

## PARAGRAPH WRITING

A sentence expresses a complete thought or idea. We do not, however, always speak or write isolated sentences. In performing some of the language functions such as describing, narrating, arguing/reasoning and discussing, we need to combine a set of sentences into a larger piece of text, known as a paragraph. Paragraph writing is linked very closely to another basic skill—that of organising our thoughts on a subject, connecting them and expressing ourselves clearly. (This is an important skill that you will have to use all the time, first as students and later on in your professional lives, in writing and speaking to state facts, to examine and analyse situations and to express your opinions.) It is important, therefore, to learn and practise how to write short, coherent paragraphs.

A paragraph is a small set of sentences related to a topic or theme (or a single aspect of a much larger theme) arranged carefully in order to describe, narrate, discuss or present an argument. The best paragraphs ('best' in terms of the ease with which they can be understood) are never very long, except in scholarly or technical texts. This is because it is easy for a reader or listener to understand what is said when the information is presented in short coherent bits.

For an example that will help you understand the process of paragraph writing, look at the sentences given below.

- 5 - In some places the temperature will rise higher than two to four degrees Celsius.
- 3 - The rise in the earth's average temperature may not sound like much, but scientists are very concerned about it.
- 1 - The earth is getting warmer.
- X - Some governments are encouraging wind and solar energy production.

Not related

# NOTE TAKING AND NOTE MAKING

## NOTE TAKING

Taking down notes while listening to a lecture or a talk is, like note making, a very useful study skill. It will help you remember what you listen to and organise your thoughts better. Taking notes will also make you think of clarifications you want from the speaker or questions you want him/her to answer.

Remember the following guidelines to take notes effectively:

- As you listen, note down the main ideas/points, important words and phrases.
- Since in real-life situations, you can hear what the speaker says only once, you have to be very alert in order to be able to identify the main points and subpoints, and connect them.
- As in note making, use words, phrases and abbreviations rather than sentences as much as possible.
- Again, you can use any format you want. You may want to take down notes first in the form of a mind map or a tree diagram as you are listening and, later, convert that to numbered points.

## EXERCISES

**Listen to your teacher read out the following passage in class. Make notes while you listen to the passage.**

*Stage Process of Risk Management*

1. Risk management is a 5-stage process. These processes go on simultaneously. The steps to be followed for efficient risk management are listed and explained briefly below.

# NOTE MAKING

Note making can be defined as a systematic method of writing down quickly, briefly and clearly the important points of a reading text. Notes are immensely useful reconstructing the text at a later point of time. Generally note making is done while reading a text whereas note taking is done while listening to a lecture, presentation, etc. The mechanism involved in both the processes is almost the same.

Note taking and note making employ different techniques such as copying or transcribing and topicalising or schematising. *Copying* refers to writing down verbatim what one has read and transcribing is writing down verbatim what one has listened to, whereas topicalising and schematising refer to taking down only key words or phrases. *Topicalising* is writing down a word or phrase to summarise a part of a text and *schematising* is the method of using graphics to organise notes.

## ***Reasons for note making***

- to identify key points
- to help understand material
- to help you remember what was said/what you read

## ***How to make notes***

- Read the passage carefully.
- Heading: What is the main idea of the passage? Frame a heading based on the central idea and write it.
- Subheadings: How has the main idea been presented and developed? Are there two or three subordinate/associated ideas? You can frame subheadings based on these.
- Points: Are there further details or points of the subtitles that you wish to keep in these notes? Indent, that is, suitably, space and number.
- Indenting: All subheadings should be written at a uniform distance from the margin. All points should also maintain the same distance away from the margin.

**Note:** Do not write full sentences. Use abbreviations wherever necessary. Read below for more help on abbreviations.