Building Strong Paragraphs for academic writing

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What is a paragraph?

A collection of related sentences about a single topic or thesis.
Paragraphs are necessary when writing...

- Helps the writer stay focused
- Helps readers understand the message you’re trying to convey
Great ideas and factual information

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your readers understanding what you saying
Great ideas and supporting evidence

Arrangement in organized manner

I completely understand
Paragraphs should be...

1. **Unified**: All sentences should be related to a single controlling idea.

2. **Clearly related to the thesis**: Refer to the central/main idea, or thesis, of the paper (Rosen and Behrens 119).

3. **Coherent**: Arranged in a logical manner.

4. **Well-developed**: Ideas discussed in the paragraph should be adequately explained and supported with evidence.
Paragraph Structure

**TOPIC SENTENCE**
- Informs reader of your idea or thesis the paragraph will focus.
- It organizes your entire paragraph.

**INTEGRATE SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**
- Integrate new understandings into your paper
- Prove your idea based off research
- Use proper in-text citations, appropriate signal phrases, and transitions

**PROVIDE ANALYSIS OR FURTHER EXPLANATION**
- Give examples
- Explain the example

**CONCLUDE**
- Close the paragraph (remind reader of relevant points)
- Transition to the next paragraph
Body paragraph - example

Children can also be influenced negatively as a result of media. Over exposure to television and gaming are two examples of possible negative impacts on children. Research suggests that children who are over exposed to television are more likely to display aggressive behaviours than those who are not. For example, a ten year longitudinal study of over 430 children revealed that eight year old boys “who were in the upper 20% of television exposure were significantly higher on measures of aggression than the study’s other participants” (Eron, Huesmann, Lefkowit and Walder 1972, cited in Sullivan 2013, p.46). The study also found that these children continued to show aggressive behaviour throughout their childhood and teens (Eron, Huesmann, Lefkowitz and Walder 1972, cited in Sullivan 2013). Furthermore, these children, who were studied into their twenties and thirties, continued to show high measures of aggression (Huesmann, Moise-Titus, Podolski & Eron 2003, cited in Sullivan 2013). This suggests that over exposure to television can have long term and negative impacts on the behaviour of children. These effects not only impact aggressive behaviour, but also children’s attitudes and values (Clay, 2003). Additional research on the link between exposure to video gaming and aggression is suggesting similar findings, with a link between time spent on video games and higher scores on measures of aggression (Anderson and Bushman 2001 cited in Kirsh 2003). They suggest gaming influences aggressive behaviour, cognition, and physiological arousal. Given that 80 percent of the most popular video games on the market today are violent in nature (Diez 1998, cited in Kirsh 2003), the influence of gaming on levels of aggression are concerning. Media, then, can have a negative impact on levels of aggression on children who are over exposed to television and video games.
Many Canadians feel that Canada’s policy of bilingualism is a good one because it protects francophone culture and benefits the country as a whole. For example, language is a large aspect of francophones’ culture, so retaining that language is essential to retaining their cultural identity. Furthermore, Vaillancourt (2004) states that people who have learned another language have “better developed intelligence” than those who are unilingual, so it might also be argued that a national policy of bilingualism supports the general intelligence of Canadians. He goes on to say that bilingualism also benefits a society collectively by increasing the market for imports and exports and making it “a receptive place of immigration for a larger number of potential immigrants” (Vaillancourt, 2004). Thus, there are good reasons to keep Canada’s policy of bilingualism both for the protection it affords French culture and identity and for benefits it offers the entire nation. (Adapted from an essay by Jennifer DeWit, used with permission.)
Let’s look at one of your paragraphs.

Do you have...

- topic sentence
- supporting evidence
- examples
- explanations/analysis of your examples
- conclusion sentence
- in-text citations
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**PROVIDE ANALYSIS OR FURTHER EXPLANATION**
- Give examples
- Explain the example

**CONCLUDE**
- Close the paragraph (remind reader of relevant points)
- Transition to the next paragraph
Thanks for your time!

Questions?
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