstorming: One way to capture your thought is by brainstorming, or listing thoughts as they come to you. Here is an example from a student who has been asked to describe how computers are used in our everyday lives:



must use computer everyday & everywhere

play an important role

chat, play games, Internet

useful & convenient for people in every work

supermarket - cashier counter, stock

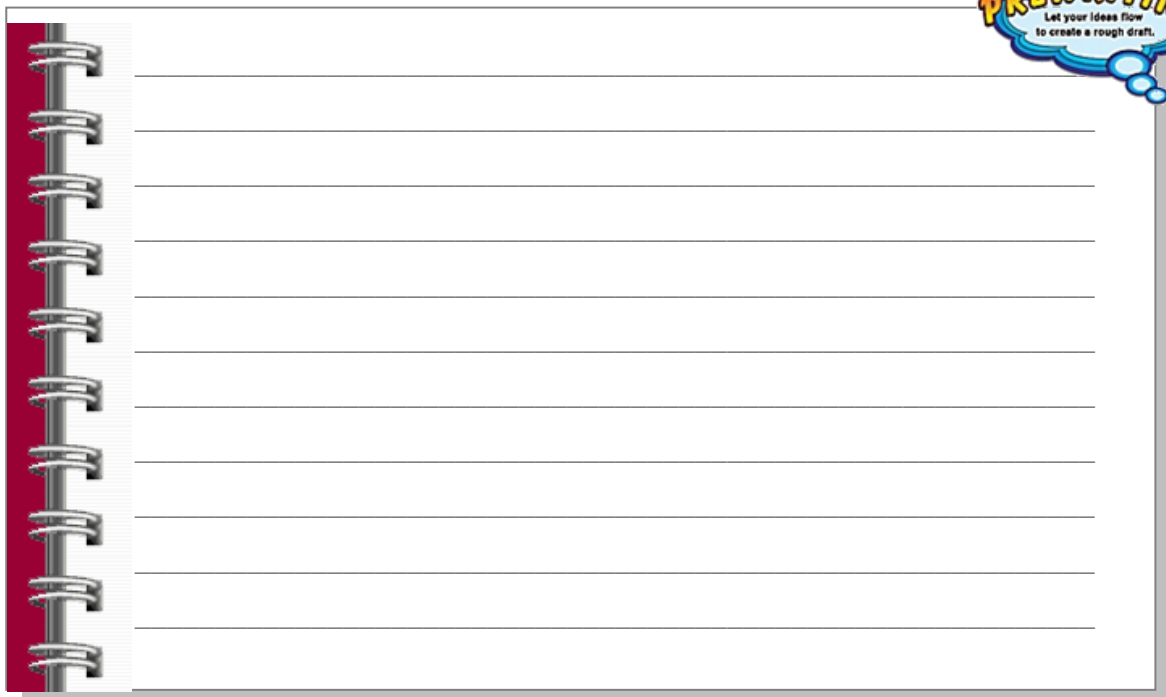
office - email, meeting, documents, communication

airport - tickets, information display, checking in, security

without computers, life is difficult

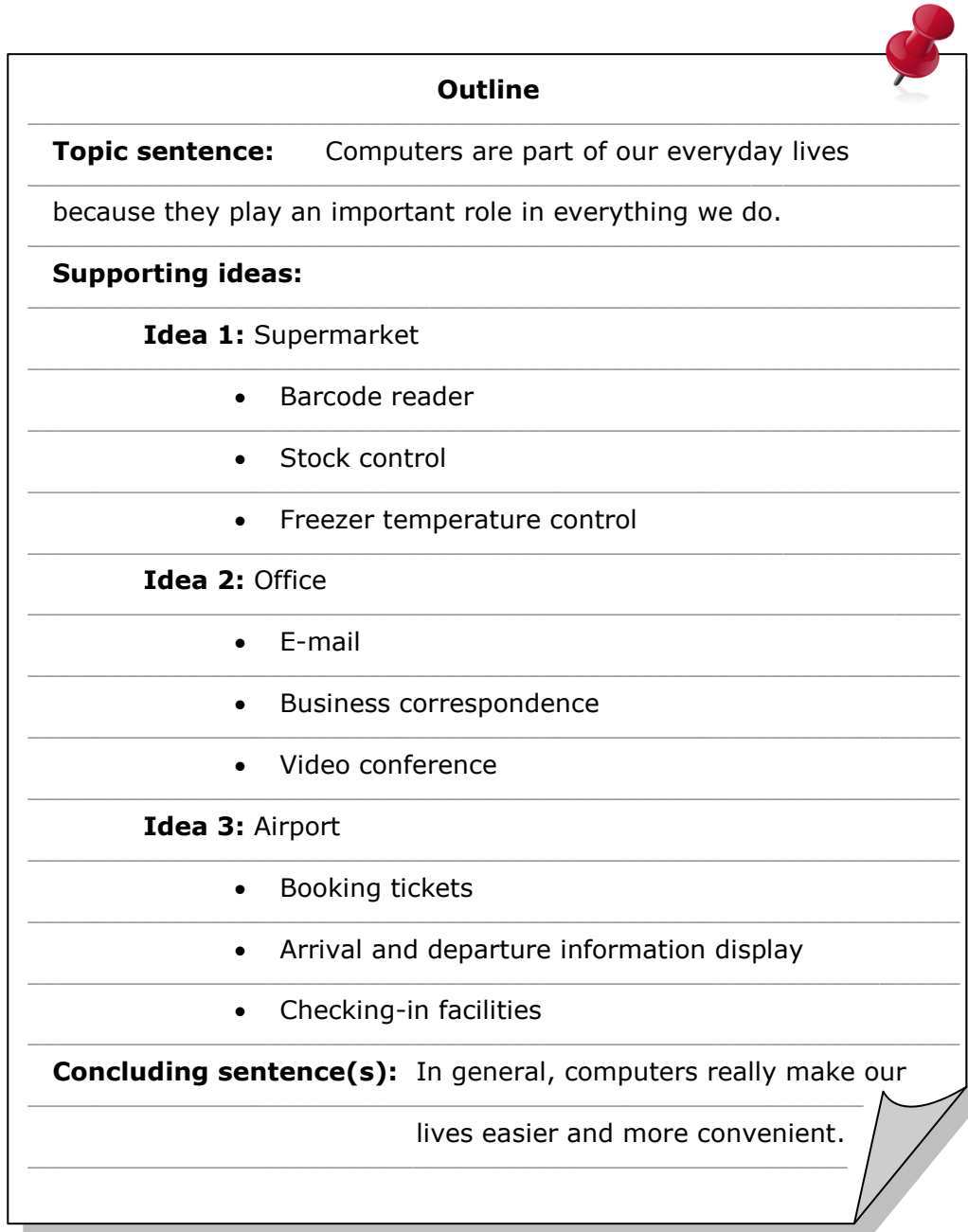
Practice -1:

