



Sentences, Paragraphs, Essays, and Putting Them Together A-State Online Writing Center

Four types of sentence structures:

1. **Simple Sentence:** one subject + one verb = one complete thought; this is the most basic type of sentence.
2. **Compound Sentence** = one subject + one verb + one conjunction + one subject + one verb. (Two thoughts jammed together to make a conjunction sandwich).
3. **Complex Sentence** = one independent clause + one dependent clause.
4. **Compound-Complex** = two independent clauses + one conjunction + one dependent clause.

Clause: In its most basic form, a clause is the combination of a subject and a predicate

1. **Subject:** The word that controls the verb
 - a. Ex: **Jim** eats candy. (Here, **Jim** is the subject).
2. **Predicate:** It's part of a sentence or clause that has a verb and states something about the subject (Dictionary.com).

Independent Clause: A sentence that stands alone as a complete thought.

Dependent Clause: A sentence that is unable to stand alone. It “depends” on the independent clause to help it become a full sentence.

Word Clues that there's a dependent clause nearby: since, although, after, because, when if, then.

Conjunction: It's the glue between two simple sentences, and it helps to hold together more complex sentences. FANBOYS is the easiest acronym to think of in helping one remember all of the conjunctions: **F**or, **A**nd, **N**or, **B**ut, **O**r, **Y**et, **S**o.

<https://www.printnpractice.com/support-files/diagramming-sentences-reference.pdf>

Paragraph Structure: PEEL (Point, Evidence, Explanation, Link)

1. **Topic Sentence:** This is normally the sentence that addresses the main theme of the text by appropriately attracting the reader's attention. This is typically only one sentence and the one that starts the paragraph.
2. **Supporting Sentences:** This is the **MEAT** of the paragraph. Gathered evidence and the explanation of that evidence are stored in these sentences. Because this section holds so much information, a thorough paper will have three or more sentences in this section.
3. **Concluding Sentences:** Between one and two sentences, this part of the paragraph where the evidence is linked to the theme of the text, and it officially becomes a cohesive piece of our paragraph puzzle.

Essay Structure: The structure of an essay parallels the structure of a paragraph almost exactly.

1. **Introduction:** This paragraph works like the topic sentence of the paper. The most basic form contains about five sentences. One sentence is the hook (the attention-getter); the three+ next sentences will be the background information on the topic and help set up

what the paper is about to discuss. The last sentence of the introduction is the most important: the THESIS.

2. **The Body Paragraphs I, II, III** (and more depending on the complexity of the prompt):
These each contain about five sentences and is the MEAT of the essay. The first sentence addresses one of the main concepts from the thesis. The next sentence is the quoted/summarized evidence to support the main concept, followed by another sentence or two explaining how the quoted text supports the argument. The last sentence should wrap up this point, make it a cohesive piece of the text, and link it back to the thesis.
3. **Conclusion:** Ideally, every paragraph should have about five-seven sentences; the same is true with the conclusion. The conclusion forces the reader to look back at all the components of the thesis and the evidence to support that thesis in order to see it as “the big picture.”