

Grade 7

# Grammar for Writing

**NEW EDITION**

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CHAPTER

# 1

# The Writing Process



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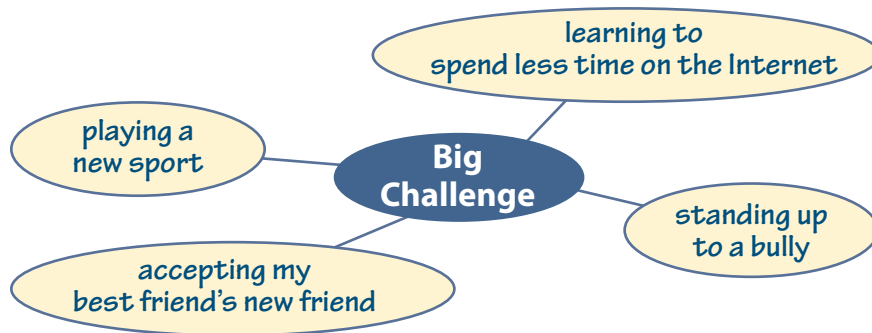
# Prewriting

Before you can begin writing, you need to plan. **Prewriting**, the first stage of the writing process, involves the steps below.

- finding possible topics to write about
- choosing and narrowing your topic
- deciding on your purpose and audience
- collecting and organizing details

➔ Use one of the techniques below to generate a topic.

1. **Freewrite** Start with a word or broad topic, or look at a photograph to generate ideas. For five minutes, write down every thought you have about it. Be specific.
2. **Brainstorm** Use one or two words to come up with more specific ideas. Instead of writing full sentences, make a list or jot down ideas in a Web.

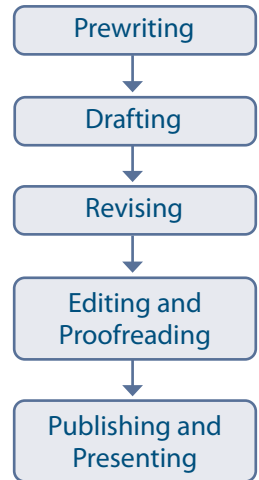


➔ Next, review your ideas, and **narrow** the topic you like best. Make sure your topic matches the length of the assignment.

<b>TOO BROAD</b>	the Internet [This is too much to cover in a short paper.]
<b>TOO NARROW</b>	checking e-mail last night [This is not broad enough to write about in three pages.]
<b>GOOD TOPIC</b>	spending less time on the Internet

## Remember

The **writing process** consists of five stages.



## TOPIC CHECKLIST

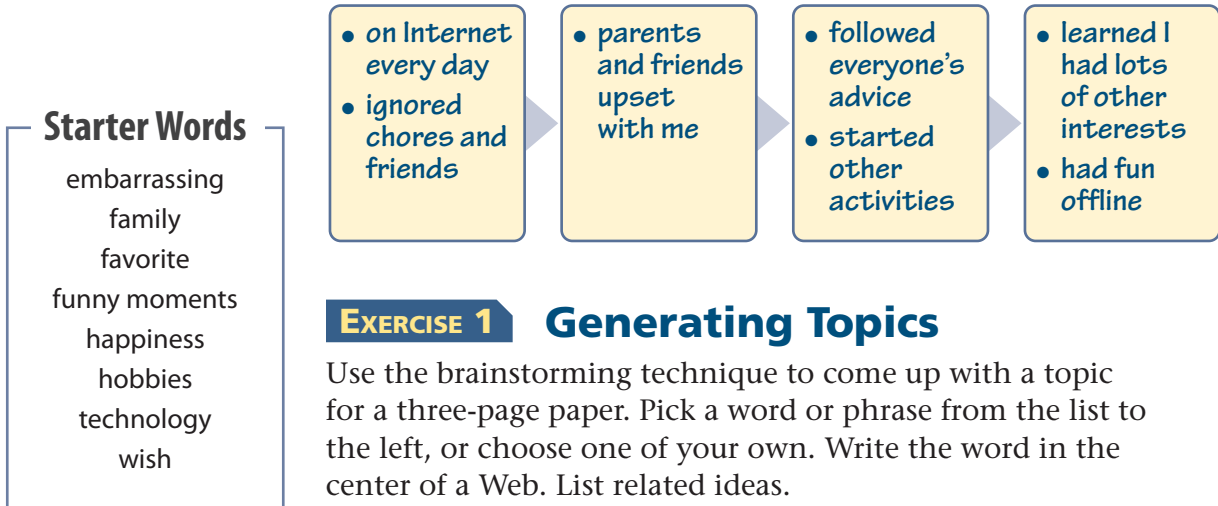
- ✓ How strongly do I feel about this topic?
- ✓ Is it narrow enough?
- ✓ Can I gather information about it?

