

Year 5 English Assessment: The Power of Paragraphing

Learning objective: To demonstrate the ability to organise writing into structured paragraphs, using fronted adverbials and cohesive devices to link ideas effectively.

Read the following passage carefully. Answer all questions in the spaces provided. Ensure your responses demonstrate a clear understanding of paragraph structure, cohesion, and the purpose of shifting focus in writing.

Max the monkey sat at his wooden desk, staring intently at a complex long-division problem. He adjusted his spectacles, his brow furrowed in deep concentration. Outside, the jungle canopy was alive with the chatter of birds.

Suddenly, a bright, colourful butterfly landed on the window ledge. Max paused, his pencil hovering in mid-air. He watched as the creature fanned its wings, displaying a pattern of symmetrical spots. He realised that maths was not just found in textbooks; it was woven into the very fabric of nature. He quickly grabbed his notebook to sketch the butterfly's wings, noting the geometric precision of the patterns.

Word bank: Cohesion · Chronological · Transition · Perspective · Structure · Emphasis · Adverbial · Conjunction

1. Identify the main topic of the first paragraph and explain why the author chose to start a new paragraph when the butterfly appeared. (2 marks)

2. What grammatical device is used at the start of the second paragraph to create a shift in time? Explain its effect on the reader. (2 marks)

3. Find and copy one cohesive device (a word or phrase) used in the second paragraph that links Max's previous thoughts to his new action. (1 mark)

4. Rewrite the following sentence using a fronted adverbial to improve the flow: 'Max sat at his desk and solved the puzzle.' (2 marks)

5. Compare and contrast the focus of the two paragraphs. How does the author maintain cohesion despite the change in subject matter? (4 marks)

6. Justify why it is important for a writer to use paragraphs when writing a story. Use examples from the text to support your answer. (4 marks)

7. Imagine Nova the owl enters the room. Write a new paragraph (50–75 words) that introduces her arrival. Ensure you use a clear transition from Max’s discovery to Nova’s entrance. (5 marks)

8. What might happen to the clarity of the story if the entire passage were written as one long paragraph? Explain your reasoning. (5 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene showing Max the monkey's desk, including his maths notebook and the geometric butterfly he is observing. Label the geometric shapes you see on the butterfly's wings.



Extension challenge: Total: /25. Consider the impact of 'paragraph length' on the pacing of a narrative. Write a short reflection on how a very short, one-sentence paragraph can be used to create tension or emphasis in a story, using Max's discovery of the butterfly as your example.