

English for Academic Purposes

George Brown College

Level 400

Paragraph Writing



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Unit 1: Sentence Structure



Review & Practice 1 [[Online Practice](#)]

Circle the **subjects** and underline the **verbs/verb phrases** in the following sentences. Then identify the **simple**, **compound**, and **complex** sentences.

1. He is sitting on the porch.
2. I enjoy jogging when the weather is nice.
3. Mary didn't learn to swim until she was an adult.
4. Karen and Anne went home to eat dinner.
5. I always close the windows before it rains.
6. I'm really tired today, so I'm going to bed early tonight.
7. I can't tell the twins apart because they look too alike.
8. Paul and Mark share an apartment.
9. I can take the subway to school, or I can walk.
10. I love salad with many different kinds of vegetables.
11. The man on the sidewalk looks unhappy.
12. I want to learn English, but I don't have time to come to class.
13. I cook dinner, and I clean the kitchen.
14. Although she tidies daily, her house is always a mess.
15. I like to cook chicken and rice.

Practice 2



Identify the subjects and verbs/verb phrases in the following sentences:

1. Before you turn off the computer, you should always save your work.
2. I didn't know the answer to question number 7 even though I studied very hard.
3. Fouad is my teacher, and Andrew is your teacher.
4. Alison and Andrew are my teachers.
5. The computer is on, but I am not using it.
6. He opened the drawer and looked for his wallet.
7. The driver of the bus called out the names of the bus stops.

Unit 1: Sentence Structure

8. During the winter car accidents are more common.
9. Opening this door is very difficult.

Sentence Structure Review

subject + verb + object (svo)

Simple Sentences

My bicycle has a flat tire.	one subject + one verb
My friend and I are going to see that movie. The Penguins, Leafs, and Oilers made it to the finals that year.	two or more subjects (a compound subject) + one verb
I picked up my bag, grabbed my hat, and ran out the door.	one subject + two or more verbs

Compound Sentences

A compound sentence is two simple sentences connected by a coordinating conjunction. The most useful coordinating conjunctions are **and**, **but**, **or**, & **so**.

My bicycle has a flat tire, **so** I have to buy a new inner tube.

My friend is going to see a movie, **and** I am going to do my homework.

Punctuation: Put a comma before the coordinating conjunction.

Complex Sentences

A complex sentence has one **independent clause** (**main** clause) that can stand alone and one **dependent clause** (**subordinate** clause), which starts with a subordinating conjunction. Both independent and dependent clauses have subjects and verbs. Independent clauses are complete sentences; dependent clauses are not.

Some Subordinating Conjunctions

Reason	Time		Contrast
because since	before after while as	when since by the time	although even though

Although my bicycle had a flat tire, I was able to ride it all the way home.

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Because it is raining, I don't want to walk my dog.

I don't want to walk my dog **because** it is raining.

I have been studying at GBC **since** I came to Toronto.

Punctuation: Put a comma after the dependent clause when it comes first.



Practice 3 [[Online Practice](#)]

Which of the following are **independent clauses** and which are **dependent clauses**?
Think of ways to complete the sentences.

1. after she went to school
2. when I was baking a cake
3. I have three more exercises to do
4. our new car is the most beautiful car in the parking lot
5. I found my keys in the drawer
6. because it was such a hot day
7. although I had many questions
8. don't make me laugh

Examples of Complex Sentences & Verb Tenses Used

CAUSE REASON		
Because	They received a high mark on their exam because they had studied hard. I'm studying hard because I want to pass my exam. Because his rent is so expensive, he works a lot of overtime.	Because can be used with a variety of tenses based on the time relationship between the two clauses.

TIME		
When	He was talking on the phone when I arrived. When she called, he had already eaten lunch.	'When' means 'at that moment, at that time'. 'When' takes either the simple past OR the present - the dependent

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	I washed the dishes when my daughter fell asleep. We'll have lunch when you get here.	clause changes tense in relation to the 'when' clause.
Before	We will finish before he arrives. She had left before I arrived.	'Before' means 'before that moment'. 'Before' takes either the simple past OR the present.
After	We will finish after he comes. She ate after I (had) left.	'After' means 'after that moment'. 'After' takes the present for future events and the past OR past perfect for past events.
While, as	She began cooking while I was finishing my homework. As I was finishing my homework, she began cooking.	'While' and 'as' mean 'during that time'. 'While' and 'as' are both usually used with the past continuous because the meaning of 'during that time' which indicates an action in progress.
Since	I have played tennis since I was a young boy.	'Since' means 'from that time'. We use the present perfect (continuous) with 'since'. 'Since' can also be used with a specific point in time.

OPPOSITION/UNEXPECTED RESULT

Even though, although	Even though it was expensive, he bought the car. Although the course was difficult, he passed with the highest marks.	'Even though' & 'although' show a situation which is contrary to the main clause to express opposition. They are synonyms.
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Practice 4

Complex sentences with **since**. Read the information about Maryam and then write 4 complex sentences with since about her life using the **present perfect** or **present perfect continuous** and **simple past**.

Maryam moved to Toronto in 2019. She moved into an apartment near High Park. She got a job at a film production company as a make-up artist. A few colleagues asked if she could do their wedding make-up. In 2021, she started a side business

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doing make-up for weddings. She only does about 4 weddings a year for extra money. Her neighbour introduced her to Denis in 2021, and they started dating. Her landlord raised her rent. Maryam and Denis decided he should move, so they could split the rent. They are very happy together. Two years ago, on Maryam's 27th birthday, Denis surprised her with a puppy. They name their puppy Oreo. (All of these things are still true today.)

Example:

Maryam has been living in the High Park neighbourhood since she moved to Toronto.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____



Practice 5: Coordinating Conjunctions [[Online Practice](#)]

Combine the following sentences to make **compound sentences**. Use the following conjunctions in each sentence.

and but so or

1. John has been looking for a job for two months. He hasn't found one yet.
2. Frank rents an apartment in the city. He owns a summer cottage up north.
3. George is allergic to peanuts. He checks ingredient lists carefully.
4. Hamid might be in his office. He might be at home.
5. He was tired. He couldn't fall asleep.
6. Susan works in an office during the week. She works in a clothing store on weekends.



