



## Using paragraphs

A paragraph is a group of sentences that share the same idea. We use paragraphs to structure our writing and to make it easier for the reader to follow.

Have a look at a range of different texts - such as newspapers, online reports and stories - to see how different writers divide texts into separate paragraphs.

There's more information about paragraphs in the factsheet **Writing paragraphs**.

### Topic sentences

A topic sentence gives you the main idea in a paragraph. It's often (but not always) the first sentence in a paragraph. For example, if you're writing about travel and you want to write a paragraph about how much travel has changed over the years, you could start your paragraph with a general statement, such as **Travel has changed completely in the last hundred years**. This is your topic sentence. The other sentences in the paragraph will then give more information about these changes in travel. These are called supporting sentences.

### How to develop a paragraph

There are lots of different ways of developing your writing in a paragraph.

If you're writing about changes in travel, you could develop the paragraph by giving an **example** of how travel has changed. For example you could write about the growth in air traffic over the last hundred years.

You could make a **comparison**. One hundred years ago, how long did it take to travel from England to India? How long would the same journey take now?

You could tell a **story (or anecdote)** to make your point. For example, you could write about some people who have sailed around the world.

You could give a **reason** why you think travel has changed completely, such as the huge changes in technology over the last hundred years. You could also discuss what you think are the **consequences** of these changes. Do many more people travel long distances than ever before? Has the increase in the number of travellers affected our planet?

You could use **statistics (or numbers)** to back up your argument. For example, can you find figures about how many people use public transport every day.