

Body Paragraph Structure

A body paragraph should have five main elements:

1. A Topic Sentence
2. Elaboration of the Point
3. Examples and Evidence to Support your Point
4. A Concluding Sentence
5. A Transition Between Paragraphs or Back to Your Thesis

1. Topic sentence

The topic sentence of a body paragraph should begin with your point. It should clearly state the topic of the paragraph and make a connection to the thesis. It can often act as a transition between the paragraph before it and the present paragraph. The topic sentence is usually at the beginning of the paragraph.

2. Elaboration of the point

The point you made in the topic sentence should be further discussed in this section. The writer must make the significance of the issue clear to the reader.

3. Support: examples and evidence

The point made in the topic sentence and elaboration sections should be followed up with a specific supportive example. Readers tend to remember examples more because they illustrate the point clearly. Evidence is also another form of support for your paragraph. This can include quotations or paraphrased passages with the proper documentation. When you use quotations or paraphrases, make sure to include an introduction to a quotation or paraphrase, the quotation/paraphrase, the citation for the sourced material, and an explanation of how the sourced material relates to your point. (This step should be repeated for each quotation/paraphrase).

4. Concluding sentence

This sentence should restate the main point as a way to conclude the paragraph. The reader is not as aware of the ideas as the writer is, so it is the responsibility of the writer to keep the reader on track by restating the main idea from the beginning of the paragraph at the end.

5. Transition

Transitions are important parts of the essay. They help to guide the reader through the paragraphs and the essay, in general, in order to better understand the points and the overall argument. A transition doesn't have to be a sentence or two. It can be a word, a phrase or even several sentences.

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