## The Writing Process

➔ Choose your **purpose** for writing, and analyze your **audience**.

Purpose	Audience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is my purpose to entertain, inform, persuade, or describe?</li><li>• What is the main thing I want my readers to learn?</li><li>• Why do I want to share this topic with others?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who will read my paper?</li><li>• How much does my audience already know?</li><li>• What are their interests? How can I help them connect to the topic?</li></ul>

➔ Next, use a graphic organizer, such as the Sequence Organizer below, to help you collect and **organize details**.



### EXERCISE 1 Generating Topics

Use the brainstorming technique to come up with a topic for a three-page paper. Pick a word or phrase from the list to the left, or choose one of your own. Write the word in the center of a Web. List related ideas.

### EXERCISE 2 Choosing a Topic

Review your Web from Exercise 1. Indicate the two topics you like best.

1. Review those topics to see if you need to narrow them or expand on them. You can use the organizer shown to the left to narrow broad topics. Write the topic at the top. In the next line, write one smaller part of it. Keep making each part smaller until you find a good writing topic.
2. Use the Topic Checklist on the previous page to help you choose the best topic.

#### INVERTED PYRAMID

hobbies  
collecting photos  
making scrapbooks

### EXERCISE 3 Choosing Your Purpose

Now, determine a purpose for the topic you chose. Write three different purposes for your topic. Choose the topic and purpose you know well and that you would most enjoy writing about. Put a check mark next to it.

- ENTERTAIN** *share the time I won a scrapbook contest*
- EXPLAIN** *explain how to make a scrapbook ✓*
- PERSUADE** *convince readers that scrapbooks are fun to make*



### EXERCISE 4 Analyzing Your Audience

Next, decide who your readers are and what background information they have. Make a chart like the one below.

*My audience is teens who may have never made a scrapbook.*

What They Know	What They Need to Know
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>what a scrapbook is</i></li> <li>• <i>some of the materials they'll need</i></li> <li>• <i>what a scrapbook is for</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>where to find great pictures</i></li> <li>• <i>all the steps involved</i></li> <li>• <i>different types of scrapbooks</i></li> </ul>

### EXERCISE 5 Collecting Details

Finally, gather and organize details about your topic.

1. Review the topic, purpose, and audience you chose in the previous exercises.
2. Refresh your memory about your topic by doing research or talking to a peer or adult who knows about it.
3. Jot down a list of details, or complete a Sequence Organizer, such as the one shown on the previous page.
4. Include any specific details that you will want to add to your paper.

For more on organizing ideas, see **Lesson 4.3**.

## LESSON 1.2

# Drafting

During the **drafting** stage, you turn your prewriting plan into complete sentences and paragraphs. Here are some guidelines about the drafting stage.

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Open up your mind, and let your ideas flow.</li><li>• Cross out ideas you don't like, and add new ones.</li><li>• Even if you're not sure how to spell some words, use them anyway.</li><li>• Jot notes in the margins about details you want to research more or things you want to check later.</li><li>• Be open to making changes to the plan you created during prewriting.</li><li>• Write legibly.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't stop to wonder about whether you should include an idea.</li><li>• Don't expect your draft to be perfect.</li><li>• Don't write so messily that you can't read your own writing.</li><li>• Don't feel you must stick to every detail of your prewriting plan. Once you begin drafting, your plan may develop or change.</li></ul>



For more about writing the introduction, body, and conclusion of an essay, see the lessons in **Chapter 5**.

