ACTIVITY 6 | Writing topic sentences

Read the three paragraphs and write a topic sentence for each one. Be sure each topic sentence includes a controlling idea.

WORDS TO KNOW Paragraphs 1.2 to 1.4

appreciate: (v) to understand the value or importance of something
beneficial: (adj) good; helpful
category: (n) a type, kind
cause: (v) to make something happen
function: (v) to work, perform a task
lack: (v) to have too little of something, be without
occur: (v) to happen, take place
process: (n) general way of doing something
recommendation: (n) written or spoken praise; approval
regardless of: (prep) no matter
tend to: (v phr) to be likely to do something

PARAGRAPH 1.2

_____

_____

First, breakfast gives the body fuel to change into energy. This is an important way to start the day after not eating all night long. Without that morning meal, the body may **lack** the necessary fuel for energy. In addition, perhaps the most **beneficial** effect of eating breakfast is that digesting[1] food "wakes up" the body's metabolism—the chemical activity required for the body to **function** properly. When a person is asleep, metabolism slows down. Eating breakfast **causes** the metabolism to increase in the morning. Finally, eating breakfast also reduces hunger later in the morning. An individual who does not eat breakfast **tends to** eat too much at lunch. It is no surprise that people have been saying for generations that "breakfast is the most important meal of the day."

[1]digest: to process food in the stomach

A family eats Sunday breakfast.

***A Comedy of Errors* by William Shakespeare performed by actors of the Chernihiv Regional Academic Music and Drama Theater, Ukraine**

PARAGRAPH 1.3

Stage acting, which is the oldest form of acting, **occurs** in front of a live audience, in places ranging from large performance halls to small theaters. The next and probably the most well-known **category** of acting is television acting. This type of acting is for weekly programs that are produced in a TV studio. The third and final type of acting is film acting for a movie. Film acting is similar to TV acting, but the process is more complex, and it takes longer to make a movie. **Regardless of** the type of acting, audience members **appreciate** actors for the many hours of enjoyment they provide.

PARAGRAPH 1.4

Perhaps the best solution is to take advantage of job-search websites. Most of these services are free for job seekers to use. After a job seeker sets up an account, it is easy to search for a particular type of job within an industry. Additionally, these online sites can store important documents. With a quick click of the mouse, job seekers can upload items such as résumés[1], letters of **recommendation**, etc. Because this information is saved on the website, the application **process** is much easier. Without a doubt, the use of job-search websites is an efficient solution for job seekers.

[1]résumé: a written work history

Supporting Sentences

Supporting sentences describe, explain, clarify, or give examples of the main idea in the topic sentence. They answer questions such as *Who? What? When? Where? Why?* and *How?*

Each paragraph must have enough supporting details to make the main idea clear to the reader. In addition, each supporting sentence should be closely related to the topic sentence and its controlling idea. Study the following examples.

1. Topic sentence: Hunters kill elephants for their valuable ivory tusks, and they must be stopped.
   Supporting sentence: In fact, approximately 50 elephants are killed in Africa every day.
2. Topic sentence: Automobile insurance has a number of benefits, including emergency towing service.
   Supporting sentence: A quick phone call is all it takes to have the broken-down car taken to a mechanic.
3. Topic sentence: Cell phones allow parents to stay in better contact with their children.
   Supporting sentence: As long as a child's cell phone is turned on, a parent can reach a child at any time.

Types of Supporting Sentences

Experienced writers use many different kinds of supporting sentences. Supporting sentences can:

1. **Explain**
   Topic sentence: There are many support services for students at the university.
   Supporting sentence: Since many college students experience at least some level of stress, counselors are always available to help them.
2. **Describe**
   Topic sentence: The Platte River is an extremely important area for migratory birds such as sandhill cranes.
   Supporting sentence: This rich, natural environment provides the birds with a safe place to rest before continuing on their lengthy journey.

Sandhill cranes taking flight from the water in New Mexico, USA

3. **Give reasons**
   Topic sentence: Note taking is one of the most useful study skills to learn.
   Supporting sentence: Reviewing good notes before a test will help students learn the most important information.

4. **Give facts**
   Topic sentence: Jogging is not as easy as it appears.
   Supporting sentence: More than 20 percent of adults cannot run farther than 100 meters without stopping to rest.

5. **Give examples**
   Topic sentence: Brazil has several key natural resources.
   Supporting sentence: Brazil is a leading producer of cocoa, sugarcane, and soybeans.

WRITER'S NOTE Supporting Details

One way to develop supporting details is to ask questions about your topic sentence. Look at your topic sentence and ask questions with *Who? What? When? Where? Why?* or *How?*

ACTIVITY 10 | Using questions to write supporting details

For each topic sentence, write two questions that the supporting sentences could answer.

