

## Paragraph Structure

A paragraph is a **unit of thought**, not of length. It is series of sentences about a single topic or idea. All the sentences in a paragraph must relate to this idea.

- The **first sentence** of a paragraph is called **the topic sentence**. Its purpose is to introduce the reader to the main idea of the paragraph.
- The sentences that follow the topic sentence **then explain, develop, and illustrate** the main idea. These supporting sentences must follow a logical order of development. If the topic or idea changes, then a new paragraph should be started.
- Clearly show the beginning of a paragraph by indenting five spaces **or** by double-double spacing between paragraphs. The visual division between paragraphs helps the reader to understand the structure of the writing and therefore to process the ideas more easily.

There are no set rules about paragraph length. A paragraph is seldom only one sentence, because you cannot develop an idea in one sentence