

Writing Skills (1.1.1.4)

Paragraph writing - Narrative

Introduction

A paragraph is a series of sentences that are organized and coherent, and are all related to a single topic. Almost every piece of writing should be organized into paragraphs. A paragraph typically consists of three elements. They are:

- ✓ **Topic Sentence:** A topic sentence introduces the topic or the main idea of a paragraph. It usually appears in the beginning of a paragraph, sometimes in the middle and rarely in the end.
- ✓ **Supporting Sentence:** The main part of the paragraph is the supporting sentence. It develops the main argument that explains and/or proves the topic sentence.
- ✓ **Concluding Sentence:** The concluding sentence ends a paragraph. It sums up the argument of a paragraph and sometimes creates a transition to the next paragraphs.

Most paragraphs in an essay have a three-part structure—introduction, body, and conclusion. We can see this structure in paragraphs whether they are narrating, describing, comparing, contrasting, or analyzing information. Each part of the paragraph plays an important role in communicating the meaning to our reader.

- ✓ **Introduction:** This is the first section of a paragraph. It includes the topic sentence and any other sentences at the beginning of the paragraph that give background information or provide a transition.
- ✓ **Body:** This follows the introduction. It discusses the controlling idea using facts, arguments, analysis, examples, and other information.
- ✓ **Conclusion:** This is the final section. It summarizes the connections between the information discussed in the body of the paragraph.

Qualities of a good paragraph

For many reasons different kinds of writing are considered good. Certain qualities of good writing are as follows:

1. **Focus:** An essay should have a single clear central idea. In the same way each paragraph should have a clear main point or a topic sentence.
2. **Development:** Each paragraph should support or expand the central idea. The idea of each paragraph should be explained and illustrated through examples, details, and descriptions.
3. **Unity:** Every paragraph in an essay should be related to the main idea. Each paragraph should stick to its main point.
4. **Coherence:** Each paragraph should be organized logically, flow smoothly, and stick together. In other words, everything in the writing should make sense to a reader.
5. **Correctness:** A good paragraph should be written in correct standard English, with complete sentences, and without any error.

Some Useful Transitions

To show addition: Again, and, also, besides, equally important, first (second, etc.), further, furthermore, in addition, in the first place, moreover, next, too.

To give examples: For example, for instance, in fact, specifically, that is, to illustrate.

To compare: Also, in the same manner, likewise, similarly.

To contrast: Although, and yet, at the same time, but, despite, even though, however, in contrast, in spite of, nevertheless, on the contrary, on the other hand, still, though, yet.

To summarize or conclude: All in all, in conclusion, in other words, in short, in summary, on the whole, that is, therefore, to sum up.

To show time: After, afterward, as, as long as, as soon as, at last, before, during, earlier, finally, formerly, immediately, later, meanwhile, next, since, shortly, subsequently, then, thereafter, until, when, while.

To show place or direction: Above, below, beyond, close, elsewhere, farther on, here, nearby, opposite, to the left (north, etc.).

To indicate logical relationship: Accordingly, as a result, because, consequently, for this reason, hence, if, otherwise, since, so, then, therefore, thus.

Narrative writing

Narrative writing is a fictional or non-fictional story writing which is certainly told by the narrator. It was in practice for a long time. Stories have been circulated from one generation to another. Its main purpose is to bind the audience with excellent storytelling ability. The genre of writing can be educational, motivational or for entertainment also. With the help of narrative writing, a writer finds a good opportunity to make people see things with different perspectives.

Benefits of good Narrative Skills

A writer needs to enhance narrative writing skills in order to make a good piece of writing for the readers. The benefits of narrative writing are:

- **It fosters creativity:** Narrative writing nurtures the hidden creativity in a budding writer. When we practice it regularly, then our mind will become more creative and imaginative. Moreover, we will become more expressive and thoughtful.
- **It improves reading:** We can only write things well, when we read well. When we want to make things more creative, we will make efforts to read different genres of books that can help us in developing writing as well as reading skills.
- **It develops a better understanding of language:** When practicing narrative writing our content should be informative as well as imaginative. This will help us to learn many interesting things about the language, and we will learn a language in a better way.
- **We get a different perspective:** Narrative writing gives us a chance to re-live an event. It helps an author to delve into emotion and make it real again. It brings our strong feelings out. Recalling a past event through writing helps us in understanding the event with more sense.
- **We gain research knowledge:** When creating a character, we need to give birth to its life story. For that reason, we have to do proper research to give background details. Narrative writing helps us by developing our research skills.

Ways to improve the narrative writing style

Most of us are not gifted with good narrative skills. However, with proper practice and hard work, one can develop this skill. The main challenge for an excellent narrative writing is to keep the audience engaged throughout the whole content. Here are a few ideas that can enhance our narrative writing skills:

1. Structuring our writing time effectively

To improve our narrative writing, planning and preparation of a good structure is important. This will eventually improve our skills in writing and keep us focused on the task. During editing, we have to look out for three elements:

- ✧ **Grammar and spelling:** Our work should be grammatically correct, and spellings should be right. Also, the words should be easy to comprehend.
- ✧ **Structuring the story:** When doing narrative writing we should keep our story in chronological order. This will keep the work in flow and audience will not face any difficulty in understanding it.
- ✧ **Engaging characters and plot:** The most important thing is to keep, all the characters engaging. Our characters should appeal to the audience.

