**Descriptive Paragraph**

A descriptive paragraph gives a clear picture about a person, place, object, event or an idea. Details for descriptive paragraphs come from the writer’s senses: smell, taste, touch, hearing and sight. These are known as sensory details[[1]](#footnote-1). Detailed information allows the reader to form an image in his or her imagination. The better the description, the clearer the image. A ***descriptive paragraph is very effective in painting a picture through the use of verbs, adverbs and colourful adjectives***.

**Example (Reading): Lake Harriet**

Lake Harriet is a great place to swim and relax. In the summer, the water is warm and clean, and the beaches attract people seeking relief from a midsummer scorcher. In addition to swimming, visitors to the lake can go canoeing, sailing, windsurfing, or fishing. The blue water is a refreshing, tempting sight. The sweet scent of sun block wafts through the air from sunbathers lying on the beach. Children laugh and splash in the water, and nearby volleyball games stir passionate shouts in the heat of competition. Meanwhile lifeguards sit atop their towers and make sure everyone is safe. In the distance, sail boats catch the soft breezes that ripple Lake Harriet's surface, and canoeists glide quietly past. This is what summer is all about!

**Paragraph Editing Checklist**

**Paragraph topic or title**

1. The first line of the paragraph **is *indented***.
2. The paragraph ***has one or two topic sentences*** that catch the reader’s attention.
3. The paragraph’s body sentences ***have ideas, example and details*** that help explain the topic.
4. The paragraph ***has one or two closing sentences that sum up the topic***.
5. The paragraph should contain: correct spelling, correct punctuation marks and correct use of capital letters.

**Task: describe one of the following topics:**

1. **Your favourite friend film.**
2. **One day at the seaside.**
3. **A favourite place in your hometown.**

**Narrative Paragraph**

Oftentimes, narrative paragraphs do not have a topic sentence. Usually the writer tells the action writer away in a ***chronological time sequence***. Sometimes the paragraph begins with a general statement that sets the scene of the story that is about to be told. Very often, ***narrative paragraphs are written in the first person point of view***. In other words, the writer tells a personal experience using the pronoun “I”. A narrative paragraph should give a clear and a vivid picture which makes the reader share the writer’s experience.[[2]](#footnote-2)

1. **Background information**

The background information sets the scene for the audience. It includes the following pieces of information:

* General statement.
* What story/event is about.
* Who it is about.
* When it happens.
* Where it happens.
* **2. Story**

The story or event happens 3 different stages: the beginning, the middle, and the end of the story or event.

* + ***beginning of the story*** -- the beginning tells what happens first in the story.It can be the problem which make the story or event happen.
  + ***middle of the story*** -- the middle tells the main events or important activities of the story/event.
  + ***end of the story*** -- the end tells the final events, i.e. the result or what brings the end of the story/event.
* **3. Conclusion**  
  It is a concluding sentence. The writer can either restate the topic sentence, give a concluding remark, make a prediction about the story, or make a suggestion.

**Example (Reading): My Bad Day**

*My day was a disaster*. First, it had snowed during the night, which meant I had to shovel before I could leave for work. I was mad that I hadn’t gotten up earlier. Then I had trouble starting my car, and to make matters worse, my daughter wasn’t feeling well and said she didn’t think she should go to school. When I eventually did arrive at work, I was twenty minutes late. Soon I found out my assistant had forgotten to make copies of a report I needed at nine o’clock. I quickly had to make another plan. By five o’clock, I was looking forward to getting my paycheck. Foolish woman! When I went to pick it up, the office assistant told me that something had gone wrong with the computers. I would not be able to get my check until Tuesday. Disappointed, I walked down the hill to the parking lot. There I met my final defeat. In my hurry to park the car in the morning, I had left my parking lights on. Now my battery was dead. Even an optimist like me had the right to be discouraged![[3]](#footnote-3)

**Note: you can read more about narrative paragraphs by clicking on the link beneath**

**Task:** write a narrative paragraph about one of the following topics.

1. One experience that taught me a very important lesson.
2. My most unforgettable experience.
3. My happiest experience.
4. The hardest thing I have ever experienced.

1. Fiderer, A. (2002) Paragraph power. USA: Professional Books. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Lord, U. (2005) Dr. Lord’s supersonic Speed reading and writing workbook. USA: Library of Congress. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://myreadwritebooster.wordpress.com/writing-3/2-paragraph-writing/6-narrative-paragraph/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)