

Unit 1

About me

1 Brainstorming

BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming means coming up with ideas about something. When you brainstorm, you write as many words or phrases as you can think of; you don't have to write your ideas in complete sentences.

Sometimes you can break your ideas down into smaller parts or examples. This will give you even more ideas to use in your writing.

- 1 Anna brainstormed a list of things she likes to do. Read what she wrote. Then brainstorm three things that you like to do.

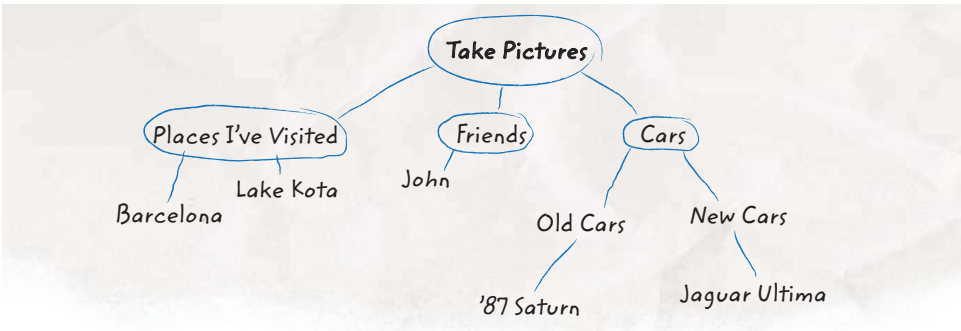
Things I like to do

- take pictures
- sing
- read

Things I like to do



- 2 Anna broke *take pictures* into smaller parts and examples. On a separate piece of paper, write one thing you like to do. Break that into smaller parts and examples.



- 3 Compare your paper with a partner. Can you add additional information to your own paper?

Later in this unit . . .

You will write a paragraph about things that you like to do.

You will learn about expository paragraphs and topic sentences.

2 Analyzing a paragraph

1 Read this student’s paragraph and follow the instructions below.

Things I Don't Like to Do

There are many things that I don't like to do, but the most common ones are ironing, being in large crowds, and driving in the city. I don't like ironing at all because it takes so much time. I would rather spend my time doing something else, like reading or even cleaning my house. Another thing I don't like is going to crowded places. When there are a lot of people around me, I feel uncomfortable. I would rather be with a small group of friends. Driving in the city is also something I don't enjoy. Taxi drivers are aggressive, and they make it difficult for me to drive. I would rather take trains or buses.

- a What is the main idea of this paragraph? Write it on the line below.
-
- b Which sentence states the main idea of the paragraph? Underline it above.
- c What are the specific details the author uses to explain the main idea? Finish the sentences.
- I don't like ironing
- because
-
-
- I don't like
- because
-
-
- I don't like
- because
-
-

2 Compare answers with a partner.

Talk about it.

Tell your partner three things that you don't like to do.

3 Learning about organization

EXPOSITORY PARAGRAPHS

Look at the paragraph in Part 2 again. It's an expository paragraph. An expository paragraph explains a general idea by breaking it down into smaller, more specific parts. The more general information describes a big idea, and the specific information gives details and support for that idea.



1 Study the examples. In each column, one phrase has general information (G) and three phrases have specific information (S).

a	G <u>things that irritate me</u>	b	S <u>run daily</u>	c	S <u>free concerts</u>
	S <u>late trains</u>		S <u>go to a dance class</u>		G <u>advantages of New York</u>
	S <u>rude store clerks</u>		G <u>how to stay in shape</u>		S <u>interesting people</u>
	S <u>traffic jams</u>		S <u>avoid junk food</u>		S <u>excellent museums</u>

2 Look at these lists. In each column, which phrase is general and which phrases are specific? Write one G and three Ss in the blanks.

a	_____ reality shows	b	_____ communicate with friends	c	_____ exchange ideas on many topics
	_____ sitcoms		_____ get maps and directions		_____ reasons to have a Facebook page
	_____ TV shows		_____ do research		_____ improve your English writing skills
	_____ cooking shows		_____ ways to use the Internet		_____ make friends abroad

3 Now complete these lists with your own ideas. In each column, there should be one general (G) and three specific (S) phrases.

a	G <u>music that I like</u>	b	G <u>bad habits</u>	c	G _____
	S _____		S _____		S <u>driving a car</u>
	S _____		S _____		S <u>taking the train</u>
	S _____		S _____		S <u>walking</u>

4 Compare answers with a partner.

4 Learning more about organization

TOPIC SENTENCES

Paragraphs always have a topic and, often, a topic sentence. A topic sentence tells readers what the paragraph is about. A good topic sentence:

- is a summary of the information in the paragraph (*not* a conclusion the reader makes)
- summarizes the whole paragraph, not just part of it
- isn't too general
- doesn't have too many details

1 Read each paragraph excerpt. Mark the best topic sentence with a *T*.

It is fun to observe the different customs people have and the clothes they wear. I also love to hear new accents and languages. Foreign markets are interesting to walk through, too.

