

Aula 5

BODY PARAGRAPH I: LOGICAL DIVISION OF IDEAS

META

This class aims at explaining the logical division ideas in body paragraphs.

OBJETIVOS

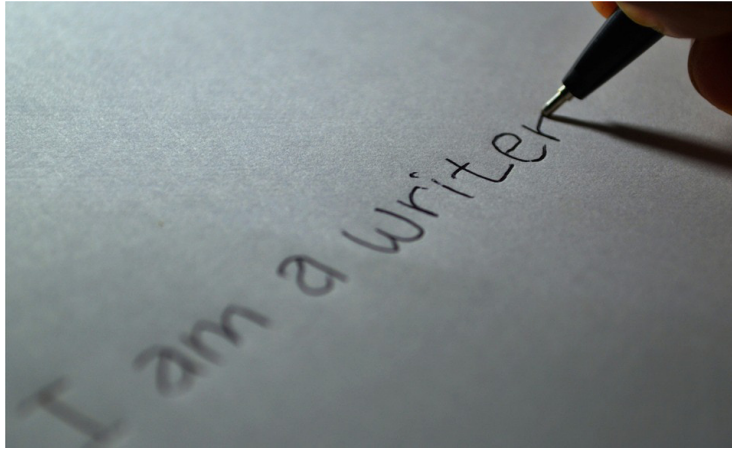
At the end of this class, it is expected that the students:
Identify logical division of ideas in body paragraphs;
Recognise the main parts of the body paragraph.

PRÉ-REQUISITOS

Previous knowledge about paragraph structure and types of paragraphs.

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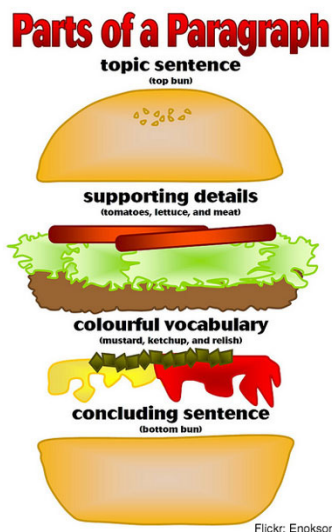
INTRODUÇÃO



Fonte: <https://theimpactnews.com>

Welcome to Class 5! Since you know how to write an introduction to your essay by now, we shall move on to body paragraphs. They are crucial to your essay because they will give support to your thesis statements. In general, there are least two body paragraphs in an essay so that the arguments are properly developed and the reader gets your point, even if they don't agree with you.

Thus, a cohesive body paragraph should have MEAT (totally suitable for vegetarians): Main idea; Evidence; Analysis; Transition. Each of them is vital for a good body paragraph as well as transition thesis statements and transitional signals.



Source: <http://3.bp.blogspot.com>

THE BODY PARAGRAPHS

Body paragraphs help you prove your thesis and move you along a compelling trajectory from your introduction to your conclusion. If your thesis is a simple one, you might not need a lot of body paragraphs to prove it. If it's more complicated, you'll need more body paragraphs. An easy way to remember the parts of a body paragraph is to think of them as the MEAT of your essay:

Main Idea. The part of a topic sentence that states the main idea of the body paragraph. All of the sentences in the paragraph connect to it. Keep in mind that main ideas are...

- like labels. They appear in the first sentence of the paragraph and tell your reader what's inside the paragraph.
- arguable. They're not statements of fact; they're debatable points that you prove with evidence.
- focused. Make a specific point in each paragraph and then prove that point.

Evidence. The parts of a paragraph that prove the main idea. You might include different types of evidence in different sentences. Keep in mind that different disciplines have different ideas about what counts as evidence and they adhere to different citation styles. Examples of evidence include...

- quotations and/or paraphrases from sources.
- facts, e.g. statistics or findings from studies you've conducted.
- narratives and/or descriptions, e.g. of your own experiences.

Analysis. The parts of a paragraph that explain the evidence. Make sure you tie the evidence you provide back to the paragraph's main idea. In other words, discuss the evidence.

Transition. The part of a paragraph that helps you move fluidly from the last paragraph. Transitions appear in topic sentences along with main ideas, and they look both backward and forward in order to help you connect your ideas for your reader. Don't end paragraphs with transitions; start with them.