➤ Organize your ideas into a strong **introduction** that grabs readers' attention, a **body** that supports the main point, and a **conclusion** that readers will remember.

➤ During drafting, you may encounter **writer's block**, or a mental block that keeps you from writing. Here are some tips for overcoming it.

1. Take a break. Let your mind rest and reenergize.
2. Discuss your paper with a teacher, parent, or friend. Talk about your topic, and ask for suggestions or ideas.
3. Refer to your prewriting notes.
4. Start freewriting. Write about anything related to your topic.

Read part of one writer's draft on the next page.

**Writing Model**

Knock! Knock! Knock! “Alicia, this is the third time Cindy has called you. Get off that computer!”

I could hear Dad’s shouting through my earphones.

I swiftly clicked one button, and the computer was off—well, not completely off. What if someone sent me an e-mail? I always left my computer on, no matter what. **What if the game I was downloading wasn’t finished yet?** That’s why my parents are upset. ~~Don’t get me wrong. That was a while ago.~~

~~It took me a while to see that~~ I wasn’t doing my work. My friends were getting tired of me ignoring their invitations. They wanted to go out. All I wanted was to be left alone on my computer.

Introduction catches readers’ attention.

Arrow shows that a detail should be moved to clarify the organization.

Cross-outs show ideas the writer no longer wants to include.

**EXERCISE 1 Planning a Draft**

Review and add to any notes, organizers, or lists you made during prewriting. Think more about your main points and how to organize them. Be sure you have at least three key ideas and two or more details that support each one.

**EXERCISE 2 Writing a Draft**

Now, on a separate sheet of paper, write a complete draft from beginning to end. Make sure to build on your prewriting ideas from the previous lesson and from Exercise 1.

# LESSON 1.3

## Revising

Now that you have a first draft, the next step is to improve it. During the **revising** stage of the writing process, you evaluate your draft and decide what works and what doesn't.

➔ Revising always entails looking at five of the six **traits of good writing**. Use the checklist below as you revise.

### REVISING CHECKLIST

#### Ideas and Content

- ✓ How clearly did I express my ideas?
- ✓ Where should I add or delete details?

#### Organization

- ✓ How clear is the order of details?
- ✓ Where should I add transitions to improve the connections between sentences and paragraphs?

#### Sentence Fluency

- ✓ How smooth does the writing sound when I read it aloud?
- ✓ Which sentences seem choppy?
- ✓ How well have I varied sentence structures, sentence lengths, and sentence beginnings?

#### Word Choice

- ✓ Which nouns, adjectives, adverbs, or verbs should be replaced with more precise words?
- ✓ Which words have I used too often?

#### Voice

- ✓ How original and fresh is my writing?
- ✓ In which places does my writing sound forced or unnatural?

#### Writing **HINT**

The sixth trait of good writing is **conventions**, or correctness in grammar, spelling, usage, punctuation, and mechanics. You will look for and correct these kinds of errors in the editing and proofreading stage of the writing process. See **Lesson 1.4**.

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# Effective Paragraphs



## Supporting the Main Idea

In effective **paragraphs**, sentences work together to develop a **main idea**, or point.

➔ Some paragraphs (especially ones that inform or persuade) state the main idea in a **topic sentence**. Topic sentences often begin paragraphs, but they may appear in the middle or the end.

<sup>1</sup>During the Middle Ages, both nobles and peasants enjoyed a surprising variety of entertainment. <sup>2</sup>In castles and nearby villages, traveling singers, acrobats, and musicians performed at gatherings and special feasts. <sup>3</sup>Jousting tournaments, held on the castle grounds, included exciting mock battles, and crowds gathered to watch actors perform short plays. <sup>4</sup>Evening life inside the castle often included mimes, storytellers, and jesters.

The topic sentence tells the main idea.

