

**GRADE NINE
SOCIAL STUDIES
WRITING PACKET**

***Keys to writing
an effective
paragraph***

DAY ONE: BASIC PARAGRAPH WRITING STRUCTURE

- Let's look at an effective paragraph. See below

The rings or circles on the Olympic flag have a special meaning. The five circles stand for the five major continents of the world. To show that athletes at the games compete as friends, the rings are linked. The colors, from left to right, are blue, yellow, black, green and red. They were chosen for a purpose. The flag of every country has at least one of these colours, which makes the rings truly special as they unite the world.

- What are the elements that make this a good paragraph?
- On a separate sheet of paper start a new page in your notes entitled HOW TO WRITE A GREAT PARAGRAPH and list these points below
 - topic sentences tell what topic the paragraph is going to discuss
 - supporting sentences give details about the topic
 - concluding sentences summarize main points or restates the topic sentence in different words

- Let's look at a paragraph that is much less effective:

Training to be an Olympic athlete takes every bit of strength and determination an athlete can muster. The first recorded Olympic games took place in 776 B.C. The opening and closing ceremonies are two important rituals of the Olympic games. My favorite sport is the downhill skiing. Economists are skeptical about the long term benefits of hosting an Olympics. Sometimes athletes are charged with doping or there is a terrorist attack at Olympic events. "Parallel Olympics" or Paralympics as they are now known, became popular as a way to promote healing in soldiers after World War Two.

- Continue in your notes with the heading 'what makes for a lousy paragraph' and list these points:
 - no topic sentence to introduce the reader to the main idea
 - supporting sentences are multi-topic
 - concluding sentence does not summarize the main points
- Work with a partner to improve the bad paragraph by creating a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence. Write the 'improved' paragraph in your notes. We will then report back to the class.

DAY TWO: EXPOSITORY VS. PERSUASIVE PARAGRAPHS

- Take an item from your backpack (cell phone, calculator, pencil case etc.)
- Get into pairs. You will have thirty seconds to **explain** the item to your partner. Pretend your listener is an alien who has never seen this item or person before
- Next take 30 seconds to convince your partner to buy this item from you for 1 million dollars

Debrief/Discuss

- What is the difference between explaining and persuading?
- What is the difference in strategy between explaining and persuading?
- What is the difference in language used?
- Let's examine and discuss the chart on expository and persuasive writing (below)
- In your notes draw a Venn diagram with differences and overlaps in the two types of paragraphs

Expository Paragraph

Function: to explain an idea

Appeals to: the head (ideas, details, data)

Uses:

- Facts
- Details
- Explain how details support topic sentence
- Informs the reader's mind with information

How?

- S-S-S
 - State
 - Support
 - Significance



Expository Sample

TOPIC SENTENCE: New York City is one of the major tourist destinations in the world.

SUPPORTING DETAILS: Every year, about 10 million tourists descend upon the great city to take advantage of the numerous adventures in entertainment and the arts. One of the biggest tourists draws of New York is Broadway, consisting of 40 theatres located in the theatre district with ticket sales in excess of 1 billion dollars annually.

In addition, New York is also home to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the largest art museum in the United States, famous for their collection of American and European modern art.
CONCLUDING STATEMENT: The Big Apple is filled with the sights and sounds drawn tourists from all over the world.

Persuasive Paragraph

Function : to change their mind/ make them see your point of view

Appeals to: the head and the heart (ideas, details and data as well as emotion)

Uses:

- Facts
- Details
- Explain how details support topic sentence
- Attempts to sway reader's mind and heart

How?

- S-S-S-E
 - State
 - Support
 - Significance
 - emotions



Persuasive Sample

TOPIC SENTENCE: New York's reputation as a dangerous city is unwarranted and misleading.

SUPPORTING DETAILS: Violent crime in the Big Apple has been steadily diminishing since 1990. Cases of homicides were the lowest they have ever been in 50 years in 2012. Those who continue to believe that New York is filled with criminal activity are using outdated data of the 1980's when the city's crime rate spiked. Tourists can rest assured that they and their families will feel safe to explore the sights and sounds of the city free from thugs and drug addicts shadowing their every step.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT: It is time to relinquish the common and false belief that New York is a city of crime and violence.

HOMEWORK

Write a short expository and a short persuasive paragraph on the same topic

DAY THREE: ADVANCED PARAGRAPH WRITING STRUCTURE

- Review the basics of a good topic sentence with supporting sentences and a concluding sentence
- A great paragraph will include the following elements: point/example/explanation and clear effective transitions
- What does that mean? Read the following paragraph.