Practice 6: Subordinating Conjunctions [[Online Practice](#)]

Combine the following sentences to make **complex sentences**. Use the following conjunctions:

although when because since

1. I found a job. I'll wait to buy a new car.

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2. The Toronto hockey team has lost many games this year. The Toronto fans still support them.
3. I got home from work yesterday. I took a shower.
4. George had a good time at the party. He left early.
5. She has been playing the piano. She was 4 years old. (when she started)
6. She got to work. She made a cup of coffee in the kitchen.
7. It is supposed to snow tomorrow. I won't drive to Montreal.
8. He had an accident driving home. He had drunk a lot of wine at the party.
9. Susan started to study English. Her speaking has improved a lot.



Practice 7

Complex Sentences. Combine the following sentences to make ONE sentence, using the following conjunctions.

because while although (even though) when since

1. George has been driving for many years. He's never had an accident.
2. Irene came to Toronto. She got a job at a bank.
3. The manager of the computer store is well-liked. He's very friendly and helpful.
4. Jenny went into her office. She has been checking emails.
5. Susan was preparing dinner. The phone started ringing.
6. She was sleeping. The phone rang.
7. She has been sleeping. The movie started.
8. He fell asleep during the class. He didn't sleep the night before.
9. The police arrived at the home. They arrested the robber.
10. He hasn't been in Canada very long. He speaks English fluently.
11. The rain stopped. They went outside to play football.

Sentence Errors and Editing



Practice 8: Sentence Errors [[8B Online Practice](#)]

A: Write a definition or description of the following sentence error types.

fragment: _____

run-on: _____

comma splice: _____

B: Identify the error type and then make the changes necessary to form a good sentence.

1. _____ Because there weren't enough chairs.

2. _____ The elevator has been out of order since Thursday, they are trying to fix it.

3. _____ Why don't you answer me I'm asking you a question?

4. _____ Before it starts to rain.

5. _____ Your friend came to the door he wanted to talk.

6. _____ When I got the job.

7. _____ I don't like to cook on Fridays, I like to go out for dinner.

8. _____ I swim every week the pool is nearby.

9. _____ People waited for the show, the singer didn't arrive.

10. _____ The plane trip was long I watched a movie.

11. _____ Can get expensive.

12. _____ Because the door was open.



Practice 9

Correct the following sentences errors.

1. He always makes the baseball team this year his bad leg kept him on the bench.
 2. The table has to be beside the piano, we'll have to rearrange the furniture.
 3. After Susan finished eating dinner. She started doing her homework.
 4. She was the best student in her class naturally she got the highest grade.
 5. Even though he doesn't have a job. He manages to pay his bills.
 6. Dogs often bark at strangers, they don't usually bite.
 7. His speech made many people angry, quite a few left the meeting before the end.
 8. Sunshine is good for you too much sun is unhealthy.
-

Sometimes less is more! For the following 3 practice exercises, combine the sentences to create clear and concise sentences.



Practice 10:

Combine the ideas to make ONE **simple sentence**. Eliminate repetition.

1. Mira loves shopping for clothes at the Eaton Centre. She loves hanging out with her friends at the Eaton Centre. She goes to the Eaton Centre every weekend.

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-
2. Making mistakes is part of learning. Practicing is a part of learning. Both of these are necessary.

-
3. My friend needs a lot of help. My sister needs a lot of help.

-
4. Carla has her own business. Carla volunteers at a shelter.

-
5. George Brown is building a new campus. The new campus will be on the waterfront. The new campus is for the health sciences.

-
6. Ellen went to Peru. She practiced Spanish there.

-
7. Some politicians make people believe they will do great things. They are successful.

-
8. The test was easy. The test was long.

Practice 11



Combine the ideas to make ONE **compound sentence** and eliminate repetition.

1. My cousins go to the campground every summer. Some friends meet them at the campground.

-
2. Carla is incredibly busy. Carla manages to balance all her activities.

-
3. George Brown is building a new campus. The new campus is not for the ESL department.
-

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4. Most politicians promise they will do great things. These politicians often disappoint us.



Practice 12

Combine the ideas to make ONE **complex sentence** and eliminate repetition.

1. Mira went shopping for clothes at the Eaton Centre. She ran into her friends at the Eaton Centre.

2. My friend needs a lot of help around the house. My friend is still recovering from a long illness.

3. Carla has her own business. Carla can work whatever hours she chooses.

4. Ellen has returned from her trip to Peru. Ellen hasn't stopped talking about her trip to Peru.

5. There were a lot of questions on the test. It took her longer than she expected to finish the test.



Preposition Phrase: **Because of**

Because introduces a full dependent clause with a subject and a verb; it is a subordinating conjunction:

The airplane could not take off because the weather was bad.
I got so wet **because** it was raining.

Because of is a preposition. It is followed by a **noun** or **noun phrase**. It is NOT followed by a subject and a verb.

The airplane could not take off **because of** the weather.
The airport was closed **because of** the bad winter storm.
I got so wet **because of** the rain.

Nouns: weather, rain, storm

Noun phrases: the weather, the bad winter storm, the rain

because of + noun / noun phrase / pronoun

The neighbours called the police **because of** the noise.

I did not have a good time **because of** you! 😞



Practice 13 [[Online Practice](#)]

Choose an appropriate noun phrase from the box to go in the sentences below:

its multiculturalism his inexperience his salary expectation
her generosity her pronunciation the traffic a leg injury the weather

1. Maria read her presentation. It was hard to understand her **because of** _____.
2. The flight was unable to take off **because of** _____. There were storm warnings all along the east coast.
3. Uh oh, it's 5 o'clock. It's rush hour. I think we should avoid Bathurst Street **because of** _____.
4. Djoumane was unable to play in the finals **because of** _____.
5. More than half the population of Toronto are immigrants. **Because of** _____, Toronto is a great place to live.
6. Mira gave a very large donation to the United Way. **Because of** _____, she was given an award.
7. The new boss is very young. They almost didn't hire him **because of** _____.
8. The new boss is in his sixties. They almost didn't hire him **because of** _____.



