

Lesson 1 Paragraph Structure

Paragraphs:

- consist of one or more sentences about a **single** thought.
- usually have more than one sentence.
- **never** have more than one idea. (Sentences must be related to the main idea.)

Example Paragraph

Scientists disagree about how long earthworms have inhabited the Earth. Worms are soft bodied creatures with no bones or shell. Due to this few fossils of worms have been found. Scientists have found trace fossils in India. These are fossils of tunnels that many scientists believe to have been made by worms. Not all scientists agree with this. Some say the tunnels may have been made in other ways. Scientists do agree that annelids, soft bodied worm-like animals, have been on Earth for 500 million years. Well-preserved annelid fossils have been found in Mazon Creek near Chicago. Can you believe that some scientists believe that worms have been on the Earth for more than a billion years?

Structure of a Paragraph

Part of a Paragraph	Reason	Example
Topic Sentence	To generate interest States the main idea	(1)Scientists disagree about how long earthworms have inhabited the Earth.
Details First Point and Support	Introduces Main Point #1 and gives information or examples	(2)Worms are a soft bodied creatures with no bones or shell. (3)Due to this few fossils of worms have been found.
Details Second Point and Support	Introduces Main Point #2 and gives information or examples	(4)Scientists have found trace fossils in India. (5)These are fossils of tunnels that many scientists believe to have been made by worms. (6)Not all scientists agree with this. (7)Some say the tunnels may have been made in other ways.
Details Third Point and Support	Introduces Main Point #3 and gives information or examples	(8)Scientists do agree that annelids, soft bodied worm-like animals, have been on Earth for 500 million years. (9)Well-preserved annelid fossils have been found in Mazon Creek near Chicago.
Conclusion	Restates the topic sentence Often leaves the reader with something to think about.	(10)Can you believe that some scientists believe that worms have been on the Earth for more than a billion years?

Questions

1. What is the main idea of this paragraph?
2. What is the concluding sentence
3. What do you notice about the first line of the paragraph?
4. Do all the sentences in the paragraph support the main idea?
5. What is the first main point? second main point? third main point?
6. Which sentence(s) support(s) the first main point? second main point? third main point?

Activity

Decide which groups of sentences would make good paragraphs. Write yes or no before each paragraph to show your answer.

1. _____ Worms have not always lived in America. Many scientists believe that worms living in America were killed during the Ice Age approximately 10,000 to 50,000 years ago. During the 1600's and 1700's Europeans brought worms to North America as they were forming the colonies. This was quite by accident. Colonists wanted to bring plants from their native countries to the New World. The worms were living in the dirt that surrounded the plants that came over. Just think, if worms had not been brought to the New World, American soil would be very poor.
2. _____ Some people think worms are bad for the garden. They have seen damage created by pests. Cockroaches, termites, beetles, and silverfish love to eat paper and the binding of books. Bees and butterflies help pollinate flowers. Malaria is spread to thousands of people each year through mosquito bites. Fleas carry bacteria which can cause humans to get sick when bitten. Earthworms help improve our soil.
3. _____ Earthworms vary greatly in size. Earthworms range in color from brown to red. Some are only an inch long while others are many feet long. There are about 2,700 species of earthworms. The Australian giant earthworms average about ten feet in length. Some gardeners buy earthworms and place them in their gardens. The largest earthworm ever found measured 22 feet from anterior to posterior. In North America the largest common night crawlers are only about 12 inches.
4. _____ Earthworms move by contracting two kinds of muscles. Earthworms are divided into segments. Each segment contains a short muscle that encircles the segment. When the short muscle contracts the earthworm gets thinner and longer. The earthworm also has long muscles that connect each segment. When the long muscles contract the earthworm becomes short and fat. By contracting each of the muscles in turn the worm is able to move along the surface of the ground or tunnel through the ground. Earthworms can move both forward and backward by contracting their muscles.

Sources of Worm Information:

The Adventures of Herman <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/worms/>

Earthworm Enchanted Learning

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/invertebrates/earthworm/Earthwormcoloring.shtml>

Earthworm <http://lhsfoss.org/fossweb/teachers/materials/plantanimal/earthworms.html>

Answer Keys

Lesson 1

1. Yes
2. No
3. No
4. Yes

You may purchase the complete unit at
<http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/How-to-Eat-Fried-Worms-Unit-269415>

This 119 page unit goes along with the book How to Eat Fried Worms by Thomas Rockwell. The unit contains the following:

- Vocabulary
 - o Vocabulary including pronunciation, definitions, and sample sentences from the text
 - o Vocabulary Test

- Comprehension – A comprehension quiz is included for each two chapters which includes:
 - o multiple choice questions which require students to recall details from the chapters
 - o multiple choice higher level thinking questions such as sequencing, main idea, plot development, summary, drawing conclusions, inference, predicting, theme, understanding vocabulary, interpreting literary devices, etc.
 - o Twelve constructive response questions aligned with Common Core Standards are included. Each of these contains a graphic organizer to help students plan their responses.

- English Lessons (Writing an Informative Paragraph)
 - o Structure of a Paragraph
 - o Making an Outline
 - o Topic Sentences
 - o Detail Sentences
 - o Sentence Order in Paragraphs
 - o Staying on Topic
 - o Concluding Sentences

- Activities to Do with the Book
 - o Worm Bookmark
 - o Worm Computer Drawings
 - o Condiment Tasting Bar Graph
 - o Taking a Poll of "The Ten Yuckiest Foods"
 - o Earthworm Pets

Answer keys for each practice page is included.