

English for Academic Purposes
Week 3 Lesson 1

Paragraph writing.
Problem paragraphs

Astana IT University
The English Language Educational Program



Outline

- Lesson 1. Structure of a paragraph
- Procedure of paragraph writing
- P-S essay paragraph structure
- Practice
- Quiz
- Vocabulary
- Checklist, assessment rubrics, peer feedback



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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. What is a paragraph?
2. How long is a paragraph?

A group of sentences that are coherent and related to a single idea.

A paragraph should be 125-200 words long, but it depends on the length of an essay.



Structure of a paragraph

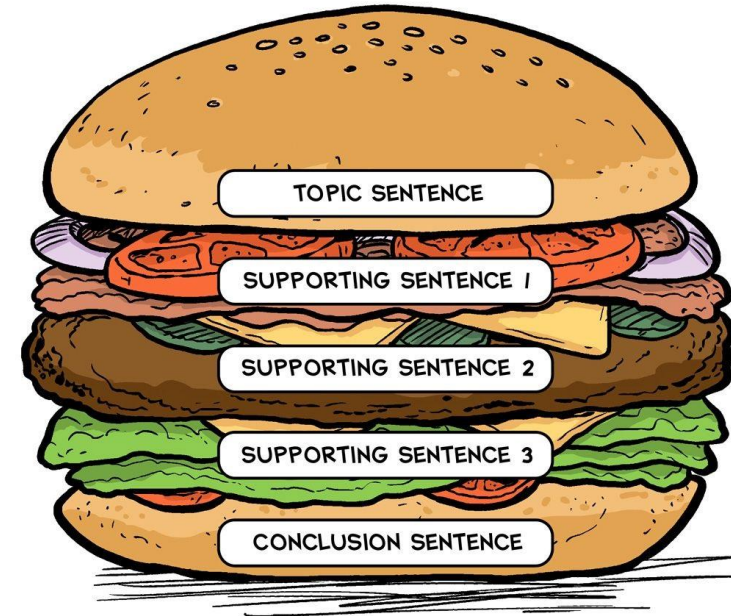
The formal academic English paragraph has three principal parts:

The Topic Sentence

The Supporting Sentences

The Concluding Sentence

The Hamburger Paragraph



Structure of a paragraph

TOPIC SENTENCE

- it states what the paragraph is about. It asserts ONE main idea
- it clearly states the main PROBLEM of the paragraph
- it controls the subject matter of the paragraph