Practice 14 [[Online Practice](#)]

Choose an appropriate noun phrase from the box to go in the sentences below:

her work schedule the delay their shared experiences
her absences the expense her promotion the ending

1. Willa was assigned to work evenings from Monday to Friday. Because of _____, she only saw her children on the weekends.

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2. The government spent more than a billion dollars hosting the Olympics. Many people were angry because of _____.
3. Mira is really bright but she isn't going to pass this level because of _____.
4. I didn't like that movie because of _____.
5. The flight to Rome left two hours late. Because of _____, I missed my flight to Sicily.
6. Maryam is going to be the next head of the department. Last night she was in a really great mood because of _____.
7. Ellen and Alison have been friends for a long time. Because of _____, they understand each other pretty well.



Practice 15

Create your own sentences.

1. Because of her interest in modern art, _____.
2. _____ because of all the line-ups.
3. _____ because of the cost.
4. Because of _____

Practice 16



Change the complex sentences below to simple sentences using *because of*.

1. They were late for class because there was a traffic jam.

_____.

2. Because the coffee is good, we like to go there.

_____.

3. Because he was successful as a language learner, he decided to become a language teacher.

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4. We don't eat out much because it's expensive.

5. There were a lot of power outages because the ice storm caused branches to fall over power lines.

6. I like the new schedule because we have a longer break.

Unit 2: Paragraph Format



Paragraph Outline (Plan)

When you write a paragraph, you should always start with an outline or plan. Brainstorm ideas to support your topic. Then use the ideas that support your topic the best. All the ideas in your paragraph should support the topic sentence. The 3 main parts of a paragraph are the **topic sentence**, **body** (supporting points and details) and **conclusion**.

Imagine you are going to read a paragraph about becoming a baker. First, the writer narrows the topic. For example, the writer is going to write about how baking has enriched their life. Imagine ways that baking can make someone's life better. Look at the outline plan below. When you are planning a paragraph in level 4, follow this outline. Make sure you have supporting points and details to support those points.

Becoming a Baker: Paragraph Outline

Topic Sentence:

Body

Supporting Point 1:

Details:

Supporting Point 2:

Details:

Supporting Point 3:

Details:

Concluding Sentence:



Discover the Format



Read the short paragraph below and analyze it with a partner.

Becoming a Baker

Becoming a baker has enriched my life in a few ways. First, baking helps me to express my creativity. I have learned to decorate cakes in so many interesting ways. I have used butter cream icing, royal icing, fondant, and even fresh flowers to create unique looks. For example, I made a baby shower cake for my sister, and I sculpted little animals out of fondant. Her friends thought it was too beautiful to eat! The second way baking has enriched my life is that it relaxes me. When I bake, I don't think about any of my problems. I only concentrate on the recipe and instructions, so I feel less stressed when I bake. The most surprising way that baking has made my life better is that I now have a very small baking business. It started with friends and family. Because of social media, my business has been expanding as more and more people find out about me and my creations. My cake business gives me some extra spending money. Since I started baking, my cakes have made me and so many other people happy as they celebrate the milestones in their lives. (195 words)



Analyzing the Paragraph

1. What is the paragraph about?
2. What is the **topic sentence** and what does the topic sentence tell us?
3. What are the **supporting points**?
4. How does the writer introduce the supporting points?
5. What **details** are used to support the supporting points?
6. How does the **concluding sentence** support the paragraph?



Types of Paragraphs

There are different kinds of paragraphs including narration, description, process, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, argumentative, opinion and persuasive. The cake paragraph was a **process paragraph**.

In **level 2**, you wrote about routines, autobiographies, and biographies. In **level 3**, you wrote narrative paragraphs that focused on telling personal stories. Your paragraphs in levels 2 & 3 were organized chronologically or by a sequence of events from the first thing to the last thing.

In level 4, we will organize our paragraphs differently. Your paragraphs in level 4 should all have 2-3 distinct supporting points that support your main idea. You will still be writing from your own personal experience and perspective, but we are moving into a more academic style of writing. You will write paragraphs about experiences, accomplishments, and regrets.

Let's look at paragraph organization again.



Paragraph Organization

Review the paragraph about becoming a baker. The paragraph has 3 distinct supporting points. Every time you write a paragraph in level 4, think about this organizational structure.



Topic Sentence:

Becoming a baker has enriched my life in a few ways.

Body

Supporting Point 1: **Expressing creativity**

Details:

- Using icing, fondant, and flowers
- Sculpting animals
- beautiful

Supporting Point 2: **Relaxes me**

Details:

- don't think about my problems
- focus on baking

Supporting Point 3: **Small business**

Details:

- friends and family
- expanding with social media
- extra money

Concluding Sentence: Since I started baking, my cakes have made me and so many other people happy as they celebrate the milestones in their lives. [Remind the reader of your topic and add a final thought or recommendation.]



Paragraph Writing Checklist

Make sure your paragraphs include the following:

Topic Sentence:

Your topic sentence should clearly tell the reader what your topic is about, state your point of view, capture the reader's attention, and make them want to read your paragraph.

Body: Supporting Ideas

Your supporting points are the main part of your paragraph. Brainstorm ideas that support your topic and choose the best ones. Things to remember:

1. Your paragraph should have unity, so all your sentences should support the topic sentence.
2. Choose 2-3 **supporting points** that best support your topic sentence.
3. Support each point with **details, facts, and examples**.
4. **Organize** your ideas. Your ideas can be organized chronologically (time sequence) or in logical order (best to worst, easiest to most difficult).
5. Use **transition expressions** when moving from one idea to the next and to show time order.
6. Use a **variety of sentence structures** to develop your writing style.

Concluding Sentence:

To conclude your paragraph, you can:

1. remind the reader of the topic by restating the idea in the topic sentence,
2. make an interesting final thought about the topic,
3. make a recommendation or suggestion, or
4. end with a prediction.

Format Note: Paragraphs can be formatted with BLOCK style (no indentation) or INDENTATED style (5-space indentation on the first line). The paragraphs here are all block style.

Level 4 Reminder:

In level 3, you wrote narrative paragraphs that told stories. Those paragraphs were organized in chronological order or time sequence. You used transition expressions that moved the story from one event to the next.

