

Parts of a Four-Paragraph Story

Title

Introduction

- **Introductory Paragraph**

Body

- **Rising-Action Paragraph**
- **Climax & Falling-Action Paragraph**

Conclusion

- **Concluding Paragraph**

Introductory Paragraph Parts

Topic Sentence

Setting Detail Sentences

Lead-off Sentence

Follow-up Sentence(s)

Character Detail Sentences

Lead-off Sentence

Follow-up Sentence(s)

Beginning Event Sentence

Example

Introductory Paragraph

A Surprise Package!

At 9 years old, I wanted my own dog. My 14-year-old brother, Jesse, had asked for and received a dog for his 10th birthday. His dog, Sophie, was a beautiful Golden Retriever. Jesse and Sophie loved each other and spent a lot of time together in our house and playing outside. I loved Sophie, too, but I wanted a dog for myself. I wanted a dog to sleep with me and play with me. I started a campaign to convince my parents to give me a dog. I put pressure on my mom and dad to give me a dog for my 10th birthday by talking to them, showing them pictures, and enlisting my brother's help.

Example

Introductory Paragraph

Breaking The Rules

“This is a perfect day to take my friends sailing!” thought Sasha. Indeed, the sun was warm, the lake was the same bright blue as the sky, and the wind was brisk. Small white caps were dancing on the peaks of the waves. Last week, Sasha had promised to take Bonita and Sheri for a sailing lesson, and they had been waiting for a windy day. Bonita and Sheri had never been sailing, and Sasha wanted to show them the wonders of the sport. “Come on,” she joyfully called to them, skipping out of the YCMA camp dining hall. “Today is a great windy day!”

Rising-Action Paragraph Parts

**Topic/Transition Sentence
(Follow-up Sentence)**

**Detail Sentences about Event 1
Lead-off Sentence
Follow-up Sentence(s)**

**Detail Sentences about Event 2
Lead-off Sentence
Follow-up Sentence(s)**

**Detail Sentences about Event 3
Lead-off Sentence
Follow-up Sentence(s)**

**(Include the problem & build
suspense)**

Topic/Transition Sentence for Rising-Action Paragraphs

- **Is a type of Topic Sentence**
- **Connects the new paragraph to the previous paragraph with a transition**
- **Refers to the topic and/or first event of the rising action**
- **Mentions a character**

Examples:

- **The next day, the upcoming game was on Isaac's mind.**
- **Suddenly, Kayle remembered the three school tasks she should have completed.**
- **Without thinking, I agreed to go to the movies with Liu on my dad's birthday.**

Example

Rising-Action Paragraph

Each week, I asked my parents to give me a dog. Unfortunately, my dad kept saying things like, “No, we don’t need another dog!”, “One dog is enough!,” and “Dogs are too expensive!” My mom loves dogs and kept saying, “We’ll see.” At the pet store, I showed my mom a picture of a dog, and I asked her to get that dog for me. It was a fluffy white dog, small enough to hold on my lap. I wanted an inexpensive dog. Next, I asked my brother to convince my parents to give me a dog. He started telling them to give me a dog.

Example

Rising-Action Paragraph

Within a few minutes, Sasha showed her friends how to raise the sails, cast off from the dock, and steer the boat. Sasha was feeling pleased; her friends were learning quickly and enjoying the experience. Then the wind picked up, and the sun was covered with clouds. Sasha took the helm, and waves started splashing over the bow of the boat. Fortunately, the girls liked the excitement; they were squealing happily. “This is fun!” they exclaimed together. Suddenly, a big gust of wind came along, the boat rolled over onto its side, and the girls were in the water. Their faces looked surprised and then worried. “Don’t worry,” said Sasha. “The other sailing counselors will see us and come get us.” “Let’s swim for shore,” suggested Bonita, with blue lips and chattering teeth. “No,” reminded Sasha. “Althea has told us many times: Rule Number One of boating is ‘Never ever EVER leave the boat!’ ”

Climax & Falling-Action Paragraph Parts

**Climax Transition Sentence
(Introduces the crisis)
Follow-up Sentence(s)**

**Detail Sentences about the decision
Lead-off Sentence
Follow-up Sentence(s)**

**Detail Sentences about actions
Lead-off Sentence
Follow-up Sentence(s)**

**Detail Sentences about actions
Lead-off Sentence
Follow-up Sentence(s)**

Climax Transition Sentence for Climax & Falling-Action Paragraphs

- **Is a type of Topic Sentence**
- **Connects the new paragraph to the previous paragraph with a transition**
- **Introduces the crisis**
- **Mentions a character**