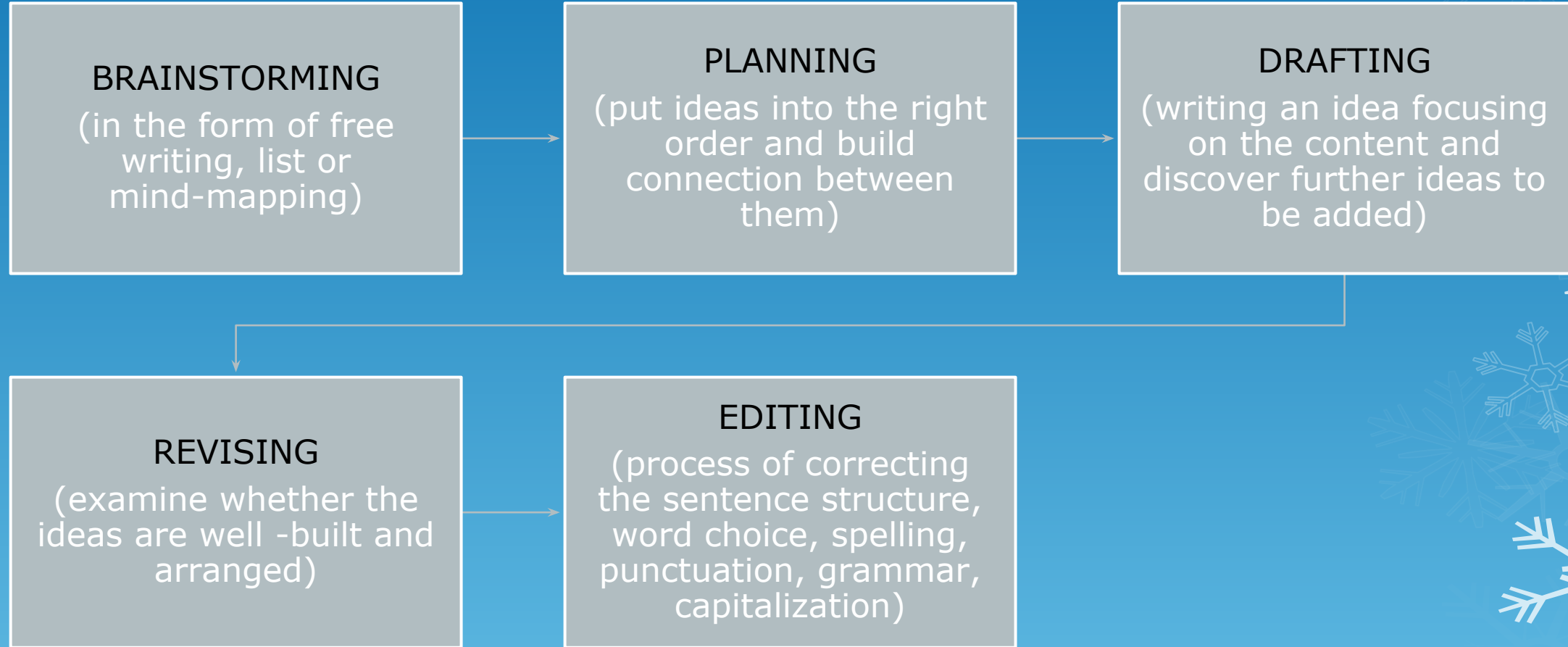
SUPPORTING SENTENCES

- a group of sentences that explains the idea presented in the topic sentence
- there are many sources to add specific details and examples such as facts, statistics and research studies

CONCLUDING SENTENCE

- the concluding sentence or the summary sentence comes at the end of the paragraph in order to summarize the information that has been presented
- It does not exist in every academic paragraph. Some paragraphs tend to be very short; thus they do not include concluding sentences