In level 4, you are going to organize your paragraphs differently. Your paragraphs should have 2-3 distinct supporting points. You will write paragraphs about **achievements, accomplishments, life experiences** and **regrets**. Your paragraphs will still be about personal experiences and opinions, but the body of your paragraph should not be a story. You should have 2-3 supporting points.

Unit 3: Paragraphs About Experiences & Accomplishments



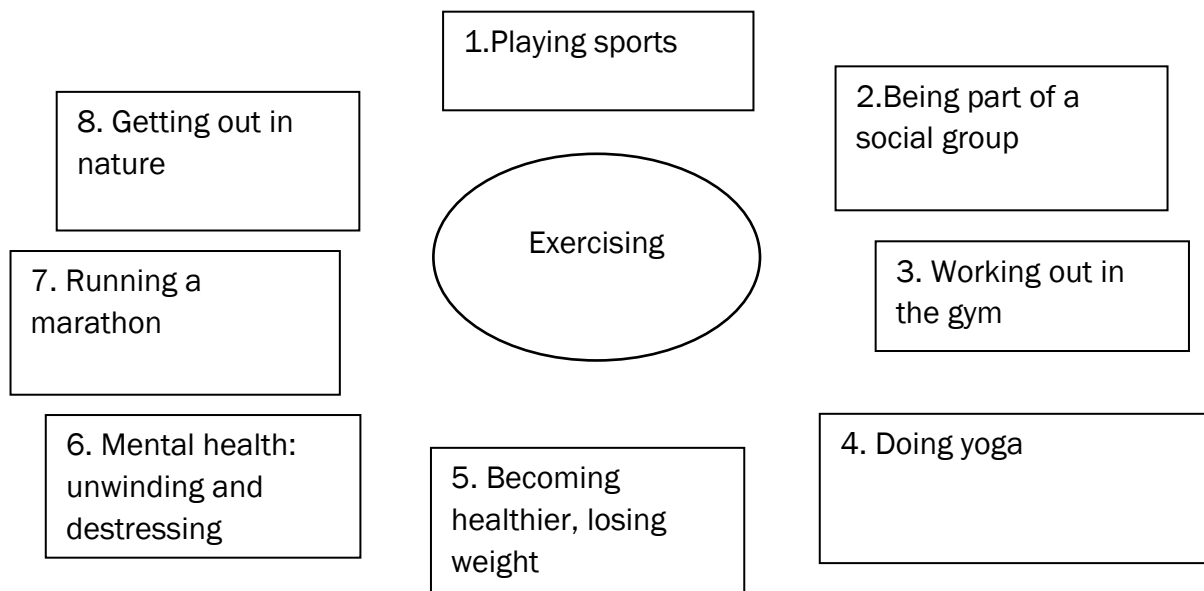
In this unit, we are going to look at paragraphs about personal experiences and accomplishments. We will read about what people have learned from their experiences, how their experiences have changed their lives and how we can all learn from each other.



Brainstorming Topics

Narrowing the Topic: Let's start with the topic: **Exercising**. There are so many things we could write about. Before we start writing, let's brainstorm ideas to narrow down the topic.

Group Work: With your group, think about the topic of **Exercising** and BRAINSTORM ideas on possible topics. Each group should come up with a topic and some possible supporting points. **Here are some examples:**



Choosing Supporting Ideas

Now, choose one of the ideas your group came up with or one of the ideas above. Brainstorm again to find 2-3 supporting points to support your topic. You can narrow the topic down more.

Examples:

Exercising Paragraph Idea 1: Doing Yoga



Nahid chose #4: Doing yoga. She narrowed the topic down to how yoga helps her mind and body.

Topic: Yoga for the Mind and Body

Possible topic sentence:

Practicing yoga has helped me achieve a healthier body and mind.

Possible Supporting Points:

- 1: Improved flexibility
- 2: Calm and peaceful
- 3: Less stressed
- 4: Stronger muscles
- 5: Better balance

Nahid should now reduce her supporting points because 5 is too many. Points 1, 2 & 4 all support a healthy body. Points 2 and 3 support a healthy mind. When you are brainstorming for ideas, you may find that some of your points are similar, so they can be used as examples for your main point. Nahid can write a paragraph about yoga that has two supporting points.

Exercising Paragraph Idea 2: Running a Marathon



Young Ju chose #7: Running a marathon. She narrowed the topic to: Running a marathon taught her about accomplishing goals.

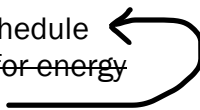
Topic: Running a Marathon

Possible topic sentence:

Running a marathon has taught me a few things about how to accomplish goals.

Possible Supporting Points:

- 1: Follow a training schedule
- ~~2: Learn to eat foods for energy~~
- 3: Build endurance
- 4: Do practice runs
- 5: Run with a partner



Unit 3: Paragraphs About Experiences & Accomplishments

Young Ju narrowed her supporting points to three things. She merged #3 with #1 and she decided not to write about food because it was too much information and didn't fit with her idea about writing about goals. Let's look at Young Ju's paragraph.



Experiences & Accomplishments Paragraph Examples

Paragraph 1



Running a Marathon by Young Ju

Running a marathon has taught me a few things about how to accomplish goals. First, having a clear plan can help us reach our goals. I used a 6-month training schedule, and it included running hills on Wednesdays, doing long runs on Sundays and having one rest day a week. I followed my plan to run longer distances each week and build up my endurance. Next, I signed up for 10-kilometre charity runs to practice. The charity runs gave me experience in running with large groups of people. They also helped me to work on my pace, so I did not use all my energy at the beginning. The final tip to accomplishing a goal is to tell someone. My friend and I followed the same training schedule even though we were not living in the same city. We used an application (app) to share our daily times and distances and made sure we kept the same pace. Then on the day of the marathon we were able to run side by side. My clear plan, practice runs and running partner all helped me to accomplish my goal of running a 42-kilometre marathon! (193 words)

Discussion:

1. Tell your partner about the 3 things that helped Young Ju accomplish her goal of running a marathon.
2. Tell your partner about a time you accomplished a goal and the steps it took you to get there.

Unit 3: Paragraphs About Experiences & Accomplishments

Paragraph 2: The next example is about how an experience changed the writer’s life.