2. Avoid second person narrative

Our content often gets weak if we use second person narration in it. The first person narration helps us in establishing a connection between the reader and the characters. When the reader reads anything in the first person, he/she will feel more into the narration. Using the pronouns like 'I', 'me', and 'you' will create a good effect.

3. Do not be descriptive

Providing a description of everything is good but if it is bringing some suspense in the readers' mind. Suspense or surprising element in a story always attracts the readers. So remember to keep descriptive work only for the element of surprise. Do not reveal the suspense till the end. But if we keep describing the unnecessary things, then it will make the story boring.

4. Choose dynamic words

Sounding dynamic in our content is very important. For that we need to upgrade our vocabulary. We should use attractive idioms, phrases and slang in our content. It helps us to make our content more interesting and catchy for the readers.

5. Create life-like characters

When we are writing about a character in our story, we must provide a description of him/her. A character should have something appealing in life. It should relate with real life.

6. Make an effective ending

Stories which end abruptly without any conclusion would not be strong enough. When we are writing a narration, our focus should be on a good ending. Sometimes we can keep our ending by raising a question in the reader's mind. This type of ending is the best one when the reader has to think about the story even after reading it.

Characteristics of Narrative writing

Each type of writing has its own unique characteristics. Here are some key characteristics that are used in Narratives:

1. **Descriptive language:** This type of language evokes feelings rather than directly stating facts. Descriptive language techniques include metaphors, similes, personification, and onomatopoeia.
2. **Characters:** A story might have just one character, or it can have a huge cast of characters. In some stories, the narrator would be the only character present. The narrator is the figure from whose point of view the story is being told, and they might (or might not) interact with the other characters.
3. **Plot:** The plot is the series of events that happen in our narrative. A plot can be simple, with only one or two events, or it can be complex and multi-layered.
4. **Narrative structure:** Every narrative, even nonlinear narratives, is organized in some way. This is how the main character pursues their goal or faces the challenge presented to them. No matter how we structure our narrative, it has three distinct parts:
 - ❖ **The beginning:** This is where the reader meets our writing. Hooking their attention at the beginning is crucial.

- ❖ **The middle:** The middle of our story or essay is where the action happens. This is where our protagonist faces one or more conflicts and reaches the climax. The point where the narrative pivots to the falling action after the protagonist either meets or fails to meet their goal.
- ❖ **The end:** After the narrative's climax, the ending wraps up loose story threads, satisfies readers' remaining curiosities, and positions the protagonist for life after the story's events.

Types of Narrative writing

Narratives have been around since the beginning of storytelling, from folk tales to ancient poetry. There are multiple ways to write a narrative. Here are some common types of narratives:

1. **Linear Narrative:** A Linear Narrative presents the events of the story in the order in which they actually happened. The narrative perspective, can be in first-person, second-person, or third-person. Linear Narrative has the effect of immersing the reader in the daily life of the protagonist. Here, the reader watches the events of the character's life unfold in chronological order. Most books, movies, TV shows, and other pieces of media are linear narratives.
2. **Non-linear Narrative:** A Non-linear narrative presents the events of the story out of order. It employs flashbacks and other literary devices to shift the chronology of a story. This has the effect of building suspense throughout the narrative. By choosing a non-linear narrative, we can emphasize our characters' emotions and perspectives on the events in the story. A well-known example of a non-linear narrative is *House of Leaves*, a novel told through first-person narration.
3. **Quest Narrative:** A Quest Narrative is a story in which the protagonist works tirelessly toward a goal. The protagonist must face seemingly insurmountable obstacles along the way. Typically, this object of their pursuit is geographically remote, and the character must go on a long journey to obtain it. This kind of narrative tells the story of a character's quest to reach a goal. *Shrek* is an example of a quest narrative.
4. **Viewpoint Narrative:** Viewpoint narrative is designed to express the points of view or subjective personal experience of the main character or other fictional characters in the story. In this type of writing, moods, feelings, and other sensory details are filtered through the narrator's own life and subjective point of view. This narrative style often takes the form of first-person narration or third-person narration. Through a narrative viewpoint, we can explore facets of our protagonist's

personality and expose our readers to their thoughts. This kind of narrative is an effective choice for personal essays and stories with perspective and personal growth themes.

5. **Historical Narrative:** Another specific type of linear narrative we may have encountered is the Historical Narrative. A Historical Narrative follows a linear timeline to tell the story of an actual event or series of events. It gives accounts of real-life experiences. They are either written by a person who actually experienced those events or a person who has observed or studied them extensively. *The Log of Christopher Columbus* is a best example.
6. **Descriptive Narrative:** In a descriptive narrative, the focus is on how the story's setting, characters, and objects look and feel. The goal here is total immersion in the world of the story. This is different from a viewpoint narrative. It does not strive to create immersion in a character's inner world. A well-known example of a descriptive narrative is Edgar Allan Poe's short story *The Tell-Tale Heart*.

Conclusion: To conclude, by acquiring the skill of narrative writing, a writer finds a good opportunity to make people see things with different perspectives. And we can also share our creative ideas, imagination, and understanding of the world to our reader. Thus, learning this skill is important.

References:

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