Keep in mind that MEAT does not occur in that order. The "Transition" and the "Main Idea" often combine to form the first sentence—the topic sentence—and then paragraphs contain multiple sentences of evidence and analysis. For example, a paragraph might look like this: TM. E. E. A. E. E. A. A.

Source:<https://lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/undergraduates/writing-guides/how-do-i-write-an-intro--conclusion----body-paragraph.html>

TROUBLESHOOTING PARAGRAPHS

Problem: the paragraph has no topic sentence.

Imagine each paragraph as a sandwich. The real content of the sandwich—the meat or other filling—is in the middle. It includes all the evidence you need to make the point. But it gets kind of messy to eat a sandwich without any bread. Your readers don't know what to do with all the evidence you've given them. So, the top slice of bread (the first sentence of the paragraph) explains the topic (or controlling idea) of the paragraph. And, the bottom slice (the last sentence of the paragraph) tells the reader how the paragraph relates to the broader argument. In the original and revised paragraphs below, notice how a topic sentence expressing the controlling idea tells the reader the point of all the evidence.

Original paragraph

Piranhas rarely feed on large animals; they eat smaller fish and aquatic plants. When confronted with humans, piranhas' first instinct is to flee, not attack. Their fear of humans makes sense. Far more piranhas are eaten by people than people are eaten by piranhas. If the fish are well-fed, they won't bite humans.

Revised paragraph

Although most people consider piranhas to be quite dangerous, they are, for the most part, entirely harmless. Piranhas rarely feed on large animals; they eat smaller fish and aquatic plants. When confronted with humans, piranhas' first instinct is to flee, not attack. Their fear of humans makes sense. Far more piranhas are eaten by people than people are eaten by piranhas. If the fish are well-fed, they won't bite humans.

Once you have mastered the use of topic sentences, you may decide that the topic sentence for a particular paragraph really shouldn't be the first sentence of the paragraph. This is fine—the topic sentence can actually go at the beginning, middle, or end of a paragraph; what's important is that it is in there somewhere so that readers know what the main idea of the paragraph is and how it relates back to the thesis of your paper. Suppose that we wanted to start the piranha paragraph with a transition sentence—something that reminds the reader of what happened in the previous paragraph—rather than with the topic sentence. Let's suppose that the previous paragraph was about all kinds of animals that people are afraid of, like sharks, snakes, and spiders. Our paragraph might look like this (the topic sentence is bold):

Like sharks, snakes, and spiders, piranhas are widely feared. Although most people consider piranhas to be quite dangerous, they are, for the most part, entirely harmless. Piranhas rarely feed on large animals; they eat smaller fish and aquatic plants. When confronted with humans, piranhas' first instinct is to flee, not attack. Their fear of humans makes sense. Far more piranhas are eaten by people than people are eaten by piranhas. If the fish are well-fed, they won't bite humans.

Problem: the paragraph has more than one controlling idea.

If a paragraph has more than one main idea, consider eliminating sentences that relate to the second idea, or split the paragraph into two or more paragraphs, each with only one main idea. Watch our short video on reverse outlining to learn a quick way to test whether your paragraphs are unified. In the following paragraph, the final two sentences branch off into a different topic; so, the revised paragraph eliminates them and concludes with a sentence that reminds the reader of the paragraph's main idea.

Original paragraph

Although most people consider piranhas to be quite dangerous, they are, for the most part, entirely harmless. Piranhas rarely feed on large animals; they eat smaller fish and aquatic plants. When confronted with humans, piranhas' first instinct is to flee, not attack. Their fear of humans makes sense. Far more piranhas are eaten by people than people are eaten by piranhas. A number of South American groups eat piranhas. They fry or grill the fish and then serve them with coconut milk or tucupi, a sauce made from fermented manioc juices.

Revised paragraph

Although most people consider piranhas to be quite dangerous, they are, for the most part, entirely harmless. Piranhas rarely feed on large animals; they eat smaller fish and aquatic plants. When confronted with humans, piranhas' first instinct is to flee, not attack. Their fear of humans makes sense. Far more piranhas are eaten by people than people are eaten by piranhas. If the fish are well-fed, they won't bite humans.

