

Bule Hora University

College of social science and Humanities
Department of English language and literature

Advanced writing skills handouts (Enla2044)

Overview of effective paragraph writing technique

The most important sentence of a paragraph is the topic sentence because it contains the main ideas of the paragraph. There are three elements in a topic sentence: the topic, a controlling idea, and the point of view of the writer.

A. Topic

The topic is the subject, what is being written about in the paragraph. The main idea expressed in the topic sentence should not be too general or too specific. If it is too general, it will be difficult to develop it adequately in a single paragraph. If it is too specific, there will be nothing left to say to develop the idea in the paragraph. Look at the following topic sentences.

- Everyone can benefit from exercise.

- Doing aerobics for thirty minutes a day will strengthen a person's cardio-vascular system by twenty five percent.
- There are three reasons why I exercise everyday.

The first topic sentence is too general. There are many different kinds of exercise and different kinds of exercise have different benefits. Not all of them can be developed within one paragraph.

The second topic sentence is too specific. There is nothing else that can be said to support this statement in the remainder of the paragraph. The third sentence is an adequate topic sentence. It limits the discussion of the paragraph to only discussing the reasons that the writer exercises. Telling what those three reasons are and what benefits the writer gains from exercise can be expanded upon in the paragraph.

B. Controlling idea

The controlling idea limits the topic of the paragraph to one definite idea or one aspect of the topic that represents a particular idea, feeling, or opinion. The controlling idea must not be too broad; it must be specific enough for the subject to be discussed within one paragraph. Look at these three topic sentences. Each has same topic, but contain different controlling ideas.

Topic

The Grand Canyon **is a favorite vacation spot for travelers worldwide.**
(controlling idea: vacation spot)

The Grand Canyon **is noted for it awe inspiring panorama.**
(controlling idea: panorama)

The Grand Canyon **is an ideal area to view the geologic history of the earth.**
(controlling idea: geologic history)

Topic=

The television is a major source of home entertainment.

- (controlling idea: home entertainment)

The television is an effective educational tool.

- (controlling idea: educational tool)

The television has become smaller since its initial invention.

- (controlling idea: become smaller)

➤

A *divided topic sentence* is useful in ensuring the sentence has a controlling idea. In a divided topic sentence, the writer specifies or explains the divisions of the topic. Look at the following sentences that illustrate a divided topic sentence.

1. There are **three** major professional sports in America.
2. **Five** essential ingredients are required in learning a foreign language.
3. To become a successful, writer one needs **four** basic skills.

All three of the topic sentences above clearly limit what will be discussed in the paragraph (three sports, five ingredients, and four skills).

One of the important techniques that writers' should follow in writing effective paragraph is the SEE methods. The abbreviation SEE refers to statement, extension and elaboration. Statement is the main idea you state in topic sentence; extension is major supports you provide; elaboration is the further explanation you give (minor supports). You can consider how the writer has achieved SEE methods in the following sample paragraph, for example.

There are several reasons why it is important to adhere to ethical norms in *research* (1). **First**, some of these norms promote the aims of research **such as** knowledge, truth and avoidance of error (2). **For example**, prohibitions against fabricating, falsifying, or misrepresenting research data promote the truth and avoid error(3). **Second, since** research often involves collaboration among people in different disciplines and institutions, many of these ethical standards promote the values that are essential to collaborative work **including** trust, accountability, mutual respect and fairness(4). **Evidently**, many ethical norms in research **like** guidelines for authorship, copyright and patenting policies, data sharing policies and confidentiality rules in peer review are designed to protect intellectual property interests while encouraging collaboration(5). Most researchers want to receive credit for their contributions and do not want to have their ideas stolen or disclosed prematurely (6). **Third**, many of the ethical norms help to ensure that researchers can be held *accountable to the public* (7). **For instance**, US federal policies on research misconduct, on conflicts of interest, on the human study participant's protections, and on animal care and use are necessary in order to make sure that researchers who are funded by public money can be held accountable to the public(8). **Fourth**, ethical norms in research **also** help to build *public support* for research (9). People are more likely to fund research project **if** they can trust the quality and integrity of research (10). **Finally**, many of the norms of research promote a variety of other important *moral and social values* **such as** social responsibility, human rights, animal welfare, compliance with the law, and health and safety since ethical lapses in research can significantly harm human and animal subjects (11). **For example**, a researcher who fabricates

data in a clinical trial may harm or even kill patients, and a researcher who fails to abide by regulations and guidelines relating to radiation or biological safety may jeopardize his health and safety or the health and safety of staff and students (12).