### Writing HINT

Besides making your main idea clear, a good topic sentence captures readers' attention and makes them want to read on.

➔ You may want to **imply**, or suggest, your main idea rather than announce it directly. In a paragraph with an **implied main idea**, include details so that your overall point is clear.

<sup>1</sup>Castle walls, often made of stone, were very thick so they could withstand bombardment or battering. <sup>2</sup>Windows were narrow slits through which soldiers shot arrows, and gatehouses featured heavy iron grates and massive doors that could be barred shut. <sup>3</sup>Many castles were built atop steep hills and surrounded by deep, hard-to-cross ditches or water-filled moats. <sup>4</sup>Drawbridges could be pulled up quickly to keep enemy invaders out.

The implied main idea is that castles were built to be strong and safe during battle.

## Effective Paragraphs

► To build an effective paragraph, you need to include enough **supporting details** to **elaborate**, or explain, the main idea fully. Some details will come from your memory or experiences, and others will come from research.

Kinds of Supporting Details	
Facts	statements that can be proved true
Examples	specific cases or instances
Sensory Details	details about how something looks, sounds, smells, feels, or tastes
Anecdotes	brief stories or incidents
Quotations	spoken or written words from an expert

As you read the paragraph below, pay attention to how the main idea is supported.

### Literary Model

The topic is life inside a typical French castle in the Middle Ages.

<sup>1</sup>The Norman castle was built for security, not for comfort. <sup>2</sup>The lord and lady of the castle usually slept behind a curtain in the main dining hall. <sup>3</sup>Also sleeping in the hall might be a small mob of knights, guests, servants, and dogs. <sup>4</sup>The floor was covered with herbs to keep down the smell of bones and other refuse. <sup>5</sup>On a winter morning, inhabitants would wash by plunging their arms through ice-crusting water in a bucket.

—Excerpt from *Across the Centuries*

### Reading as a Writer

1. What, in your own words, is the main idea of this paragraph?
2. What kinds of supporting details are included? How effective are they?
3. What other kinds of details might the author add to elaborate the main idea? Think of one or two specific suggestions.

**EXERCISE 1** Identifying Main Ideas

In each paragraph that follows, underline the topic sentence. If there isn't a topic sentence, write a one-sentence statement of the main idea in your own words.

<sup>1</sup>One of the largest plant-eating dinosaur skeletons ever found is more than 120 feet long. <sup>2</sup>Discovered in Patagonia, the dinosaur is estimated to be 98 million years old. <sup>3</sup>Patagonia continues to be the site where the largest plant-eating dinosaur skeletons have been discovered. <sup>4</sup>Two other skeletons discovered in Patagonia measure between 115 and 131 feet long.



<sup>1</sup>Archaeologists in Peru have discovered what might be the oldest mural in the Americas. <sup>2</sup>Carbon dating shows the mural and the temple in which it was found are about 4,000 years old. <sup>3</sup>The mural and temple surprised archaeologists. <sup>4</sup>They had previously believed that such complex art and architecture developed later in Peru.

**EXERCISE 2** Supporting a Main Idea

Read each main idea below, and choose one.

- Styles of fashion and music often make a comeback.
  - Text messaging is better than making a phone call.
  - Exotic animals, such as reptiles or ferrets, make good pets.
1. For the main idea you chose, write a paragraph that elaborates on it. Write your paragraph on a separate sheet of paper.
  2. Include at least two different types of details in your paragraph. Write at least six sentences.