- a ____ I don't travel too much these days.
- b ____ You can walk through foreign markets.
- c T I always enjoy visiting new places.

It's easy to get work done on a train because you can use your computer. Also, it's fun to just relax and look out the window. Finally, trains are environmentally friendly – fewer cars on the road means less traffic.

- d ____ So, we should travel by train.
- e ____ Traveling by train has many advantages.
- f ____ Trains are nice.

First, I can find out what's going on in the world. Second, there's always some interesting information about places to travel or recipes to prepare. Finally, it is a great way to learn new vocabulary.

- g ____ Newspapers teach us world events, they give us new recipes, they tell us about places to travel, and they help us learn new vocabulary.
- h ____ I learn a lot from reading the newspaper.
- i ____ There is only one newspaper I really like.

2 Compare answers with a partner.

3 With your partner, discuss the reasons the other sentences above are not good topic sentences. Mark each sentence with one of these reasons.

- G – It is too general.
- S – It contains too much specific information.
- C – It is a conclusion.
- N – It is not related to the other sentences.
- P – It is a summary of only part of the paragraph.



5 Working on content

1 Look at your brainstorming list in Part 1, Step 1. For each item, write one phrase that contains general information and three phrases that contain specific information. Look at the example.

- G three places I like to go to
- S My Thai restaurant
- S Powell's Bookstore
- S the park down the street



- a G _____
S _____
S _____
S _____
- b G _____
S _____
S _____
S _____
- c G _____
S _____
S _____
S _____

2 Now write a topic sentence for each of the topics above.

- Near my apartment, there are three places that I like to go to .
- a _____ .
- b _____ .
- c _____ .

3 Choose *a*, *b*, or *c* to write a paragraph about later. Circle the letter.

6 Analyzing a model

- 1 You are going to write about things you like to do. First, read this example paragraph and follow the instructions below.

Three Special Places

Near my apartment, there are three places I like to go to. The first is My Thai restaurant. Thai food is my favorite kind of food, and the chef there is excellent. The restaurant isn't too expensive, so I often go there with my friends. It's a nice place to relax, talk, and enjoy a delicious meal. The second place is Powell's Bookstore. Powell's is one of the biggest bookstores in my city, so I can find books on almost any subject there. The people who work there are very friendly. If I can't find a book, they will gladly order it for me. The third place I like to go to is the park down the street from my apartment. It has huge trees and a beautiful garden. I sometimes go there after eating a fine Thai meal, and I sit under a tree to read a book from Powell's.



- a What is the main idea of the paragraph? Circle it.

Thai food places I like reading in the park

- b Underline the topic sentence.
- c Subtopics are more specific than the main topic. There are three subtopics in the paragraph above. Write them on the lines below.

- 2 Compare answers with a partner.



7 Write!

- 1 Plan your paragraph about the things you like to do.
- a

What's your main topic? Write it here: _____.
- b

What are your subtopics? Write them on the lines below.

- 2 Now write a paragraph like the one on page 6. Underline the topic sentence.

- 3 When you finish, complete this checklist.

Writing checklist

☐

Do you have a topic sentence?

☐

Is your topic sentence underlined?

☐

Do you have at least three subtopics?

8 Editing

PARAGRAPH FORMAT

A paragraph has a special shape. It shows readers where the paragraph, and the topic of that paragraph, begin and end. Here are the basic rules for writing a paragraph by hand.

a Start the first line of the paragraph about five spaces to the right of the other lines. Write to the end of every line except the last one. If a sentence ends in the middle of the line, don't go down to the next line to start the next sentence. Start it on the same line.

b Start the first line of the paragraph about five spaces to the right of the other lines. Write to the end of every line except the last one. If a sentence ends in the middle of the line, don't go down to the next line to start the next sentence. Start it on the same line.

- 1 Discuss the two paragraphs above with a partner. What are the differences? Which is better?
- 2 Look at the paragraphs below. Each one has mistakes in format. Rewrite them without the mistakes.

a I enjoy my time at work. In the morning, I read letters from customers and write down their questions.
Then, in the afternoon, I call these customers and answer their questions.

b I also enjoy my time at home. I spend a lot of time on the Internet. I can keep in touch with my friends by chatting and sending messages. In addition, I can do research for my job.

- 3 Compare answers with a partner.
- 4 Now look at the paragraph you wrote in Part 7. Did you use correct paragraph format?
- 5 See if you can make any other changes to improve your paragraph.

9 Giving feedback

- 1 Exchange your revised paragraph with a partner. Read your partner’s revised paragraph and follow the instructions below.
- a

Did the author include a topic sentence? Circle one.

Yes

No
- b

Did the author underline the topic sentence? Circle one.

