

Paragraph Structure

A paragraph is a basic unit of organization in writing in which a group of **related** sentences develops **one main idea**.

A well-written paragraph has three major **structural parts**:

- Topic sentence (main idea)
- Supporting sentences (to develop the topic sentence)
- Clincher or concluding sentence (optional)

Main idea and topic sentence

The main idea of a paragraph is generally introduced by a key sentence. This is often called a topic sentence.

- ①. The main idea is an **assertion** (主張/斷言/觀點) in the form of a **complete sentence**;
- ②. The main idea contains both a **topic** and a **controlling** idea. It limits the topic to a specific area;
- ③. The main idea is **general** enough to hold the paragraph. All other sentences offer "proof" or "evidence" to support the main idea.
- ④. It often - but not always - comes at the beginning of the paragraph.