

Mastering Paragraphs: The Writing Architect

Learning objective: To understand the purpose of paragraphs in organising writing into logical sections and to identify when to start a new paragraph using the TI-P-E-T rule.

Read the front of each flashcard to test your knowledge of paragraph structure. Use the 'TI-P-E-T' acronym (Time, Place, Event, Topic) to help you decide when to start a new section in your writing.

What is the primary purpose of a paragraph?

A paragraph is a group of sentences that work together to develop a single idea or topic, making a piece of writing easier to read and understand.

What does the 'T' in the TI-P-E-T acronym stand for?

Time: Start a new paragraph when a scene jumps forward or backward in time.

Explain why we might start a new paragraph when the 'Place' changes.

A change in location signals to the reader that the setting has shifted, helping them visualise the new environment without confusion.

When writing a story, why should you start a new paragraph for a new speaker?

Using a new paragraph for a new speaker is a convention that helps the reader track dialogue and understand who is currently talking.

Define the term 'Cohesion' in the context of writing.

Cohesion is the way sentences and paragraphs link together using connecting words and consistent themes to create a smooth flow.

What is a 'Topic Sentence' and where is it usually located?

A topic sentence is the opening sentence of a paragraph that summarises the main idea; it is typically located at the very beginning.

If Max the monkey is writing a report about bananas, when should he start a new paragraph?

Max should start a new paragraph whenever he shifts from one sub-topic to another, such as moving from 'How bananas grow' to 'Nutritional benefits of bananas'.

Compare and contrast: How do paragraphs differ in a narrative story versus a non-fiction report?

In a narrative, paragraphs often shift due to action or dialogue. In non-fiction, they are structured to group specific facts or sub-topics logically.

Justify your answer: Why is it important to avoid 'run-on' blocks of text?

Long blocks of text can overwhelm the reader and obscure the main points; shorter, structured paragraphs provide 'breathing space' and clarity.

What might happen if a writer failed to use paragraphs entirely?

Without paragraphs, the reader would struggle to identify when themes or settings change, resulting in a chaotic and difficult-to-follow text.

Explain the relationship between a sub-heading and a paragraph in a report.

A sub-heading acts as a signpost for the reader, introducing the specific topic that the following paragraph will explore in detail.

Critique this statement: 'Paragraphs are only for long stories.'

This is incorrect, paragraphs are essential for all types of writing, including letters, instructions, and reports, to ensure ideas are organised logically.