## LESSON 4.2

# Paragraph Unity

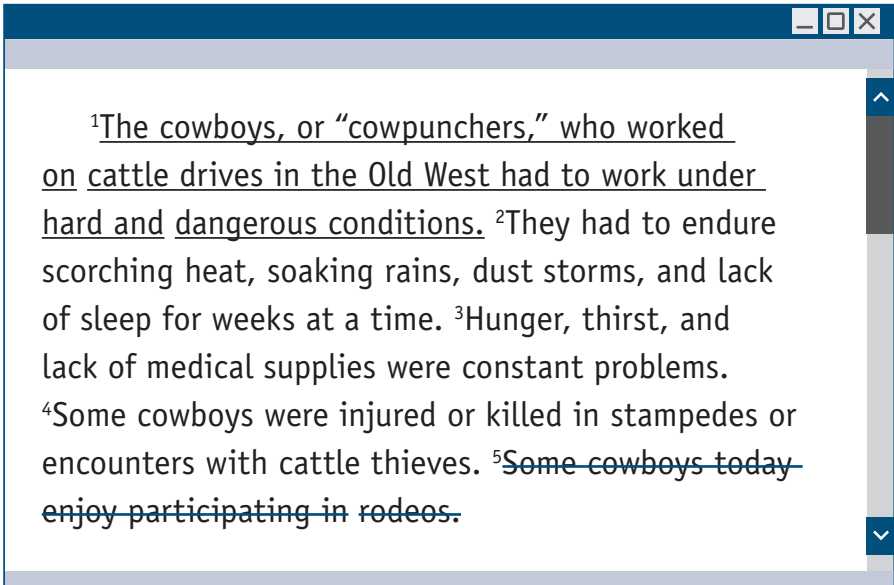
► A paragraph has **unity** if all of its sentences stay on one topic and work together to support the main idea. As you read the model below, notice how each sentence relates directly to the author’s point about railroad travel.

### Literary Model

<sup>1</sup>Perhaps there is nothing in the line of discovery and improvement that has shown more marked progress in the last century than the railway. . . . <sup>2</sup>Now we have everything that heart can wish. <sup>3</sup>In fact, we live better on the road than we do at home, with but thirty-six hours between New York and Minneapolis, and a gorgeous parlor, bedroom, and dining-room between Maine and Oregon, with nothing missing that may go to make life a rich blessing, we are compelled to express our wonder and admiration.

—Excerpt from *Bill Nye’s Cordwood* by Bill Nye

► Including a **topic sentence** that directly states your main idea can help you stay focused. As you revise, delete any details that do not relate to the topic sentence.



<sup>1</sup>The cowboys, or “cowpunchers,” who worked on cattle drives in the Old West had to work under hard and dangerous conditions. <sup>2</sup>They had to endure scorching heat, soaking rains, dust storms, and lack of sleep for weeks at a time. <sup>3</sup>Hunger, thirst, and lack of medical supplies were constant problems. <sup>4</sup>Some cowboys were injured or killed in stampedes or encounters with cattle thieves. ~~<sup>5</sup>Some cowboys today enjoy participating in rodeos.~~

The paragraph explains how railroad travel has progressed over a century.

Topic sentence focuses on one main idea.

Irrelevant information disrupts paragraph unity.

**EXERCISE 1** Identifying Unity Problems

Decide which paragraph has a problem with unity, and explain why. Then revise it by deleting detail(s) that are unrelated.

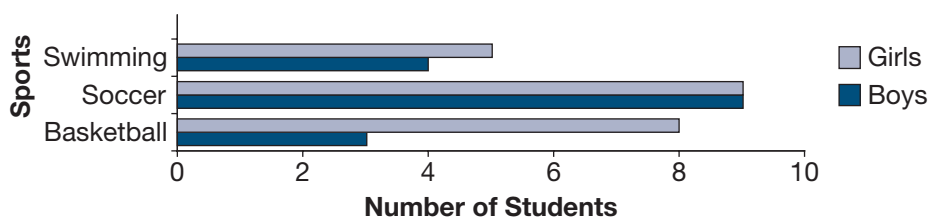
<sup>1</sup>Data from the U.S. Census Bureau reveal interesting comparisons between men and women. <sup>2</sup>For example, a total of 167 million females live in the United States, 3 million more than males. <sup>3</sup>Also, 36 percent of women age 25 to 29 earned a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 28 percent of men. <sup>4</sup>However, men continue to earn more money than women, with women earning 82 cents for every dollar a man earns.

