First Term Resource: Body Paragraphs

Body paragraphs are found between the introduction and conclusion paragraphs. They include the supporting points, details, descriptions, and examples, and they support the main idea (thesis statement) of the paper. If the thesis statement is the brains of the paper, the body paragraphs are the muscles (Figure 1).

**When should I begin a new body paragraph?**

When the focus of the paper shifts or you include a new supporting point, begin a new body paragraph.

**What should a body paragraph consist of?**

A body paragraph should consist of a topic sentence and support sentences. The topic sentence reveals the main point of the paragraph and provides a transition from the previous paragraph.

Think of a table: The topic sentence is the table top. The supporting sentences are like the legs of the table, holding up the table top.

The supporting sentences in a body paragraph include examples, description, narration, or the steps of a process.

**Should I consider anything else?**

**Length** - Paragraphs of more than one typewritten page might scare readers away. Short paragraphs might not provide enough support.

**Sentence Variety** - When you read your paragraph out loud, if the language seems repetitive, check the structure of your sentences. Are they all simple sentences? If so consider combining sentences or changing the order to create a smoother flow.

**Focus** - The information and examples in your paragraph might be interesting, but if they are not focused on one major supporting point (the idea in your topic sentence), the reader might get distracted.

For more information view the [Body Paragraphs](#) and [Paragraph Development](#) tutorials.

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