

Writing Paragraphs → Topic Sentences

Level: Elementary School

To write a good paragraph, you need to come up with a good topic sentence. One way to do this is to think of the two parts that make up a topic sentence: the actual topic + the controlling idea. The controlling idea is what you plan to say about the topic. For example, notice the two parts in the sentence "Parents can protect their toddlers by taking certain safety precautions at home." In this case, the first part is the topic and the second part is the controlling idea.

Read each sentence below. Circle the topic and underline the controlling idea.

1. When you want to play a new game, you must learn the rules first.
2. When we got our new dog, we taught her to obey some basic commands.
3. A volcano often shows a few warning signs before it finally erupts.
4. People who like to read often enjoy many different kinds of books.
5. For any big holiday, each family has its own traditions.
6. The plot of a good short story should go through five specific stages.
7. I saw some very strange outfits at our recent costume party.
8. The space station circling the earth today is not the first station humans have put into orbit.
9. There are many pyramids in Egypt, but the Great Pyramid has always been the most famous.
10. I enjoy my birthday more than the big holidays for many different reasons.

Time4Writing provides these writing materials to teachers and parents at no cost. More presentations, handouts, interactive online exercises, and video lessons are freely available at Time4Writing.com. Consider linking to these resources from your school, teacher, or homeschool educational site. The rules: These materials must maintain the visibility of the Time4Writing trademark and copyright information. They can be copied and used for educational purposes. They are not for resale. Want to give us feedback? We'd like to hear your views: info@time4writing.com