Writing Centre

Topic and Concluding Sentences

Topic and concluding sentences help organize and focus your body paragraphs, which helps the flow of your paper.

**Tip!** Topic and concluding sentences should not include quotations.

**Topic Sentences**

Topic sentences are usually the first sentence of a body paragraph. These sentences act like a mini thesis; they are not factual statements and should introduce the main point or idea of the paragraph to your reader. They should also support your overall thesis.

**Tip!** Include a key word from your introductory paragraph in your topic sentence.

All of the evidence you discuss in the body of your paragraph should support your topic sentence.

**Example:** in an essay about why cats are better than dogs, one topic sentence may be: *Cats have a smaller carbon footprint than dogs, making them the more environmentally friendly pet of the two.*

**Transitioning Between Paragraphs**

Topic sentences can help transition to a new paragraph by making mention of the previous paragraph’s main idea.

A common way to structure your transitioning topic sentence is: linking word/phrase + previous paragraph’s main idea + linking word/phrase + new topic or argument.

**Example:** *In addition to [linking phrase] + having a smaller carbon footprint than dogs [previous paragraph’s main idea], + cats are also [linking phrase] + more cost effective for owners [new topic or argument].*

**Concluding Sentences**

A concluding sentence is the last sentence of a paragraph. It should firmly close your paragraph or argument. These sentences support your thesis and mirror your topic sentence, but often go one step further by including a major point from the body of your paragraph.

**Example:** *Because dogs consume more food than cats, cats have a smaller carbon footprint than dogs, which makes them the more sensible pet.*

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https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/common_writing_assignments/argument_papers/body_paragraphs.html