

Topic Sentences: An Overview

What is a topic sentence?

A topic sentence is the sentence in a paragraph that:

- Sums up the main idea of the paragraph
- Helps organize the paragraph by giving it a focus point

Topic sentences usually come at the beginning of a paragraph. In an essay, a good topic sentence will signify the paragraph's relevance to the overall thesis.

Types of Topic Sentences

Pivots

Pivots are topic sentences that don't appear at the beginning of a paragraph. Instead, they appear in the middle, to indicate that a change in direction is occurring. A writer might pivot to address a counterargument to their thesis.

Ex: When faced with criticism about the health effects of their products, fast food companies often point the finger at consumer choice. Although this is true, these companies' marketing tactics--and particularly those aimed at children--should not be overlooked.

Complex

A complex topic sentence combines with a transition from the previous paragraph. This works by moving from old information recapped with a subordinate clause to new information presented by an independent clause or clauses.

Ex: Although summer vacation provides a needed break for most students, it is important that they not completely disengage from their studies, as doing so will result in academic losses that will have to be made up in the coming year.

Bridge Sentence

Like the complex sentence, this kind of topic sentence leans on what came before it to transition into the current paragraph. The difference is that bridge sentences are less complicated and don't involve multiple clauses.

Ex: The solution to the rise in sedentary lifestyles lies in educating the public about the importance of exercise.

For more information and examples, visit Walden University's resource [here](#).



Georgia College Writing Center
writing.center@gcsu.edu
Mon. - Thur. 9am - 7pm | Fri. 9am - 2pm
Sat. 2pm - 4pm | Sun. 2pm - 4pm*

Schedule an appointment through the Unify portal

*All Writing Center appointments are virtual for Spring 2021

