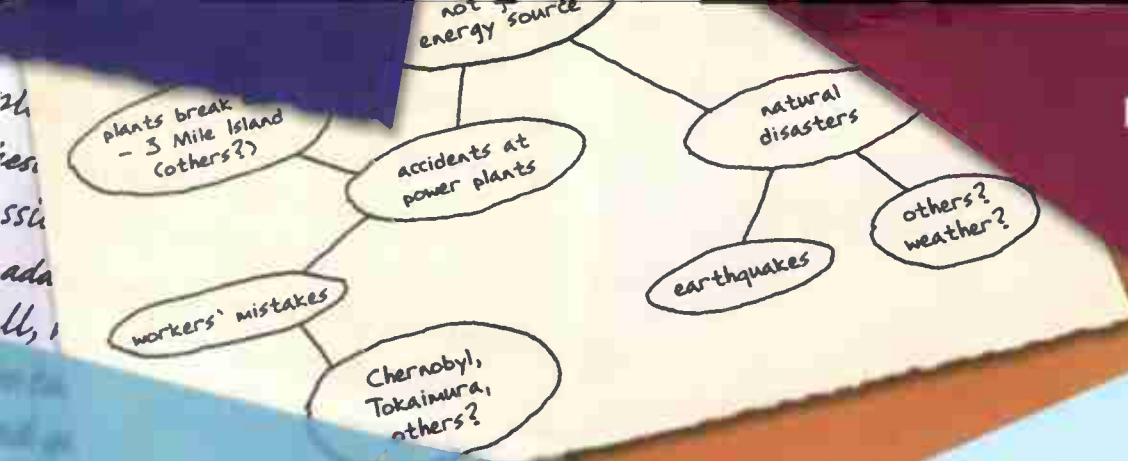


DOROTHY E ZEMACH  
& LISA A RUMISEK



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COLLEGE

# writing

FROM PARAGRAPH TO ESSAY



DOROTHY E ZEMACH  
& LISA A RUMISEK

# COLLEGE

# *writing*

FROM PARAGRAPH TO ESSAY

  
MACMILLAN

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# To the Teacher

Non-native English speakers who enroll in a college or university want to develop writing skills that will lead to academic success. This book is a combination text and workbook. Its focused lessons, specific exercises, and ample opportunities for practice are designed to help your students gain confidence in writing academic prose.

This book is designed to take university-level students with an intermediate ability in English as a second language from paragraph writing through essay writing. The course combines a process approach to writing (where students work on invention, peer response, editing, and writing multiple drafts) with a pragmatic approach to teaching the basics of writing (with direct instruction on such elements as topic sentences, thesis statements, and outlines).



The Introduction presents process writing to students. The tasks in the main units are graded. Students first work on recognizing and identifying key writing structures from model paragraphs and essays. Then they manipulate the structures in short, manageable tasks. Finally, they apply the structures to their own writing. There are opportunities for students to work independently, with a partner, and with a group. The exercises can be done either in class or as homework. Critical thinking is emphasized, so that students become aware of the impact of their choice of words, sentences, and organizational techniques on the effectiveness of their writing. The focus throughout is on academic writing—the type of writing used in university courses and exams in English-speaking institutions of higher learning.

In Units 1–6, students analyze and write the types of paragraphs that commonly occur in academic contexts. They practice writing topic sentences and concluding sentences, organizing the paragraph coherently, and using appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and transitional devices in the paragraph body. In Unit 7, students write two-paragraph papers, in preparation for longer assignments. In Units 8–11, students apply what they have learned about paragraphs to essay writing. They work on developing and supporting a central thesis, organizing an outline from which to write, and writing effective introductions and conclusions. Unit 12 discusses strategies for timed essay writing, including understanding standard instructions, time-management techniques, and methods for organizing information.

Included in the Student Book are samples of the development of an essay from brainstorming to the final draft. There is also a guide to punctuation and examples of a letter requesting information, a personal essay of the type commonly required in college applications, resumes and addressed envelopes.

The Teacher's Guide supports the instructor by offering teaching suggestions, a discussion of marking and grading writing, ideas for supplemental activities for each unit, and photocopiable exercises and activities.

# ***To the Student***

Writing is a very important part of your university study. You will write assignments that may range from one paragraph to several pages long, and will write answers on tests and exams that may be a few sentences long or a complete essay.

Academic writing in English may be different not only from academic writing in your own language, but even from other writing in English. The purpose of this book is to help you recognize and produce the sort of writing that you will do for your university courses.

During this course, you will have many opportunities to study and discuss examples of English academic writing. Naturally, you will also have many opportunities to discuss your own academic writing and the writing of your classmates. You will learn how important the reader is to the writer, and how to express clearly and directly what you mean to communicate. We hope that what you learn in this course will help you throughout your academic studies and beyond.

You should come to your writing class every day with energy and a willingness to work and learn. Your instructor and your classmates have much to share with you, and you have much to share with them. By coming to class with your questions, taking chances and trying new ways, and expressing your ideas in another language, you will add not only to your own world but to the world of those around you. Good luck!

# Introduction: Process Writing

In this unit, you will ...

- learn about process writing, the writing method used in most English-speaking university classes.



## The writing process

These words are important for understanding the writing process. Match each word with the correct definition.

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| a. step      | 1. to check a piece of writing for errors                   |
| b. topic     | 2. a group of related sentences                             |
| c. gather    | 3. one thing in a series of things you do                   |
| d. organize  | 4. subject; what the piece of writing is about              |
| e. paragraph | 5. to change or correct a piece of writing                  |
| f. essay     | 6. a short piece of writing, at least three paragraphs long |
| g. proofread | 7. to arrange in a clear, logical way                       |
| h. edit      | 8. to find and collect together                             |



## The six steps of the writing process

2 Read about the writing process. These are the steps you will practice in this book.

### Process writing

When we write, we do more than just put words together to make sentences. Good writers go through several steps to produce a piece of writing.

#### Pre-writing

**STEP ONE: Choose a topic.** Before you write, your teacher gives you a specific assignment or some ideas of what to write about. If not, choose your topic yourself.

**STEP TWO: Gather ideas.** When you have a topic, think about what you will write about that topic.

**STEP THREE: Organize.** Decide which of the ideas you want to use and where you want to use them. Choose which idea to talk about first, which to talk about next, and which to talk about last.

#### Drafting

**STEP FOUR: Write.** Write your paragraph or essay from start to finish. Use your notes about your ideas and organization.