Reflection on the above sample paragraph

The paragraph is highly advanced, well organized and sufficiently developed one. It begins with topic sentence which states the main idea, i.e. *the reasons for adhering to ethical norms in research*. This topic sentence is supported by five major supporting sentences which extend the reasons into these five categories. Each of the five major supporting sentences are also supported by minor supporting sentences that further elaborate the reasons for adhering to ethical norms in research. For example, the first major supporting sentence '**First**, some of these norms promote the aims of research **such as** knowledge, truth and avoidance of error' is elaborated by one minor supporting sentence. That is sentence NO. 3 which elaborate the major supports by giving example on how adhering to ethical norms promote truth and avoid error.

Note that the above sample paragraph has clear organization which is achieved through useful extension and elaboration as well as use of markers of movement of idea from point to point. Evidently, the major supporting sentences are indicated using sequencing words first , second, third, fourth and finally. Therefore, major supporting sentences of the paragraph are sentences on number 2, 4, 7, 9 and 11 while the minor supports are number 3,5,6,8,10,and 12.

1. List markers of
 - a. addition used in the paragraph. _____
 - b. listing used in the paragraph. _____
 - c. examples used in the paragraph. _____
 - d. reason used in the paragraph. _____
 - e. conclusion used in the paragraph. _____
2. the pronoun used in the paragraph. _____

In general well organization and detailing of idea as in the sample paragraph are crucial in academic writing; Specifically, if you are composing argumentative text, it indispensable skills that you have to develop.

Unit 1 Argumentation

Introduction

In argument, you take a position on a debatable topic and attempt to change readers' minds about it. The more persuasive your argumentative essay, the more likely readers will be to concede your points and grant your conclusion. When you write a literary argument, you follow the same process you do when you write any essay about a literary topic. However, because the purpose of an argument is to convince readers, you need to use some additional strategies to present your ideas. *Persuasion* seeks to alter how readers think or believe. It is usually about controversial topics and often appeals to reason in the form of *argument*, offering evidence or logical proof.

Choosing a Debatable Topic

Frequently, an instructor will assign a topic or specify a particular literary work for you to discuss. Your first step will be to decide exactly what you will write about. Because an argumentative essay attempts to change the way readers think, it must focus on a debatable topic, one about which reasonable people may *disagree*. Factual statements—statements about which reasonable people do *not* disagree—are, therefore, inappropriate as topics for argument. Facts are either true or false.

Example of factual Statement: How many cell phones were sold last year?

Debatable Topic: That is the best kind of coffee?

In addition to being debatable, your topic should be narrow enough for you to develop within your page limit. After all, in an argumentative essay, you have to present your own ideas and supply convincing support while also pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of opposing arguments. If your topic is too broad, you will not be able to discuss it in enough detail. Finally,

your topic should be interesting. Keep in mind that some topics— such as sex before marriage, corporal punishment —have been written about so often that you will probably not be able to say anything very new or interesting about them. Instead of relying on an overused topic, choose one that enables you to write something original.

Developing an Argumentative Thesis

After you have chosen your topic, your next step is to state your position in an argumentative thesis—one that takes a strong stand. Properly worded, this thesis statement will lay the foundation for the rest of your argument. One way to make sure that your thesis actually does take a stand is to formulate **an antithesis**—a statement that takes an arguable position opposite from yours. If you can construct an antithesis, you can be certain that your thesis statement takes a stand. If you cannot, your thesis statement needs further revision to make it argumentative thesis.

Tips for writing argument

1. Be careful to use precise terms in your thesis statement. Avoid vague and judgmental words, such as *wrong*, *bad*, *good*, *right*, and *immoral*.

Vague: The poem “Birmingham Sunday (September 15, 1963)” by Langston Hughes shows how **bad** racism can be.

Clearer: The poem “Birmingham Sunday (September 15, 1963)” by Langston Hughes makes a moving statement about how **destructive** racism can be.