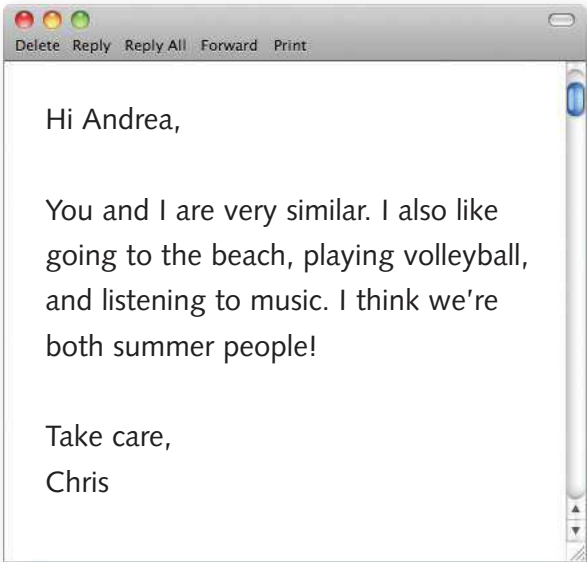
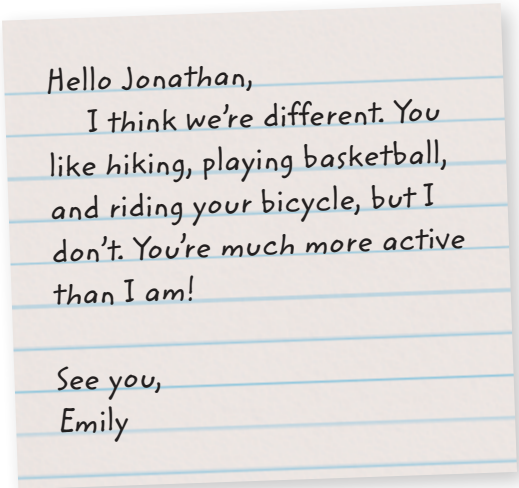
Yes

No
- c

Write your partner’s topic sentence on the line below.
- d

Write another possible topic sentence for the paragraph.
- e

Can you find any subtopics? What are they? Write them on the lines below.
- 2 Do you like to do the same kinds of things as your partner? Write a short note or an e-mail to your partner saying why or why not. Look at the examples.



- 3 Give your note to your partner.
- 4 Can any of your partner’s comments help you make your paragraph better?

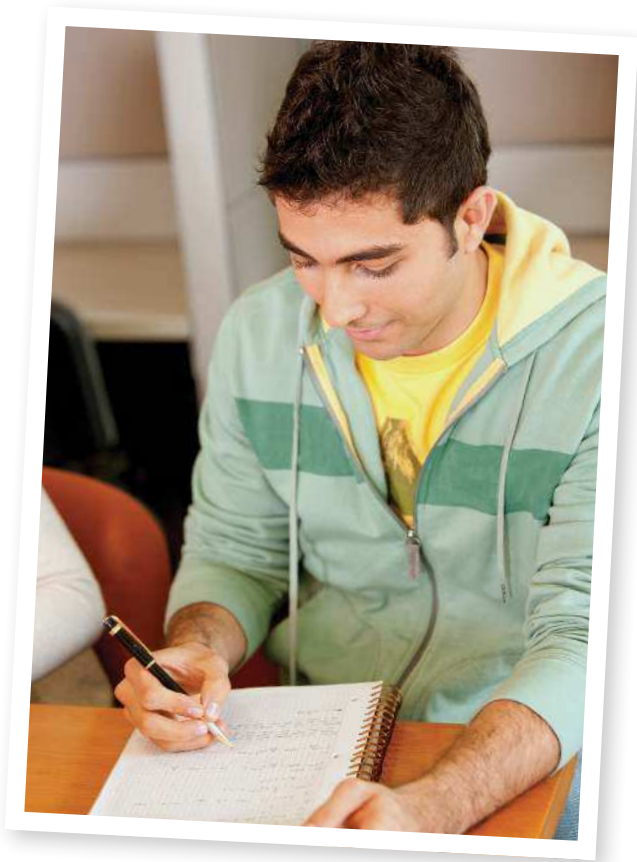
JUST FOR FUN

1 How well do you and your classmates know each other? Write another paragraph about yourself. Choose one of these topics, or use your own idea.

- places I want to visit in the future
- things I like to read or watch
- things I like to collect
- things I am good at
- _____
(your idea)

2 Follow the instructions below.

- a Don't write your name on your paper, and don't show it to anyone.
- b When you finish, give your paper to your teacher. Your teacher will write numbers on the papers and place them around the room.



3 Read the papers and guess which classmate wrote each paragraph. Make a list. Use a separate piece of paper if necessary.

Paragraph number	Author
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

4 Your teacher will tell you who wrote each paper. How many authors did you get right?