

A paragraph is a group of sentences that...

- includes a topic sentence.
- contains supporting details.
- follows a specific style.
 - Chronological order — details that are presented in the order in which they occur.
 - Cause and Effect — details that explain how one event or action relates to another.
 - Order of Importance — details stated from most important to least important, or least important to most important.
 - Compare or Contrast — details that show a difference or likeness.
 - Descriptive — describes and details a concept.
 - Persuasive — attempts to convince the reader of something.
 - Definition — defines a concept.

Read the following paragraphs and complete the questions below each paragraph.

Paragraph 1:

An effective salesman should provide excellent customer service and be knowledgeable about the product being sold. Customers want to have their questions answered honestly and accurately. They want to be assured that the information is not only current, but also true. In addition, customers need to feel that the salesman has answered or at least provided access to all the information necessary to make the purchase knowing that it meets their needs. For example, the purchase of a refrigerator is a large-ticket item. A customer may need to know the energy-saving features, flexibility of features such as how to adjust the shelves, how to moderate the temperature, what type of coolant is used, and warranty information. So, an effective salesman is a skilled professional who understands the products and strives to help the customer make a purchase which meets his shopping needs.

1. What is the topic of the paragraph?

2. What is the main idea or topic sentence?

3. What is the concluding sentence?

4. How is the paragraph supported?

5. What style of paragraph is this?

Paragraph 2:

Americans young and old are flunking their financial security. People today do not possess financial literacy. Their outlook is grim. People have failed to differentiate between needs and wants. Our needs are paltry: food, shelter, clothing and companionship. Our wants are eternal. People must acknowledge that their resources are limited. This is a fact. Management is the key facet of financial security. Using a budget is part of that management. The repercussions of not having a financial plan can mean a bleak future. Having control of your expenditures is an empowering feeling and can lead to a strong future.

6. What is the topic of the paragraph?

7. What is the main idea or topic sentence?

8. What is the concluding sentence?

9. How is the paragraph supported?

10. What style of paragraph is this?

Paragraph 3:

There is a feeling that comes with friendship. It is one of conviction and comfort. Having a confidante allows one to recreate oneself to adjust to life's challenges. Gregarious, glum, or buoyant are the moods we experience. Being able to discuss how we really feel with a commiserating soul is regenerative and somehow we are able to gain the strength to continue in our journey of life.

11. What is the topic of the paragraph?

12. What is the main idea or topic sentence?

13. What is the concluding sentence?

14. How is the paragraph supported?

15. What style of paragraph is this?

Write a paragraph of your own on one of the following topics:

- An issue or situation in your local community that bothers you.
- A description of a person you admire.
- Why people should continue learning after high school.
- Why a budget could be a helpful tool.
- Factors that make a perfect date, spouse, or friend.
- The reasons behind self-improvement.