2. As you write your essay, use moderate language, and qualify your statements so that they seem reasonable. Try to avoid words and phrases, such as *all*, *never*, *always*, and *in every case*, which can make your points seem simplistic, exaggerated, or unrealistic. Also, avoid absolute statements. For example, the statement, In “Doe Season,” the ocean symbolizes Andy’s attachment to her mother, leaves no room for other possible interpretations. A more measured and accurate statement might be, In “Doe Season,” the symbol of the ocean **might** suggest Andy’s identification with her mother and her realization that she is becoming a woman.

3. Present yourself as someone worth listening to

When you write a literary argument, you should try to present yourself as someone your readers will want to listen to. Make your argument confidently, and don’t apologize for your views. For example, do not use phrases such as “In my opinion” and “It seems to me,” which undercut your credibility. Be consistent, and be careful not to contradict yourself.

4. Finally, avoid the use of *I* (unless you are asked to give your opinion or to write a reaction statement), and avoid slang and colloquialisms.

5. Consider your audiences

The strategies you use to convince your readers will vary according to your relationship with them. Somewhat skeptical readers may need to see only that your argument is logical and that your evidence is solid. More skeptical readers, however, may need to see that you understand their positions and that you concede some of their points. Of course, you may never be able to convince hostile readers that your conclusions are legitimate. The best you can hope for is that these readers will acknowledge the strengths of your argument even if they remain skeptical about your conclusion.

6. Refute Opposing Arguments

As you develop your literary argument, you may need to refute—that is, to disprove—opposing arguments by demonstrating that they are false, misguided, or illogical. By summarizing and refuting opposing views, your more opposing arguments seem less credible to readers; thus, you strengthen your case. When an opposing argument is so strong that it cannot be easily dismissed, however, you should concede (admit) the strength of the argument and then point out its limitations.

Notice in the following paragraph how a student refutes the argument that Homer Barron, a character in William Faulkner's short story "A Rose for Emily," is gay.

A number of critics have suggested that Homer Barron, Miss Emily's suitor, is gay. Certainly, there is some evidence in the story to support this interpretation. For example, the narrator points out that Homer "liked the company of men" (Faulkner 000) and that he was not "a marrying man" (Faulkner 000). In addition, the narrator describes Homer as wearing yellow gloves when he took Emily for drives. According to the critic William Greenslade, in the 1890s yellow was associated with homosexuality (24). This evidence, however, does not establish that Homer is gay. During the nineteenth century, many men preferred the company of other men (as many do today). This, in itself, did not mean they were gay. Neither does the fact that Homer wore yellow gloves. According to the narrator, Homer was a man who liked to dress well. It is certainly possible that he wore these gloves to impress Miss Emily, a woman he was trying to attract.

7. To make sure that the support for your argument is not misleading or distorted, you should follow the guidelines below:

a. Avoid distorting evidence.

Distortion is misrepresentation. Writers sometimes misrepresent the extent to which critical opinion supports their thesis. For example, by saying that "many critics" think that something is so when only one or two do, they try to make a weak case stronger than it actually is.

b. Avoid quoting out of context.

When you take words from their original setting and use them in another, you are quoting out of context. When quoting a source's words

out of their original context, you can change the meaning of what someone has said or suggested. For example, you are quoting out of context if you say, Emily Dickinson's poems are so idiosyncratic that they do not appeal to readers. . . . when your source says, "Emily Dickinson's poems are so idiosyncratic that they do not appeal to readers who are accustomed to safe, conventional subjects." By eliminating a key portion of the sentence, you alter the meaning of the original. In context, the original sentence indicates only that readers who are used to "safe, conventional subjects" (not all readers) dislike Dickinson's poetry. For example, if you say making sex is a charity while the original source says making sex is charity for married couples, you would be misleading the readers by quoting out of context.

c. *Avoid slanting.*

When you select only information that supports your case and ignore information that does not, you are guilty of slanting. In your literary arguments, include examples that represent a fair range of evidence, not just examples that support your thesis. The same holds true for the sources that you provide from your research. Consult books and articles that represent a cross-section of critical opinion about your subject. If you find that such a cross-section does not exist, you may need to modify your thesis.

d. *Avoid using unfair appeals.*

Traditionally, writers of arguments use three types of appeals to influence readers: (1) logical appeals, which address a reader's sense of reason, (2) emotional appeals, which play on a reader's emotions, and (3) ethical appeals, which emphasize the credibility of the writer. Problems arise, however, when these appeals are used unfairly. For example, writers can use logical fallacies—flawed arguments—to fool readers into thinking a conclusion is logical when it is not. Writers can also use inappropriate emotional appeals—appeals to prejudice, for example—to influence readers. And finally, writers can undercut their credibility if they use questionable support—books and articles written by people who have little or no expertise on the topic. This is especially true when information is obtained from the Internet, where the credentials of the writer may be difficult or impossible to assess.