#### Reviewing and revising

**STEP FIVE: Review structure and content.** Check what you have written. Read your writing silently to yourself or aloud, perhaps to a friend. Look for places where you can add more information, and check to see if you have any unnecessary information. Ask a classmate to exchange papers with you. Your classmate reads your paper, and you read his or hers. Getting a reader's opinion is a good way to know if your writing is clear and effective. Learning to give opinions about other people's writing helps you to improve your own. You may want to go on to step six now and revise the structure and content of your paper before you proofread it.

#### Rewriting

**STEP SIX:**  
**Revise structure and content.** Use your ideas from step five to re-write your text, making improvements to the structure and content. You might need to explain something more clearly, or add more details. You may even need to change your organization so that your paper is more logical. Together, steps five and six can be called *editing*.

**Proofread.** Read your paper again. This time, check your spelling and grammar and think about the words you have chosen to use.

**Make final corrections.** Check that you have corrected the errors you discovered in steps five and six and make any other changes you want to make. Now your text is finished!

Steps five and six can be repeated many times.



## Review

3 Complete this chart, summarizing the steps of the writing process.

### Pre-writing

- **STEP ONE:** Choose a .....
- **STEP TWO:** Gather .....
- **STEP THREE:** Decide .....



### Drafting

- **STEP FOUR:** Write .....



### Reviewing and revising

- **STEP FIVE:** Check .....



### Rewriting

- **STEP SIX:**  
May need to ...
  - explain .....
  - add .....
  - change .....

Steps ..... and ..... may be ..... many times.

# Pre-Writing: Getting Ready to Write

In this unit, you will learn how to ...

- choose and narrow a topic.
- gather ideas.
- edit ideas.

## ➤ What is pre-writing?

Before you begin writing, you decide what you are going to write about. Then you plan what you are going to write. This process is called *pre-writing*.



## Choosing and narrowing a topic

### ➤ How to choose a topic for a paragraph

A paragraph is a group of five to ten sentences that give information about a topic. Before you write, you must choose a topic for your paragraph.

- Choose a topic that isn't too *narrow* (limited, brief). A narrow topic will not have enough ideas to write about. *The ages of my brothers and sisters* is too narrow. You can't write very much about it.
- Choose a topic that isn't too *broad* (general). A broad topic will have too many ideas for just one paragraph. Most paragraphs are five to ten sentences long. *Schools* is too general. There are thousands of things you could say about it.

A student could narrow this topic by choosing one aspect of schools to discuss.

*schools* ➔ *high schools in my country*  
*popular school clubs*  
*university entrance exams*

### I Choose three topics from this list. Narrow each of the three down to a paragraph topic. Then compare with a partner.

- holidays
- friends
- my country
- dancing
- cars

## Brainstorming

### ➤ What is brainstorming?

Brainstorming is a way of gathering ideas about a topic. Think of a storm: thousands of drops of rain, all coming down together. Now, imagine thousands of ideas “raining” down onto your paper! When you brainstorm, write down every idea that comes to you. Don’t worry now about whether the ideas are good or silly, useful or not. You can decide that later. Right now, you are gathering as many ideas as you can.

You will learn three types of brainstorming in this unit: *making a list*, *freewriting*, and *mapping*.



### ➤ Making a list

Write single words, phrases, or sentences that are connected to your topic. Look at this list a student made when brainstorming ideas to write about her topic, “What should I study in college?”



history—learning about the past  
 math (too difficult, not interesting?)  
 What job do I want later?  
 English for work? Travel?  
 writing?  
 science—biology, chemistry  
 I don't like physics!  
 journalism  
 I like reading—literature?  
 art—drawing, painting, sculpture  
 photography?  
 studying / homework  
 friends / social life

## 2 Work with a partner or small group. Choose one of these topics. List as many ideas as you can in five minutes.

- a. teenage fashions
- b. things to do at the beach
- c. driving a motorcycle

## 3 Work alone. Choose a topic from exercise 1 on page 5, and list as many ideas as you can in five minutes.

## Freewriting

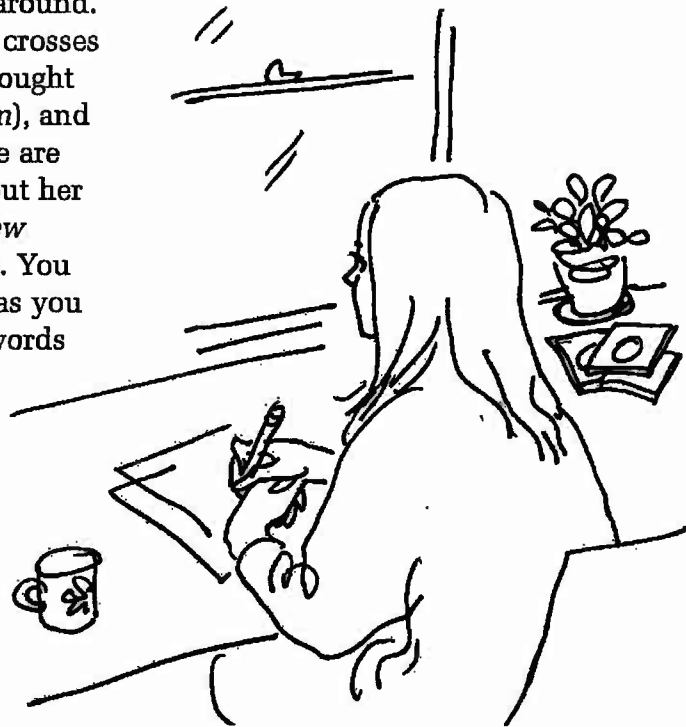
When you freewrite, you write whatever comes into your head about your topic, without stopping. Most freewriting exercises are short—just five or ten minutes.

Freewriting helps you practice *fluency* (writing quickly and easily). When you freewrite, you do not need to worry about *accuracy* (having correct grammar and spelling). Don't check your dictionary when you freewrite. Don't stop if you make a mistake. Just keep writing!

Here is an example of a student's freewriting:

*There are too so many subjects to study at university, it is difficult to choose one for my major. I've always made good grades in math, but I don't like it very much. I don't like physical physics or any science very much. Writing—I've always liked writing. Would journalism be a good course to take? Newspapers have pictures, too, so maybe photography would be good. I'm maybe definitely looking forward to meeting new friends at university. And what about reading? Reading is a part of any course, but literature includes a lot of reading and it probably includes a lot of writing, too.*

Notice how the writer's ideas jump around. When she makes a mistake, she just crosses it out and continues writing. One thought (*writing*) leads to another (*journalism*), and then to another (*photography*). There are some details that are not exactly about her topic (*looking forward to meeting new friends*), but that's OK in freewriting. You want to get as many ideas on paper as you can. You can take out unnecessary words and sentences later.