<sup>1</sup>The busy holiday shopping rush forces stores to hire temporary workers. <sup>2</sup>The U.S. Census Bureau notes that in December 2021, retail sales totaled \$53.7 billion. <sup>3</sup>That was a 10 percent increase from November. <sup>4</sup>The only people probably busier are postal carriers. <sup>5</sup>To handle the shopping rush, 15.6 million people were employed by retail stores.

**EXERCISE 2** Writing a Paragraph

Write a unified paragraph of at least four sentences based on the graphic below. Begin with a clear topic sentence.

**Favorite Sports of Students in Ms. Hirst's Classes**



## LESSON 4.3

# Patterns of Organization

A paragraph has **coherence** when all of the sentences fit logically together.

➤ Arranging details in an order that makes sense is one way to make sure your paragraphs are clear and coherent. Your organization of a paragraph depends on your topic and purpose.

➤ Below are four common patterns of organization for paragraphs.

1. **Chronological Order** When you organize ideas in chronological (time) order, you present them in the order in which they occur. Use chronological order to tell a story, describe a historical event, or explain the steps in a process.

### Writing HINT

Using transitions (such as *before*, *however*, *since*, and *then*) helps readers understand how you have organized your ideas. For more about transitions, see **Lesson 4.4**.

### Writing Model

<sup>1</sup>At first we couldn't decide if the low rumbling we heard was from a train or thunder. <sup>2</sup>But, within five minutes, the blackening sky gave us the answer. <sup>3</sup>While I grabbed the picnic basket, my dad yelled to everyone to head to the cabin. <sup>4</sup>Before we had gone twenty yards, we were completely drenched.

2. **Spatial Order** Use spatial order to help your readers visualize a person, place, or object. Describe details according to their location, such as front to back, top to bottom, left to right, near to far, or inside to outside.

### Writing Model

<sup>1</sup>The sky to the left was a bright blue, with sunlight streaming between an occasional fluffy white cloud. <sup>2</sup>Straight above us, the sky was almost gray, and the clouds hung lower to the ground. <sup>3</sup>However, to our right was an even scarier scene. <sup>4</sup>Jagged bolts of lightning were exploding in the air.

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# Writing an Essay



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# Parts of an Essay

Knowing how to write a short **essay** is useful anytime you want to express your thoughts. In fact, writing is an excellent way to form your own opinion about an issue.

In addition, knowing how to write an effective essay is useful because you will be assigned essays to write and you will take essay tests throughout your school years.

➔ You already know about paragraphs. The form of an essay is similar to that of a paragraph.

Paragraph	Function	Essay
Topic Sentence	states main idea	Introductory Paragraph
Supporting Sentences	develop main idea	Body Paragraphs
Concluding Sentence	restates main idea	Concluding Paragraph

Organization of an Essay		
Introduction	Body	Conclusion
The introduction of an essay includes a clear statement of the main idea. Start with an attention-getting sentence to keep your readers interested.	Body paragraphs include facts, details, examples, sensory details, and quotations to support the main idea.	The last paragraph sums up the points made in the essay. It restates the main idea and draws the essay to a close.

➔ The introduction and conclusion are usually only one paragraph long, while the body of an essay includes three or more paragraphs.

## **EXERCISE** Identifying Parts of an Essay

The essay on the next page needs to be rewritten. Read it once through.

1. Use the proofreading symbol ¶ to start a new paragraph where you think each new one should begin.
2. Label the introductory paragraph and concluding paragraph, and underline the main idea in each.

Review **Lesson 4.1** for more about main ideas and topic sentences.

### **Remember**

The three parts of an essay mostly appear in expository and persuasive essays. Many descriptive and narrative essays do not have these features.

### HINT

Look for the three topic sentences. They will help you find the individual body paragraphs.

