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TAKING READING TO THE MAX!

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Basic Paragraphs

STRATEGIES FOR READING & WRITING

To all the readers in the country, we dedicate this workbook to you. The workbook will help you develop a strong foundation in reading and writing. Reading and writing are essential to life. Keep working on it. You will learn how to read with understanding while improving your writing skills.

--The MaxScholar Team

MAXSCHOLAR

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Strategies for Reading & Writing

Basic Paragraphs

DIRECTIONS:

Learning to write paragraphs is essential to good writing. Paragraphs help to break up large chunks of information, making the content easier to understand. Knowing how to write good, well-structured, and proofread paragraphs is an important skill to master.

You will learn to write different types of paragraphs.

In this workbook, you will learn how to write the following types of paragraphs which are the most commonly used ones, and ones that you should practice the most.

- Explanatory
- Process
- Reason
- Persuasion
- Comparison / contrast
- Narrative

Knowing how to write these types of paragraphs will help you with many standardized tests. The material used is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. These standards are noted right before the exercises associated with each of the above types of paragraphs.

Regardless of the type of paragraph you are asked to write, each paragraph should be written with the following steps in mind. By following these guidelines, you will produce excellent, well-thought out paragraphs each time.

The three steps to successful paragraph writing are:

- 1. Plan your paragraph**
- 2. Write your paragraph**
- 3. Proofread your paragraph**

Step 1: Plan Your Paragraph

1. **Decide what the main idea of the paragraph is going to be.**
 - a. **What are you trying to say?**

You must have an idea of what the paragraph will be about. What are you trying to tell? What information do you already have?
 - b. **What is the main idea you want to discuss?**

What are the most relevant details related to the main idea?
 - c. **For whom are you writing?**

Who will be the persons reading the paragraph? What is their prior knowledge?
2. **Write down lists of supporting details (facts and ideas) that you might use to support the main idea sentence.**
 - a. Using a graphic organizer (see below) or just a note pad, start organizing your thoughts by writing down your ideas. Once you see them on paper, it is easier to decide how to use them.
 - b. Do not write entire sentences. Only use words or phrases. It is a good idea to write down more information than you will need, because you can always edit the details.
 - c. If you are missing some important information or details, now is a good time to look them up, so you can have everything ready before you start writing.

Step 2: Write your paragraph

Recipe for Writing a Five Sentence Paragraph

- Main Idea sentence
 - Detail sentence
 - Detail sentence
 - Detail sentence
 - Conclusion sentence (should restate the Main Idea sentence with your opinion)
- a. **Write your main idea sentence.** The first sentence in the paragraph should be the main idea sentence. This sentence tells what the paragraph is about.
 - b. **Supply the important details.** The next three sentences should be detail sentences. These sentences cover the important points that support your main idea sentence.
 - c. **Write a concluding sentence.** The concluding sentence should tie everything together from your main idea sentence and should include your opinion.

Step 3: Proofread Your Paragraph

- 1. Check your paragraph for errors in spelling and grammar.** Read your paragraph to look for errors in spelling and grammar.
 - a. See if the first letter of the sentence and the first letter of all proper nouns are capitalized.
 - b. Make sure that you use the same verb tense throughout.
 - c. Use a dictionary or an on-line dictionary to double check your spelling.
 - d. Check your paragraph for the proper use of punctuation, making sure that you use marks such as commas, semi-colons, colons, and hyphens in the correct context. Make sure that each sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a period.
- 2. Check your paragraph for coherency and style.** Vary the length and format of your sentence and use transitional words when appropriate.
 - a. Try to avoid starting every sentence or every paragraph with “I think...” or “I contend...” Try to vary the format of your sentences, making what you write more interesting to the reader.
 - b. For beginning writers, use short sentences which clearly express your point. Run-on sentences can become hard to follow and often contain grammatical errors.

Section 1: Plan Your Paragraph

Here are some examples of paragraphs. You should read each of them, and then analyze them to see how each author planned and wrote each one. You will do that by using your highlighters and follow the directions.

Directions: Read the following paragraphs, one at a time. In each paragraph, highlight the main idea sentence in blue. Highlight all the detail sentences, using yellow for the first detail sentence, green for the next detail sentence, and orange for the third detail sentence. Last, highlight the concluding sentence in purple.

Sean Carter, better known as “Jay-Z,” is a man of many talents. He is an American songwriter, record producer, and entrepreneur and is ranked as one of the greatest rappers of all time. Jay-Z was even part owner of the NBA’s Brooklyn Nets at one time. He married Beyoncé Knowles on April 4, 2008, and they have a baby girl, named Ivy Blue. Jay-Z is one of the most successful hip-hop artists and entrepreneurs in America.