Sample Persuasion paragraph

Euthanasia is a merciful and humane termination of prolonged suffering, and not murder, as some proponents insist. There is no sane reason why a person with a terminal illness should have to suffer the agony, humiliation, and degradation of a slow, certain death when other alternatives are available. Certainly no one wants to die, but like taxes, it is unavoidable. Life is indeed a precious gift that should be cherished and celebrated. For

those unlucky souls inflected with a painful terminal illness, they should have the option of passing quietly, peacefully, and quickly. What rational person would choose the never-ending torment that comes with the slow, excruciating death of a terminal illness? Loved ones too suffer from a prolonged terminal illness. They experience the grief, agony, and pain of losing someone every time they visit the hospital. This continued exposure creates emotional, physical, and psychological stress that is unnecessary and in most cases probably unwanted. Prolonged terminal illnesses also put a great burden on family's financial resources. With the high cost of medical care today, this could (and many times does) create a financial crisis that takes years to overcome. In addition, time and resources of the hospital are inefficiently utilized. Medical facilities may be turning away patients that need urgent care if their beds are filled with patients that are afflicted with incurable diseases. This in turn could create grave social problems for a community. We are all going to die, let us hope that we have the option of going out serenely.

Source: James Heard, M.Ed. and Ted Tucker, M. Ed. An Accelerated Method for University Students

Write a persuasion paragraph from one of the topic below.

- a. The death penalty Legalization of drugs
- b. Mandatory military service Abortion
- c. The existence of God Political party affiliation
- d. Interracial marriage
- e. Pornography on the Internet schools
- f. You own idea

Essay Organization

An essay is a collection of paragraphs that cover one particular topic. The organization of an essay is essentially the same as a paragraph. It contains an introduction, just as a paragraph contains a topic sentence. The introductory paragraph lets the reader know what the essay will be about. An

essay has body paragraphs, which develop the topic stated in the introduction, in the same way that supporting sentences develop the topic sentence in a paragraph. The body paragraphs, usually the longest part of the essay, contain support for the thesis statement. An essay contains a concluding paragraph, just as a paragraph contains a concluding sentence. The concluding paragraph summarizes the information in the essay or may contain the writer's opinion or prediction of the topic. For an essay, a topic sentence and a concluding sentence may be not needed for all paragraphs. If the thesis statement contains a predictor, it will clearly show what the topic of the paragraphs will be. Even if no topic sentence is used, the writer still needs to have good transition and unity to tie the paragraphs together cohesively.

The introductory paragraph

There are two primary functions of the introductory paragraph: to indicate what the essay will be about and to attract the attention of the reader. The introduction may include making an initial general statement and narrowing it down to the thesis statement or explaining the importance of the topic. In addition, the introduction may provide the reader with background information, set the limits of the discussion, or to clarify the meaning of words. Without an introduction the essays begins too abruptly and may cause confusion for the reader.

Making introduction Effective

If the introduction does not grab the attention of the reader, they may stop reading and seek entertainment or information elsewhere. There are several techniques that can be used in introductions to help get the attention of the reader. These are anecdotes, quotes, surprise with an unexpected view, questions, interesting facts or statistics, background or historical information, or a combination of these.

Sample

Thesis statement

The thesis statement is the most important sentence in an essay, just as the topic sentence is the most important sentence in a paragraph. The thesis statement is similar to the topic sentence and serves the same function in an essay as the topic sentences does for the paragraph. It tells what the essay is about, just as the topic sentence tells the reader what the paragraph is about. The thesis statement is the last sentence in the introductory

paragraph. It lets the reader know what will be discussed in the remaining paragraphs and expresses the opinion or point-of-view of the writer. It contains the same components as the topic sentence. It contains the topic, a controlling idea, and opinion or point-of-view. The topic is what the essay will be about. The controlling idea is what will be said about the topic. There can only be one controlling idea in the thesis statement. The thesis statement must also contain an opinion. If the thesis statement contains a fact, it cannot be supported and the writer cannot write an essay about it.