Young people today should all play golf. First of all, golf is a beautiful game for beautiful people. It is a historic game that has been well loved by men and women for over 500 years. It provides a great opportunity to spend time with your friends. You also get great exercise and a lot of fresh air when you play golf. Overall the game of golf has a lot to offer people of any generation.

- This paragraph is not bad. Let's identify the following elements in this paragraph
 1. a clear and concise topic sentence with a controlling idea
 2. Point/Example/Explanation
 3. clear, effective transitions
- Let's break down the main **supporting points** to convince us that young people should play golf
 1. It is a beautiful game for beautiful people
 2. It is historic
 3. It provides opportunity to spend quality time with friends
 4. It is healthy

These are four strong points, but it could be even more convincing if concrete examples and explanations were added to help us to better appreciate the main points. Here is the paragraph re-written with examples and explanations that expand upon the main supporting points.

Young people today should all play golf. First of all, golf is a beautiful game for beautiful people as the rhythmic, artistic flow of a golf swing is a pleasure to behold. The sport has been played religiously for over 500 years by royalty and commoners alike including esteemed people such as avid 16th century golfer Mary Queen of Scots. A round of golf takes over four hours to play which can give you a much needed break from your nagging spouse and some serious quality bro-time with your buddies. In addition the health benefits are fantastic as experts have stated that playing a round of golf is the equivalent amount of exercise you would get on an eight Kilometer run. It is clear that the game of golf has a lot to offer people of any generation.

Go through the paragraph with the class and underline the concrete examples and explanations that make the writing more clear, interesting and believable to the reader.

HOMework

Write a paragraph using the same format to convince your reader to adopt an activity that you are passionate about

DAY FOUR: SENTENCE COMBINING AND GROUP PARAGRAPH ASSIGNMENT

Sentence Combining I

Being able to combine sentences can help you write more smoothly. Many times you can say things in one sentence better than you can say them in two. Here is an example:

Two sentences: *The milk spoiled. It was two weeks old*

One sentence: *The two week old milk spoiled*

Several sentences: The water was cold. The water was dirty. The water was polluted

Combined sentence: The water was cold, dirty and polluted

In the space provided, rewrite the following sentences into one smooth sentence

There were many great painters during the Renaissance. Leonardo da Vinci was a great painter. Leonardo da Vinci had an astonishing understanding of the rules of perspective.

The printing press was a very important invention. The printing press allowed for the spread of information. The printing press helped break the hold that the Catholic Church had on education

Sentence Combining II

Sometimes we use an entire sentence describing something when we could have just used a phrase in another sentence. For example:

Two sentences: *Mr. Scott is my P.E. teacher. He taught me how to properly shoot a basketball.*

Combined sentence: *Mr. Scott, my P.E. teacher, taught me how to properly shoot a basketball*

Sometimes we can take a phrase from one sentence and use it to combine two sentences. For example:

Two sentences: *Dave went to get a coffee. He went to Starbucks.*



One sentence: *Dave went to Starbucks to get a coffee. .*

In the space provided, rewrite the following sentences into one smooth sentence

Martin Luther was a Protestant Reformer. Martin Luther was a Roman Catholic priest. He started the Protestant Reformation

European exploration dramatically increased in the 1500's. Discoveries in the Americas introduced many new products into Europe. Chocolate and tomatoes were discovered.

Helpful Hints for a Simple Paragraph

Do's 	Don'ts 
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Use a formal tone➤ Begin with the end in mind➤ Focus on one key topic➤ Use key vocabulary to reinforce your key topic➤ Have a topic sentence➤ Attempt to use <u>effective</u> transitions between ideas or examples➤ Include specific examples➤ Explain your examples➤ Use a hook➤ Consistent verb tense➤ Use a capital letter to start a sentence➤ Proofread➤ Be precise and to the point (concise)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Use excessive or unnecessary words (convoluted)➤ Use "I" or "in my opinion"➤ Use informal (colloquial) language➤ Exceed 8 sentences➤ Be vague➤ Don't state the obvious. Don't use the word "obvious"➤ Use nowadays, moreover, or slang➤ Avoid absolute terms such as "all" or "every"➤ Use inappropriate topics/language/examples➤ Go off-topic

In-Class Assignment

The class will be divided into four groups. Within each group, you will be subdivided into pairs. Each pair will collaborate to write a paragraph summarizing the main idea from the four mini-chapters in Unit One. Be sure to use the helpful hints outlined in the chart above.

- Kings Gain Power p. 4
- A prosperous Age p. 6
- A New View of Humanity p. 8
- A New View of the World p.10

When you are done, you will then rotate your paragraphs around with other pairs within your group. You will read and critique each one. The as a group you will decide which is the best paragraph and why. You will then present your 'winning' paragraph to the class.