Problem: transitions are needed within the paragraph.

You are probably familiar with the idea that transitions may be needed between paragraphs or sections in a paper. Sometimes they are also helpful within the body of a single paragraph. Within a paragraph, transitions are often single words or short phrases that help to establish relationships between ideas and to create a logical progression of those ideas in a paragraph. This is especially likely to be true within paragraphs that discuss multiple examples. Let's take a look at a version of our piranha paragraph that uses transitions to orient the reader:

Although most people consider piranhas to be quite dangerous, they are, except in two main situations, entirely harmless. Piranhas rarely feed on large animals; they eat smaller fish and aquatic plants. When confronted with humans, piranhas' instinct is to flee, not attack. But there are two situations in which a piranha bite is likely. The first is when a frightened piranha is lifted out of the water—for example, if it has been caught in a fishing net. The second is when the water level in pools where piranhas are living falls too low. A large number of fish may be trapped in a single pool, and if they are hungry, they may attack anything that enters the water.

In this example, you can see how the phrases “the first” and “the second” help the reader follow the organization of the ideas in the paragraph.

Source: <http://writingcenter.web.unc.edu/handouts/paragraphs/>

Body Paragraphs

The body paragraphs in an essay are like the supporting sentences in a paragraph. They are the place to develop your topic and prove your points. You should organize body paragraphs according to some sort of pattern, such as chronological order or comparison/contrast. Sometimes, depending on your topic, you will need to use a combination of patterns.

Logical Division of Ideas

A basic pattern for essays is logical division of ideas. In this pattern, you divide your topic into subtopics and then discuss each subtopic in a separate paragraph. Logical division is an appropriate pattern for explaining causes, reasons, types, kinds, qualities, methods, advantages, and disadvantages, as these typical college exam questions ask you to do.

ECONOMICS	Explain the three causes of inflation.
AGRICULTURE/LANDSCAPE DESIGN	Describe the basic types of soils and the additives needed to prepare each type for planting.
U.S. HISTORY	Discuss the causes of the U.S. Civil War.
BUSINESS	Explain the three main forms of business organization.
HEALTH SCIENCES	Describe the various classes of drugs used to treat depression.

Three Keys

Here are three keys to organizing a logical division essay.

1. Divide your topic into subtopics, and then discuss each subtopic in a separate paragraph.
2. Write a thesis statement that indicates logical division.
3. Use transitions between paragraphs to guide your reader from one subtopic to the next.

Thesis Statements for Logical Division of Ideas

The thesis statement of a logical division essay often indicates the number of subtopics:

Native Americans have made valuable contributions to modern U.S. culture in four main areas.

Inflation has three causes.

The thesis statement may even name the specific subtopics:

- a. Native Americans have made many valuable contributions to modern U.S. culture, particularly in the areas of language, art, food, and government.
- b. Inflation has three causes: excessive government spending, unrestrained consumer borrowing, and an increase in the supply of paper money.

Paired conjunctions (*both . . . and*, *not only . . . but also*) are an especially effective way to list two subtopics:

- c. Young people in my culture have less freedom than young people in the United States **not only** in their choice of lifestyle **but also** in their choice of careers.
- d. Puppies, like children, need **both** love **and** discipline to become responsible members of society.

A colon (:) is often useful before lists of two, three, or more subtopics in a thesis statement:

- e. Young people in my culture have less freedom than young people in the United States in three areas: where they live, whom they marry, and what their job is.
- f. The Father of Psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, believed that the human mind had three separate parts: the id, the ego, and the superego.

Source: OSHIMA, A.; HOGUE, A. Writing Academic English. 4th ed. White Plains, NY: Pearson Longman, 2006.

