

The paragraph

A paragraph is a group of sentences that relate to a topic or a theme. When your writing contains information about a variety of topics, it is convenient to divide your writing into separate paragraphs.

Traditionally, **the first word of a paragraph is indented.** (Sometimes new paragraphs, especially in books, are not indented. Instead, a separation is made by leaving a blank line space, as follows.)

In the writing model to the right, the first paragraph is about the U.S., and the second paragraph is about Tanzania. Dividing the writing into two paragraphs makes it easier to read and understand.

blank line space

Clothing customs in different countries

Clothing customs in the United States are generally liberal, although in some places people dress more formally than in others. For example, in casual social settings, the dress code is almost “anything goes,” and, in the summer, it’s not unusual for people to go to nice restaurants in shorts and sandals. In offices and formal restaurants, though, people generally dress more conservatively in all seasons of the year.

Far away in East Africa, on the other hand, clothing customs are much more conservative, especially for women. Women should keep their shoulders covered, even in hot weather, and sleeveless shirts are always inappropriate. Skirts and pants should go to below the knees. In cities, and for business, a lightweight suit is appropriate for both men and women.

A Write a check mark in the place or places where a new paragraph could or should start. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, copy the paragraphs, indenting each one.

Famous families

Jackie Chan is a movie star and singer from Hong Kong. His wife, Joan Lin, is an actress from Taiwan. They have a son, JC Chan. He’s a singer and actor in the United States. Another famous family is the Williams family. Venus and Serena Williams are famous tennis players. Their mother’s name is Oracene Price. Their father, Richard Williams, was their coach. Still another famous family is the Fernández family from Mexico. Vicente and Alejandro are father and son. They are both singers, and they are famous all over Latin America.

B Use the Ideas and your answers to the questions below as a guide to help you write your two paragraphs.

Ideas

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| A trip to visit friends or relatives | A trip to and from school |
| A trip to and from work | A vacation |

Paragraph 1

Begin your paragraph with an opening statement, such as: *Last month, I went to ____.*

- Where did you go?
- What kind of transportation did you take?
- Were there any transportation problems? If so, what were they?
- When did you leave?
- Who did you travel with?
- What did you do when you were there?
- When did you get back?

Paragraph 2

Begin your next paragraph with an opening statement, such as: *On my next trip, ...*

- Where are you going to go?
- What kind of transportation are you going to take?
- Do you think you are going to have transportation problems on your next trip? Why or why not?
- When are you leaving?
- Who are you traveling with?
- What are you going to do when you are there?
- When are you getting back?

A On a separate sheet of paper, combine each pair of sentences into one sentence, using even though to begin each one.

You can find some good deals at the Savoy Hotel. Their rooms are the most expensive in town.

2 You can bargain for really low prices at the Old Market. It isn't the prettiest place to shop.

3 The Philcov X30 is easy to use and not too expensive. It isn't the most popular camera.

4 The prices of smart phones are getting lower every year. They can still be very expensive.

5 The Samson camcorder is the most professional camera you can buy. It isn't the lightest.

B Now rewrite the sentences, using however or on the other hand.

Write at least six sentences about places to shop in your town or city. Use even though, however, and on the other hand. Use your sentences to help you write your guide.

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