How to link paragraphs

A well-structured paragraph has an introductory sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence. All these sentences relate to the main idea or topic of the paragraph. In the same way, a longer piece of writing has an introductory paragraph, supporting paragraphs and a concluding paragraph. These are all linked to the main idea or topic of the writing.

In a longer piece of writing, paragraphs need to link to one another. To help your readers follow your writing, you need to guide them from your introduction to your conclusion.

A well-constructed paragraph needs to include a link that connects it to any paragraph that follows. Supporting and concluding paragraphs also need links back to paragraphs that come before them. You can create these links between paragraphs in different ways:
• Repeat key words or ideas (for example, *race/racing/races*).
• Use pronouns instead of repeating key words (for example, *him/he/it/that/those*).
• Insert transitional devices (for example, *However, But, Therefore, So, Firstly* and *Secondly*).

Example:

Anda surprises the crowds
The injured racer Anda surprised the crowds in the final race of the day. After colliding with a cyclist and hurting himself, he was the underdog. But underdogs can win races!

Anda has been winning races since he first started cycling in high school. He has won regional and national races. He is now winning international races as well.

On the international circuit, Anda has also surprised the crowds. So, injured or not, talented Anda wins races and continues to surprise crowds.

The introductory paragraph links the topic and main idea with a *hook* in the concluding sentence to create interest.

The supporting paragraph includes references to Anda and races and the pronouns create links with the introductory paragraph. This paragraph develops the main idea introduced in the previous paragraph.

The concluding paragraph has links to words and ideas in the first two paragraphs. The concluding paragraph also summarises the main idea and provides a final comment.

1. What is the main idea or topic in each of the paragraphs in *Anda surprises the crowds*?

   a) Introductory paragraph: _____

   b) Supporting paragraph: _____

   c) Concluding paragraph: _____

2. Identify the sentence links in the introductory paragraph of *Anda surprises the crowds*. Find an example of:

   a) keyword repetition: _____

   b) use of pronouns: _____

   c) transitional device: _____

Let's
Practise
Practise • Consolidate
Apply your skills

3. Identify the main ideas that are linked in all the paragraphs in *Anda surprises the crowds* by writing down key words or ideas that are repeated.
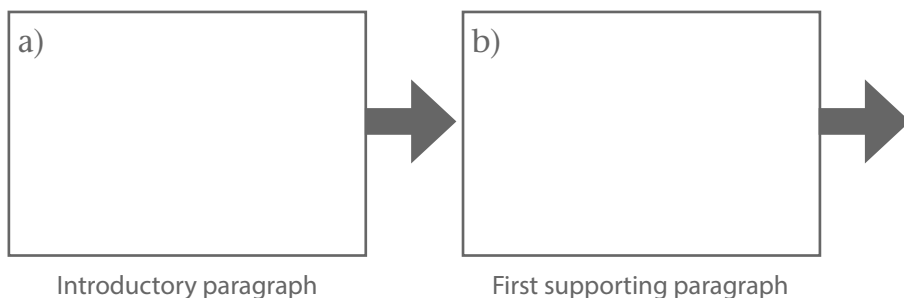
   a) title and paragraph 1: _____

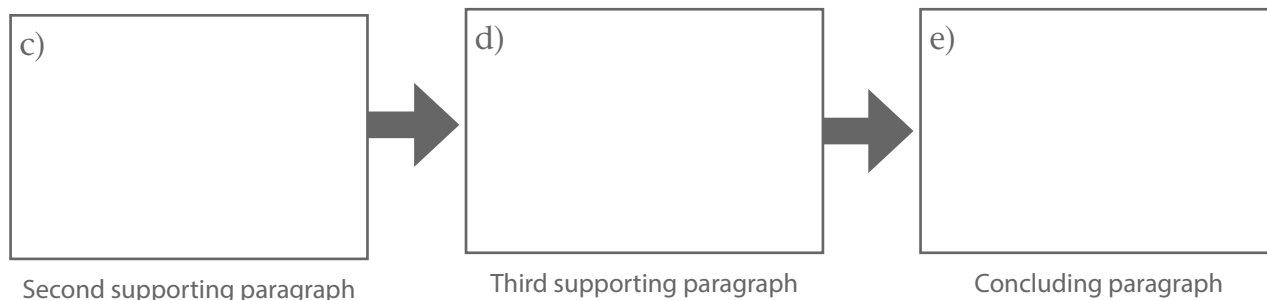   b) paragraph 1 and paragraph 2: _____

   c) paragraph 2 and paragraph 3: _____

4. Refer to the concluding paragraph 3 in *Anda surprises the crowds*, and then identify the final comment on the topic in all the paragraphs.

_____

5. A mind map can help you plan your writing and decide how to add links between sentences in a paragraph and between paragraphs in a longer piece of writing. Plan paragraphs on the topic *Why we need to exercise*. Choose the sentences from the margin to use in the introductory paragraph and the supporting paragraphs. Write them in the mind map.

- Then it improves our energy levels.
- For all these important reasons, we need to exercise daily.
- We need to exercise for three important reasons.
- It can also help to increase our happiness hormones.
- Firstly, exercise is essential for good health.

a) ⟶ b) ⟶

Introductory paragraph   First supporting paragraph

c) ⟶ d) ⟶ e)

Second supporting paragraph   Third supporting paragraph   Concluding paragraph

6. Identify the linking words in the following short paragraph. Underline transition words and put brackets around key words.

Digital technologies have become central to teaching and learning in many schools. They increase student classroom participation and motivation. However, the Internet, cellphones and social media have also brought new technological challenges to classrooms. These days schools need to be aware of these challenges but support digital technologies for teaching and learning in the classroom.

Let's Practise