TASKs:

1. **Pre-reading:** Brainstorm with your group about how having children can change someone’s life. (You don’t need to have children to have an opinion on this topic.)
2. The sentences in the table are not in order. **First**, read all the sentences and identify the writer’s 3 supporting points are. **Then** number the sentences from 1 to 13 in the correct order. Look at the transition expressions to help you. **Finally**, compare your answers with a classmate. Put the sentences in the correct order.



Having Children Changed My Life

By Jingbei

Topic Sentence: My life has changed in many ways since I had my children.

Paragraph Outline: What are the 3 supporting points?

- _____
- _____
- _____

Order	Supporting Points & Details
	Now, our children have playdates, and we babysit for each other.
	The last and most difficult change for me was learning how to cook healthy, kid-friendly meals.
	Another thing that has changed is my relationship with my neighbours.
	I like these early mornings because we have leisurely family breakfasts.
	I used to stay up late and sleep in on weekends.
	Every Saturday morning, my husband and I make a weekly meal plan, so we can shop and cook efficiently.
	For example, last Saturday, my neighbour had a work emergency, so I looked after her son.
	Now, I go to bed early because my children wake up at 6am on weekends.
	When it was just my husband and me, we would often go out for dinner or order in.
	The first thing that changed was my schedule.
	All these changes have made me appreciate my own parents, and all the work they did to raise my siblings and me.
	Before having children, I did not know my neighbours.
	We can’t afford to eat out these days, so learning to cook was a necessity.

Transition Expressions: What transition expressions does the writer use?

Paragraph 3: Read and analyze the paragraph.



Technology's Impact on My Career

by Andrea

I have been adapting to different types of technology since I first started teaching. When I first started teaching in Thailand, I used an electric typewriter to create material. When I wanted to edit something big, I had to retype the whole thing. Using a computer changed my work dramatically when I returned to Canada. Using word processing software to edit and format content for my students was a game changer. Sometimes students find mistakes and I can change them instantly. The biggest change in technology happened over the pandemic years. Suddenly teachers and students were forced to study and learn online. I learned how to teach on Zoom, use breakout rooms and manage online classes. I had to be very careful when I was typing because it was not easy to edit. I started trying different kinds of technology tools like H5P, Kahoot and MS Forms to make my material interactive. Technology is changing every day, so I anticipate learning and using new tools for the rest of my career. (171 words)



Analyzing the Paragraph: Discuss the paragraph with a partner.

1. Underline or highlight the topic sentence and concluding sentence. How are they similar?

2. What are the 3 supporting points?

3. How are the main points supported?

4. Let's edit: For organization, which sentence in the paragraph do you think should move to a different location and why?

Paragraph 4:

Pre-reading Task: Before you read the paragraph, read this topic sentence and tell your partner what you expect the paragraph to be about. Brainstorm some ideas the author might write about.

Topic Sentence: I have had some valuable life experiences including taking a year off from school for a working holiday at two farms in France.



The Value of Farm Work
by Luke

I have had some valuable life experiences including taking a year off from school for a working holiday at two farms in France. The first farm was a cheese farm. I saved money for travelling by working and living at the farm. I fed the pigs, milked the goats, and cleaned out the barn where the goats lived. I even learned how cheese is made. It was hard, exhausting work, but at the end of each day, I felt a strong sense of accomplishment. I have never tasted better cheese since I left that farm. The second farm was a strawberry farm on the island of Corsica. At this farm, I picked strawberries. My back was sore from bending over, but I learned to stretch periodically throughout the day. To this day, those strawberries were the most delicious ones that I have ever eaten! Now, I work as a teacher, which is not as physically demanding as farm work. I think everyone should experience the value of tough, back-breaking work that leaves you feeling exhausted and fulfilled. (177 words)



Analysing the Paragraph: Discuss the paragraph with a partner.

1. How many supporting points are there and what are they?

2. What kind of conclusion does Luke use?

3. Share vocabulary from the paragraph that is new to you.

4. Tell your group what kinds of work experience you have had. Have any of you ever worked on a farm before like Luke?

Unit 3: Paragraphs About Experiences & Accomplishments

Paragraph 5: Skills I Have Learned at GBC

Pre-reading Task:



Individual Work: Think about the **skills you have learned at GBC**. Think about skills other than language skills. Brainstorm some ideas you can write about. Try to come up with 3 different skills you have learned since you started studying at GBC. You will share your paragraph outline with your group.



Group Work: Share your paragraph outline with your group. What kinds of skills have you learned at the college? Support your 3 points, by giving your partners examples or descriptions of the kinds of skills you have learned.



Whole Class: Choose a reporter from your group and share your groups ideas with the class.

Now, let's read the paragraph to what skills Ergun has learned.



Skills I have Learned at GBC by Ergun

Since I started studying at GBC, I have learned many new skills that I can use in different parts of my life. First of all, I learned how to work more efficiently in groups. I have been working in different groups with different people since level 2. Sometimes it is not easy working with classmates. Some people speak too much and other people don't speak enough. I learned to encourage the quiet students and politely interrupt the talkative students. This will be a good skill in any workplace. Another skill I have learned was how to organize a presentation. I plan to study after ESL, and presentation skills will help. I know I should have a good introduction with a clear outline or plan. I should also use transition expressions to help the listeners follow my points. The most important thing I have learned is English. My English skills have improved in each level, and it is exciting to use English with my neighbours and at my job. I have improved my group work, presentation and English skills, and these skills will help in my future. (186 words)



Analysing the Paragraph:

1. How many supporting points are there and what are they?
2. What grammatical structures does Ergun use?
3. What kind of conclusion does Ergun use?
- 4.