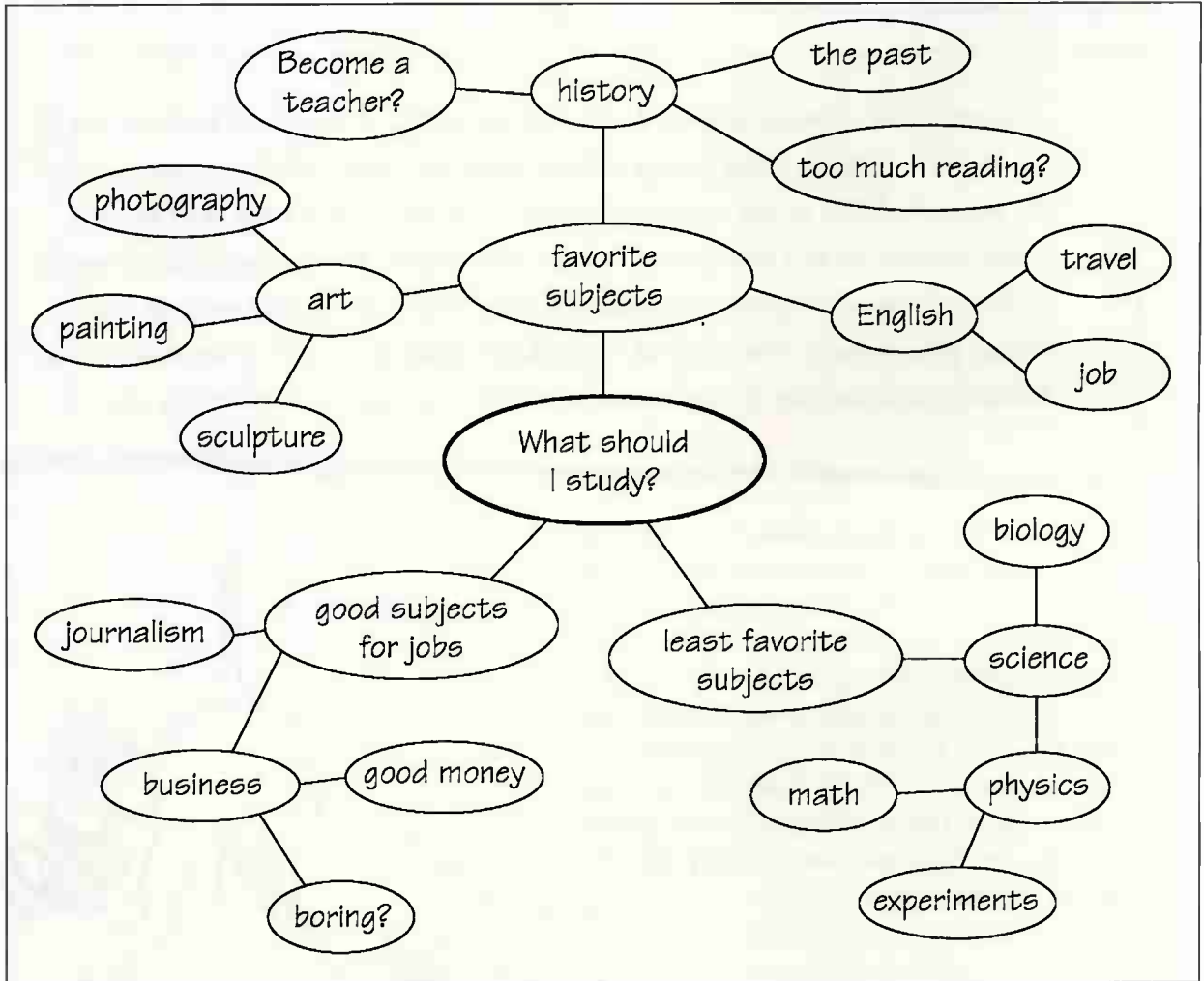


- 4 Choose one of the narrowed topics you thought of for exercise 1 on page 5. Practice freewriting for five minutes. Remember, do not stop, erase, or go back. Just write as much as you can.

## Mapping

To make a map, use a whole sheet of paper, and write your topic in the middle, with a circle around it. Then put the next idea in a circle above or below your topic, and connect the circles with lines. The lines show that the two ideas are related.

The example below shows a map of “What should I study in college?” The writer connected *favorite subjects* to the main idea. *Art* and *English* are connected to *favorite subjects* to show that they are related.



**5** Choose another narrowed topic you thought of for exercise 1 on page 5. Make a map in five minutes. Share your map with a partner. Explain how the circles are related to each other.

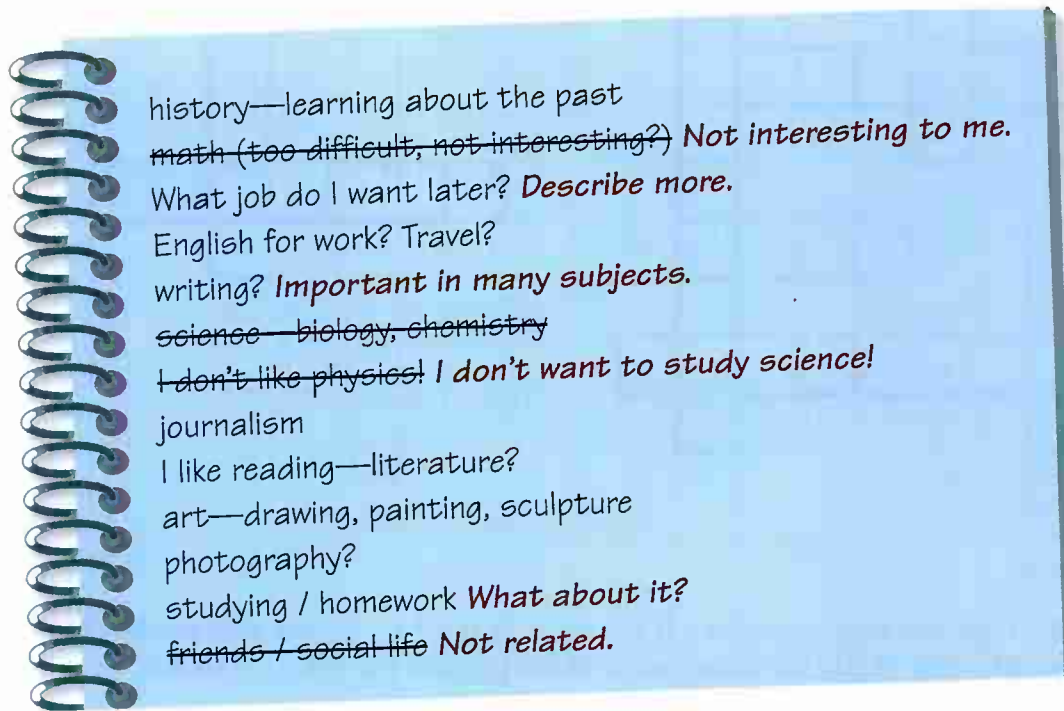
## What's the best way to brainstorm?