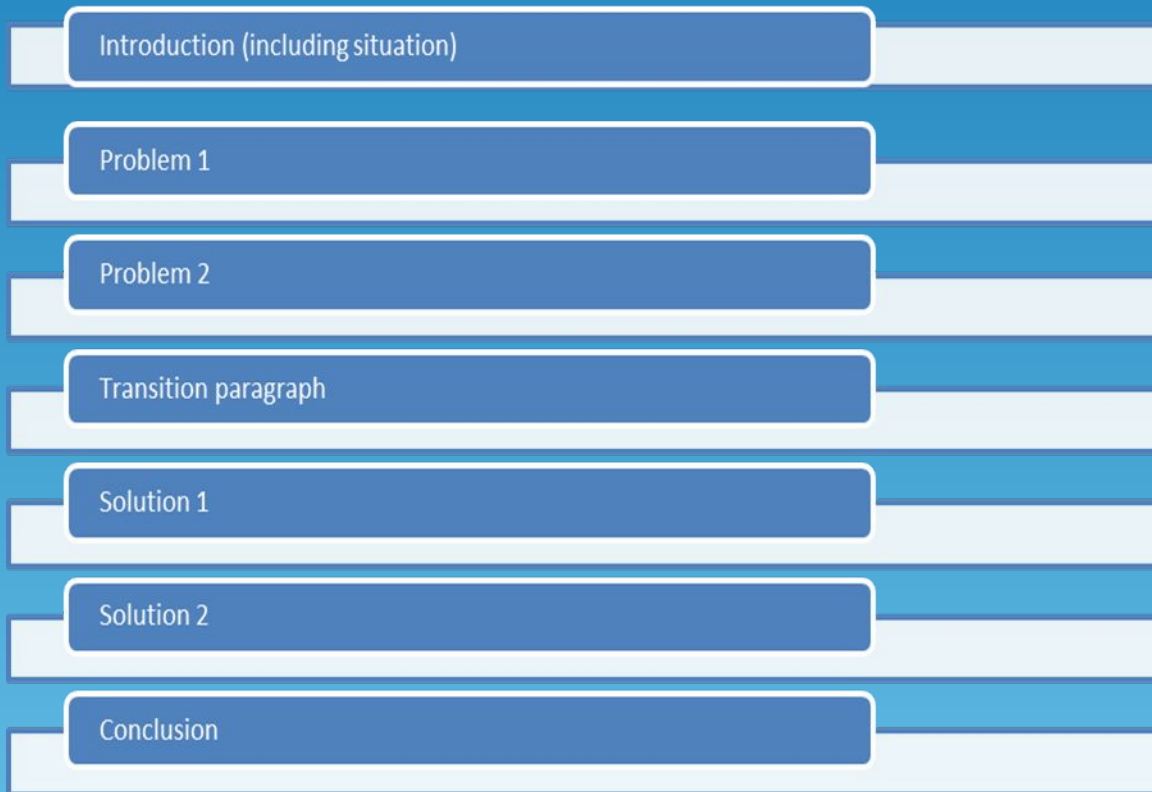
Procedure of paragraph writing



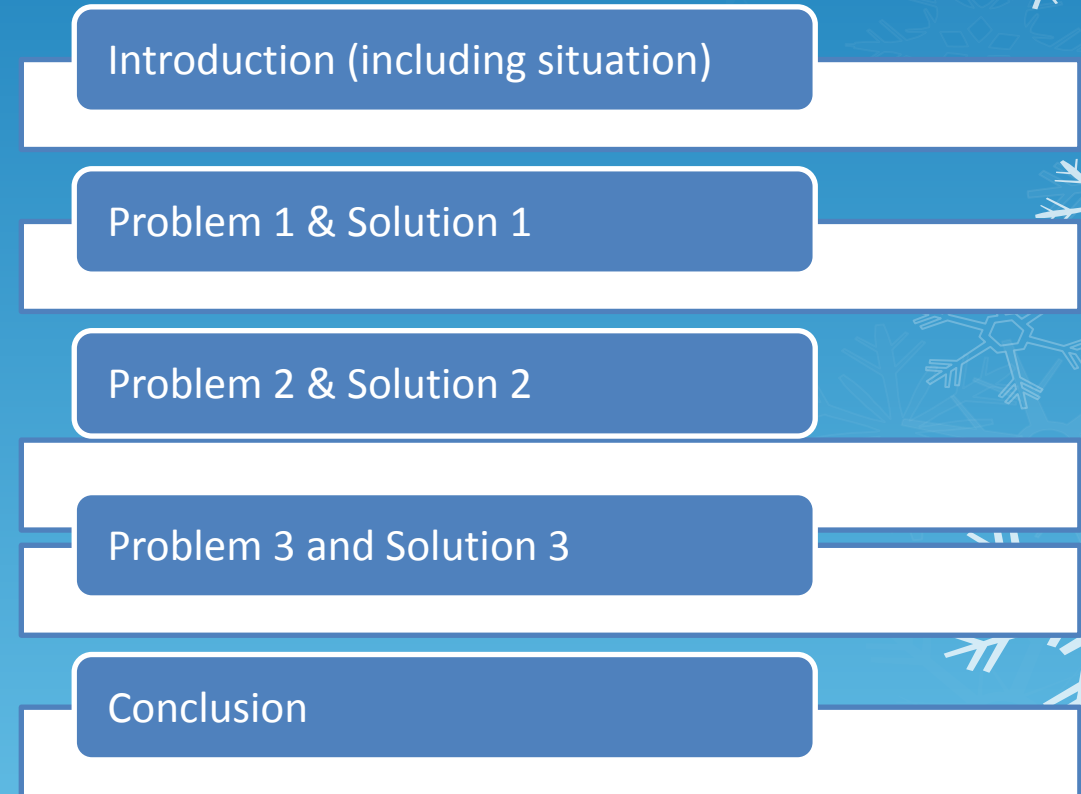
P-S Essay Structure

Look at Figure 1 and 2. What do they show?

Block structure



Chain structure



Practice 1. Example Essay

While reading do the following tasks:

- Find what essay structure it uses;
- Find in the essay the following essay parts:
Situation, **Problem**, **Solution**, **Evaluation**;
- Find in the Problem paragraph (topic sentence, supporting sentences, concluding sentence).

Practice 1. Example Essay

Consumption of processed and convenience food and our dependence on the car have led to an increase in obesity and reduction in the fitness level of the adult population. In some countries, especially industrialized ones, the number of obese people can amount to one third of the population (WHO, 2015). This is significant as obesity and poor fitness lead to a decrease in life expectancy, and it is therefore important for individuals and governments to work together to tackle this issue and improve their citizens' overall health.

Obesity and poor fitness decrease life expectancy. Overweight people are more likely to have serious illnesses such as diabetes and heart disease, which can result in premature death (Wilson, 2014). It is well known that regular exercise can reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, which means that those with poor fitness levels are at an increased risk of suffering from those problems.

Changes by individuals to their diet and their physical activity can increase life expectancy. There is a reliance today on the consumption of processed foods, which have a high fat and sugar content. According to Peterson (2013), in preparing their own food and consuming more fruit and vegetables, people could ensure that their diets are healthier and more balanced, which could lead to a reduction in obesity levels. However, organizing such a change in diet and a reduction of food would need to be controlled by a dietician, which would incur further costs. In order to improve fitness levels, people could choose to walk or cycle to work or to the shops rather than taking the car. They could also choose to walk upstairs instead of taking the lift. These simple changes could lead to a significant improvement in fitness levels.

