

CHAPTER THREE

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PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

- **A *paragraph*** is a group of related sentences that develops one main idea, which is the topic of the paragraph.
- **A *paragraph*** develops **ONE** main idea through a series of related sentences. This main idea is usually introduced in the first sentence of the paragraph, called ***the topic sentence***. The idea is then developed further through the sentences that follow.

PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

❖ *What are the Parts of a Paragraph?*

A paragraph has three parts

1. **Topic sentence:** The topic sentence tells what topic the paragraph is going to discuss.
2. **Supporting sentences:** The supporting sentences give details about the topic.
3. **A concluding sentence:** The concluding sentence summarizes the main points or restates the topic sentence in different words.

PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

- **The topic sentence:** The topic sentence is the most important sentence in a paragraph. It has two parts: a topic and a controlling idea.
- **The topic** names the subject of the paragraph.
- **The controlling idea** tells what the paragraph will say about the topic. It is called the controlling idea because it controls or limits the topic to a very specific point or points.

THE TOPIC SENTENCE

1a. ^{TOPIC} Some marriages ^{CONTROLLING IDEA} are a union of two families.

1b. ^{TOPIC} Some marriages ^{CONTROLLING IDEA} are a union of two individuals.

2a. ^{TOPIC} Some weddings ^{CONTROLLING IDEA} are very elaborate.

2b. ^{TOPIC} Some weddings ^{CONTROLLING IDEA} are very simple.

2c. ^{TOPIC} Some weddings ^{CONTROLLING IDEA} take place in unusual locations.

PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

- ***Supporting Sentences:*** Supporting sentences explain the topic by giving more information about it. Supporting point sentences list the main points of the paragraph.
- ***E.g.*** * Certainly, Hawaiian clothing, music, and other Hawaiian customs play a big role.
- * Other customs included in the festivities depend on the ethnic backgrounds of the couple.

PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

- ❑ **Examples:** Examples illustrate the supporting point sentences. Examples are good support because they are specific; they make your meaning very clear.
- ❑ **Notice** the signal phrases that can introduce examples. At the beginning of a sentence, use **For example** or **For instance**, followed by a **comma**. In front of an example that is just a word or phrase (not an entire sentence), use the prepositional phrase such as **without a comma**.

Signal Phrases for Examples

| Followed by a Comma | No Comma |
|--|------------|
| 1. For example, For instance, | 2. such as |
| <p>1. For example, the bride often wears a long white <i>holoku</i> (wedding dress), and the groom wears a long-sleeved white shirt and pants with a red sash around his waist.</p> <p>For instance, there may be noisy firecrackers, a Chinese way of keeping bad spirits away.</p> <p>2. The bride's <i>lei</i> is traditionally made of white flowers such as <i>pikake</i> (jasmine), and the groom's is made of green <i>maile</i> leaves.</p> | |

PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

- ***The Concluding Sentence:*** A concluding sentence signals the end of the paragraph and reminds the reader of the main idea.

- There are three **tips** to help you write a good concluding sentence:
 1. Begin with a conclusion signal. Most conclusion signals have commas after them; others do not.

Conclusion Signals

| Followed by a Comma | No Comma |
|--|--|
| <p>1. All in all, In brief, In conclusion, Indeed, In short,</p> <p>In summary, To conclude, To summarize, To sum up,</p> | <p>2. It is clear that . . . These examples show that . . . You can see that . . .</p> |
| <p>1. To summarize, Japanese food is both beautiful to look at and delicious to eat. Indeed, many U.S. cities and regions have a special food for everyone to enjoy.</p> <p>2. It is clear that fad diets don't work and may even damage a dieter's health.</p> | |

PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

2. **Remind** your reader of the main idea by one of the following methods.

- Repeat the idea in the topic sentence in different words. **Do not just copy the topic sentence.**
- Summarize the main point or points of the paragraph.

3. **NEVER** end a paragraph by introducing a new idea!

PUNCTUATION

❖ *Apostrophes (')*

- The apostrophe mark (') has three main uses in English:
 - ✓ To make contractions
 - ✓ To make nouns and some pronouns possessive
 - ✓ To make letters of the alphabet plural

APOSTROPHES (')

➤ **Contractions:** An apostrophe shows where letters are missing in a contraction.

➤ Isn't → is not won't → will not it's → it is

➤ **Note:** We use contractions in conversation and in informal writing such as letters to friends, but we usually do not use them in formal academic and business writing.

APOSTROPHES (')

- **Possessives:** Possessive words show ownership.
- In the phrase **Maria 's book**, Maria 's is a possessive noun showing that Maria is the owner of the book.
- In English, we can show ownership with nouns in two ways. **We** can use an *of* phrase and say **(the name of my friend)**, or we can use an **apostrophe + s** and say **(my friend's name)**.
- **E.g.** the speed of the runner **or** the runner's speed
the orders of the doctor **or** the doctor's orders

APOSTROPHES (')

When the owner's name is given, we don't have a choice. We must use an **apostrophe** or **apostrophe + s**.

E.g. Maria's book

NOT

the book of Maria

The Smiths' house

NOT

the house of the Smiths

APOSTROPHES (')

Besides nouns, we also make indefinite pronouns possessive. Indefinite pronouns are the words someone, anyone, somebody, anybody, everyone, everybody, no one, nobody, and one.

E.g. someone's jacket
anybody's mistake

APOSTROPHES (')

Plural of Letters of the Alphabet:

Use an **apostrophe + s** to make letters of the alphabet plural.

E.g. The teacher gave ten A's and two F's last semester.

APOSTROPHES (')

1. Don't confuse it's and its. It 's is a contraction of it is. Its is a possessive pronoun. Possessive pronouns (my, your, our, his, her, its, their) never have apostrophes.

E.g. It's hot today.

The book lost its cover.

2. Don't confuse the contraction of a noun + is and the possessive form of the noun.

E.g. John's sick today. (John is sick today.)

John's car is a Toyota. (The car that belongs to John is a Toyota.)

APOSTROPHES (')

- 3. Don't use an apostrophe to make nouns plural .

E.g. It is the policy of many **companies'** to hire student interns during the summer.

The Smith's have a new baby daughter.

SUMMARY WRITING

- ❖ **A summary** : is a short statement that gives the main information about something without giving all the details. The ability to summarize information is a useful writing skill.
- ❖ In your classes, you will need to summarize information from your textbooks on test. In some classes, you will also write original papers in which you summarize information from outside reading.

REVIEW

❖ *These are the important points covered in this chapter:*

1. A paragraph has three parts: a **topic sentence**, **supporting sentences**, and a **concluding sentence**.
 - **The topic sentence** is the most important sentence in a paragraph. It is usually the first sentence.
 - A good topic sentence has both **a topic** and a **controlling idea**. **The controlling idea** gives the reader a hint about what the paragraph will say about the topic.

REVIEW

2. Supporting sentences explain **the controlling idea** in detail.

3. The concluding sentence repeats **the main idea in different words** or summarizes the main supporting points. It usually begins with a conclusion signal.