There is no best method of brainstorming. Some writers like to use lists because they don't have to write complete sentences. Some writers like freewriting because they can write quickly and ideas come easily. Some writers prefer mapping because they can easily see the relationship between ideas. Experiment with all three methods, and then choose the one that works best for you.

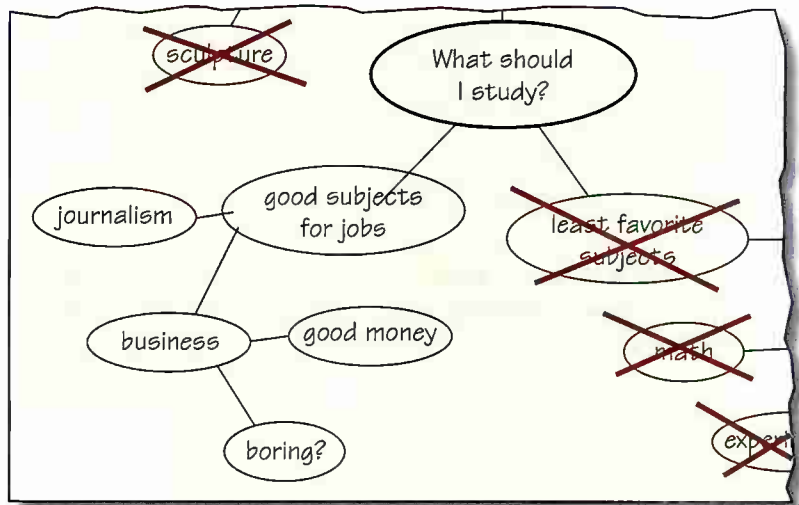
## Editing

### How to edit

After you have gathered plenty of ideas, you will need to go back and edit them. This is the time to choose which ideas are the most interesting, and which are the most *relevant to* (important or necessary for) your topic. Of course, you can still add new ideas if you think of something else while you are re-reading your list. For example, the student writing “What should I study in college?” edited her list like this:



To edit freewriting, cross out sentences or parts of sentences that aren't related. You can add more ideas in the margin or add more sentences at the bottom. To edit a map, cross out circles that don't belong, and add new ones if you get more ideas. You might also change the lines you have drawn.

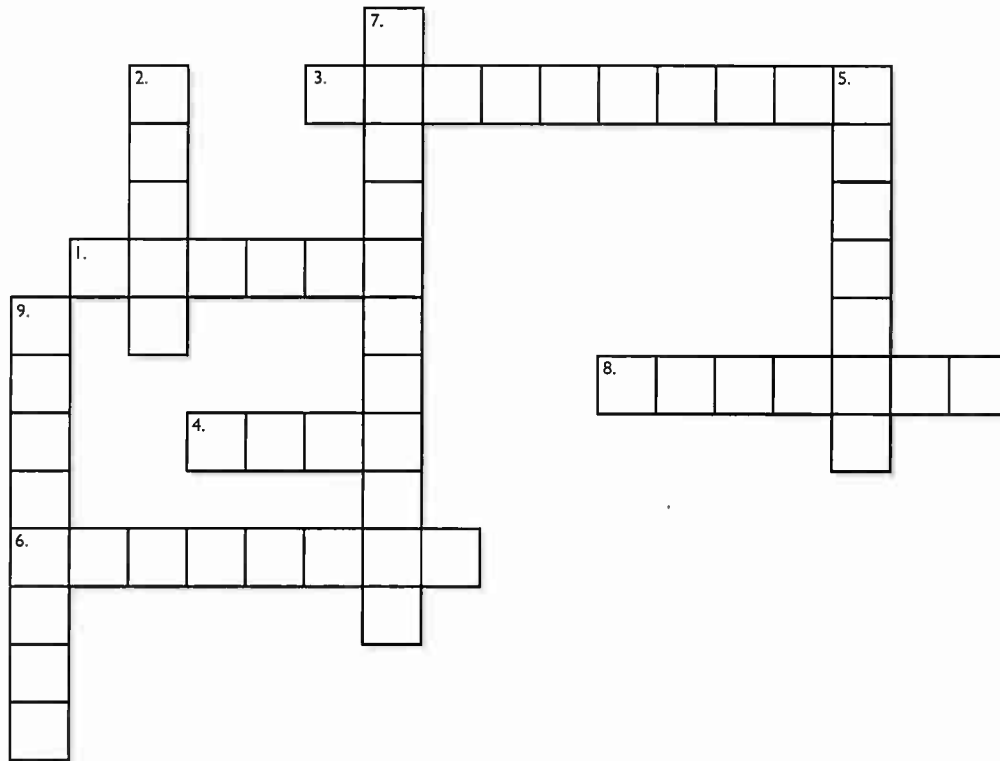


- 6 Look at the list you made in exercise 3 on page 6, the freewriting you did in exercise 4 on page 7, or the map you made in exercise 5 on page 8. Edit your brainstorming. Show your work to a partner. Explain how you edited your brainstorming.



## Review

### 7 Complete the crossword puzzle.



Each paragraph has only one topic. If the topic is too <sup>1</sup> n\_\_\_, you will not be able to write enough about it. On the other hand, if the topic is too <sup>2</sup> b\_\_\_, you will have too many ideas for just one paragraph.

After you choose a topic, you will need to <sup>3</sup> b\_\_\_ some ideas to write about in your paragraph. One way to do this is to make a <sup>4</sup> l\_\_\_. Another way of brainstorming is <sup>5</sup> m\_\_\_. After you have written down many ideas, you can go back and decide which ones are the most interesting and the most <sup>6</sup> r\_\_\_ to your topic.

<sup>7</sup> F\_\_\_ is a useful way to help you write more easily and naturally. In this kind of writing, you are working on <sup>8</sup> f\_\_\_, and not <sup>9</sup> a\_\_\_.

### 8 Look again at the note about brainstorming at the bottom of page 8. Brainstorm a list of pros (good things) and cons (bad things) about each of the three methods of brainstorming.