Governments could also implement initiatives to improve their citizens' eating and exercise habits. Jones (2011) argues that this could be done through education by making changes to the curriculum to incorporate diet & lifestyle. This could be implemented in high school and could have a preventative effect on the younger generations rather than a cure for the obese older generation. Governments could also do more to encourage their citizens to walk or cycle instead of taking the car, for instance by building more cycle lanes or increasing vehicle taxes. While some might argue that increased taxes are a negative way to solve the problem, Wilson (2014) highlights that it would not be any different from the high taxes imposed on cigarettes to reduce cigarette consumption.

In short, obesity and poor fitness are a significant problem in modern life, leading to lower life expectancy. Individuals and governments can work together to tackle this problem and so improve diet and fitness. Of the solutions suggested, those made by individuals themselves are likely to have more impact, though it is clear that a concerted effort with the government is essential for success. With obesity levels in industrialized and industrializing countries continuing to rise, it is imperative that we take action now to deal with this problem.

References

- Jones, J. (2011) Educate for obesity. *The Educationalist Journal* 8 (4). pp34-56
- Peterson, R, J. (2013) Healthier eating creates a healthier world. *The New Scientist*.76 (6).
- Wilson, C. (2014) Diseases connected to Obesity. *Medical Journal*. 55 (5). Pp23-56

Practice 1. Example essay answers

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Changes by individuals to their diet and their physical activity can increase life expectancy. There is a reliance today on the consumption of processed foods, which have a high fat and sugar content. According to Peterson (2013), by preparing their own foods, and consuming more fruit and vegetables, people could ensure that their diets are healthier and more balanced, which could lead to a reduction in obesity levels. In order to improve fitness levels, people could choose to walk or cycle to work or to the shops rather than taking the car. They could also choose to walk up stairs instead of taking the lift. These simple changes could lead to a significant improvement in fitness levels.

Governments could also implement initiatives to improve their citizens' eating and exercise habits. Jones (2011) argues that this could be done through education, for example by adding classes to the curriculum about healthy diet and lifestyles. Governments could also do more to encourage their citizens to walk or cycle instead of taking the car, for instance by building more cycle lanes or increasing vehicle taxes. While some might argue that increased taxes are a negative way to solve the problem, Wilson (2014) highlights that it is no different from the high taxes imposed on cigarettes to reduce cigarette consumption.

In short, obesity and poor fitness are a significant problem in modern life, leading to lower life expectancy. Individuals and governments can work together to tackle this problem and so improve diet and fitness. Of the solutions suggested, those made by individuals themselves are likely to have more impact, though it is clear that a concerted effort with the government is essential for success. With obesity levels in industrialized and industrializing countries continuing to rise, it is essential that we take action now to deal with this problem.

Practice 2. Understanding the problem part in the essay and asking questions

Sample Essay topic: *Overpopulation of urban areas has led to numerous problems.* **Explain the problems** and suggest ways that governments and individuals can tackle these problems.

To explain the problem (Body paragraph #1/2), think about the answers to these similar questions:

- What are the problems that *overpopulation causes in cities*?
- What are the consequences/effects of *overpopulation in cities*?
- What happens when *the cities are overpopulated*?
- Why is it a problem? Is it widespread (locally or globally)?
- How likely is the problem to happen?

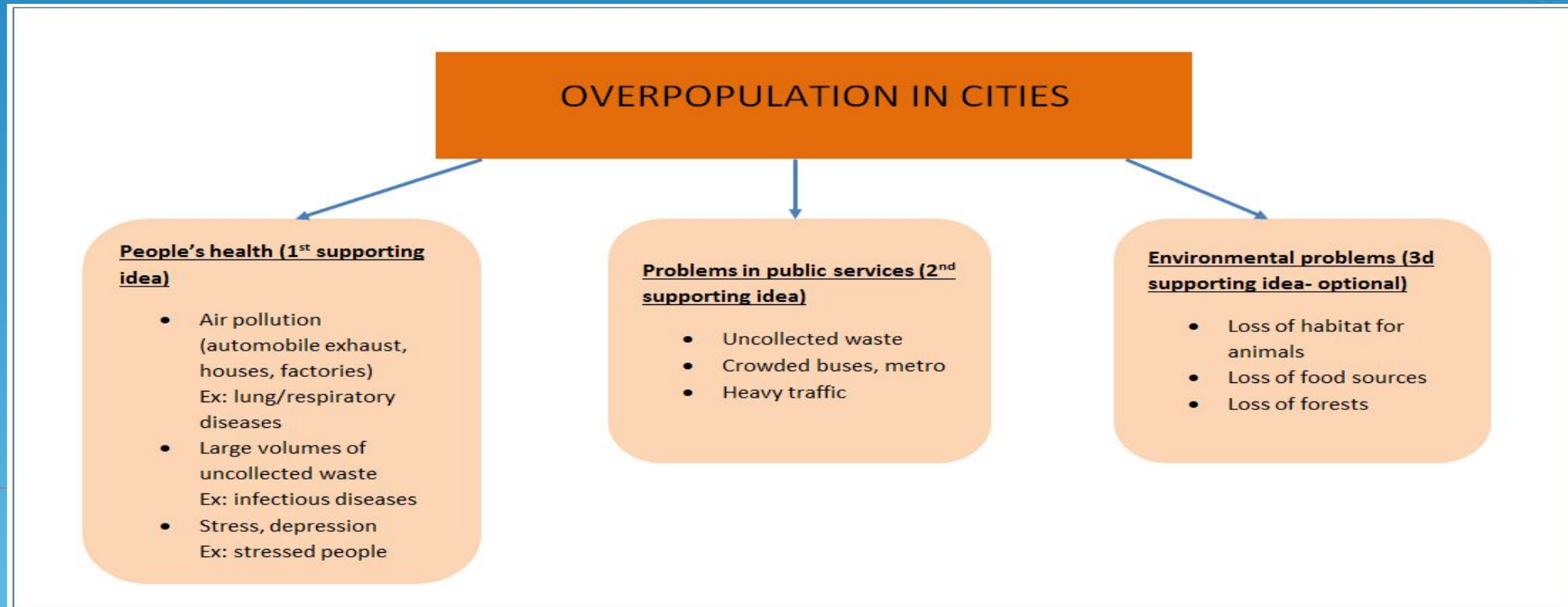
Practice 3. Gathering information/brainstorming

