

**Topic Sentences:** a topic sentence provides direction by stating the [main idea] of a paragraph and answering the reader's unspoken question, "What is your point?"

*[Carrying a homemade lunch instead of eating out] has had unexpected benefits.*

*[Knowing how to research using a computer] is an essential skill in college.*

*There are many creative ways to hide [thinning hair.]*

**Supporting Sentences:** these sentences are specific, giving details and examples. They provide the proof or explanation of your topic sentence.

*[Adopting a pet from the animal shelter] can help both animal and owner.*

Shelter animals are killed if they are not adopted, so adopting a pet from the shelter saves a life. Shelter puppies and kittens are usually spayed or neutered before adoption, saving the owner veterinary fees.

*[Failure to take care of small details of car maintenance] can make driving dangerous.*

Tires that do not have enough air can be dangerous to both driver and passengers. These tires can cause a car to lose its grip on the road and flip.

**Unity:** unity means that you will write about the topic you mention in the topic sentence and the point you want to make about that topic and nothing else.

*[One way that I try to keep in shape] is by eating good food.*

- ✗ I get plenty of exercise.
- ✓ I eat very few sweets or candy.
- ✓ I stay away from too much fat.

*[My neighbor's yard] is ugly.*

- ✓ In his front yard, he has an old, rusty car.
- ✗ At the side of his house is a beautiful old oak tree.
- ✓ Because he never mows his lawn, tall grass and weeds surround his house.

**Coherence:** this means that the ideas in the paragraph are logically connected and easy to follow. The most common coherence tools are transitional expressions/words and repetition.

My neighbor's yard is ugly. Because he never mows his lawn, tall grass and weeds surround his house. Even worse, in his front yard, he has an old, rusty car.