# 2 The Structure of a Paragraph

In this unit, you will learn ...

- the definition of a paragraph.
- the parts of a paragraph.
- how to identify and write topic sentences.

## ➤ What is a paragraph?

As you learned in Unit 1, a paragraph is a group of sentences about a single *topic*. Together, the sentences of the paragraph explain the writer's *main idea* (most important idea) about the topic. In academic writing, a paragraph is often between five and ten sentences long, but it can be longer or shorter, depending on the topic. The first sentence of a paragraph is usually indented (moved in) a few spaces.

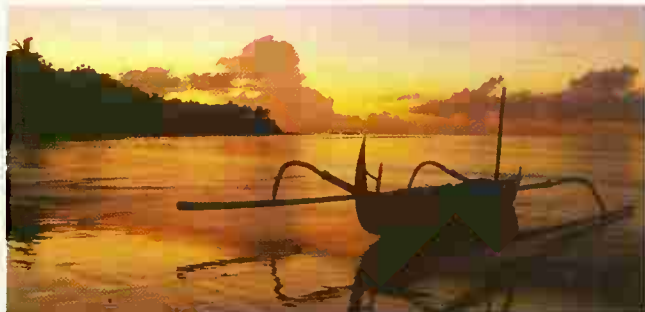
## Understanding a paragraph

- I Read this paragraph. It is the beginning of an article about Indonesia in a student newspaper. Then answer the questions.

### Indonesia—Something Interesting at Every Turn

By Ken Jones

If you dream of traveling to a country with beautiful tropical islands, wonderful food, beautiful places to go sightseeing, and very friendly people, you should visit Indonesia. If you look at the map, the first thing you



notice is that Indonesia is made up of islands—more than 17,000 of them. Traveling between islands by boat is great fun. Just like the many islands, there are also many different groups of people living in Indonesia. In fact, there are around 300 different ethnic groups! Most Indonesians are Malay, but others are Javanese, Balinese, Chinese, or Indian. All these groups together make Indonesian culture very interesting. Finally, Indonesia has many cities and historical sights to see. Jakarta, the capital city, is fast becoming a modern center of commerce, yet the ancient temples on the island of Bali show that the country's old traditions are still alive. All the people, places, and things to see definitely make Indonesia a great place for a vacation.

a. What is the topic of the paragraph?

.....

b. What is the main idea about the topic?

.....

c. What ideas help explain the main idea?

.....

.....

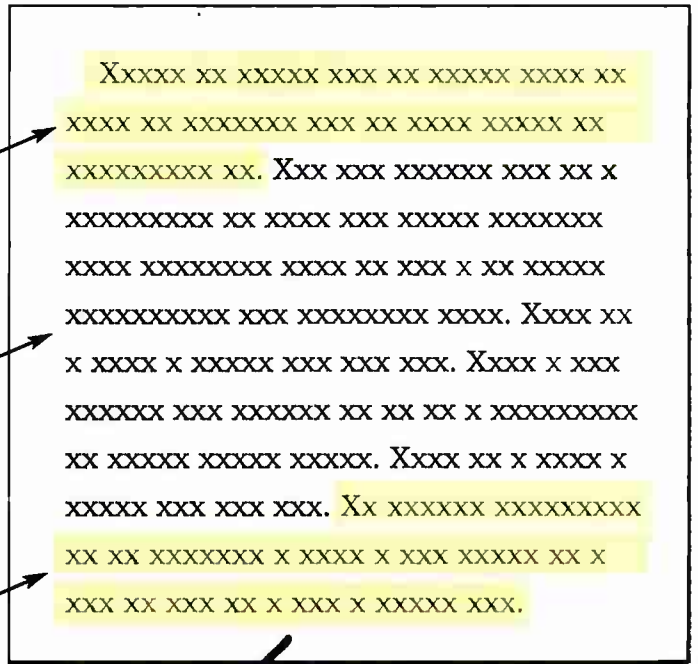
.....

**Paragraph organization**

☞ **What makes a paragraph?**

A paragraph has three basic parts:

1. **The topic sentence.** This is the main idea of the paragraph. It is usually the first sentence of the paragraph, and it is the most general sentence of the paragraph.
2. **The supporting sentences.** These are sentences that talk about or explain the topic sentence. They are more detailed ideas that follow the topic sentence.
3. **The concluding sentence.** This may be found as the last sentence of a paragraph. It can finish a paragraph by repeating the main idea or just giving a final comment about the topic.



- 2 Read the paragraph about Indonesia in exercise 1 on page 11 again. Circle the topic sentence, put one line under the supporting sentences, and put two lines under the concluding sentence.
- 3 Put a check (✓) next to the group of sentences that makes a good paragraph. Why are the other groups of sentences not good paragraphs?

a.

*My best friend has many different hobbies, such as skiing, cooking, and playing the piano, and she is very good at all of these activities. For example, she has played the piano for ten years and has won in three piano competitions. She also likes to spend time traveling, and she has been to many different countries in the world. She grew up speaking Spanish and English, but now she can also speak French and Italian. I like my best friend very much.*

b.

*Classes in literature are useful no matter what job you intend to have when you finish university. Books are about life. People who study literature learn the skill of reading carefully and understanding characters, situations, and relationships. This kind of understanding can be useful to teachers and business people alike. Literature classes also require a lot of writing, so they help students develop the skill of clear communication. Of course, a professional writer needs to have this skill, but it is an equally important skill for an engineer. Finally, reading literature helps develop an understanding of many different points of view. Reading a novel by a Russian author, for example, will help a reader learn more about Russian culture. For anyone whose job may bring them into contact with Russian colleagues, this insight can help encourage better cross-cultural understanding. Studying literature is studying life, so it is relevant to almost any job you can think of.*

c.

*One good way to learn another language is to live in a country where that language is used. When you live in another country, the language is around you all the time, so you can learn to listen to and speak it more easily.*

## The topic and the main idea

### ☞ The topic sentence ...

- usually comes first in a paragraph.
- gives the writer's main idea or opinion about the topic and helps the reader understand what the paragraph is going to talk about.

### 4 Circle the topic of the sentence. Underline the main idea about the topic.

- Indonesia is a very interesting country to visit.
- Dogs make excellent pets.
- A really good place to study is the library at my school.
- Learning a second language creates job opportunities.
- Soccer is my favorite sport because it is exciting to watch.
- One of the most valuable tools for students is the computer.
- My sister and I have very different personalities.
- Summer is the best time to travel in my country.
- My hometown is a friendly place to live.