Thesis statements may also have additional characteristics. The thesis statement indicates the central purpose for the essay and controls the essay. It gives a plan for the essay and the essay must follow that plan. The thesis statement may indicate how many paragraphs the essay will be, the organization of the essay, and the content of each paragraph. For example, in the thesis statement *The primary causes for the gradual collapse of the British Empire were political differences, economic factors, and geographic distance*, one paragraph each will be devoted to explaining the three causes of the collapse: political differences, economic factors, and geographic distance. The order of the ideas presented in the body paragraphs must match the order indicated in the thesis statement. In the above example, the first body paragraph must be about political differences, the second paragraph must be about economic factors, and the third must be about geographic distance.

When writing thesis statements keep in mind these simple rules: it must

- be a statement, not a question;
- be complete sentence;
- be an opinion, not a fact;
- have one, and only one, a controlling idea; and
- state the writer's position on the topic.

Parts of a Thesis Statement

Topic and Controlling Idea

Being able to write a clear thesis statement is essential for good essay writing in English. Like a topic sentence, a thesis statement has two main parts: a **topic** and a **controlling idea**. The topic is the subject of the essay, or what the essay is about. The controlling idea is what you are going to say about the topic.

As with topic sentences, it is not enough to just state the topic of the essay in the thesis statement. You must also tell the reader what your essay will say about the topic, which means that you need to have a controlling idea. Naturally, for any one topic there are many possibilities for controlling ideas. For example, with the topic *the sense of smell*, the thesis statement in the essay on page 66 has the underlined controlling idea:

- For me, it is the sense of smell rather than the sense of taste that brings back happy memories.

However, there could be other controlling ideas with the topic *the sense of smell* as shown in these examples.

- The sense of smell is much stronger in dogs than it is in humans.

In an essay with this thesis statement, you would support the controlling idea by giving examples of how dogs can smell better than people can.

- Many scientists believe that the sense of smell is the most basic of all the senses in humans.

In this essay, you would discuss how the sense of smell is more basic than the other senses.

Exercise

Look at the following thesis statements. Place an X in the space provided if it is an ineffective thesis statement. If the statement is ineffective as a thesis statement, indicate in the line under the statement what it is lacking: does it lack a topic, a controlling idea, or an opinion.

- ___ 1. Computers save time, money, and effort.
-

___ 2. Habitual gamblers waste resources.

___ 3. The three most common reasons for divorce are economic difficulties, incompatibility, and unfaithfulness.

___ 4. George Washington was the first president of the United States.

___ 5. Are money and religion the two main causes of war?

___ 6. Hawaii is a great vacation spot because of the sun, sand, and surf.

___ Dream interpretation is a major concern for Freudian psychologists.

___ 7. The only proven methods to lose weight are diet and exercise.

Look at the topics below and write effective thesis statements for them.
Benefits of exercise

Body Paragraphs

The body or supporting paragraphs support or development the ideas presented in the thesis statement. One of the problems that many students face is coming up with ideas for the supporting sentences. The sentences in the body paragraph must have concrete support to convince the reader of the writer's point of view. Without concrete and sufficient support, the essay is too vague or too general. Concrete support can be established by using facts, statistics, illustrations, examples, and personal experience. Without solid supporting sentences the reader must guess what the writer means and the writer will fail to convince the reader of his position.

For beginning writers, all body paragraphs should have topic and concluding sentences. The topic sentence for the body paragraphs should introduce the

points or sub-topics stated in the thesis statement, if any. Experienced writers may eliminate the topic and concluding sentences, but only if the thesis statement contains the topic for each paragraph. In addition, writers must ensure that there are good transitions between sentences and paragraphs. The relationship between paragraphs and how they are connected must be clearly understood by the reader. At times it may be appropriate for the concluding sentence of one paragraph to serve as a bridge to introduce the topic for the next paragraph.

