

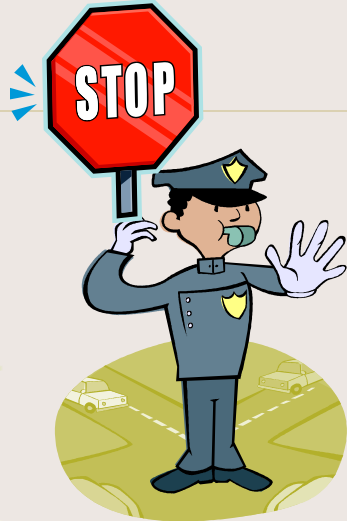
The image shows the cover of a spiral-bound notebook. The cover is a light beige or tan color with a fine, woven fabric texture. On the left side, there is a silver metal spiral binding. The text is centered on the cover in a black, serif font.

Jane Schaffer Writing Strategy

How to Write an Effective Paragraph

Created by Hollie Gustke

The Prompt



Before writing anything, know your assignment— **READ THE PROMPT!**
What are you being asked to do?

Response-to-Literature Writing=
writing that discusses what is of
value in a work of literature.

Literary Response requires a careful,
critical look at the reading.

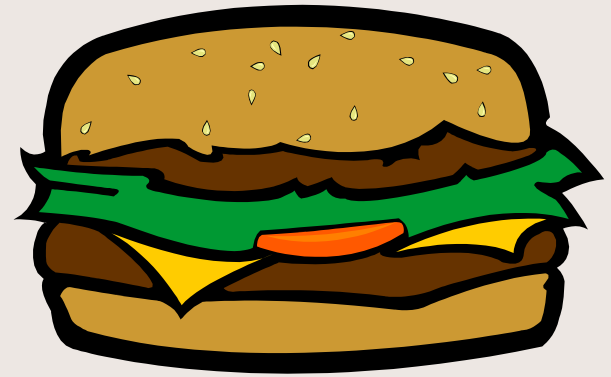
Get Ready to Color Your World!

How to Write an Effective Paragraph

- Materials: When we write, we will use blue, red, and green pens.
- **BLUE** is for Topic Sentences (**TS**) and Concluding Sentences (**CS**).
- **RED** is for Concrete Details (**CD**).
- **GREEN** is for Commentary Sentences (**CM**).

Step 1: TOPIC SENTENCE

- A Topic Sentence (TS) is the top bun of a hamburger.

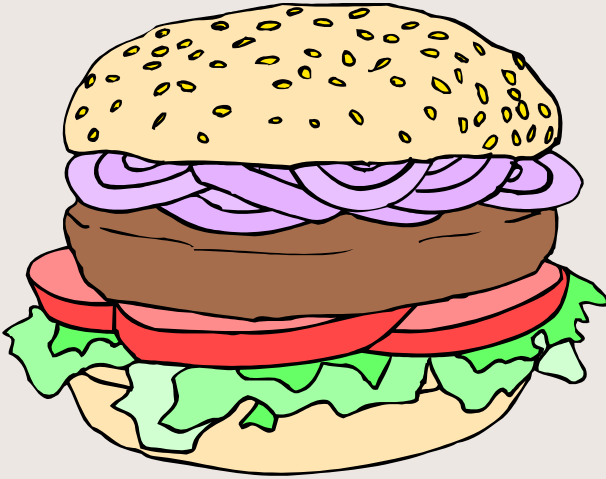


- TS = first sentence of the paragraph. It shows the main idea.
- Usually a mildly controversial statement--something that you have to prove. It can be as brief as 3 words!

Example Topic Sentence (TS)

1) In the fairy tale “The Three Little Pigs,” the third pig is very wise.