### 5 For each of these paragraphs, choose the sentence from the list below that would make the best topic sentence.

a.

.....  
 ..... When Ken wanted to enter a good university, he studied hard to pass the examination. The first time he took the exam, he did not do well, and he felt very discouraged. But he knew he wanted to study at that university, so he studied more. The next year, he tried taking the exam again. The second time, he did very well, and now he is studying engineering. I believe Ken is a good role model for me, and he has taught me that never giving up is the best way to succeed.



1. One of my closest friends, named Ken, is a person I can trust.
2. My friend Ken is a very successful student.
3. I admire my friend Ken because he doesn't give up.



b.

..... Many children begin learning to play soccer when they are very young. You often can see them playing at school or in the streets around their houses. In high school, students may play soccer on a team and compete in tournaments. If a player is very good, he might go on to play for a professional team. People in my country love to watch soccer on television and also go to the games whenever they can. Many people have a favorite team or player, and everyone loves to talk about matches and competitions. Soccer is really like a national sport in my country.



1. I love to play soccer, and I hope I can become a professional player one day.
2. There are many popular sports in my country, but the most popular sport is soccer.
3. Soccer is a difficult sport to learn to play well.

**6 Write a topic sentence for three of these topics.**

- a. a favorite place to relax
- b. a grandparent
- c. a pet I have known
- d. a favorite food to eat
- e. playing a musical instrument

topic: .....

.....

.....

topic: .....

.....

.....

topic: .....

.....

.....



## Review

- 7 These sentences are mixed up parts of one paragraph. Number the parts in order: 1. topic sentence, 2. supporting sentences, and 3. concluding sentence.

*What should I study at university?*

- a. .... *It wasn't an easy decision, but for the reasons listed above, I have decided to study journalism.*
- b. .... *It can be difficult to choose a subject to study in college because there are so many choices, but by considering my skills and interests, I have decided to study journalism.*
- c. .... *I have always enjoyed writing, so it is sensible to choose a major that involves writing. When I begin working, I would like to have the opportunity to travel, and travel is often an important part of a journalist's job. Finally, I am also interested in photography, and pictures are very important in journalism.*

- 8 Use words or phrases in the box to complete the sentences.

concluding sentence	indented	main idea	paragraph
supporting sentences	topic	topic sentence	

- a. The ..... is usually the first sentence in a ..... . It gives the ..... and the .....
- b. The first sentence of a paragraph should be .....
- c. The ..... come after the topic sentence, and they explain the topic sentence.
- d. The ..... comes at the end of a paragraph.

# 3 The Development of a Paragraph

In this unit, you will learn ...

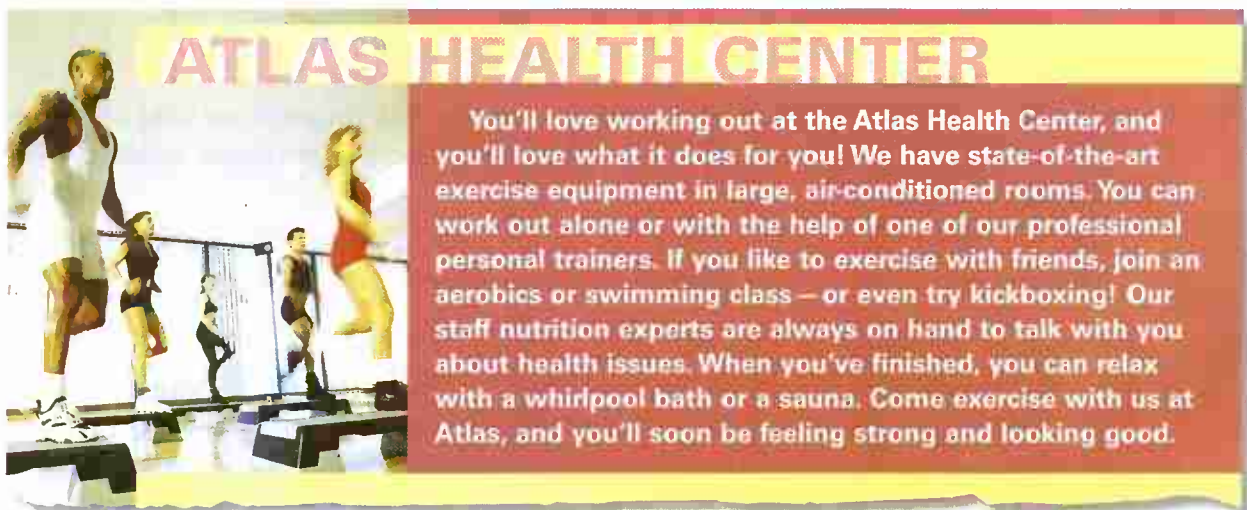
- methods of paragraph support and development.
- how to write concluding sentences.
- how to do peer editing.

## ➤ Paragraph development

After you have chosen a topic and written a topic sentence, you *develop* your main idea by adding more information to explain what you mean. This unit will explain three common ways to develop a paragraph: giving *details*, giving an *explanation*, and giving an *example*.

## Details

- 1 Details are specific points that tell more about a general statement. Read this brochure from a health club. Notice the details that help develop the paragraph.



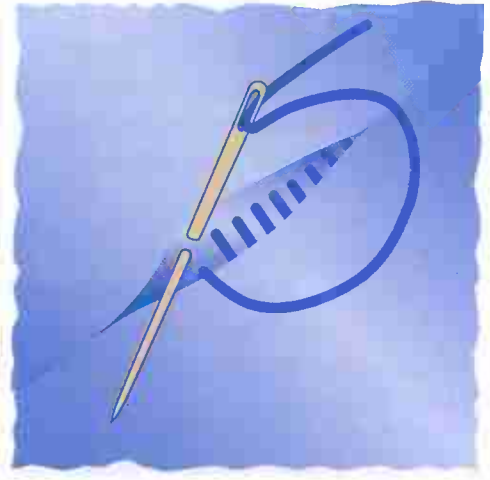
- 2 In the paragraph above, underline the topic sentence. Below, list the details used to support the topic sentence. Compare your answers with a partner.

- a. ....
- b. ....
- c. ....
- d. ....
- e. ....
- f. ....

## Explanation

- 3** An explanation tells what something means or how something works. In this paragraph, underline the topic sentence. Then answer the questions.

