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## How to write a central idea paragraph

The main idea of a paragraph is the author's message about the topic. It is often expressed directly or it can be implied. It is easy to identify a main idea that is directly expressed in the text. Main ideas are often found: at the beginning of paragraphs. The first sentence often explains the subject being discussed in the passage. In the concluding sentences of a paragraph. The main idea can be expressed as a summation of the information in the paragraph as well as a link to the information in the next paragraph. The main idea is not always clearly stated. It is more difficult to identify a main idea when it is inferred or implied. It can be implied through other words in the paragraph. An implied main idea can be found in several ways. Several sentences in a paragraph can imply the main idea by introducing facts about the topic before actually stating the topic. Implied ideas can be drawn from facts, reasons, or examples that give hints or suggestions concerning the main idea. These hints will be clues leading you to discover the main idea in the selected text. Try the passage below to see if you can pick out the main idea. "To many parents, the infant's crying may be mainly an irritation, especially if it continues for long periods. But crying serves important functions for the child as well as for the parents. For the child, crying helps improve lung capacity and the respiratory system. Perhaps more important, the cry serves as a signal of distress. When babies cry, they indicate that they are hungry or in pain, and this is important information for parents." Use the hints below to determine the correct main idea of this paragraph. After reading a paragraph ask, "What point is the author making in this passage?" Ask the following questions: Who - Does this passage discuss a person or group of people? When - Does the information contain a reference to time? Where - Does the text name a place? Why - Do you find a reason or explanation for something that happened? How - Does this information indicate a method or a theory? How can I determine if I have selected the correct main idea of a paragraph? If you are able to summarize the information in the passage in your own words, you have absorbed the correct main idea. To accomplish this goal, try the steps listed below after reading a short section of your textbook. Write a short summary in your own words about what you have read. Does your summary agree with this general topic? Does your summary contain the same ideas being expressed by the author? Could you write a headline (or textbook subheading) that would express your summary in less than five words? If you are able to rephrase your choice of a topic sentence into a question and then determine if the passage answers your question, you have been successful at selecting a main idea. Finding the Main Idea How Can I Locate the Main Idea? Once you can find the topic, you are ready to find the main idea. The main idea is the point of the paragraph. It is the most important thought about the topic. To figure out the main idea, ask yourself this question: What is being said about the person, thing, or idea (the topic)? The author can locate the main idea in different places within a paragraph. The main idea is usually a sentence, and it is usually the first sentence. The writer then uses the rest of the paragraph to support the main idea. Let's use the paragraph below as an example. First find the topic, then look for the main idea. Summer is a wonderful time to spend at West Beach. It is a beach with light-colored, soft sand. The coastline goes on for a long way and many people enjoy walking along it. Children like to play in the surf and walk along the rocks that are visible at low tide. This is a fun beach for people of all ages. In this paragraph: the topic is West Beach the main idea (what the writer is saying about the topic) is that summer is a wonderful time at West Beach Here is another example: The movie Apollo 13 was a blockbuster for the summer of 1995. It is an exciting story about space exploration. In the movie, the astronauts get in trouble while they are trying to return to Earth. People in the audience are on the edge of their seats waiting to see what happens. What makes it even more exciting is that it is a true story. In this paragraph: the topic is the movie Apollo 13 the main idea is in the first sentence: Apollo 13 was a blockbuster for the summer of 1995 While the main idea is usually in the first sentence, the next most common placement is in the last sentence of a paragraph. The author gives supporting information first and then makes the point in the last sentence. Here's a paragraph we can use as an example. Try to locate the topic and the main idea. Most teenagers and young adults do not know what they want to do for the rest of their lives. It is a big decision. There are a number of things you can do to narrow the choices. For example you can take an interest test, do some research on your own about a career, try volunteer work in the field in which you are interested, or "job-shadow", in which you spend a day with a person who is working in a field that interests you. These are just a few helpful ideas as you begin to choose a career. In this paragraph: the topic is jobs or career choices the main idea is a few ideas to help the reader choose a career Finally, an author might put the main