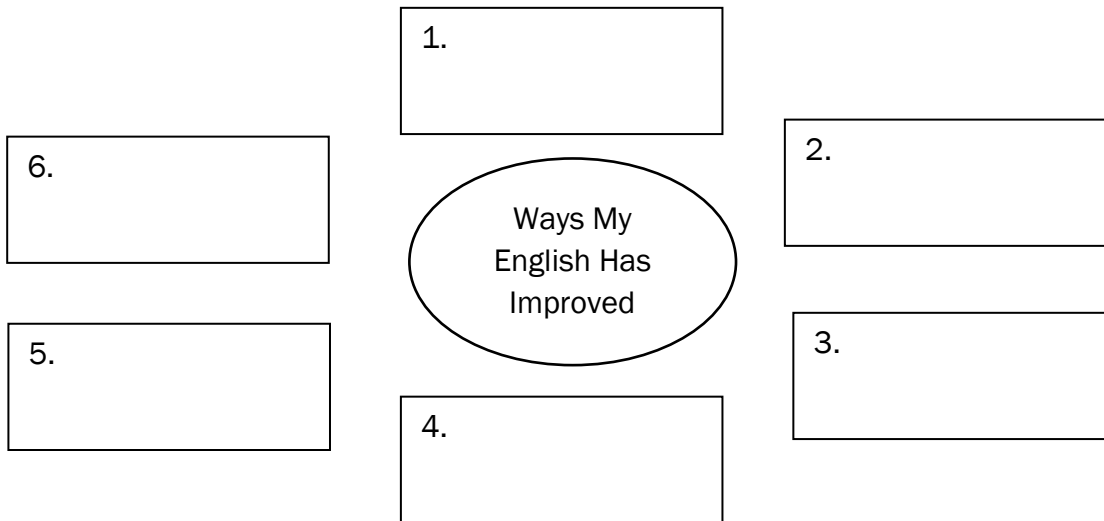
Unit 3: Paragraphs About Experiences & Accomplishments

Paragraph 6: Ways My English Has Improved



Brainstorming Discussion:

With your group, brainstorm how your English has improved since you first started studying. Try to think of 5-6 ways as a group and give examples that support your ideas.



Next, choose the 2-3 supporting points that you like the best and fill out this paragraph writing plan:

Topic Sentence: _____

Body

Supporting Point 1:
Details:

Supporting Point 2:
Details:

Supporting Point 3:
Details:

Concluding Sentence: _____

Finally, share your plan with the class. For homework, write a practice paragraph to share with the class.

Unit 3: Paragraphs About Experiences & Accomplishments

Now, let's look at Ludmila's paragraph on the same topic. She decided to use 2 supporting points rather than 3. She used a lot of details to support her 2 points.



My Language Learning Journey by Ludmila

My English language skills have improved in two important ways. Firstly, my vocabulary has expanded significantly. Since I started studying at George Brown, I have tried to learn new words and phrases, both through reading and watching English television. I keep a vocabulary journal, and I write down any new vocabulary from your novel, listening lectures and other material. Then I review it each evening. As a result, I now feel more confident in expressing myself. Secondly, I have been using new grammar structures from class in my daily life. For example, I use the modal verb 'should' with my friends when I give them advice. I also try to listen for grammar when other people are speaking. Just the other day, I heard someone using the present perfect even though they said 'I've' instead of 'I have'. Due to this practice, I remember the grammar point better, and it encourages me. All in all, these improvements have made me a more effective communicator and have inspired me to continue learning. (171 words)

Analysing the paragraph:

1. Analyse the paragraph with a partner. Talk about the topic sentence, supporting points, details, conclusion, transition expressions, grammar, and sentence structure.
2. What do you think about Ludmila's ideas for improving her English? Do you do the same things?

Unit 4: Paragraphs About Regrets



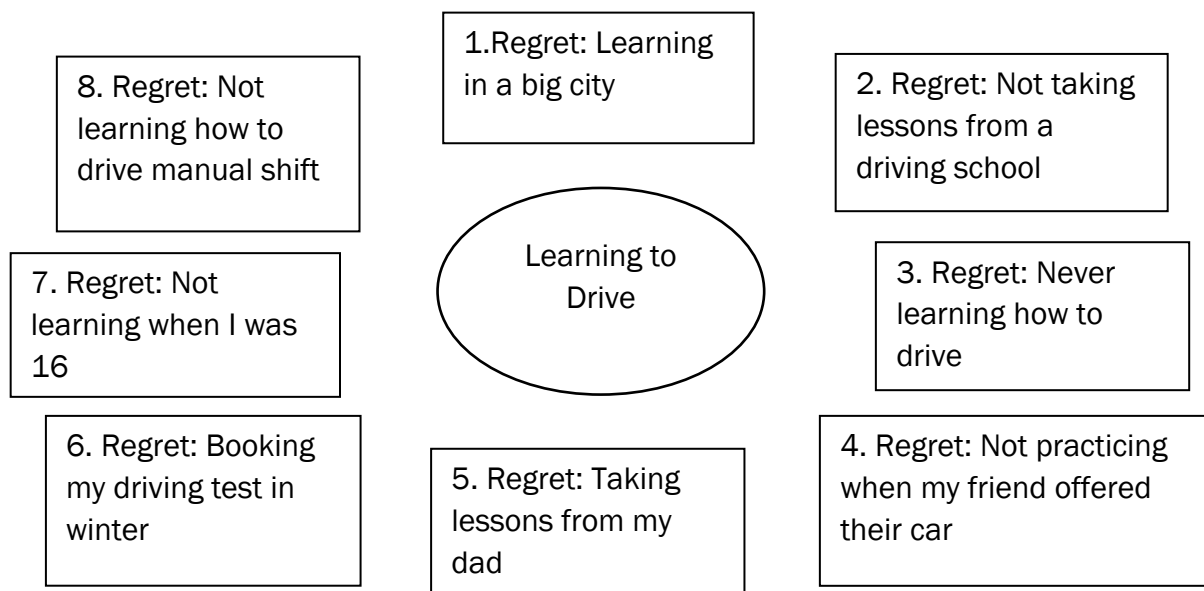
We all have things we regret in life. Regrets do not always have to be so serious. Maybe you ordered a sandwich in a restaurant and your friend ordered the pasta. The pasta looks so much better and now you regret your choice! In this unit, we will analyze paragraphs about regrets.



Brainstorming Topics

Narrowing the Topic: Let's start with the topic: **Learning to Drive**. There are so many things we could write about. Before we start writing, let's brainstorm ideas to narrow down the topic.

Group Work: With your group, think about the topic of **Learning to Drive** and BRAINSTORM ideas on possible regrets. Each group should come up with a topic and some possible supporting points. Here are some examples:



Choosing Supporting Ideas

Now, choose one of the ideas your group came up with or one of the ideas above. Brainstorm again to find 2-4 supporting points to support your topic. You can narrow the topic down more.