*"A stitch in time saves nine." My mother, who likes to sew, used this simple saying to teach me the value of working on problems when they are still small. Originally, the saying referred to sewing—if you have a small hole in a shirt, you can repair it with one stitch. But if you wait, the hole will get larger, and it will take you nine stitches. This simple sentence reminds me to take care of small problems before they become big problems.*



- a. What is the writer trying to explain? .....
- b. Is she successful? Do you understand the explanation? yes / no

## Example

- 4** An example is a specific person, place, thing, or event that supports an idea or statement. This paragraph includes an example from the writer's own experience. Underline the topic sentence.

Even when a first date is a disaster, a couple can still become good friends. For example, my first date with Greg was terrible. I thought he was coming to pick me up at 6:30, but instead he came at 6:00. I didn't have time to fix my hair, and my make-up looked sloppy. When I got into his car, I scraped my leg against the car door and tore my stocking. Next, he took me to an Italian restaurant for dinner, and I accidentally dropped some spaghetti on my shirt. Then we went to a movie. Greg asked me which movie I wanted to see, and I chose a romantic comedy. He fell asleep during the movie, and I got angry. Now that Greg and I are good friends, we can look back and laugh at how terrible that first date was!

- 5** Why do you think the writer chose to use an example to develop the paragraph in exercise 4 above? Write your reason here, and then compare with a partner.
- .....

## Choosing a means of support

**6** Would you develop each of these topics with details, an explanation, or an example? Explain your choices to a partner. (More than one answer is possible.)

- a. what freedom means to me
- b. an unusual vacation
- c. weddings in my country
- d. why I don't like to swim
- e. the ideal job

**7** Develop your own paragraph. Look back at the topic sentences you wrote in Unit 2, exercise 6 on page 15. Follow these steps.

**Step one:** Choose one that you would like to develop into a paragraph.

**Step two:** Brainstorm some ideas using any method you like.

**Step three:** Develop your paragraph with supporting sentences.

**Step four:** Exchange paragraphs with a partner. Say what kind of support your partner used. Could your partner tell what kind of support you used?

## Concluding sentences

⇒ How to end a paragraph

The final sentence of a paragraph is called the *concluding sentence*. It sums up the main points or restates the main idea in a different way. A sentence that sums up the paragraph reminds the reader of what the writer's main idea and supporting points were. A sentence that restates the main idea should give the same information in a slightly different way, perhaps by using different words or by using different word order. A concluding sentence should not introduce a new point.

**8** Read the example paragraphs in exercises 3 and 4 on page 18 again. Underline the concluding sentences. Do the concluding sentences sum up the information in the paragraph or restate the main idea?

**9** Work with a partner. Take turns reading these paragraphs aloud. Is the main idea developed by details, an explanation, or an example? Is there a concluding sentence? Circle *yes* or *no*. If there is no concluding sentence, write one with your partner.

*Even simple study habits can improve your grades. In college, I learned how important it is to get enough sleep. When you are well-rested, it is easier to learn. Research shows that when people don't get enough sleep, their memories aren't as effective. If students are really tired, they might even fall asleep in class! It's easy to see how getting enough sleep can improve your performance in school.*

- a. means of support: .....
- concluding sentence? yes / no
- .....

*My favorite class is psychology. I enjoy learning about the ways people think and behave. I also am interested in learning about the way children's minds develop.*

- b. means of support: .....
- concluding sentence? yes / no
- .....

*I am too nervous to sing karaoke songs with my friends. The last time I tried was on my birthday, when my friends took me to a karaoke club. I told my friends I didn't want to sing, but they encouraged me until I said yes. When I stood up in front of the microphone, I was so scared, I felt dizzy. It was hard to hear the music, and my mouth was too dry to make a sound. I just stood there until a friend jumped up next to me and finished the song.*

- c. means of support: .....
- concluding sentence? yes / no
- .....

*I will never eat dinner at The Little French Bistro again. The restaurant is not very clean. You can see dust in the corners and on the shelves. The food is expensive, but the portions are small. I never feel full after I've finished eating. In addition, the waiters are not very friendly. For these reasons, I will not visit that restaurant again.*



- d. means of support: .....
- concluding sentence? yes / no
- .....

*For me, a friend is someone who accepts you the way you are. A friend doesn't want you to change your personality or your style. I like people who don't care if the people they are with are wearing popular clothes or listening to trendy music.*

- e. means of support: .....
- concluding sentence? yes / no
- .....



## Peer editing

### ☞ What is peer editing?

Showing your work to another student is a very useful way to improve your writing. This is called *peer editing*. You read your partner's writing and your partner reads yours. You comment on your partner's writing and your partner comments on yours. You might talk together, write comments on a sheet that your instructor gives you, or write directly on your partner's paper.

Here is the first draft of the paragraph about the writer's first date with Greg. The writer has shown the paragraph to another student, who wrote some comments.

<i>Topic sentence</i>	Even when a first date is a disaster, a couple can still
<i>Developed by example</i>	become good friends. For example, my first date with <i>Can you make this stronger?</i> Greg <u>wasn't very good</u> . I thought he was coming to pick <i>When did he come?</i> me up at 6:30, <u>but he didn't</u> . When I got into his car, <i>Explain how you tore it.</i> <i>Tell more about this.</i> <u>I tore my stocking</u> . Next, I accidentally <u>got some spaghetti</u> <i>What kind of movie? How did you feel about that?</i> on my shirt. Then we went to <u>a movie</u> . <u>He fell asleep</u>
<i>Concluding sentence</i>	during the movie. Now that Greg and I are good friends, <i>Good!</i> <i>The same as the topic sentence</i> <u>we can look back and laugh</u> because <u>even when a first</u> <u>date is a disaster, a couple can still become good friends.</u>

### 10 Look at the handwritten comments on the paragraph above, and answer these questions with a partner.

- How many of the comments are statements? How many are questions?
- Why do you think the peer editor sometimes wrote questions instead of statements? For example, why did she write "Can you make this stronger?" instead of "Please make this stronger"?
- Why do you think the peer editor marked the topic sentence and the concluding sentence?
- Do you agree with the peer editor's comments?
- What do you think the writer will do next?
- Go back to exercise 4 on page 18 and read the paragraph about the date again. Did the writer use the reader's suggestions?



### ➤ Why do writers use peer editing?

There are two reasons for peer editing. The first is to get a reader's opinion about your writing. A reader can tell you that ...