1. Some pesticides should not be used on vegetable crops.

   What kinds of pesticides should not be used? Why should we avoid using pesticides?

2. Many coffee producers are committed to using environmentally friendly farming methods.

3. Although snow skiing and water skiing seem very different, the two sports have some similar characteristics.

4. Trophy hunting, in which people pay for the opportunity to hunt endangered animals, is controversial.

5. Children who participate in extracurricular activities are often more confident than those who do not.

Avoiding Unrelated Sentences

Some writers include too many ideas in one paragraph. Remember that a paragraph should focus on just one controlling idea, the one in the topic sentence. Every sentence must support the topic sentence. In this way, supporting sentences help maintain the unity of the paragraph. Sentences with unrelated ideas should be removed.

ACTIVITY 11 | Identifying unrelated sentences

Read the two paragraphs. For each numbered sentence, check (✓) if it is a *good* supporting sentence or an *unrelated* sentence. Be prepared to explain your answer. (Note that neither paragraph has a concluding sentence at this point. Concluding sentences will be added in Activity 17.)

WORDS TO KNOW Paragraphs 1.5 to 1.6

characteristic: (n) a special quality
entire: (adj) complete; whole
maintain: (v) to keep in good condition
massive: (adj) huge

PARAGRAPH 1.5

The Features of a Successful Restaurant

Regardless of the type of food they serve, all successful restaurants have similar **characteristics**. First, these restaurants provide fast and friendly service, with servers who are polite at all times. They make sure that customers' needs are met throughout the meal. [1] Since customers are choosing to eat out, obviously the quality of the food is also important. A good restaurant always uses the freshest ingredients in its dishes. [2] Some of the best-quality cheeses can be imported from France. [3] Finally, good restaurants also have a pleasant atmosphere. They are clean and well **maintained**, and they also pay attention to details such as decor[1] and lighting.

[1]decor: style; design

	Good	Unrelated
Sentence 1	☐	☐
Sentence 2	☐	☐
Sentence 3	☐	☐

An exhibit shows the African influence on American arts and music at the National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, DC.

PARAGRAPH 1.6

Visiting Washington, DC

There are two types of popular tourist attractions in Washington, DC: the museums and the monuments. [1] The most interesting museums in Washington, DC, are the 16 Smithsonian museums. There is a museum for every interest, from the Museum of African American History and Culture to the Air and Space Museum. A tourist can easily spend an **entire** week visiting these 16 museums, which all have free admission. Washington, DC, also has very beautiful memorials[1] and monuments. One of the most frequently visited is the Lincoln Memorial. This memorial is home to a **massive** statue of President Abraham Lincoln and an engraved[2] copy of Lincoln's famous speech, the Gettysburg Address. [2] There are many food trucks there, so it is a good place to have lunch. Close by is the Washington Monument. [3] This magnificent stone tower was built in memory of the first president of the United States, George Washington. It is beautiful in its simple design.

[1]memorial: a monument dedicated to the memory of the dead
[2]engraved: carved into stone or wood

	Good	Unrelated
Sentence 1	☐	☐
Sentence 2	☐	☐
Sentence 3	☐	☐

Grammar: Sentences vs. Fragments

Every sentence in English must have a subject and verb and a complete idea.* A sentence without a subject or verb in the main clause is called a **fragment**. The word *fragment* means a piece of something.

* The one exception is the imperative, as in *Look at the Burj Khalifa.* In an imperative, the subject is understood as *you.*

FRAGMENTS	SENTENCES
Cheetahs and gazelles enemies.	Cheetahs and gazelles **are** enemies.
Wheat grown in Argentina.	Wheat **is** grown in Argentina.
Is a lot of pollution today.	**There** is a lot of pollution today.
Maya Angelou a famous author.	Maya Angelou **is** a famous author.
The Burj Khalifa the tallest building in the world.	The Burj Khalifa **is** the tallest building in the world.
Because the engine failed.	Because the engine failed, **the pilot had to make an emergency landing**.

ACTIVITY 12 | Checking for fragments

Read the sentences. The subject in each clause is underlined. If the subject has a verb, write *C* (correct) and circle the verb. If a verb is missing, write *F* (fragment) and add a verb in the correct place.

F encounter
1. Students an incredible amount of new vocabulary in English every day.

_____ **2.** Some learners this problem by using flash cards.

_____ **3.** What are flash cards?

_____ **4.** How do language learners use them?

_____ **5.** A flash card a small card for learning vocabulary.

_____ **6.** Learners write the new word on one side of the card.

_____ **7.** Then they a definition on the other side.

_____ **8.** Students test themselves on the vocabulary words by guessing the meaning and then checking the answer.

_____ **9.** Because learners create their own cards, they can focus on words that are important for them.

_____ **10.** Even though it a traditional method, using flash cards extremely useful.