Paragraph Idea 1: Never learning how to drive



Trang chose #3: regret never learning how to drive. She narrowed the topic down more to focus on how not learning to drive has affected her travel lifestyle.

Topic: Not Learning to Drive Has Affected My Travel Lifestyle

Possible topic sentence:

I regret not learning how to drive because it has affected my travel freedom.

Possible Supporting Points:

- 1: Can't experience remote places
- 2: Public transportation is limited in some places
- 3: Car packing is much easier than packing in a suitcase
- 4: Can't go camping
- 5: Can't make my own schedule / Must follow transit schedules

Trang should now reduce her supporting points because 5 is too many. Points 1 and 4 can go together because camping is often in remote places. Points 2 and 5 can also go together. When you are brainstorming for ideas, you may find that some of your points are similar.

Paragraph Idea 2: Taking my driving test in the rain



Willis chose #6: regret booking my driving test in winter. He narrowed the topic to: regret doing my driving test in the rain.

Topic: Regret My Rainy Day Driving Test

Possible topic sentence:

Doing my driving test on a rainy day turned out to be a big mistake.

Possible Supporting Points:

- 1: Not enough practice using rainy day car features (windshield wipers, anti fog controls)
- 2: Bad visibility (couldn't see pedestrians and cyclists)
- 3: Slippery roads
- 4: Felt nervous
- 5: Uncomfortable (wearing wet clothes)

Willis can delete #4 because everything probably made him nervous. #5 is not the most important point about doing his driving test on a rainy day, so he can delete that one too.



Regret Paragraph Examples

Paragraph 1:



Rainy Day Driving Test By Willis Yu

Doing my driving test on a rainy day turned out to be a big mistake. First, I did not have enough experience using some features of my car. For example, I had not had enough practice using the windshield wipers, and I kept turning my signal lights on instead of the wipers. The windshield was foggy, and I wasn't sure if I should turn on cold or hot air. I regret not learning how to defog the windshield. Another reason I should not have taken my test in the rain was the slippery road conditions. At one point, I lost control of the car. Although I only lost control for a second, it was scary and dangerous. The most important reason I regret doing my driving test in the rain was the low visibility. I almost hit a pedestrian at a crosswalk because the rain on my windshield made it difficult to see. I should have driven slowly when I saw the crosswalk. Of course, I failed the test. I wish I had postponed my driving test on that rainy day because it was too dangerous. (186 words)



Analyzing Willis's Paragraph

1. What is the paragraph about?
2. What is the **topic sentence** and what does the topic sentence tell us?
3. What are the **supporting points**?
4. How does Willis introduce the supporting points?
5. What **details** are used to support the supporting points?
6. How does the **concluding sentence** support the paragraph?
7. What **grammatical structures** does Willis use to **show regret**? Did you find anything new?



The Writing Process: Points to Remember

1. Choose a topic
2. Brainstorm ideas about your topic
3. Narrow down the topic
4. Brainstorm supporting points
5. Choose your best supporting points (merge some and delete some)
6. WRITE
7. Edit

Paragraph 2:

Pre-reading Task: Discuss these questions with a partner/group.

1. Did you spend time with your grandparents when you were young? If yes, what did you learn from them?
2. What do you wish you could know about them now?
3. Is there anything you should have asked them but didn't? If they are still alive, what do you want to ask them?



Lessons from My Grandparents

by Lily

Like many people, I regret not learning more from my grandparents. First, I will never know about their childhoods. I should have asked them to tell me about how they grew up. I do not know what they liked to do with their friends and how they spent their free time. I should have asked them about their home life and how they spent time with their families. Sometimes I heard my brother ask them questions, and now I regret not listening to their answers. I also regret not finding out more information about our family history. I should have asked where their parents came from. I don't even know the names of my great grandparents and what kinds of jobs they had. I think the biggest regret I have is not knowing how my grandparents met. I wish I knew more about their love story. I should have asked when I had the chance. I think their marriage was arranged by their families, but now it's too late for me to find out. Ask your grandparents and parents about their life stories, so you do not share my regret. (190 words)

Analysing the Paragraph: Lessons from My Grandparents

1. What does Lily regret?
2. What is the topic sentence?
3. What are Lily's 3 main points and how does she introduce them?
4. How does she conclude the paragraph?
5. What grammatical structures does Lily use to show regret?

Paragraph 3:

Pre-reading Task: Discuss these questions with a partner/group.

1. Do you have any travel regrets?
2. Have you had opportunities to travel, but you decided not to?
3. If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?



Travel Regrets
by Andrew

I regret not taking the opportunities I had to travel when I was young. For example, I almost went to Nigeria with a volunteer organization to teach English. I was accepted into the program, and I started to save money for the flight. Then I got cold feet and cancelled. Now I realize I should have gone for the experience. Another time I had a plan to go to Morocco with a friend. We researched things we wanted to do. We had planned to go camping in the desert with camels! We talked about it a lot, but we never did anything to make it happen. I wish I had been more proactive because in the end we did not go. The most recent opportunity I missed was a work trip to China. I was supposed to lead a delegation of colleagues to Shanghai, but I changed my mind. My colleagues had a great experience. I should have gone when I had the chance. I realize now that we should take chances to travel and go on adventures when we have the chance, and I hope to go to Colombia next summer. (192 words)

Analysing the Paragraph: Travel Regrets by Andrew

1. What does Andrew regret?
2. What is the topic sentence?
3. How does Andrew organize his paragraph?
4. What are his supporting points?
5. How does he conclude the paragraph?
6. What grammatical structures does Andrew use to show regret?

Paragraph 4:

Pre-reading Task: Discuss these questions with a partner/group.

1. Have you had opportunities in the past that you didn't take? What were they and why didn't you take them?
2. What advice would you give to someone younger about possible opportunities?
3. Are there any jobs you wish you had done, but didn't?