Abraham Lincoln had a very hard childhood. He was born on February 12, 1809 in Hardin County, Kentucky in a one-room log cabin. When Abe was nine years old, his mother died. He had to take on more chores around the house. Even though Abe had a hard childhood, he was very successful in life.

Directions: Read the following paragraphs, one at a time. In each paragraph, highlight the main idea sentence in blue. Highlight all the detail sentences, using yellow for the first detail sentence, green for the next detail sentence, and orange for the third detail sentence. Last, highlight the concluding sentence in purple.

New York City is one of the most exciting cities in the world. It is rich with culture, arts, sports, fashion, finance, food, and history. Broadway is where hit plays and musicals are performed. Museums are all over the city. A trip to New York City is always fun.

The King's Speech won four Academy Awards in 2010. This film depicted an inspiring story of Britain's King George VI who had a serious speech impediment that caused him to stutter when he spoke. Every time he spoke, he repeated parts of words or could not say them smoothly which was very embarrassing to him. Through the help of a speech therapist, the King was finally able to overcome his handicap. The King's Speech was a film rich in image, plot, and acting, well deserving of all the awards.

Directions: Read the following paragraphs, one at a time. In each paragraph, highlight the main idea sentence in blue. Highlight all the detail sentences, using yellow for the first detail sentence, green for the next detail sentence, and orange for the third detail sentence. Last, highlight the concluding sentence in purple.

Bob Hope, who was one of our country's most patriotic individuals, was actually not born in the United States. Bob once said jokingly, "I left England at the age of four when I found out that I couldn't be the king." He appeared in many forms of entertainment, including vaudeville, theater, movies, and television. Perhaps the most memorable of all his contributions was his on-stage appearances in front of the American military forces overseas. Bob Hope's life is an example that patriotism can come to anyone who loves where he or she lives.

We have entered the era of Photoshop. There was a time when a photo could not be changed; however, this is no longer true. Photoshop is a program that was developed by a company named "Adobe" in the 1980s to edit black and white images. Adobe has expanded the program's use to include color images and video images. Photoshop has had a major influence upon the editing of images of all types.

Step 2: Write Your Basic Paragraph

You will first be shown an effective way to

1. **Plan and write a paragraph, using our graphic organizer to help you plan your paragraph.**
2. **Practice writing your own paragraphs using our suggestions.**
3. **Proofread and edit what you have written.**

The exercises are organized as follows

1. **You will first see a description or definition of a type of paragraph.**
2. **You will be given an example of such a paragraph.**
3. **You will be given some topics for you to use to practice writing this type of paragraph, using our graphic organizer.**

Our graphic organizer will give you a place to write down the main idea sentence, three supporting details, and a conclusion sentence, just the way you are supposed to write a paragraph.

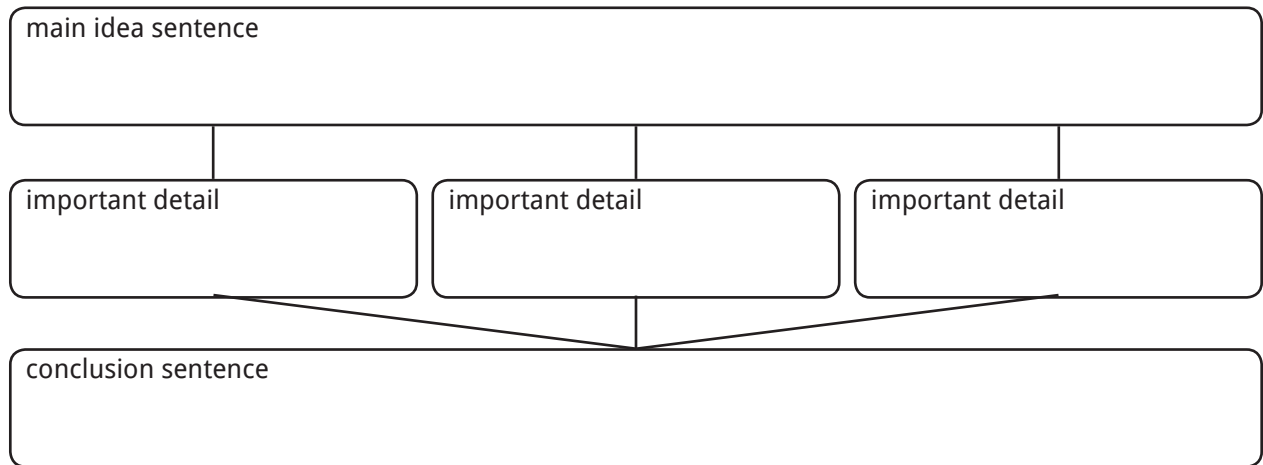
Once you understand and practice writing this way, you will be asked to proofread your work and use our checklist to indicate you have checked your own work. The lists look as follows:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Main idea sentence | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Capitalization |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detail | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Order & Organization |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detail | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Punctuation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detail | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spelling |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conclusion sentence | |

Here is our graphic organizer. This should be used as a guide for writing a paragraph.