Conclusion

The concluding paragraph of an essay is the last paragraph. It has an important function, to ensure that the reader has a clear understanding of the point the writer is making. There are several devices or techniques that a concluding paragraph may encompass, depending on the type of essay being written or the writer's intent.

A concluding paragraph may involve

a:

- Summary of the main points
- A restatement of the ideas in the thesis statement
- A final comment about the topic
- A prediction
- A recommendation
- A possible solution
- The writer's opinion

Sample

VI. Read the following essay and answer the questions that follow (13pts).

We couldn't ignore some benefits of Chat. Currently, it has become a good source of income for producers and merchants. As some critics argue, it also increases work efficiency. But, unscientific arguments are heard from chat chewing supporters: they believe that chat is a blessed leaf that is created by God for the purpose of worshipping and curing some diseases. This story is wrongly associated with Islam. However, this rumour is baseless in religious and other empirical works. Instead, Chat has devastating impacts on our social life, economic development and physical well being.

Although supporters of chat chewing assert that it is helpful for building strong bond of social life, experience in our neighbourhood reveals that chat is one of the leading causes for the divorce of married couples. This due to the fact that chewing results in unbalance of sex desire. To be brief, its consequence is a great loss of sex appetite for male couple as chat plays paramount role in discharging

Expository essay
Sample

The dog is generally considered the first domesticated animal. It is believed that the direct ancestor of the domestic dog is the wolf, originally found through Europe, Asia and North America. Archeologists have found remains of dogs that are 10,000 years old. In these ancient societies as well as in modern one, there are three main relationships that people have with dogs.

First, there are working dogs. These dogs such as Siberian huskies and collies, serve people almost like employees. The dogs help pull heavy loads, round up cattle, and keep a sharp eye out for strangers. To a sheep farmer, for example, a good sheepdog is his most valuable partner. Sheepdogs, such as Border collies and standard collies, and Shetland sheepdogs are, very intelligent and can learn to respond to hand signals as well as spoken words. Sheepdogs in Scotland, for instance, move sheep along with just a glance from the farmer. As a result, working dogs know their worth to their master, and they are proud of it.

Other dogs are known primarily for their excellence in sports. For example, the sleek and extremely fast gray hound is used in dog races. These races take place on specially prepared tracks where the competitors chase a mechanical rabbit. People wonder on these athletes' performance. Next, special hunting dogs often compete in hunting trails. Bird dogs are a type of hunting dog. Setters and pointers, for example, recognize a bird's scent long before it makes a sound and show their owner where the bird is by standing very still. Retrievers, such as golden retrievers or Labrador retrievers, will throw themselves into an icy cold lake to pick up the bird their owner has shot. Clearly, sporting are the athletes of the dog world.

Third, many people enjoy dogs as friends. All kinds of dogs can be excellent friends. Both the working dogs and the hunting dogs have great patience and are very good with small children. Most of these dogs will allow children to climb all over them and are great baby-sitters because of their loyalty to their owner and their family. A few types are kept only for the purpose of being a friend. Some of these are the toy dogs, such as Chinuahuas or Lhasa apsos. Since these dogs are so tiny, they are great to have if you live in a small apartment. In short, all dogs, including the toy dogs, are wonderful friends.

In summary, although there are great breeds of dogs, they can be categorized into these three main types by their relation to their owners. Even if you don't have interest in sport and no farm, you can great companion in dogs. Because of their strong relation they have to people dogs can be called "man's best friend".

Classification paragraph

Read the following essay and answer the questions that follow it .

The Classification of Birds

Birds are instantly recognisable creatures. Perhaps it is their ability to fly that causes this. Some people might consider that their shape was the most distinguishing feature. Everyone, however, agrees on the characteristics that a bird possesses: two wings, feathers, two legs, a toothless bill or beak, warm blood, and it lays eggs.

The modern system of classifying birds is like a pyramid, with the base formed by 85 1 4 different species. A convenient definition of species is: an interbreeding group of birds which do not normally mate with other such groups.

The next division above the species is the genus, a group of species showing strong similarities. The scientific name of a bird gives the genus first, then the species. Thus, the scientific (Latin) name of the golden eagle is 'Aquila chrysaetos' (eagle, golden). When there are strong points of similarity between one genus and another, these related genera are grouped together and are said to belong to the same family. The names of the families of birds always end in 'idae'.