<sup>1</sup>Today, women take their independence for granted. <sup>2</sup>Their grandmothers and great-grandmothers, however, laid the groundwork. <sup>3</sup>At the turn of the twentieth century, women often had long hair and wore ankle-length skirts. <sup>4</sup>In the next decades, women began working outside the home. <sup>5</sup>They even did work that had been considered “men’s work.” <sup>6</sup>The women living from the 1920s through the 1970s made possible the independence women know and expect today. <sup>7</sup>In the 1920s, flappers insisted on freedom in their clothing and way of life. <sup>8</sup>They chose short skirts that allowed them to move freely, and they cut their hair in short, easy-to-care-for styles. <sup>9</sup>They danced the Charleston in clubs and wore fringed skirts. <sup>10</sup>They even began driving cars! <sup>11</sup>During World War II, women were needed in factories because the men were off fighting, and these “Rosie the Riveters,” as they were called in the 1940s, went to work wearing pants. <sup>12</sup>Their attitude was, “If it needs to be done, I can do it.” <sup>13</sup>They were former housewives who went off to work and raised families at the same time. <sup>14</sup>By the 1960s, more women were working outside the home than ever before. <sup>15</sup>The numbers grew through the decade. <sup>16</sup>According to the U.S. Department of Labor, 40.8 percent of women were in the labor force in 1970. <sup>17</sup>In the twenty-first century, women can choose any career, can marry or remain single, and can own their own homes. <sup>18</sup>Rules of correctness do not tell them how to dress, where to work, or how to act. <sup>19</sup>Today, women owe their current variety of choices to women of the past, who fought for and won the independence women cherish today.

# Thesis Statements

A **thesis statement** is a sentence or two that states your main idea about your subject. Sometimes it is also called a **claim** or **controlling idea**. It can come anywhere in the introduction, but it often is the last sentence in the first paragraph.

➔ To write an effective thesis statement, start with your subject. Collect your information, and look for connections to explore. Then ask yourself, “What main point do I want to make about this subject?”

➔ Your thesis statement should be specific. If it is too general, it won’t grab your readers’ interest. On the other hand, if it is too specific or simply a fact, you won’t have enough material to develop an essay. Suppose your topic is “paintings.”

<b>Too Broad</b>	Paintings are beautiful.
<b>Too Narrow</b>	Claude Monet painted <i>Water Lilies</i> in 1906.
<b>Lacks a Main Idea</b>	Claude Monet was an impressionist painter.
<b>Strong Thesis, or Claim</b>	Claude Monet was an important impressionist painter.

➔ It is a good idea to use your thesis statement, or claim, to preview the essay’s organization. Mention your key ideas in the order in which you will discuss them in your body paragraphs. See Lesson 5.4 for more about thesis statements that give clues about how an essay will be organized.

Claude Monet’s **quick brushstrokes** and **use of bright colors** made him an important impressionist painter.

Writing a thesis statement before you begin will give your essay a focus and keep you on track. You may want to revise your thesis statement, or claim, during the process of writing as you discover new information.



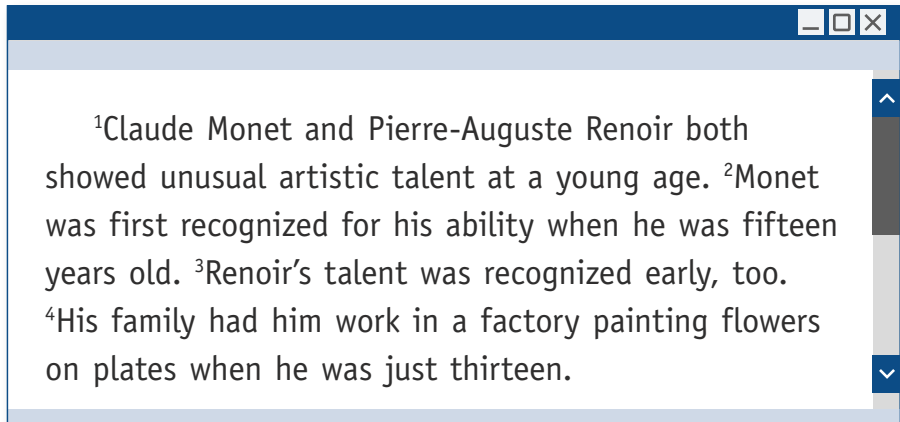
Claude Monet

### Test-Taking TIP

In essay tests, you will often be asked to write one or more paragraphs in response to a statement or a piece of literature. Including a thesis statement will keep you on track as you write and probably result in a better overall score.