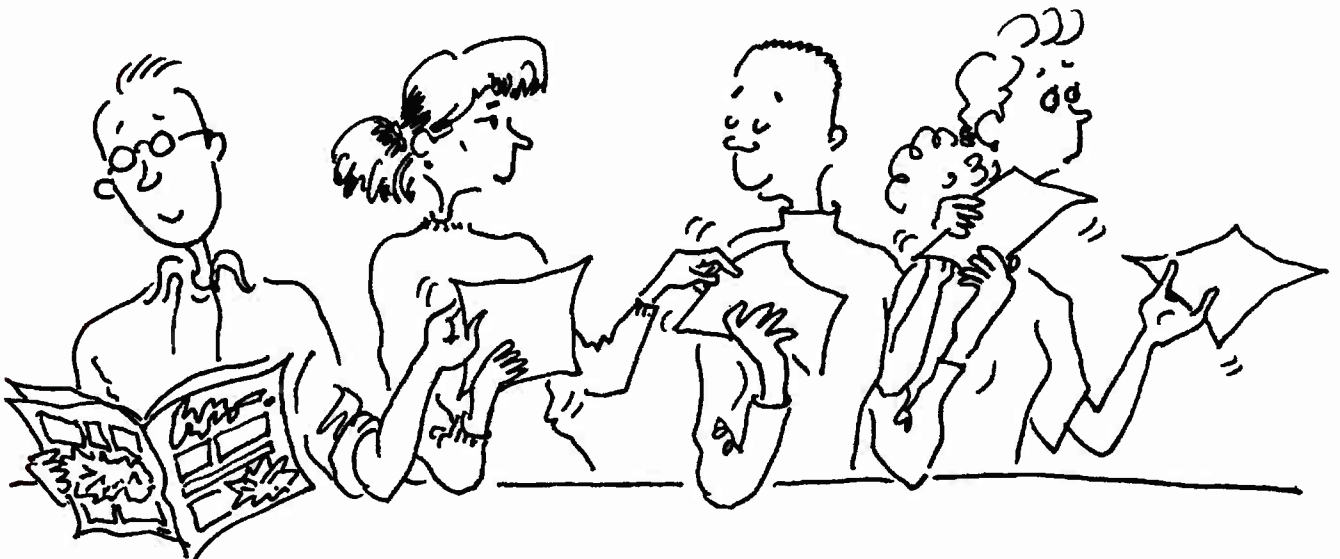
- you should add more details or explanation.
- something is not organized clearly.
- you have some information that is not relevant.
- there is something that is hard to understand.

These comments will help you write your next draft.

The second reason to share writing with others is for you to read more examples of writing. Other people will have had experiences that you haven't. They may show you fresh ways of writing about experiences. Reading their paragraphs and essays can give you good ideas to use yourself in the future.

### ➤ How do I peer edit?

- Read your partner's paper several times. The first time, just read from the beginning through to the end. Ask yourself, "What is it about? What is the writer's purpose?"
- On your second reading, go more slowly and look at specific parts of the writing and make notes.
  - Look for topic sentences and concluding sentences.
  - Note places where you have trouble understanding something, where there seems to be unnecessary information, or where there is not enough information.
  - Let the writer know which parts of the paper are especially strong or interesting.
  - Ask questions. This is a good way to let the writer know where he or she could add more information.
  - Circle or underline words, phrases, and sentences that you wish to comment on.
- Don't look for grammar or spelling mistakes. Pay attention just to the content and organization of the paper.



## Giving constructive suggestions

**11** For each pair of sentences, check (✓) the one that you feel would be most helpful to the writer. Share your answers with a partner, and explain your choices.

- a.  This is a weak topic sentence.  
 Can you make this topic sentence stronger?
- b.  Did you remember a concluding sentence?  
 Why didn't you write a concluding sentence?
- c.  You didn't write enough.  
 Please explain more about your vacation. Where did you stay? What did you do during the day?
- d.  I'm not sure what this part means.  
 This must be wrong. I can't understand it.
- e.  I think this sentence should come before the next one.  
 Your organization is pretty bad. You'd better change it.
- f.  Why do you keep saying the same thing over and over again?  
 I think these two sentences are really saying the same thing.
- g.  I can't understand why you're talking about your sister.  
 Your paragraph is about your brother, but this sentence is about your sister. Are you sure it's relevant?
- h.  This is a good paragraph. Nice job! I wish I could write as well as you.  
 I like your topic sentence because it has a strong main idea. Your example is funny. I wish I could meet your brother!

**12** Read this paragraph aloud with a partner. Then peer edit it together. Then join another pair and share your comments.

*My father is a teacher. I admire him a lot. I am considering becoming a teacher, too. My older brother works for a big company. My father really loves learning, so he is a natural teacher. My father always helped me with my homework. I guess I will become a teacher.*

- 13** Write a second draft of the paragraph in exercise 12 on page 23. Use the comments you and your partner made. Then exchange paragraphs with your partner. Discuss how your versions are different from the original. Do you think the second drafts are better? Why or why not?

## **Review**

- 14** Read these statements. Write T (true) or F (false). If the statement is false, change it to make it true. Then compare your answers with a partner.
- a. .... Details give more specific information than the topic sentence.
  - b. .... An explanation tells what something is or how it works.
  - c. .... A detail is usually a short, personal story.
  - d. .... The concluding sentence uses the same words as the topic sentence.
  - e. .... The concluding sentence should finish the paragraph with a new idea.
  - f. .... A peer editor should mark any spelling and grammatical mistakes carefully.
  - g. .... A peer editor should give some positive comments.
  - h. .... Peer editing helps the writer, not the reader.
  - i. .... If a peer editor can't understand something that you wrote, then you know he or she isn't a very good reader.
  - j. .... A peer editor should be able to identify your topic sentence, main idea, and concluding sentence easily.

# 4 Descriptive and Process Paragraphs

In this unit, you will learn about ...

- descriptive paragraphs and reasons for writing them.
- organizing and writing descriptive paragraphs using adjectives and prepositions.
- process paragraphs and reasons for writing them.
- using transition words to write a process paragraph.

## ➤ Describing people, places, and processes

A descriptive paragraph explains how someone or something looks or feels. A process paragraph explains how something is done.

## Descriptive paragraphs

### ➤ Using adjectives

Adjectives are words that tell us how things look, feel, taste, sound, or smell. Adjectives also describe how you feel about something. Here are a few common adjectives.

#### shape and size

large / small  
wide / narrow  
round  
rectangular

#### atmosphere

cozy  
comfortable  
warm / cool  
cold / hot

#### how you feel

amazed  
surprised  
happy  
nostalgic

#### appearance

colorful  
unforgettable  
beautiful  
unattractive

A description of a place may answer some of these questions:

- Where is the place?
- How big is it?
- How warm or cold is the place?
- How does the place make you feel? Why?
- What things can you see in this place?
- What colors do you see?

### I List some words to describe these places.