The golden eagle, for instance, is one of the 'Falconidae' (falcon family). Families with broadly similar characteristics are grouped together into 27 orders, whose names end in 'iformes'. The golden eagle falls into the order of 'Falconiformes' (falcon-like birds). The largest order is 'Passeriformes' or perching birds.

This contains 63 families, and more species than all the rest 25 put together. The feet are designed so that they can grip a perch, with three toes in front and one behind. In addition, all are known as song-birds. Two large families within this order are sparrows, with 155 species, and crows, with 100 species.

Finally, all of the orders make up the class 'Aves' (birds). This system of classification has enabled scientists to differentiate 8514 species of birds. Placing a bird in the right family depends upon a number of features. Among them are external characteristics, such as the shape of the beak and feet, and the colour pattern of the feathers. However, at the level of order, the next higher category, distinctions are based on such features as the structure of the skull, the arrangement of the muscles in the legs, and the condition of the young at the time of hatching.

Model Essay 1

Man's Best Friend

The dog is generally considered the first domesticated¹ animal. It is believed that the direct ancestor² of the domestic dog is the wolf, originally found throughout Europe, Asia, and North America. Archeologists have found remains of dogs that are 10,000 years old. In these ancient societies, as well as in our modern one, there are three main relationships that people have with dogs.

First, there are working dogs. These dogs, such as Siberian huskies and collies, serve people almost like employees. The dogs help pull heavy loads, round up³ cattle, and keep a sharp eye out for strangers. To a sheep farmer, for example, a good sheepdog is his most valuable partner. Sheepdogs, such as Border collies, standard collies, and Shetland sheepdogs, are very intelligent and can learn to respond to hand signals as well as spoken words. Sheepdogs in Scotland, for instance, move sheep along with just a glance from the farmer. As a result, working dogs know their worth to their master, and they are proud of it.

Other dogs are known primarily for their excellence in sports. For example, the sleek and extremely fast greyhound is used in dog races. These races take place on specially prepared tracks where the competitors⁴ chase a mechanical rabbit. People gamble⁵ on these athletes' performance. Next, special hunting dogs often compete in hunting trials. Bird dogs are a type of hunting dog. Setters and pointers, for example, recognize a bird's scent long before it makes a sound and show their owner where the bird is by standing very still. Retrievers, such as golden retrievers or Labrador retrievers, will throw themselves into an icy cold lake to pick up the bird their owner has shot. Clearly, sporting dogs are the athletes of the dog world.

(continued)

The question about what success comes from has been so much debated in our society. Some may think that careful planning contributes to success. Traditionally, young people turn to the successful people for guidance because young people believe that **they** can make excellent achievements through careful planning. Today, **this view** might be reversed. More and more people are taking a fresh look at it. Based on hard working, they prefer taking risks rather than simply careful planning.

The most persuasive argument is that people taking risks or chances are more likely to succeed than **the others**. Risks or chances are not questions that people **who** disagree about **the point**. With the beginning of advanced international communication, a great number of opportunities you will face **to by** which the traditional careful planning is **threatened**. The difference between **the two opinions** is courage to challenge yourself. Actually, the only one step in the gap is not bound conquered, at all, in most cases, which prevent too many **cowards** from succeeding at last. People being short of bravery- if **they** are prepared to admit it and learn one or two from the brave ones who actually not only have courage but also are wise and confident. Therefore, one of the biggest lessons they should learn is that how plunk up your courage.

The resource from which courage comes is nothing more than experience. It is hardly possible to decide whether to take a risk in front of some important affairs without any experience. To gain experience, one of the most necessary approaches for you is to learn how to analyze and sum up what you have done no matter you won or loss. For instance, as an old saying goes "Failures teach success." Confidence is the bases to your goal. **Never give up, solid aims in life and encourage yourself from time to time** as Abraham Lincoln once said, "I will prepare and some day **my** chance will come."

Lastly, taking risks or chances can be regarded as a break with the tradition. The **emphasis** on the challenge has been exactly expected because **that it is surely help people succeed avoiding wasting time**. No other reasonable solution in intensive completion provides many opportunities to accomplish your objectives in life.

To sum up, the careful planning is a sound solution, but when **are** we weighting in mind attentively, we find that taking risks or chances is more necessary to success (Source: www.TestMagic.com).