BODY PARAGRAPH #1/2 (EXPLAINING THE PROBLEM)

- **Overpopulation in cities**
 - **Large volumes of uncollected waste**
 - **Significant impact on human health**
 - **Greater poverty**
 - **Difficult to provide services for all people**
 - **Problems in public transportation**
 - **Air pollution**

Practice 4. Classifying ideas for describing the PROBLEM (Body Par. #1/2)

Now, classify your ideas under more general topics. This will help you decide which ideas can be supporting ideas and which ideas can be used for justifications (examples, explanations) in your body paragraph #1. Find at least 2 different ideas. (There are 3 different ideas below.)



Practice 4. Developing body paragraph #1/2 (describing the problem)

Topic
sentence

Overpopulation causes lots of problems in big cities. First problem is that it negatively affects people's health. Air pollution caused by car exhaust, factories and houses makes it very difficult to breath and it also leads to respiratory diseases among people. **Moreover**, people suffer from stress and depression in overpopulated cities since they face with lots of problems during their daily lives. **Secondly**, there are lots of problems in public services. **For instance**, the waste of the city cannot be collected and the streets can be full of garbage, which is a bad scene for the citizens. **Furthermore**, buses and trains are always crowded and people lose a lot of time while travelling.

Supporting
idea 1

Supporting
idea 2

Practice 5. Make up a mind-map on the following essay topic and classify ideas for a **problem paragraph** by asking questions (Padlet individually).

“Cheating and plagiarism at universities.”

Practice 5. Make up a mind-map and classify ideas for a problem paragraph.

Poor understanding of plagiarism concept

- the form of misconduct
- importance of this problem both to students and to universities


Students' learning activity

- academic level
- course difficulty
- time-management skills
- organizing and gathering the information

Lack of basic writing process


- search for the reliable resources and organizing ideas
- search for weak points and strengths

1.Paragraph is

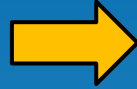
- a) made up of only one sentence.
- b) a series of sentences that talk about various subjects.
-  c) a series of sentences that talk about a specific subject.
- d) a series of paragraphs about one main idea or point.

Quiz

2. A topic sentence is

- a) a sentence with signal words that increase effectiveness of organization.
- b) reasons, examples and other details that support the main point of the paragraph.
- c) a way to conclude the paragraph so the reader knows what the entire paragraph was about.
-  d) the sentence that expresses the main topic or idea of a paragraph.

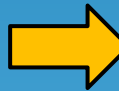
3. What are supporting sentences?



- a) Reasons, examples and other details that support the main point of the paragraph.
- b) Signal words that help organize a paragraph using time order or listing order.
- c) A way to conclude the paragraph so the reader knows what the paragraph was about.
- d) A series of paragraphs about one main idea or point.

4. How many parts does a paragraph have?

QUIZ



- a) A paragraph has 2 parts.
- b) A paragraph has 3 parts.
- c) A paragraph has 4 parts.
- d) A paragraph has 5 parts.

5. How many topics should cover a paragraph?



- a) Two or three.
- b) Five and six.
- c) One.

