

Exercise 1 Comparing a paragraph and an essay

Read the paragraph and then the short essay. Which is more interesting?

Paragraph	Short Essay
<p>My uncle Patricio is one of the most interesting people in my family. He is old and has a wrinkled brown face. On his arm, there is a tattoo. Patricio has an intriguing history. He and my mother were born in a small village in the mountains. When he was seventeen, he left home to explore the world. Now he fixes air conditioners in Los Angeles, and during the winter months, he sometimes comes to visit us and play the accordion. I love spending time with my uncle Patricio because he has an interesting look and a mysterious past. Someday, I hope that he will tell me more about his life.</p>	<p>My family is full of happy, crazy, and talented people. My aunt Margarita has a yard full of orphaned pets. My brother José is an expert tailor, and my mother loves to experiment in the kitchen. However, I think the most interesting is my mysterious uncle Patricio.</p> <p>Patricio is an elderly man now, with white hair sticking up all over his head. Beneath his messy hair, he has a wrinkled brown face and powerful dark eyes that show many emotions. Patricio is tall and skinny, and he wears baggy pants and a plaid shirt. He has a tattoo of a heart on his arm. The heart has the word Rosa written across it in red and black letters, but he has never told me who she is.</p> <p>Patricio has an intriguing history. He and my mother were born in a small village in the mountains. When he was seventeen, he left home to explore the world. On one trip, he went to Siberia to look for gold. On another trip, he went to Alaska to work on a fishing boat. Now he fixes air conditioners in Los Angeles, and during the winter months, he sometimes comes to visit us and play the accordion.</p> <p>I love spending time with my uncle Patricio. He has an interesting look and a sad and mysterious past. He is also a talented musician. Someday, I hope that he will tell me about Rosa and how he got the tattoo with her name.</p>

introduction

body paragraph 1

body paragraph 2

conclusion

Exercise 3 **Understanding thesis statements**

A. Read the short essay. The thesis statement is missing. Choose the best thesis statement from the list following the essay. Discuss your choice with a partner.

Imagine having a job that fits your class schedule. You do not have conflicts with studying because you only work at night and on the weekends. In addition, you can work in a beautiful room with paintings on the walls, candlelight, and beautiful music playing in the background. _____

First, restaurant work is a great job for a student because the hours are different. Most restaurants are busiest during the weekends in the evening. Since students have to go to class during the week and during the day, a restaurant job gives them time for class.

The second reason why restaurant work suits students is that the student can eat at the restaurant. Students are short on time. They don't want to go shopping, cook, or clean up, so they need to get meals in a hurry. It is perfect if they can eat at work.

Students can make money, eat, and still have time for class if they work in a restaurant. For this reason, many eating places are staffed by students. It's a great job for those who need to work while they are in college.

- a. A restaurant job is a convenient choice for a college student for several reasons.
- b. Many restaurants hire college students.
- c. A college student can make a lot of money working in an expensive restaurant.

B. Now read this short essay. The thesis statement is missing. Write a thesis statement on the lines provided. Make sure your thesis states a topic and a controlling idea. Compare your answer with a partner.

I have many wonderful memories of my childhood in El Salvador, but I have one memory that still makes me shiver when I think about it. I lived with my grandmother in a house in the country, and I had many cousins to play with. The neighbors all knew me, and we children always felt safe. _____

My scary experience happened when I was about ten. I was playing hide and seek with some children from the neighborhood when my cousin and I discovered a dark abandoned warehouse. We were happy because we thought that no one would find us there. We went inside. There were boxes, and everything was covered with dust. Suddenly my cousin ran away. I thought she was hiding, so I laughed and called her name, but she did not answer. I started to hide too, but at that moment, I smelled a terrible odor. I looked in the corner, and a big shape was moving. It was dark, and I couldn't see very well, but I knew it was big. I ran outside as fast as I could. My cousin was outside, and we ran back to our house as fast as we could.

I still do not know what was in the warehouse. My grandmother said she thought some thieves had been hiding there. She said it was a lucky thing that they didn't see me. Her words made me more afraid. I thought, "what if they had caught me?" After that, I decided to stay away from that dark warehouse. I learned to be very careful and never go into empty buildings again, no matter what!

In Part 4 you will ...

- review simple and compound sentences.
- learn about main and dependent clauses.
- learn how to correct run-on sentences.

PART 5

Putting It All together

Exercise 1 Identifying topics and controlling ideas

Circle the topic and underline the controlling idea in the topic sentences below.

1. Pizza is easy to make if you follow these steps.
2. If you compare a Mini-Cooper with a Volkswagen Bug, you will find several important differences.
3. There are several ways to reduce stress.
4. Not getting enough sleep can have negative effects on a student.
5. One of my backpacking trips was almost my last.
6. A good journalist has to have special talents and skills.

Exercise 2 Editing a paragraph

Read the paragraph. Draw a line through the sentences that are irrelevant. There are five irrelevant sentences.

When I want to eat steak, I go to my favorite restaurant, Saltgrass Steakhouse, because I always have a good experience. I love walking through the big heavy wooden doors because the spicy smell of grilled meat makes my mouth water. The hostess knows my family, and she always gives us a good seat where we can watch the other customers and enjoy the cowboy decorations on the walls. The service is friendly and efficient. On the other hand, the cook is often grumpy. He yells at the waiters sometimes. The waiters always bring crayons and paper for my daughters. I always order the rib-eye steak because the grilled meat is tender and seasoned with delicious spices. After dinner, we talk and enjoy the atmosphere. It is not good to eat there every day because the beef has a lot of fat. All red meat has a lot of fat, and it can cause problems such as high cholesterol. I like to eat at Saltgrass Steakhouse once a month, but I would eat there more often if I had the money. It has the best steak in the city.