Writing Strong Paragraphs

Paragraphs are the building blocks of your paper; they allow you to separate your paper into individual ideas and subtopics. They are individual units that seek to introduce and support individual claims that connect to your thesis.

Because every claim you make in your paper will need to be supported with appropriate evidence (ex: citations, statistics, quotations from a text, and references to legitimate journals), you can think about your body paragraphs as the box that will deliver each claim in your paper. Everything connected to each claim will be in the paragraph, and every paragraph will have a claim to prove.

# Paragraph Basics.

* A paragraph should express and support a single idea
* Paragraphs should generally be about 4-6 sentences in length
* You can think of a paragraph as a “mini-essay” – it should have an introductory “topic sentence”, body sentences that support your topic, and a final sentence that serves as a conclusion/transitional statement to the next paragraph.

# Inside the Paragraph Box

1. **Create a topic sentence**. Each paragraph in your essay should be centered on one specific idea. That idea should connect back to your thesis, and it should be stated explicitly in a topic sentence (usually the first sentence).
2. **Support your topic sentence**. Every sentence that follows your topic sentence should provide evidence and arguments for the statement you make in your topic sentence.
3. **Wrap up your paragraph with a transition**. At the end of your paragraph, you want to include a sentence that wraps up the evidence and idea you’re exploring, but also serves as a transition, or a “bridge”, into your next one.

If you need further assistance with this or any other writing issue, visit the Academic Writing Center!