

What is a paragraph?

In an academic essay, a body paragraph is a block of sentences that develops only ONE idea; each body paragraph develops a point signaled in your thesis statement as presented in the list below:

Topic Sentence *

—announces the main idea of the paragraph

Evidential Sentences

—provide relevant evidence that establishes context for your topic and is usually cited

Analytical Sentences

—explain evidence in context of your thesis

Concluding Sentence

—restates the main idea and may include a transition to the next topic

** You may want to include transitional words and phrases, such as in addition, moreover, or evidently with your topic sentence to assure a better flow between paragraphs. However, do not forget the main purpose of a topic sentence - to announce the main idea of the paragraph. For more on transitional words, phrases, and sentences, please see our "Transitional Words and Phrases" handout.*

Example

Thesis Statement Even though opponents of pizza allege that it is fattening, messy, and low-quality, pizza should be praised for its affordability and cultural adaptability.

Topic Sentence

First, pizza is one of the most affordable foods available: it can cost as little as \$1 per slice. A researcher at the Institute of Nutrition Studies, Alicia Jalowsky shows that the average fast food burger costs about \$7, while a complete pizza meal with a drink costs about \$2.75 (39).

Evidential Sentence(s)

This is a standout bargain, even when compared to other cheap options. A person can feed a family of four with one large pizza for less than \$20.

Analytical Sentence(s)

Concluding Sentence

New Yorkers seeking an affordable meal know they can always turn to pizza.

Topic Sentence

Equally important, pizza has also evolved to reflect different cultures.

Evidential Sentence(s)

In *History of Italian Cuisine: A Fresh Cut*, Sallucci emphasizes that the classic Margherita pizza was created to honor Queen Margherita of Italy (223). Moreover, the same author points out that its red tomato sauce, green basil, and white cheese correspond to the colors of the stripes on the Italian flag (226).

Analytical Sentence(s)

By reflecting different cultures through various ingredients and presentation, the consumers feel a deeper, cultural connection with their communities through pizza.

Concluding Sentence

Clearly, there is no universally correct way to enjoy a pizza.