Vocabulary

Problem

three main *difficulties* have arisen

the main *challenge* faced by

one of the *concerns* during the ...

the new process created two *questions*

the society/people/government faced three *issues*

our principal *worry/dilemma* is/was

Solution

the best *remedy* for this may be

two *answers* have been put forward

another *suggestion* is

the government's /NGO's *proposal* was accepted

this was *adjusted/improved/reformed*

Problem Language

Adjective:

*central / main / major / common / immediate / serious / significant **PROBLEM***

Verbs:

associate / raise / consider / discuss / address / affect

resolve / discuss / overcome/solve/

Phrases:

The most significant problem is.....

..... poses / presents an immediate problem because...

Another possible issue is

Cause & effect language

leads to / results in / gives rise to / as a consequence / owing to / because of / as a result

Cause and effect phrases

This suggests / ... is linked to / associated with / connected to / ...may be affected by...

Homework assessment rubric



Criteria	Score	Your score
1. Each paragraph has a proper structure: a topic sentence, supporting sentences, a concluding sentence	10	
2. The topic sentences state the problem/s relevant to the topic	10	
3. The supporting sentences provide evidence, examples with reference to academic articles and relevant to the topic and provide student's own vision and analysis of the situation/s	25	
4. The concluding sentences are relevant to the topic sentences and flow logically within the paragraph	10	
5. Paragraphs demonstrate a student's good language control: flexible and wide range of academic vocabulary and grammar with no or a few spelling and punctuation errors	20	
6. The references (both, in-text references and the reference list) are formatted in APA	15	
7. The word count for the problem paragraphs is 150-200 words in total (75-100 words each)	10	
Total score	100	
Does the homework have all the requirements? (from 1 to 7)		Tick the relevant box
Includes all of the items given above and they are done in a superior manner	A (90 -100)	
Includes most of the items given above and they are done very well	B (75 - 89)	
Includes most of the items given above and they are done in a satisfactory manner	C (60 - 74)	
Doesn't include many of the items given above and they are done below a satisfactory level	D (50 -59)	
Many items given above are missing or done poorly	F (49 and below)	

Peer-feedback on problem paragraphs for students



Peer Feedback Body Paragraphs (Problems)							
FEATURE		1	2	3	4	5	Comments(as much as possible)
P-S Essay structure	Block structure: an appropriate structure is used and meets the number of problem/solution paragraphs						
Topic sentence	TS introduces main problem of the paragraph TS is clearly formulated						
Development sentences (supporting sentences)	The problem is clearly explained in sufficient details, using concrete examples/data. Evidence for the problem is presented and evaluated.						
Concluding sentence	CS summarizes the information that has been presented in a paragraph.						
Sources	Sources are referenced where necessary according to the APA style (using in-text citation, quoted or correctly paraphrased to avoid plagiarism) There are the reference section entries (format, details, alphabetical order)						
Cautious language	Reporting verbs and avoid overgeneralization (fact-proven)						
Register	The language used is formal and academic						
Coherence and cohesion	It is easy to follow the writer's way of thinking The ideas contribute to a building argument Transition words are used correctly						
Accuracy	There are no spelling, grammar, lexical and punctuation mistakes						
Word count	100-150 words per paragraph						



Asynchronous PA (the ppt file has been uploaded as a separate presentation)

- The asynchronous practical assignments are aimed at creating and using classification phrases and relative clauses. So, the tasks and language reference are related to the themes.
- The completion of the tasks will help you improve your knowledge and skills in using categorizing words and relative clauses and may be useful while preparing for the midterm test on Grammar and Vocabulary.
- **Key assignments** will be considered as some of the criteria in the assessment rubric for **your problem-solution essay**.
- **Students need to send their notes on Asynchron.tasks to the platform their instructors ask them to do (Padlet/ClassNote/Microsoft Teams chat and so on).**
- **The link to the test for the instructors for instructors:**
- <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ShareFormPage.aspx?id=8xWPFcCDBkmCTGm9xQ2dYdMb5pXweidEqfAYBs8bqpdUOFhGNkdEwVvK5RFIwSDVWUkdLMIhHRzYyTy4u&sharetoken=qFtVHj61mIjUVNssb3tx>

SIS

Watch the video-lecture ' 3.4: Paragraphs.' from Coursera 'Writing in Sciences':

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1b4AebK4Dvr2tJuHWhX9rCPGS-M36R18g>

Based on the video lecture, please, do the test in MS Forms:

The link to the test for Instructors

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ShareFormPage.aspx?id=8xWPFeCDBkmCTGm9xQ2dYdMb5pXweidEqfAYBs8bqpdURjFaUEw3Vk4wQk5NWUVYN0IUVIQwQjBJWi4u&sharetoken=r9maI1AWYnwSVV2OvkjC>

