

TOPIC SENTENCES

(Occasion/position statement)

An **occasion** is the first part of the topic sentence. The occasion introduces your **reason for writing**. An occasion can be any event, problem, idea, solution or circumstance that gives you **reason** to write.

The **position** states what you plan to **prove or explain** in your paragraph.

An **occasion/position statement** can be a complex sentence and can begin with one of these subordinate conjunctions.

START WITH...

If
After
Since
Before
So that
Whenever
As long as

In order that (to)
Even though
Although
Unless
While
When
Even
As if

As
Until
Where
Though
Even if
Because
Wherever
As soon as

EXAMPLES:

Although my family and I have taken many wonderful vacations, none was more fun and exciting than our camping trip to the Grand Canyon.

Before you make the decision to light up a cigarette, consider the problems caused by smoking.

Even though bike helmets are sometimes unfashionable and uncomfortable, all cyclists should wear them.

If students use chemicals to do science experiments, it is important that they learn the proper way to dispose of them.

TRANSITION WORDS

•In an **accordion paragraph** you will need a transition each time you introduce a new reason/detail/fact.

•Use the **transition sets** below when you write a paragraph. Words in these sets may be mixed. **Vary** and **bury** them.

•Read your paragraph aloud. This way you will know if you have selected a transition that fits and makes sense.

Some Common Transition Sets:

first • second • third
one • another • next
first of all • also
first • then
at first • after
one • equally important
the first • the second
one • another • last

first • in addition • finally
first • also • besides
one • the other
the first • a second
one example • another example
a good example • a better example
an important • an equally important

More Advanced Transition Sets:

a good • a better • the best
to begin • then • consequently
it started when • as a result • then • therefore
at the beginning • then • following this • finally
one way • another way • a final method
one • one other • along with • last
in the first place • after that • later on • at last
one important • another important • the most important
initially • then • after that
a bad • a worse • the worst
as soon as • next • later • in the end
to begin • at the same time • finally
first of all • besides • in addition
to start • furthermore • additionally • last
first • along with • likewise

CONCLUSIONS

What to do:

- **Restate** your position; remind the reader of your topic.
- Use **key words** from your topic sentence.
- **Summarize** your paragraph, **convince** the readers of your position, **challenge** them to think about the issue, or **encourage** them to take action.

What to avoid:

- Introducing a new topic.
- Phrases such as...

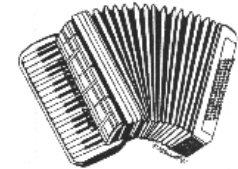
-as I have said
-as I proved
-as you can see

Helpful Words and Phrases:

in fact
obviously
clearly
certainly
in conclusion
truly
definitely
surely
to sum up
all in all

FLEXIBILITY

Paragraphs may be any length. Below are sample paragraphs that illustrate the flexibility of the accordion paragraph. You may want to experiment with different lengths. Remember you may vary the number of reasons/details/facts or explains in any paragraph.



(6) Six Sentence Paragraph

1. Topic Sentence
2. Reason/detail/fact
3. Explain
4. Reason/detail/fact
5. Explain
6. Conclusion

(7) Seven Sentence Paragraph

1. Topic Sentence
2. Reason/detail/fact
3. Explain
4. Reason/detail/fact
5. Explain
6. Explain
7. Conclusion

(8) Eight Sentence Paragraph

1. Topic Sentence
2. Reason/detail/fact
3. Explain
4. Reason/detail/fact
5. Explain
6. Reason/detail/fact
7. Explain
8. Conclusion

(9) Nine Sentence Paragraph

1. Topic Sentence
2. Reason/detail/fact
3. Explain
4. Explain
5. Reason/detail/fact
6. Explain
7. Explain
8. Explain
9. Conclusion

(10) Ten Sentence Paragraph

1. Topic Sentence
2. Reason/detail/fact
3. Explain
4. Explain
5. Explain
6. Reason/detail/fact
7. Explain
8. Explain
9. Explain
10. Conclusion

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