### EXERCISE 1 Identifying a Thesis Statement, or Claim

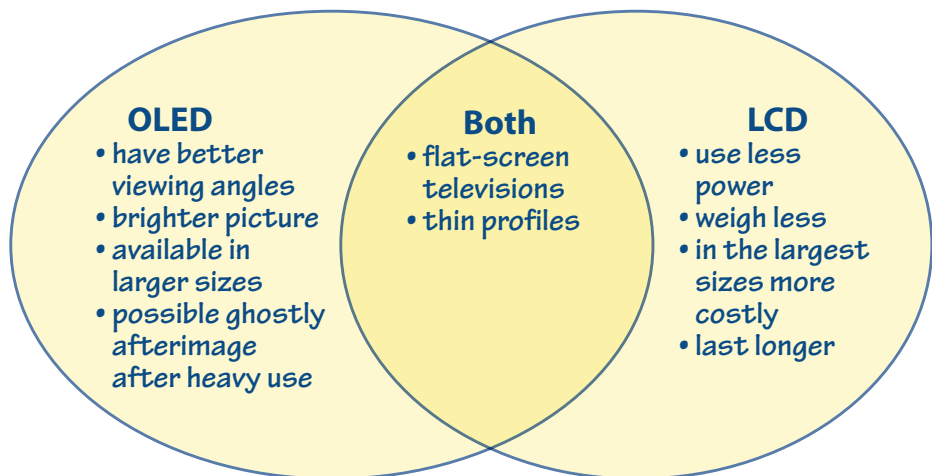
Underline the thesis, or claim, in the introductory paragraph.



### EXERCISE 2 Writing a Thesis, or Claim

Below is a Venn diagram that compares OLED and LCD televisions. Use the details in the graphic organizer to write a strong thesis, or claim.

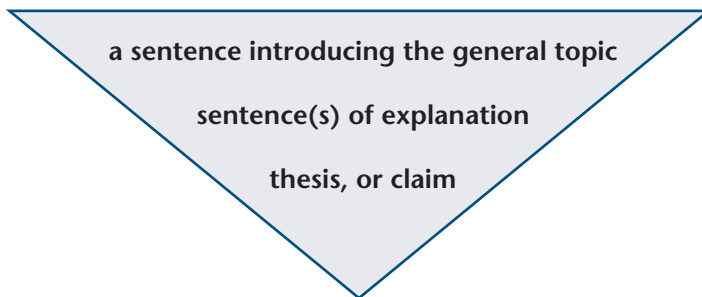
1. Assume your paper needs to be two or three pages long.
2. Remember to make a point about your subject. You may choose to use some or all of the details to preview your key points.



# Introductions

Consider the **introduction** of your essay an invitation. It should catch your readers' attention and invite them to read more.

➔ The first paragraph of many essays introduces the topic and usually includes a **thesis statement**, or **claim**, which states your main idea. One commonly used structure for an introductory paragraph begins with a general sentence and ends with a specific statement. This organization can help focus your essay.



➔ Below are some effective ways to begin an essay.

- an amazing fact
- an unusual comparison
- a question
- a contradiction
- an example
- an anecdote
- a quotation
- brief mention of an opposing view

➔ The length of an introductory paragraph depends on the topic of the essay. Your introduction should quickly introduce the main idea that you will develop in the body of the essay. Two to five sentences are usually ideal. Occasionally, your introduction may be more than one paragraph.

➔ Avoid starting with phrases such as, “This essay is about...” or “I will write about...” Also try to avoid vague, general statements. They often don’t add any content or spark interest in your readers.

## Writing HINT

Although readers read the introduction first, you do not have to write it first. Try starting in the middle of your paper. Then go back to the introduction later.

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# Grammar for Writing

NEW EDITION



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ISBN 978-1-4217-7357-5



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