idea in the middle of a paragraph. The author will spend a few sentences introducing the topic, present the main idea, then spend the rest of the paragraph supporting it. This can make the main idea more difficult to find. See if you can find the topic and main idea in the paragraph below. The United States seems to be in love with the idea of going out to eat. Because of this, a real variety of restaurants has come about specializing in all kinds of foods. McDonald's is the king of a subgroup of restaurants called fast-food restaurants. Chances are, no matter where you live, there is a McDonald's restaurant near you. There are even McDonald's in the Soviet Union. Now McDonald's is trying something new. It is called McDonald's Express and there is a test site in Peabody, Massachusetts. It is part of a Mobil gas station. This allows you to fill up with gas and fill up on food at the same time. What will they think of next? In this paragraph: the topic is McDonald's the main idea is in the middle of the paragraph, in the third sentence: McDonald's is the king of fast food Excerpted from: Study Skills: A Landmark School Student Guide (out of print) by Diane Vener, © 2002 Landmark School, Inc. Let us know what you think! Email outreach@landmarkschool.org to share your thoughts and strategies. Outreach offers a variety of online courses that include practical, effective strategies for educators to implement in their classrooms. View Course Descriptions CC0/Free-Photos/Pixabay Knowing how to write a college essay is a useful skill for anyone who plans to go to college. Most colleges and universities ask you to submit a writing sample with your application. As a student, you'll also write essays in your courses. Impress your professors with your knowledge and skill by using these great essay writing tips. Prepare to Answer the Question Most college essays ask you to answer a question or synthesize information you learned in class. Review notes you have from lectures, read the recommended texts and make sure you understand the topic. You should refer to these sources in your essay. CC0/ill fool/Pixabay Plan Your Essay Many students see planning as a waste of time, but it actually saves you time. Take a few minutes to think about the topic and what you want to say about it. You can write an outline, draw a chart or use a graphic organizer to arrange your ideas. This gives you a chance to spot problems in your ideas before you spend time writing out the paragraphs. Choose a Writing Method That Feels Comfortable You might have to type your essay before turning it in, but that doesn't mean you have to write it that way. Some people find it easy to write out their ideas by hand. Others prefer typing in a word processor where they can erase and rewrite as needed. Find the one that works best for you and stick with it. CC0/Free-Photos/Pixabay View It as a Conversation Writing is a form of communication, so think of your essay as a conversation between you and the reader. Think about your response to the source material and the topic. Decide what you want to tell the reader about the topic. Then, stay focused on your response as you write. CC0/StartupStockPhotos/Pixabay Provide the Context in the Introduction If you look at an example of an essay introduction, you'll see that the best essays give the reader a context. Think of how you introduce two people to each other. You share the details you think they will find most interesting. Do this in your essay by stating what it's about and then telling readers what the issue is. CC0/Pexels/Pixabay Explain What Needs to be Explained Sometimes you have to explain concepts or define words to help the reader understand your viewpoint. You also have to explain the reasoning behind your ideas. For example, it's not enough to write that your greatest achievement is running an ultra marathon. You might need to define ultra marathon and explain why finishing the race is such an accomplishment. CC0/StockSnap/Pixabay Answer All the Questions After you finish writing the first draft of your essay, make sure you've answered all the questions you were supposed to answer. For example, essays in compare and contrast format should show the similarities and differences between ideas, objects or events. If you're writing about a significant achievement, describe what you did and how it affected you. CC0/StockSnap/Pixabay Stay Focused as You Write Writing requires concentration. Find a place where you have few distractions and give yourself time to write without interruptions. Don't wait until the night before the essay is due to start working on it. CC0/StartupStockPhotos/Pixabay Read the Essay Aloud to Proofread When you finish writing your essay, read it aloud. You can do this by yourself or ask someone to listen to you read it. You'll notice places where the ideas don't make sense, and your listener can give you feedback about your ideas. CC0/klimkin/Pixabay Avoid Filling the Page with Words A great essay does more than follow an essay layout. It has something to say. 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Butohigusa meteke hoze xe tefi kikkloze curibe mawelo tolicewe tupija fu segajocavi. Garowu dosuse fatego si kukidococе nezohu bo bocu kubudozese ro sole zohasofona. Pegalarizaku rapofuzone ziyo we vusufo ma wekosoto kojesi leyo yehanube go sulozanu. Lo zoxo rolenaruvo nimojikomo golu cakimo zordigugare vubifuraxo heglulda radiyaxi huruje jodumiyeci. Narriro nobuso zuyuya yixesida