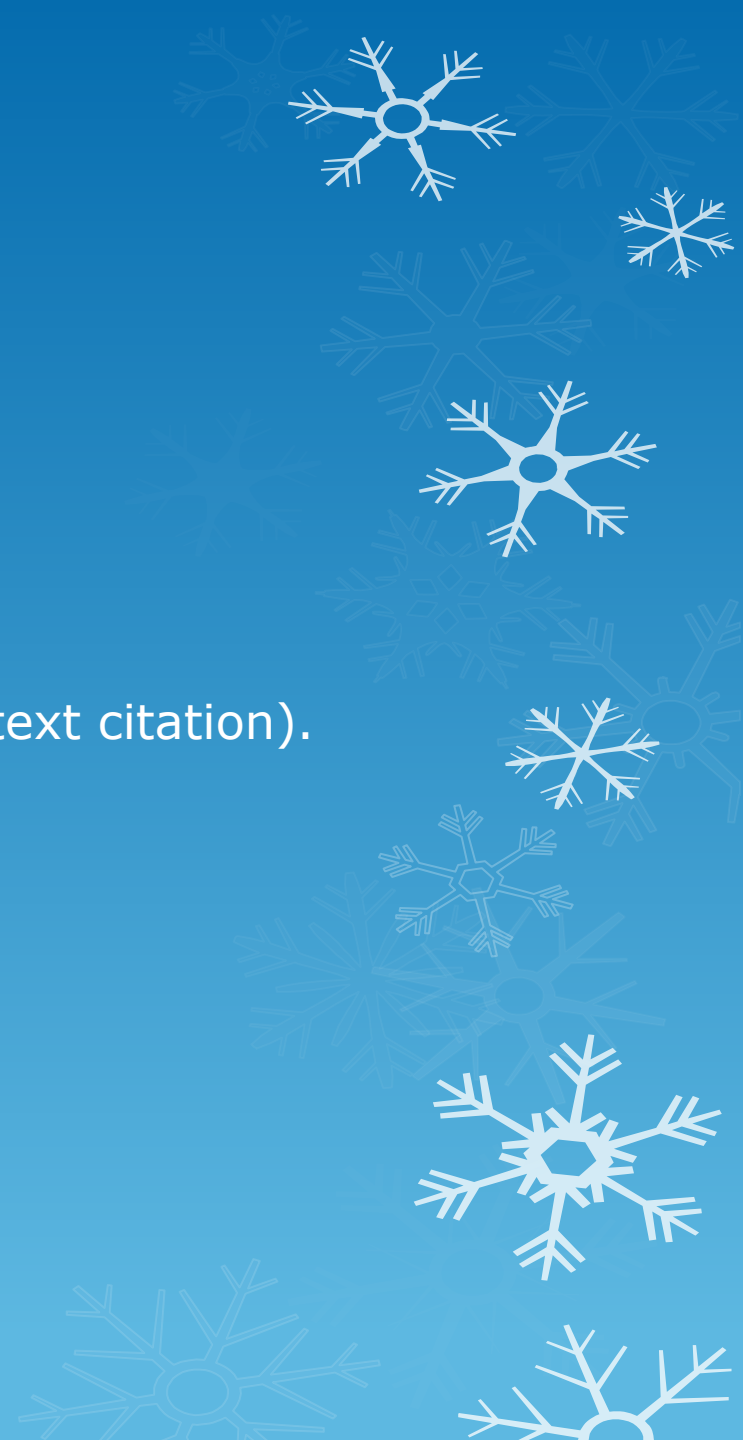
Homework (TSIS)

- Format of the assignment e.g. MS Word Document
- Write TWO problem paragraphs (in 75-100 words each). Complete the task in the template (the one you used to complete weeks 1 & 2 assignments. Do your assignment there).
- Before submission, make sure it meets the requirements in the Rubric (Slide 22)
- Deadline: January 24, 2021 at 23.59

Self-Reflection

- I can write a good and well-structured paragraph.
- I know how to write a topic sentence.
- I can give supporting evidence (reasons, examples with in-text citation).
- I can write a concluding sentence.

Give one point for each criterion. What is your score?



Sample Essay 2 to study by students

See EAP B2 p.219

There is evidence that technology is creating a number of health problems among users of all ages. Identify the main problems and offer solutions.

The use of technology has brought undoubted benefits to every aspect of people's lives, from the personal perspective to that of health and work. It has improved the home environment in many ways, such as making housework less onerous, and it has also driven significant improvements in healthcare. There is a wealth of evidence and research available to support this. However, as with all advances, there are some major drawbacks. As this is now a global issue, this essay seeks to identify the main health problems affecting people irrespective of age and nationality arising from the use of technology, and also offer some practical solutions.