TOPIC: _____

Create a paragraph using our graphic organizer. The main idea sentence should be a sentence, but the details should be words or phrases. When you write your paragraph, make sure that you turn each detail into a complete sentence. When you are through, insert a check below to indicate that you have written a main idea sentence, three important details, and a conclusion sentence.



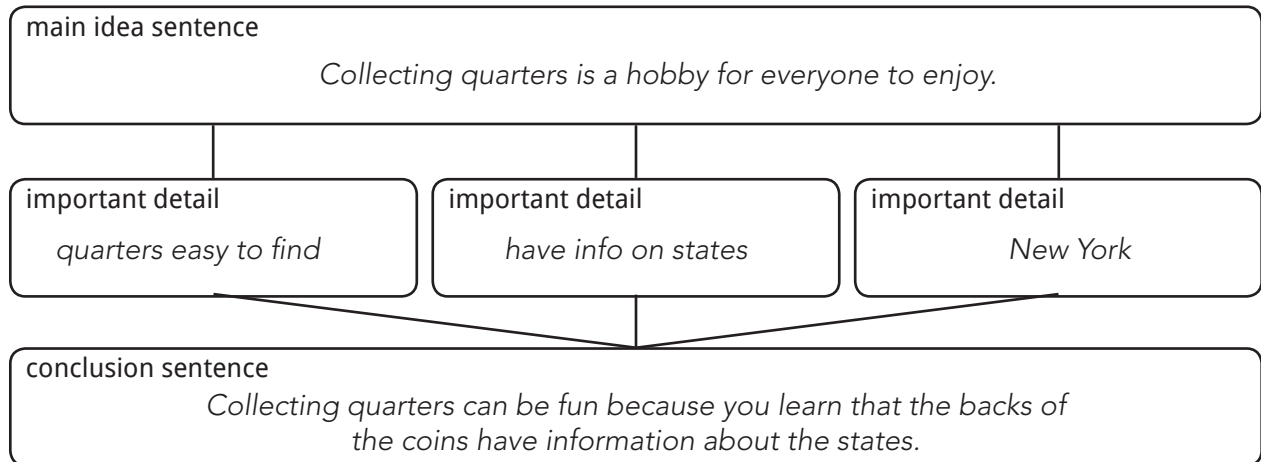
Paragraph:

- Main idea sentence
- Detail
- Detail
- Detail
- Conclusion sentence

Here is an example, following by topics for you to practice writing you own paragraph.

Collecting Coins

Insert a check below to indicate that you have written a main idea sentence, three important details, and a conclusion sentence.



Paragraph:

Collecting coins is a hobby for everyone to enjoy. Quarters are easy to find in everyday life. Some of them have information about the states of the United States on their backs. A quarter might have information about New York, like the Statue of Liberty. Collecting quarters can be fun because you learn that the backs of the coins have information about the states.

- Main idea sentence
- Detail
- Detail
- Detail
- Conclusion sentence

Next, you will learn about how to proofread or edit your paragraphs.

Step 3: Proofreading

Up till now you have learned how to plan your paragraph and write your paragraph. Now it is time to learn how to proofread and edit your paragraph. It is a good idea to read the paragraph you have written, and then check off the appropriate boxes to indicate you have proofread your work. Our graphic organizer has changed to provide boxes for you to check your proofreading of your work.

The next group is our Proofreading Checklist (**COPS**):

Capitalization

Order & Organization

Punctuation

Spelling

Capitalization review should make sure that all sentences begin with a capital letter, as do all proper nouns. A proper noun is a particular person, place, or thing.

Order and organization is an important part of writing because it helps the reader understand and enjoy your writing. It is important that one idea flows smoothly into the next one.

