

Grade 4 ELA Assessment: Mastering Paragraphs

Learning objective: To demonstrate the ability to organize writing into paragraphs to show changes in time, place, person, or topic.

Read the short passage about Max the monkey and his mathematical adventures. Answer the questions below using your knowledge of paragraph structure and cohesion.

Max the monkey sat in the highest branch of the ancient baobab tree, clutching his notebook. He loved to calculate the distance between the swaying branches. Just as he finished his sum, a gust of wind blew his pencil into the long grass below. Max sighed, knowing he would have to climb down. When he reached the forest floor, he spotted a shiny stone that looked like a perfect geometric sphere. He picked it up, marveling at its smooth surface, and decided to add it to his collection of natural treasures.

Word bank: cohesion · chronological · topic sentence · sub-heading · paragraph break · conjunction · narrative · sequencing

1. Identify the main topic of the first paragraph. Why is it important for the reader that this information is grouped together? (2 marks)

2. If you were to split this passage into two paragraphs, where would you place the paragraph break and why? (3 marks)

3. What is the purpose of a 'topic sentence' in a paragraph? Explain how it helps the reader follow the writer's ideas. (3 marks)

4. Rewrite the following two sentences as one paragraph, using a conjunction to improve the flow: 'Max found a stone. He was very happy.' (2 marks)

5. Explain the difference between a paragraph organized by time (chronological) and a paragraph organized by topic. (4 marks)

6. Max decides to start a new adventure. Write a short paragraph (4-6 sentences) describing Max arriving at a riverbank and starting a new calculation. Ensure your paragraph follows logically from the passage provided. (5 marks)

7. Give one example of how a paragraph break helps to show a shift in 'place' or 'setting'. (2 marks)

8. True or False: Every paragraph must be exactly the same length. Explain your answer. (2 marks)

9. Total: /25

Draw: Draw a scene showing Max the monkey near the riverbank with his notebook, illustrating the setting for your new paragraph.



Extension challenge: Write a third paragraph for the story where Max shares his discovery with his friend Pip the caterpillar. Use at least two words from the word bank to ensure your writing is cohesive.