

Writing Strong Topic Sentences

Worksheet 2 of 5 from the Paragraph Writing series.



Objective

Learn how to write focused and engaging topic sentences that clearly introduce the main idea of a paragraph.

What Is a Topic Sentence?

A topic sentence is the first sentence in a paragraph. It tells the reader what the paragraph is about—the main idea you'll be explaining or describing. A great topic sentence does three important things:

1. **States the main idea clearly** – It tells the reader exactly what to expect in the paragraph.
2. **Is focused and specific** – It doesn't try to cover too many ideas at once.
3. **Gets the reader interested** – It gives a reason to keep reading.



Examples:

✗ Too Vague: "Sports are fun."

Why it doesn't work: It's too general and doesn't give direction for the paragraph.

✓ Strong Topic Sentence: "Playing team sports like soccer and basketball teaches students important skills like cooperation and discipline."

Why it works: It clearly states the topic, gives focus, and hints at what the paragraph will explain.



PART 1: What Makes a Strong Topic Sentence?

Directions: Read each sentence below. If it is a **strong topic sentence**, write ✓ in the box. If it is too vague or off-topic, write ✗ and briefly explain what's wrong.

Sentence	✓ / ✗	Why?
1. Dogs are cool.	_____	_____
2. My dog, Ranger, once chewed through a couch.	_____	_____
3. Dogs make excellent pets because they are loyal, playful, and can be trained to help people.	_____	_____
4. There are many different types of animals in the world.	_____	_____
5. Having a pet can teach kids responsibility.	_____	_____



PART 2: Rewrite the Vague Topic Sentence

Directions: Rewrite each weak topic sentence to make it more focused and engaging.

1. **Weak Sentence:** I like food.

Stronger Topic Sentence: _____

2. **Weak Sentence:** School is okay.

Stronger Topic Sentence: _____

3. **Weak Sentence:** Books are fun.

Stronger Topic Sentence: _____

4. **Weak Sentence:** Summer is a time when things happen.

Stronger Topic Sentence: _____



PART 3: Write a Topic Sentence from a Prompt

Directions: Read each prompt and write a clear topic sentence that introduces the idea of the paragraph.

1. **Prompt 1:** You want to explain why video games can be educational.

Topic Sentence: _____

2. **Prompt 2:** You're writing a paragraph about your favorite season.

Topic Sentence: _____

3. **Prompt 3:** You're writing about the importance of recycling.

Topic Sentence: _____



PART 4: Turn Your Idea into a Topic Sentence

Directions: Write down something you know a lot about or enjoy. Then turn it into a strong topic sentence for a paragraph.

1. My Idea: _____

2. My Topic Sentence: _____

Answer Key

PART 1: What Makes a Strong Topic Sentence?

Sentence	✓/✗	Why?
1. Dogs are cool.	✗	Too vague; doesn't explain what the paragraph will focus on.
2. My dog, Ranger, once chewed through a couch.	✗	Too specific; sounds like a detail, not a topic sentence.
3. Dogs make excellent pets because they are loyal, playful, and can be trained to help people.	✓	Clear and focused; gives main idea and preview of support.
4. There are many different types of animals in the world.	✗	Too broad; doesn't focus the paragraph.
5. Having a pet can teach kids responsibility.	✓	Focused and makes a point that can be explained in a paragraph.

PART 2: Rewrite the Vague Topic Sentence

(Answers may vary—examples provided)

- I like food.**
Trying new foods from different cultures is one of my favorite ways to learn about the world.
- School is okay.**
School can be a fun and valuable place when teachers make learning exciting.
- Books are fun.**
Reading mystery novels keeps me entertained and helps improve my vocabulary.
- Summer is a time when things happen.**
Summer is my favorite season because it means freedom, travel, and warm weather activities.

PART 3: Write a Topic Sentence from a Prompt

(Answers may vary—sample responses provided)

1. **Prompt: Why video games can be educational**

Video games can be powerful learning tools that improve problem-solving and reading skills.

2. **Prompt: Favorite season**

Autumn is my favorite season because of the cool weather, colorful leaves, and festive holidays.

3. **Prompt: Importance of recycling**

Recycling is essential because it reduces waste, saves energy, and helps protect the environment.

PART 4: Turn Your Idea into a Topic Sentence

(Responses will vary)

1. **My Idea:** *Basketball*

2. **My Topic Sentence:** *Playing basketball helps me stay healthy, learn teamwork, and release stress.*



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