PRACTICE

A. Check (✓) the thesis statements that suggest logical division as a method of organization.

- _____ 1. Teenagers demonstrate their independence in several ways.
- _____ 2. My eighteenth birthday was the most memorable day in my life so far.
- _____ 3. On their eighteenth birthdays, U.S. citizens receive two important rights/responsibilities: They can vote, and they can sign legal contracts.
- _____ 4. In most occupations, women are still unequal to men in three areas: salary, power, and status.
- _____ 5. Living in a dormitory offers several advantages to first-year students.
- _____ 6. Photosynthesis is the process by which plants manufacture their own food.
- _____ 7. A college degree in international business requires (1) a knowledge of business procedures and (2) a knowledge of cultural differences.
- _____ 8. A computer is both faster and more accurate than a human.
- _____ 9. Giving a surprise birthday party requires careful planning.
- _____ 10. Being an only child has both advantages and disadvantages.

B. Analyze the following thesis statements.

Note: You may want to use one of the topics in this practice or the next for your own essay at the end of the chapter.

Step 1 Locate the main topic and the subtopics in each of the following thesis statements.

Step 2 Draw a box around the topic.

Step 3 Underline the subtopics.

Step 4 Draw a circle around the words or punctuation marks that introduce the subtopics.

The first one has been done for you as an example.

1. Capital punishment should be abolished (not only) because it deprives another person of life (but also) because it does not stop crime.
2. Women generally live longer than men for two main reasons: They tend to take better care of their health, and they have better resistance to stress.
3. Teenagers declare their separateness from their parents by the way they dress and by the way they talk.
4. In choosing a major, a student has to consider various factors, such as personal interest, job opportunities, and the availability of training institutions.

Source: OSHIMA, A.; HOGUE, A. Writing Academic English. 4th ed. White Plains, NY: Pearson Longman, 2006.

Ordering sentences

- 12** Order the steps to form a process paragraph. Write 1 next to the first step, 2 for the second step, and so on.

Introduction to linguistics: language-learning research project

Conduct an experiment to find out whether learners of English use English more correctly in a written test or in informal conversation.

- a. Next, make a written test that checks the grammar point you are researching. This could be a fill-in-the-blanks test, a correct-the-errors test, or another style. It should have at least ten questions, but it should not be too long.
- b. After giving the written test, interview each learner individually for about ten minutes. Try to make the interviews informal and friendly. Be sure to ask questions that will encourage learners to use the grammar point you are researching. Record the interviews. (Ask for learners' permission first!)
- c. After you have counted the errors, calculate the score as a percentage. Do this for the written test and the spoken interview.
- d. Next, read the tests and listen to the recordings. Make a note of how many times your chosen grammar point was used, and how many times it was used incorrectly. Do this for both the written test and the recorded conversation.
- e. Third, find about ten intermediate-level English learners who will agree to take your test. Arrange a time to give the test to each learner.
- f. Finally, prepare two graphs to compare your results. Did learners make more mistakes on the written test or while they were speaking?
- g. First, choose a common English grammar point you would like to use in your research. Ask your teacher for a suggestion if you need help choosing one.



- 13** Write a process paragraph about a topic that you know well. First, brainstorm all the steps that need to be followed. Then write the paragraph. Remember to use transitions.

Source: OSHIMA, A.; HOGUE, A. Writing Academic English. 4th ed. White Plains, NY: Pearson Longman, 2006, p. 31.

WEB SEARCH

Access the website: <http://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-a-body-paragraph-definition-examples-quiz.html>

And the quiz: <http://study.com/academy/practice/quiz-worksheet-writing-body-paragraphs.html>



SUMMARY

Body paragraphs are important because they will give support to your thesis statement from the introduction. This is the sequence that represents a good progression through the body paragraph:

1. Insert a topic sentence
2. Explain your topic sentence
3. Introduce your evidence
4. Insert your evidence
5. Unpack your evidence
6. Explain your evidence
7. Insert a concluding sentence

Source: <https://depts.washington.edu/owrc/Handouts/Strong%20Body%20Paragraphs.pdf>

Without them, your body paragraph will lack structure and your essay will be compromised. Consequently, we shall go on talking about body paragraphs and transitional signals in order to exercise your writing in English.



SELF-EVALUATION

Did I increase my knowledge related to Body Paragraph?
Am I able to identify the logical division of ideas in body paragraphs?



NEXT CLASS

Next class, your studies will continue on Body Paragraphs. See ya!

REFERENCES:

OSHIMA, A.; HOGUE, A. **Writing Academic English**. 4th ed. White Plains, NY: Pearson Longman, 2006.

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