

# TOPIC SENTENCE

## WHAT IS A TOPIC SENTENCE?



- Some might say that the topic sentence is one of the most important aspects and definitely the most vital sentence within a paragraph. In some cases, you might hear the topic sentence is referred to as the focus sentence but these are essentially the same thing.
- A topic sentence is used to summarise all of the information within a paragraph. When writing in a more formal style, the topic sentence will usually feature at the beginning of the paragraph, although this is not a set rule.

## WHAT IS A TOPIC SENTENCE USED FOR?

- A writer will use a topic sentence as a way of explaining to the audience what the paragraph is going to be about. Any sentences which appear after the topic sentence should give further information about the topic sentence or should give facts about it in order to prove the claim that it has made. The following sentences might also serve as a way to further describe the topic sentence by giving more details about it. For example, if the topic sentence is about animals kept as domestic pets, the following sentences should relate back to that subject.
- On top of this, the topic sentence should always refer back to the thesis statement which was made at the beginning of the essay. You can imagine the thesis statement as being a map which directs the reader as to where you are going with the information and how it is being treated.

## TOPIC SENTENCES EXAMPLES

- **'There are a lot of reasons why (name of a city) is the most polluted in the world.'**

The controlling topic here is that there are 'a lot of reasons' and the topic is that a certain town is the most polluted.

- **'In order to be an effective manager, one must have certain qualities.'**

The topic of this sentence is being an effective manager and it has a controlling idea of 'certain qualities.'

- **'There are a lot of factors which contribute to global warming.'**

This sentence has a topic of global warming whilst the controlling idea is related to 'factors which contribute.'

- **'We can improve teen pregnancy rates by improving education.'**

The topic of this sentence is that teen pregnancy can be improved and the controlling idea is 'improving education.'

## HOW TO WRITE A TOPIC SENTENCE

Whilst there is no set rule for how long a paragraph is 'allowed' to be, there are suggestions that a good paragraph should not exceed five sentences. The length of the paragraph will depend highly on what it needs to discuss and the information within it. There are certain things that each paragraph should adhere to, let's take a look at these rules.

### WRITE YOUR THESIS STATEMENT

- Before you can write a topic sentence, you must have a thesis statement. This should be strong and be effective in summing up the purpose of the essay as well as the main argument.

### OUTLINE YOUR ESSAY AND DRAFT OUT THE TOPIC SENTENCES

- The next step is to create your essay outline, this will give your essay structure and will allow you to detail what is going to be discussed in each paragraph. You will also make note of what data and evidence will be included in each of the paragraphs.
- This is the point where you can play with words and draft up some topic sentences for each of your paragraphs. A topic sentence needs to be much more specific than your thesis statement but it should relate clearly to it.

### EXPAND WITH SOME EVIDENCE

- The remaining sentences within your paragraph should logically flow from the original topic sentence. They should be used to expand on what has been said in the topic sentence. This will not only make your work flow but will also ensure that each paragraph remains focused and relevant to the topic sentence. You should give some evidence to support your topic sentence.

### REVISE THE TOPIC SENTENCES

- What your topic sentence looks like to begin with may not be how it ends up in the final draft and that is OK. It is very important that you look over and edit each topic sentence within the essay as you go along. This will ensure that they remain relevant to the content of your paragraphs.
- When making the final edits for your topic sentences, you should ensure that they are clear enough to allow the reader to know what the paragraph is going to be about but also not so clear that they detail everything you wish to talk about within that paragraph.