Organising your writing

Good writing is organised, with a well-defined layout which helps the writing flow, making it clear and easy for the reader to understand. Organised writing should be separated into paragraphs; each paragraph should focus on a different idea or show there is a change of focus or topic.

Paragraphs often start with a **topic sentence**.

### Topic sentences

Topic sentences are often the first sentence in a paragraph and their function is to tell the reader what the paragraph will be about. They can also act as transitions from one part of a text to the next. If you can write clear topic sentences for each paragraph and if each topic sentence is related to the overall theme of the writing, your writing will be more successful.

### How to write a good topic sentence

A good topic sentence should be interesting, to get the reader’s attention. It shouldn’t be too long, or your reader may lose interest. Before you write, ask yourself what idea you want to write about in each paragraph and write a clear sentence which explains the idea. The rest of the paragraph should develop the idea you wrote about in the topic sentence by explaining it, giving examples, or reasons.

### Does every paragraph need a topic sentence?

Most paragraphs need a topic sentence, but not all. If your new paragraph is continuing a theme, or developing a point that was started in a previous paragraph, it may not be necessary; however, most paragraphs need a topic sentence.