THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY

Writing Centre

Topic and Concluding Sentences

Topic and concluding sentences help **organize** and **focus** your body paragraphs, which helps the **flow** of your paper.

Tip! *Topic and concluding sentences should not include quotations.*

Topic Sentences

Topic sentences are usually the **first sentence** of a body paragraph. These sentences act like a mini thesis; they are not factual statements and should **introduce the main point or idea of the paragraph** to your reader. They should also support your overall thesis.

Tip! *Include a* ***key word*** *from your introductory paragraph in your topic sentence.*

All of the evidence you discuss in the body of your paragraph should support your topic sentence.

   Example: in an essay about why cats are better than dogs, one topic sentence may be: *Cats have a smaller carbon footprint than dogs, making them the more environmentally friendly pet of the two.*

Transitioning Between Paragraphs

Topic sentences can help **transition** to a new paragraph by making mention of the previous paragraph's main idea.

A common way to structure your transitioning topic sentence is: **linking word/phrase + previous paragraph's main idea + linking word/phrase + new topic or argument.**

   Example: *In addition to* **[linking phrase]** + *having a smaller carbon footprint than dogs* **[previous paragraph's main idea]**, + *cats are also* **[linking phrase]** + *more cost effective for owners* **[new topic or argument]**.

Concluding Sentences

A concluding sentence is the **last sentence** of a paragraph. It should firmly close your paragraph or argument. These sentences **support your thesis** and mirror your topic sentence, but often go one step further by including a **major point** from the body of your paragraph.

   Example: *Because dogs consume more food than cats, cats have a smaller carbon footprint than dogs, which makes them the more sensible pet.*