Do a brainstorming list for a paragraph talking about a job you're responsible for at work.



PREWRITING
Let your ideas flow
to create a rough draft.

Outlining: After you've put your ideas into words, you can begin to select and organize them and make an outline. According to the list above, we can see that the three places are the main categories. So, the writer can include some supporting details under each category. The outline would look something like this.



Outline

Topic sentence: Computers are part of our everyday lives because they play an important role in everything we do.

Supporting ideas:

Idea 1: Supermarket

- Barcode reader
- Stock control
- Freezer temperature control

Idea 2: Office

- E-mail
- Business correspondence
- Video conference


Idea 3: Airport

- Booking tickets
- Arrival and departure information display
- Checking-in facilities

Concluding sentence(s): In general, computers really make our lives easier and more convenient.

Practice -2:

Return to the information you prepared in Practice-1, and then arrange the ideas in an outline. Remove the ideas and details that don't fit the outline. If some parts of the outline don't contain as much as details like other parts do, add some more details for those parts.

**Drafting:**

Drafting occurs when you put your ideas into sentences and paragraphs. While drafting, you have to begin to expand, connect, and arrange your ideas. At this point, don't worry about being perfect. New ideas will come to you later and you may discover a better arrangement of ideas. So write quickly to record your thoughts. Here is an example of the draft that develops from the outline.

Example:

Computers are part of our everyday lives because they play an important role in everything we do. In supermarket, cashiers use computers with laser and barcode technology to scan price. Buyers can use computers to keep record of items in the stock. And if buyers want to monitor and control freezer temperatures they just use computers. In office, we use computers to write emails and make business correspondence. And if the manager can't attend meeting he can meeting with employees by video conference. In airport, we can use computers to book tickets and when we are at airport we can see that computers can use for arrival and departure information display and checking-in facilities. In general, computers really make our life easier and more convenient.

Practice -3:

Write a draft based on the outlining you did in Practice-2.

A large, vertical spiral notebook with a silver metal spiral binding on the left side. The notebook is open to a blank page with horizontal ruling lines. The page is framed by a grey border.

Revising:

Revising means improving what you have already written. When you revise, you examine how well your first draft makes its point. This may require rearranging ideas, developing ideas further, cutting out ideas that don't support your point, and changing the wording of your sentences. Here's part of the draft on computer applications that the writer decided to revise. He added some specific details to make it more interesting.

Nowadays computers are part of our everyday lives because they play an important role in **almost** everything we do. **Computers help us in other ways besides downloading music, watching movies, and playing games. They also help people in every place such as supermarkets, offices, and airports.** In supermarkets, cashiers use computers with laser and barcode technology to scan prices. **Besides** buyers can xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Practice -4:

Review the draft you composed in Practice-3 one or more times. Make changes on the original version.



Editing:

After you've finished revising your work, you can edit it. You should check it carefully. Focus on word choices, verb forms, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure. Use your dictionary and any other reference materials you need. This draft should be near and should represent your best effort. Here is the edited final draft of the paragraph on computer applications:

Nowadays computers are part of our everyday lives because they play an important role in almost everything we do. Computers help us in other ways apart from downloading music, watching movies, and playing games. They also help people in every work situations including supermarkets, offices, and airports. In supermarkets, cashiers use computers with laser and barcode technology to identify items and scan prices. Besides, buyers can use computers to keep a record of items in stock so that they can manage it systematically. In addition, if they want to monitor and control their freezer temperatures they just use computers to do it automatically. For offices, we normally use computers to write emails and produce some business correspondence. If the manager can't attend a meeting, video conference technology makes it convenient for him to discuss and share ideas with his employees. In airports, we also use computers to book tickets, and provide ground services like arrival and departure information display, and checking-in facilities. In general, we can see that computers really make our life easier and more convenient.



Notice that this final draft is more interesting than the original. All of its content develops the main point. Its sentences are clear and it has plenty of details.

Writing Assignment

Look over your revised paragraph from Practice-4 carefully. Correct mistakes in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

