

Mastering Paragraphs with Pip and Max

Learning objective: To understand how to organise, structure, and link paragraphs effectively using cohesive devices and topic sentences.

Read the short text provided by our friends Pip and Max. Answer the questions to test your knowledge of paragraph structure and layout. Remember to use formal English conventions.

Pip the caterpillar loves to read in the quiet garden. A topic sentence usually introduces the main idea of a paragraph. Max the monkey thinks of paragraphs as mathematical blocks that build a story. When you change the speaker, time, place, or topic, you must start a new paragraph. Using words like 'meanwhile' or 'consequently' helps keep your writing flowing smoothly, creating great cohesion.

Word bank: cohesion · topic sentence · subheading · transition · narrative · chronological · conjunction · paragraph

1. **1. What is the main purpose of a topic sentence? A) To finish the story, B) To introduce the main idea of the paragraph*, C) To list all the characters, D) To provide the conclusion. (1 mark)**

2. **2. True or False: You should start a new paragraph every time the speaker changes in a dialogue. (1 mark)**

3. **3. Which of these is a synonym for 'cohesion' in writing? A) Disconnection, B) Confusion, C) Flow*, D) Length. (1 mark)**

4. **4. What is the 1-word term for a word like 'furthermore' or 'however' used to link paragraphs? (1 mark)**

5. **5. When writing a biography, which structure should you use to order your paragraphs? A) Alphabetical, B) Random, C) Chronological*, D) Mathematical. (1 mark)**

6. **6. True or False: A paragraph can consist of only one single sentence. (1 mark)**

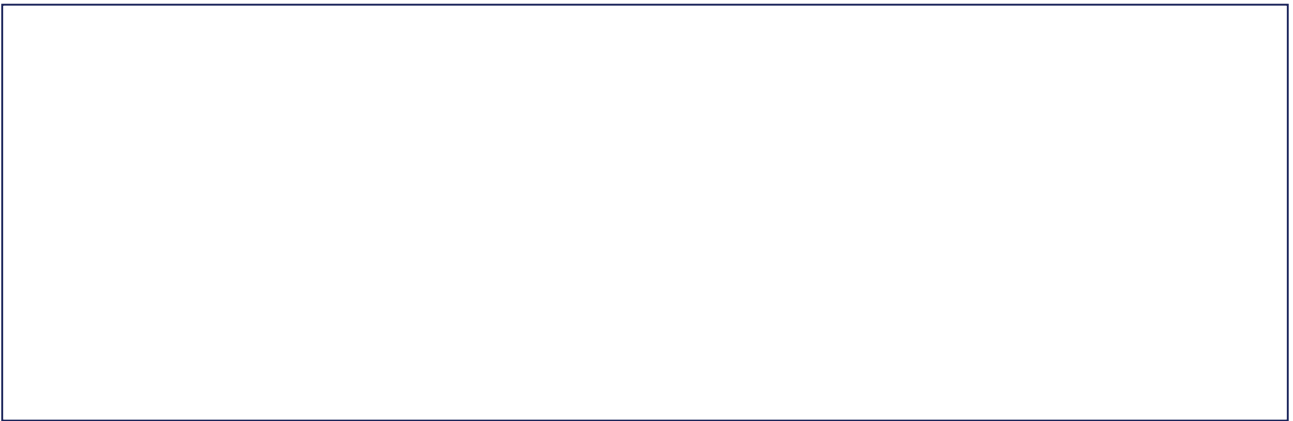
7. **7. If you are writing about a forest and then move to describing the ocean, what must you do? (1 word answer) (1 mark)**

8. **8. Which of these is NOT a good reason to start a new paragraph? A) Changing the time, B) Changing the place, C) Changing the topic, D) Because the page looks too full*. (1 mark)**

9. 9. Fill in the blank: A _____ provides a clear signpost for the reader about what the following paragraphs will be about. (1 mark)

10. 10. Why is it important to use cohesive devices between paragraphs? A) To make the writing longer, B) To help the reader follow the development of ideas*, C) To impress the teacher, D) To fix spelling errors. (1 mark)

Draw: Draw a 'Paragraph Mountain'. Each peak represents a new paragraph. Label the base of each peak with the 'topic' of that section of a story about Pip and Max's adventure in the woods.



Extension challenge: Explain why a text without paragraph breaks would be difficult for a reader to understand. Justify your answer by comparing the structure of a long, un-paragraphed letter to a well-structured newspaper report. What might happen if an author decided to group all their ideas into one single, massive paragraph? Write a short response of 100 words.