



ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΑΙΓΑΙΟΥ

English I
Course Unit 4: Writing 2

Eftihia Landrou

School of Sciences

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Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Writing 2: Paragraph writing

Writing a paragraph answer to a question should have a *topic sentence* (usually the first sentence of the paragraph) that gives a general idea of what points will be made in the paragraph. A good paragraph should also have *main points* related to the topic of the paragraph

Topic sentence

A topic sentence is the sentence that gives the general idea of a paragraph. It's usually the first sentence of the paragraph.

For example, a paragraph about the necessary skills to become a video game tester can start like this:

"The qualifications needed to become a video game tester will vary."

Exercise 1

Write a topic sentence for the following question:

"Should computers be used in education?"

.....

Main points

A good paragraph should have *more than one main point* (usually 3 or 4), which will *support* the topic sentence.

For example, look at the main points of the paragraph about the qualifications of a video game tester:

- basic technical know-how
- great gaming skills
- passion for gaming
- willingness to play a game again and again

Exercise 2

Write some main points (3-4) on the advantages and disadvantages of using computers in education.

Advantages

.....
.....
.....

Disadvantages

.....
.....
.....

Connecting your main points

When you are ready to write your paragraph, your main points should be connected together. Main points and ideas should be connected **logically**. For example:

- *The career of a game tester is more demanding than it sounds. Many testers work long hours to ensure that the latest video game or console enters the market free of any technical problems.*

The first sentence states that the career of a game tester is demanding. The second sentence **explains why** this is so.

Another way to connect ideas is using **connectors**.

Some connectors that you can use are the following:

- **First, Second, ... Finally**

- **Also, Moreover, In addition** (for ideas that are related to the *same* topic). For example, *One basic requirement for a game tester is great gaming skills. In addition, he or she has to be willing to play the same game over and over again.*
- **On the other hand, However, Although** (for ideas that are opposite). For example:
 - *Some basic technical know-how is necessary. However / On the other hand, a passion for gaming is more important.*
 - *Although some technical know-how is necessary, a passion for gaming is more important.*

Exercise 3

Complete the passage below with the missing words. You can use *modals (may, might, could, etc.)*, *if sentences, relative pronouns (who, which, etc.)*, and *connectors*.

VIDEO GAME TESTER: ALL WORK AND ALL PLAY!

[1].....your parents and teachers might say you'll never get anywhere in life if you spend all your spare time on the couch playing video games, a recent survey proves them wrong! The job of video game tester currently ranks among the "World's Coolest Jobs" for 2014, and if you're an avid gamer, you [2]..... want to explore this rather unusual career.

The Job Description

A video game tester has to play games for hours on end; the objective is to find any bugs or problems before a video game goes on the market. Testers can [3]..... help video game developers measure if a game is too easy or too difficult, too straightforward or too complex and frustrating. This means that when the game goes on sale, it [4]..... be a high quality product.

The Qualifications

The qualifications needed to become a video game tester will vary; you should have some basic technical know-how, [5]..... mostly what you need is great

gaming skills, a passion for gaming and the willingness to play a video game over and over and over.

The Benefits

There's a great deal of competition for a job as a video game tester, [6]..... can make this career more demanding than it sounds. Many testers start off by working in long shifts to ensure that the latest video game or console enters the market free of any technical problems. [7]....., securing a job as a full-time tester [8]..... mean a long-term career doing exactly what you love! [9]....., according to a survey, a full-time video game tester [10]..... earn an average salary of \$33,362. So, [11]..... think you're cut out for a career as a professional video game tester, remember, practice makes perfect!

Exercise 4

Write a paragraph to the question:

"Should computers be used in education?"

Use the topic sentence and the main points you have written in Exercises 1 and 2, and connect your points with connectors. Use grammar forms you have learned: *Present Simple, modal verbs, if sentences, relative clauses.*

Example:

- *Although computers in education may make students more interested about a lesson, they could also make them less concentrated in class.*

Exercise 5 (assignment)

Choose *one* question of the following and write a short paragraph. Remember to use a topic sentence and to connect your points.

1. What are the pros and cons of social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)?
2. What are the characteristics of a market? (use the text in Reading 2 to help you)

Answers to the exercises

Exercise 1 (suggested answers)

Note: A topic sentence should be a sentence that can be explained and developed, NOT a title (e.g. a phrase without a *verb*).

Appropriate topic sentences for this question would be:

- Computers have a lot of benefits when used in education; however, there are some disadvantages, too.
- Computers in education create more problems than they solve.
- Computers are a great tool in education.

Inappropriate topic sentences would be:

- The benefits and disadvantages of computers in education.
- Computers in education.

Exercise 2 (suggested answers)

Advantages may include:

- computers make the lesson more motivating and interesting
- you can use the internet to find information
- your answers to exercises get corrected immediately

Disadvantages may include:

- sometimes students get distracted
- computer use may cause eye problems
- some students may find it difficult to work or read on a computer

Exercise 3

1. Although / Even though / Though / While
2. may / might / will
3. also
4. will
5. but / however / although / though / even though
6. which
7. However / On the other hand
8. can / could / would / may / might / will
9. In addition / Moreover / Also / What's more / Additionally
10. can / may / might / could
11. If

Exercise 4 (sample students' answers)

Student 1

New emerging educational technologies are changing the way we learn. Education has become very flexible and fun. Technology for education is promoting individual learning and mobile learning, therefore, both teachers and students are benefiting from this new technology for education. Some of the barriers in education have been broken down by this new technology for education; students can learn from anywhere, teachers can easily reach their students from anywhere. Technology is helping to change education in a positive way; it is part of the modern world. Technology for education is improving grades for students and it prepares them for the future.

Comment: This is a good paragraph. It has a clear topic sentence and each point it makes is developed with an explanation.

Student 2

I think that computers in education have a lot of advantages, but there are some disadvantages, too. An advantage is that many students in faraway locations will have access to the internet and they will have the chance to do a lot of things. For example, they can communicate with other people. Also, communication between different places will be easier. Another advantage is that students could find a lot of information online, for example Wikipedia, etc. But there are some disadvantages such as higher cost for the government for the equipment etc. One more disadvantage is that students spend a lot of time online.

Comment: This paragraph has a clear topic sentence and more than one main point, but not all points are developed enough. For example, finding information online and spending too much time online need an explanation and/or an example to be fully explained.

Exercise 5 (sample students' answers)

Topic 1 – Student 1

Many people nowadays know how to use the Internet and of course what social networks are and how they work. Some of those social networks are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. Lots of us know the right way to use those social networks but some others don't. If you use them in right way you can find old friends, you can communicate, see photos and videos, listen to songs and see news from all around the world. But if you don't use them in the right way you may lose the connection with your close friends because you use social networks to communicate and you don't come face to face with them. One terrible thing about social networks is to lose your personality by uploading things or communicating with someone you don't know and giving him/her some of your private information, like ID or bank account. All of these may have a serious effect on your life.

Topic 1 – Student 2

These days, more and more people are using social networks, like Facebook, Instagram, etc. This phenomenon has its advantages and disadvantages. Firstly, surfing the social networks helps people to meet other people, places and cultures. Also, keeping in touch with the Internet is reinforcing our networking knowledge. However, the continuing and uncontrollable use of the Internet services can move people to addiction. That fact is really sad, as it can cause mental and physical problems. Finally, the Internet, unfortunately, has moved a lot of people to depression and alienation because they spend a lot of time online and they lose the real contact with the people around them.