Step 2: CONCRETE DETAILS



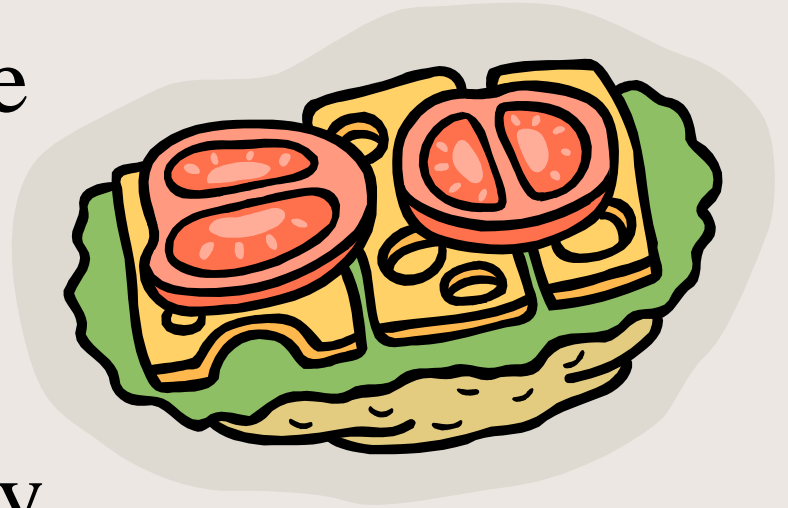
- Concrete Details (**CD**) are the meat of the hamburger.
- **CD**s = *Support* for your **TS**. (facts, quotes, examples, etc. from text)
- **CD**s can't be argued with—a **CD** is evidence that supports your point!

Example Concrete Detail (CD)

2) For example, remembering his mother's warning about a wolf, he builds his house out of sturdy brick.

Step 3: COMMENTARY

- Commentary Sentences (**CM**) are the “extras” on the hamburger—the tomato, cheese, lettuce, mayo—they make it **delicious!**

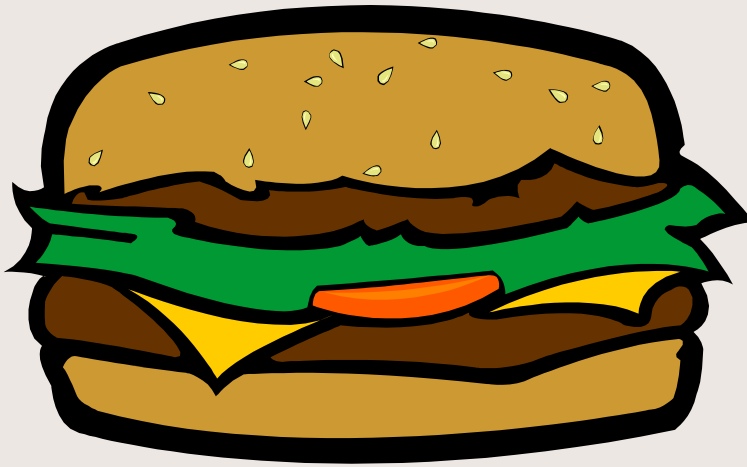


- **CMs** = your analysis, interpretation, explanation, or insight into the text.

Example Commentary Sentences (2 CMs)

3) The wolf is unable to blow down the brick house. 4) This shows that the third pig is smarter than his brothers, who were both eaten by the wolf.

Step 4: CONCLUDING SENTENCE



- A concluding sentence (**CS**) is the bottom bun of the hamburger.
- A **CS** wraps up the paragraph. It rephrases the main idea.

Example Concluding Sentence (CS)

5) In conclusion, the third pig outsmarts not only his brothers but the “big, bad” wolf as well.

TS, CD, CM, CS—Now What?

- **CHUNKING**

A combination of CDs and CMs is called a *chunk*.

For a *literary response*, we will use a combination (or “ratio”) of 1:2.

That is, for every 1 CD, you will have 2 CMs.

One Chunk: 1 CD + 2 CM

For example, remembering his mother's warning about a wolf, he builds his house out of sturdy brick. The wolf is unable to blow down the brick house. This shows that the third pig is smarter than his brothers, who were both eaten by the wolf.

Ratio = 1:2

Transitions

- A good paragraph will also use transition words. These are words or phrases that help readers connect your ideas.
- Example transitions:

For example,

Thus,

In summary,

For instance,

Because of this,

Hence,

Consequently,

As a result,

Therefore,



Does It Flow?



Now you know how to write
a one- chunk paragraph...

LET'S EAT!



Step 6: A Whole Paragraph



In the fairy tale “The Three Little Pigs,” the third pig is very wise. For example, remembering his mother’s warning about a wolf, he builds his house out of sturdy brick. The wolf is unable to blow down the brick house. This shows that the third pig is smarter than his brothers, who were both eaten by the wolf. In conclusion, the third pig outsmarts not only his brothers but the “big, bad” wolf as well.