

23b Writing the Body of the Research Paper



Sample research papers with well-developed paragraphs, pages 516-532.

When writing the body of the paper, you should classify, compare, and analyze the issues. Keep in mind three key elements, as shown in the checklist on page 496.

The length of your paragraphs ought to be from four sentences up to twelve or even fifteen. You can accomplish this task only by writing good topic sentences and by developing them fully. The techniques described in the following paragraphs demonstrate how to build substantive paragraphs for your paper.

Organize by Chronology

Use *chronology* and *plot summary* to trace historical events and to survey a story or novel. You should, almost always, discuss the significance of the events. This first example traces historical events.

Time
sequence
established

Following the death of President Roosevelt in April 1945, Harry S. Truman succeeded to the Presidency. Although he was an experienced politician, Truman "was ill prepared

CHECKLIST

Avoiding Certain Mistakes in the Introduction

Avoid a purpose statement, such as "The purpose of this study is . . ." unless you are writing reports of empirical research, in which case you *should* explain the purpose of your study.

Avoid repetition of the title, which should appear on the first page of the text anyway.

Avoid complex language or difficult questions that may puzzle the reader. However, general rhetorical questions are acceptable.

Avoid simple dictionary definitions, such as "Webster defines *monogamy* as marriage with only one person at a time." See page 498 for an acceptable opening that features definition.

Avoid humor, unless the subject deals with humor or satire.

Avoid hand-drawn artwork, clip art, and cute lettering unless the paper's subject matter requires it (for example, "The Circle as Advertising Symbol"). *Do* use computer graphics, tables, illustrations, and other designs that are appropriate to your subject.