The main health problem associated with the use of technology such as computers in particular is the increase in obesity. While it is perhaps too easy to blame technology alone for the weight increase among children and adults worldwide, it is certainly a major contributing factor, according to the website of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Supposing we take chatting online and playing video games as examples. Compared to the past, children now spend considerably more time doing these activities which have come to be regarded as leisure pursuits (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2005, pp.21 and 25-27). It is possible to encourage parents and schools to increase the activity levels of children at home and school. It is unlikely, however, that this initiative will work in all cases and with older age groups. A more useful solution for children might be to combine technology with some physical activity. Field trips where children are encouraged to use handheld technology such as smartphones to record information are a practical solution to a sedentary school environment. Technology that serves to get students out of the classroom can be very beneficial.

The American Optometric Association (1997) in an early information document points out another health problem: the effect of using small-screen technology such as computers on eyesight, which according to Tatemichi et al. (2004, pp.1021-7) may be related, for example, to glaucoma among myopic workers who spend a lot of time in front of computer screens. Again, this problem is not restricted to age or global location. Furthermore, as electronic devices become increasingly smaller the problem is likely to worsen. Manufacturers could perhaps do more research into the most effective ways to avoid such health problems and all devices could come with simple guidelines suggesting proper or corrective measures for use. Although it is impossible to guarantee that consumers, especially children, will read such advice, the message can be given and reinforced in other ways such as health campaigns. This dual or combined approach could be particularly effective.

As outlined above, there are several major health problems associated with the use of technology such as obesity and deteriorating eyesight that can have a negative impact on the lives of people of all ages and nationalities. However, as with all problems, there are certainly viable solutions. It has not been possible to cover all the health problems linked to the use of technology, nor indeed all the solutions. While there is no single solution or 'silver bullet', it is now perhaps time for less research into the problems themselves and more financial investment into ways of making all forms of technology more ergonomically suitable for their users.

References

Rideout, V. J., Foehr, U. G., & Roberts, D. F. (2005). *Generation of M2 Media in the Lives of*

Sample Essay 1 to study by students

See **EAP C1 p.152**

- 1 Work in pairs. You are going to read a text about the phenomena of *brain drain* and *brain gain* in a global economy. Discuss the possible meaning of these two terms.
- 2 Read Text 1 and take notes on:
 - the context / situation (time, place, people involved)
 - the problem(s) identified in the text
 - the solutions proposed.

Promoting the return of international students: examples of three programmes

TEXT 1

When individuals who have acquired higher education abroad return home, they often come back not only with a higher level of education, but also with various human capital assets that are not easily obtainable at home. These may include language skills, technical know-how, and a network of business relationships that may lead to new opportunities, to name a few. The return of skilled labour is therefore an important asset for economic development. Often, however, we observe that those individuals who migrate as students, or as temporary workers, do not return home. The ever-increasing number of skilled emigrants, as well as the increase in the number of students studying abroad, is raising concerns of brain drain for developing nations. The emigrants may find better employment opportunities in the host country. But this may be to the detriment of growth and development in the source country. Individual emigrants will typically choose to return home if and only if doing so is their best course of action.

Preventing outflows of workers and students is not easy. It also prevents the acquisition by these individuals, and to some extent by the source country, of knowledge available abroad. In fact, from a policy point of view, and at least in the short run, promoting emigration by workers and students (the latter probably more than the former) in order to acquire higher levels of education and skills may very well be a cost-efficient way to improve the quality of domestic human capital, as opposed to establishing, say, universities or research institutes in the source country.

In this section, we focus on the following policy challenge: how could a government in a source country make the best of the fact that students want to go, or are already going, abroad? Our approach is practical, as we provide a review of three programmes that have been implemented in Latin American countries in order to minimize brain drain, or maximize brain gain. The first programme is implemented by the *Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología* (CONACYT hereafter) in Mexico. The programme has a repatriating component for scientists (i.e. recent PhDs). CONACYT also implements a separate initiative, called the *Sistema Nacional de Investigadores*, in order to provide higher pay for productive researchers, in order to make it more attractive for them to remain at home (and, more generally, in order to encourage their research productivity). The second programme is Colombia's COLFUTURO, whereby a contract is signed with students going abroad. The students receive a stipend that allows them to pay for part of their studies, but in return they must come back home after the completion of their study. [...] Finally, we also review the experience of Colombia's network, an example of a diaspora programme. In this third programme, the objective is to build bridges between those undertaking research at home and Colombian nationals residing in the US, for example, in universities.

SOURCE: Angel-Urdinola, D.F., Takeno, T., and Wodon, Q. (2008), pp.185-186. 'Student migration to the United States and brain circulation: Issues, empirical results, and programmes in Latin America' in Solimano, A. (ed.) *The International Mobility of Talent*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Thank you for participation!