Examples:

- **Before they knew it, Jason had jumped off the cliff.**
- **After the game was lost, my friend Elijah started to act really crazy.**
- **For a variety of reasons, the whole family started to yell at each other.**

Example Climax & Falling-Action Paragraph

On my 10th birthday, I was at first excited and then depressed. I got some video games and clothes. They were all very nice gifts. However, I did not get a dog. I started to cry about not getting a dog; I was so sad. My dad said, “I’m sorry, but we aren’t going to have another dog!” My mom hugged me and looked sad. After a few days, I decided to continue to ask for a dog. I said, “Mom and Dad, I still want a dog.” Every day, I talked to my parents about wanting a dog. I promised to feed the dog and take the dog on walks. I promised to help around the house. Every day after school, I did my chores. I even did extra chores! Also, I took care of Sophie. I fed her and played with her.

Example Climax & Falling-Action Paragraph

Unfortunately, no one noticed the girls out in the middle of the lake, and the boat started to sink. “This boat is supposed to be sink proof!” lamented Sasha. Pretty soon, the boat was under water, and the girls could no longer hold onto it. It was more than three feet under the lake surface. “I guess we’ve got to swim now,” said Sasha, so the girls started to swim for the nearest beach. They were strong swimmers, but they did not rush. While swimming, they saw the other sailors go to shore. They could hear the dinner bell ringing and see the campers going into the dining hall. “No one knows we’re out here!” exclaimed Bonita. “Nevertheless, we’re going to be in a lot of trouble with Althea for leaving the boat!” moaned Sasha. Although worried, the girls kept swimming with strong strokes and serious and determined expressions on their faces. Every now and then, they rested by floating on their backs.

Concluding Paragraph Parts

Concluding Transition Sentence

Detail Sentences about Event 1

Lead-off Sentence

Follow-up Sentence(s)

Detail Sentences about Event 2

Lead-off Sentence

Follow-up Sentence(s)

Clincher Sentence

(End the story & include a message)

Concluding Transition Sentence for Concluding Paragraphs

- **Is a type of Topic Sentence**
- **Connects the new paragraph to the previous paragraph with a Concluding Transition**
- **Tells the reader the story is ending**
- **Mentions a character**

Examples:

- **The adventure complete, Stephano heaved a sigh of relief.**
- **After all our problems, I yelled to Paxton, I'm so glad we solved that puzzle!"**
- **Finally, I exclaimed to Donovan, "This has been a super day!"**

Example

Concluding Paragraph

A couple of months later, we celebrated Christmas. I opened all my presents, and I did not get a dog. Then my mom suddenly said, “Oh, I forgot one gift!” She asked Jesse to go upstairs and get it. However, I was so sad; I did not pay much attention to him and started cleaning up the wrapping paper. In a few minutes, Jesse came down the stairs carrying a fluffy white puppy. He handed her to me. She was my Christmas surprise! A couple of days later, we named her Blaze, as in a “blaze of light.” She sits next to me, plays with me, and sleeps with me. I am very happy to have my own special friend after asking for her so many times. I learned not to give up hope!

Example

Concluding Paragraph

At the end of their ordeal, the girls exhaustedly crawled onto the beach. After lying on the sand for a few minutes to catch their breath, they yelled, “We made it!” and slapped hands. Thinking ahead, Sasha warned, “We still have to face Althea. Let’s change out of our wet clothes and look good for her.” “We have to eat, too!” reminded Bonita. “I’m starving!” After running along the shore for a mile, they reached their cabin. They quickly changed their clothes. Next, they meekly entered the dining room. They were told to go immediately to Althea’s office. Right from the start, Althea had a stern look on her face and asked why they were late for dinner. The girls explained about the capsized boat and swimming to shore. Althea angrily said, “Our rule is to stay with the boat! I specially bought unsinkable boats for this camp, and I’ve repeated this rule many times!” Then the girls explained further. The boat had sunk, and no one had noticed them missing or had come to find them. “Well,” concluded Althea after thinking about their story, “I guess sometimes a rule just has to be broken, especially when your lives are at stake!”

Using Dialogue

Quote at the beginning:

“It was an accident,” said Donnell.

“Let’s get out of here!” I exclaimed.

Quote at the end:

Donnell said, “It was an accident.”

I exclaimed, “Let’s get out of here!”

Quote broken in the middle:

Two sentences:

**“It was an accident,” explained
Donnell. “I will pay for it.”**

One sentence (Compound):

**“It was an accident,” I said, “but I will
pay for it.”**