A Missed Opportunity

By Maxine

I regret not doing a semester of French immersion in the French islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon when I was a student. First of all, immersing myself in French would have been a great chance for me to improve my French. I wish I had learned French because I have missed some job opportunities that required the two official languages. Another reason I wish I had gone to the French islands is to learn about a unique culture. St. Pierre and Miquelon are isolated islands closer to Canada than to France, and they have a very small population. I imagine they have a unique culture because of the isolation. However, now I will never know. The final reason I should have gone to St. Pierre and Miquelon is the unique wildlife. Because they are islands in the north Atlantic, they have a lot of seals and unique sea birds. People have seen whales off the coast of the islands. I still have not seen a whale, and I think I missed my chance! Although I don't have time to study French on a remote island, I hope to register for a French class at GBC next month! (198 words)

Analysing the Paragraph: A Missed Opportunity by Maxine

1. What does Maxine regret?
2. What is the topic sentence?
3. What are her supporting points and what kind of details does she give?
4. How does she conclude the paragraph?
5. What grammatical structures does Maxine use to show regret?

Grammar in Use:

To express a wish that did not come true, use **wish +(that) past perfect**.

I **wish I had studied** French. (I didn't.)

I **wish I had gone** to the islands.

To express a future hope, use **hope + infinitive**.

I **hope to register** for a French class at GBC next month.

Unit 4: Paragraphs About Regrets

To express that you wanted to do something in the past, but you could not, use **would have + past participle**. We often use this structure with conditionals (if) and you will learn that in L6.

It **would have been** a great way to learn French, **but** I didn't go.

I **would have seen** whales in their natural habitat, but I didn't have the opportunity.

Paragraph 5:



A Lack of Confidence

by Karen

I regret not having more confidence when I was younger. First, I was very shy and did not feel confident expressing my opinion. For example, sometimes in my university classes, I would have an idea that I wanted to share, but I was too shy to raise my hand and express my idea. I was also shy outside of class. Sometimes in social situations, I was too quiet even when I wanted to speak out and chat with different people. I should have pushed myself to join in discussions. Secondly, I may have missed some opportunities because I could not present myself with confidence. To illustrate, in my first job interviews, I was not assertive and did not give the interviewer a clear idea of my capabilities. Moreover, when I got my first job, I wish I had been more assertive and shown my boss I had good ideas. Even though I was qualified and competent, more confident people got promoted. In conclusion, although I am much more self-assured now, I wish my younger self had been more confident. (179 words)

Analysing the Paragraph: Lacking Confidence by Karen

1. What does Karen regret?
2. What is the topic sentence?
3. What are her supporting points and what kind of details does she give?
4. How does she conclude the paragraph?
5. What grammatical structures does she use?
6. Do you relate to Karen?

Appendices



Answer Key

This is the correct order of sentences for Unit 3, Paragraph 1.


Having Children Changed My Life

My life has changed in many ways since I had my children. The first thing that changed was my schedule. I used to stay up late and sleep in on weekends. Now, I go to bed early because my children wake up at 6am on weekends. I like these early mornings because we have leisurely family breakfasts. Another thing that has changed is my relationship with my neighbours. Before having children, I did not know my neighbours. Now, our children have playdates, and we babysit for each other. For example, last Saturday, my neighbour had a work emergency, so I looked after her son. The last and most difficult change for me was learning how to cook healthy, kid-friendly meals. When it was just my husband and me, we would often go out for dinner or order in. We can't afford to eat out these days, so learning to cook was a necessity. Every Saturday morning, my husband and I make a weekly meal plan, so we can shop and cook efficiently. All these changes have made me appreciate my own parents, and all the work they did to raise my siblings and me. (194 words)



Correction Codes for Editing

Your teacher will use the following codes to help you correct and edit your writing.

	Error Type	Explanation
1	^	Something is missing from your sentence.
2	ART	The article is missing or wrong.
3	C	Capital letter mistake.
4	CJ	The conjunction is missing or wrong.
5	CS	Comma splice. The comma is not strong enough to separate the 2 ideas. (You can correct this in different ways: period, conjunction etc.)
6	#	There is a singular/plural mistake.
7	SF or FRAG	There is a sentence fragment (incomplete sentence)
8	PREP	Preposition is missing or incorrect.
9	P	Punctuation is missing or incorrect.
10	PRO	Pronoun is missing or incorrect.
11	SP	There is a spelling mistake .
12	S/V	There is a subject-verb agreement mistake in your sentence.
13	T	Transition – you used the wrong transition, or you need to add one.
14	V	There is no verb . You need to add a verb.
15	VF	You used an incorrect verb form . (maybe gerund or infinitive)
16	VT	You used the wrong verb tense .
17	WC or WW	You used the wrong word . (WC = word choice)
18	WF	You used the wrong form of the word.
19	WO or 	Word order problem.
20	AWK	Awkward. The sentence is not written in natural English, but I can still understand it. You need to rewrite the sentence and make it clearer.
21	R-O	Run-on sentence. You have too many clauses. Use punctuation.
22	?	Meaning is unclear

Correction Code Chart: Sample Errors

Practice 1: Correct the following mistakes using the correction code. The first one is done.

	Error Type	Example
1	^	Max went to the class, but nobody ^{was} there because they were in the lab.
2	ART	I went to ^V supermarket. Nadia is ^V nice student.
3	C	Arya lives in toronto.
4	CJ	I drink coffee, so I don't like the bitter taste.
5	CS	I drink coffee, I drink tea.
6	#	I have two [#] sister. I live with one [#] people.
7	SF or Frag.	Because I felt sick.
8	PREP	My school is <i>in</i> King Street. I came ^V Canada last year. I was born <i>on</i> July.
9	P	When I go to the Eaton Centre I always eat in the food court. ^P
10	PRO	I don't have my grammar book. I gave it to <i>he</i> . <i>Him</i> has it.
11	SP	Ruby lives in a small <i>hous</i> .
12	S/V	Daniel <i>love</i> ice-cream. I <i>likes</i> cookies. Sunwha <i>bake</i> every day.
13	T	First, we checked our homework. Finally, we studied writing. After that we left.
14	V	Do you want to ^V the Eaton Centre?
15	VF	Vincent wants <i>eating</i> pizza for lunch.
16	VT	Yesterday, George <i>go</i> to the library.
17	WW	Did he <i>make</i> his homework?
18	WF	Azzedine is a good student. He writes <i>good</i> . Today, he is <i>quietly</i> .



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