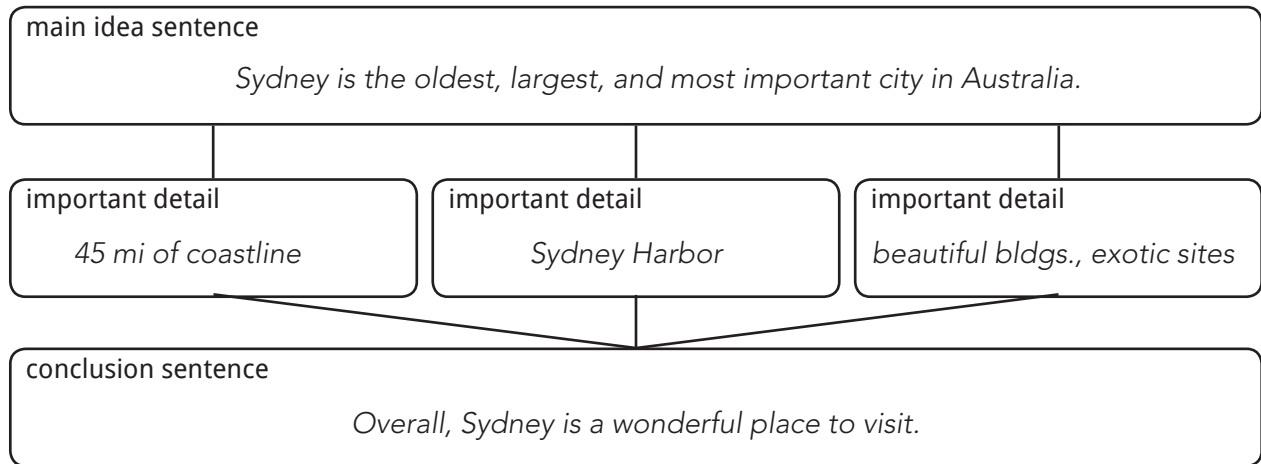
Punctuation is important for the reader and sometimes prevents confusion. You must know how and where to use a period (.), a comma (,), an exclamation point (!), a question mark (?), a semicolon (;), and quotation marks (" ").

Spelling is very important and misspelled words are often upsetting to readers. If you do not know how to spell a word, look it up in a dictionary, an on-line dictionary, or ask your teacher or a friend to help you.

Now it is your turn to use our graphic organizer to plan a paragraph and then check off the boxes to make sure that the paragraph was proofread correctly.

Here is an example of how we recommend this process be done.

Create a paragraph using our graphic organizer. When you are through, insert a check below to indicate that you have written a main idea sentence, three important details, and a conclusion sentence.



Paragraph:

Sydney is the oldest, largest, and most important city in Australia. It is located along forty-five miles of coastline on the Tasman Sea. One of its most prominent features is Sydney Harbour, home of the famous Sydney Opera House. Sydney also has many beautiful buildings and exotic sites to see. Overall, Sydney is a wonderful place to visit.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Main idea sentence | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Capitalization |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detail | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Order & Organization |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detail | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Punctuation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detail | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spelling |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conclusion sentence | |

Types of Five Sentence Paragraphs

As we said before, it is important to learn how to write these six types of paragraphs.

- Explanatory
- Process
- Reason
- Persuasion
- Comparison / contrast
- Narrative

Explanatory paragraphs give examples as the supporting details. Some topics might include:

- Water conservation
- Cities in Europe
- Popular musicians of the 1960s
- Professional sports teams
- Ways to follow a healthy diet
- Vacations places in the United States

We have provided exercises for you to practice writing **explanatory** paragraphs.

Here is a list of all the Common Core State Standards that are aligned with the writing drills for **explanatory** paragraphs.

CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.4.2.A
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.4.2.B
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.4.2.C
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.4.2.D
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.4.2.E
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.4.4
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.4.5
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.4.10

CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.5.2.A
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.5.2.B
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.5.2.C
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.5.2.D
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.5.2.E
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.5.4
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.5.5
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.5.10

CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.6.2.A
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.6.2.B
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.6.2.C
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.6.2.D
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.6.2.E
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.6.4
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.6.5
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.6.10

CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.7.2.A
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.7.2.B
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.7.2.C
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.7.2.D
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.7.2.E
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.7.4
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.7.5
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.7.10

CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.8.2.A
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.8.2.B
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.8.2.C
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.8.2.D
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.8.2.E
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.8.4
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.8.5
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.8.10

CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.9-10.2.A
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.9-10.2.B
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.9-10.2.C
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.9-10.2.D
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.9-10.2.E
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.9-10.2.F
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.9-10.10

CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.10-11.2.A
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.10-11.2.B
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.10-11.2.C
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.10-11.2.D
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.10-11.2.E
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.10-11.2.F
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.W.10-11.10



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