

Hello. I'm Margot Politis. Welcome to Study English, IELTS preparation.

Today, we're going to look at 'paragraphs'.

But what's a 'paragraph'? Well it's a group of sentences that are related and develop an idea.

You need to use paragraphs in any formal writing you do, especially in the IELTS writing test.

Let's listen to a weather expert talking about clouds, and then we'll look at how a paragraph works.

Clouds have two effects. Now clouds obviously decrease the amount of incoming radiation, that is heating, from the sun. That then affects how many more clouds form. It affects how hot it gets in the daytime. At the same time clouds, at night time, prevent radiation or heat escaping from the earth. This not only affects temperatures, but it affects the atmospheric systems, the winds, then the humidity and how everything occurs.



Jim Arthur speaks clearly on the topic of clouds.

What we have here, when it's written down, is a really good paragraph.

A good paragraph consists of three main parts: a *topic sentence*, *supporting sentences* and *developing sentences*.

Let's start by looking at the *topic sentence*. The *topic sentence* provides the main idea of the paragraph. It tells us what the paragraph is about.

Here's Jim Arthur introducing the subject he will be discussing.

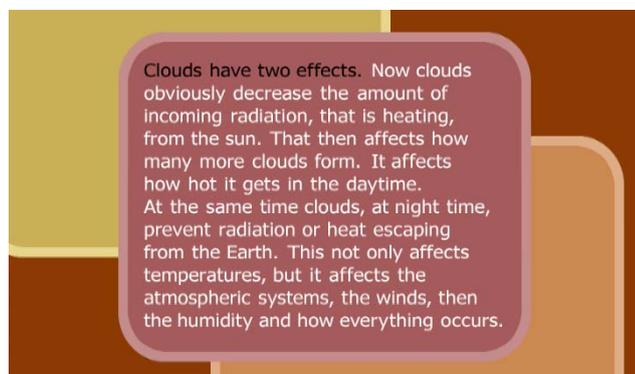
Clouds have two effects.

"Clouds have two effects."

This is Jim's *topic sentence*.

There are two parts to his *topic sentence*.

"Clouds have 2 effects."



The first part tells us the *subject*: the *subject* is 'clouds'.

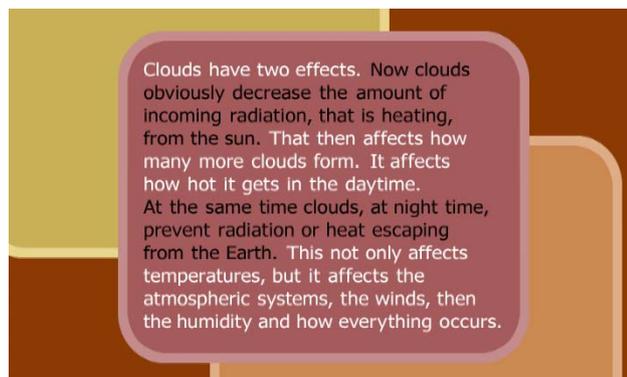
The second part tells us the *controlling idea*.

The *controlling idea* is that clouds 'have two effects'. This is what the rest of the paragraph will discuss.

Let's listen to Jim discussing the effects.

Now clouds obviously decrease the amount of incoming radiation that is heating, from the sun.

In his second sentence, Jim states one of the effects of clouds that relates to and supports the *topic sentence*.



"Clouds decrease the amount of incoming radiation." This sentence is called a *supporting sentence*.

Listen to him continue.

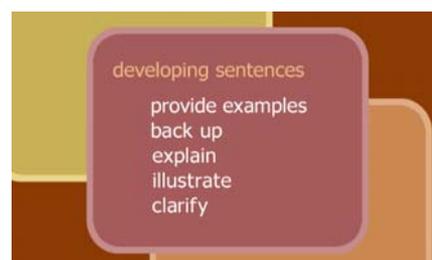
That then affects how many more clouds form. It affects how hot it gets in the daytime.

These two sentences further develop or support the idea expressed in the *supporting sentence*. They're called *developing sentences*.

Developing sentences 'provide examples', 'back up', 'explain', 'illustrate' or 'clarify' the point made in the *supporting sentence*.

Listen to the next sentence in the paragraph.

At the same time clouds, at night time, prevent radiation or heat escaping from the earth.



This is the second *supporting sentence* in the paragraph.

It supports the *topic sentence*. It gives the second effect of the clouds. They 'prevent radiation or heat escaping from the earth'.

Now Jim develops the idea further.

This not only affects temperatures, but it affects the atmospheric systems, the winds, then the humidity and how everything occurs.

Jim clarifies the information in a *developing sentence*. He tells us that clouds affect 'atmospheric systems, winds and humidity'.

Let's summarise how paragraphs work.

Paragraphs consist of related sentences that develop an idea.

The idea is introduced in the *topic sentence*.

The idea is supported in the *supporting sentences*.

The idea is further developed with examples or clarification in the *developing sentences*.

There are different ways to structure a paragraph, but these basic elements occur in all of them.

When you practise writing paragraphs, try to 'make the ideas clear' and 'provide details' to strengthen the points you are making. Also do this when you're speaking.

An important feature of a good paragraph is 'coherence'. Arranging your ideas logically will help provide coherence and get your message across.

Now let's look at some vocabulary about the weather.

The clips we've seen feature a weather expert, Jim Arthur, talking about clouds.

He's a 'meteorologist'. He studies 'meteorology', the science that looks at processes in the Earth's atmosphere that cause different weather conditions.

Jim works in Darwin, the capital of the Northern Territory in Australia. Let's listen to him talk about the particular weather conditions around Darwin.

Around Darwin we get tropical cyclones because we're close to that hot water to the north of us. We also get continental thunderstorms - just come off the land, very violent thunderstorms with a mixture of hot arid dry air and hot, humid air. We get monsoons, classic monsoons, where the northwest monsoons come in for weeks on time.



Jim mentioned three words describing weather:

'cyclones',

'thunderstorms'

and 'monsoons'.

These words describe severe, and in some cases, violent weather conditions.

A 'cyclone' is a violent tropical storm or hurricane.

A 'thunderstorm' is a storm with thunder and lightning.

A 'monsoon' is a period of heavy rains, and the wind that brings those rains.

Many words used in English originally came from other languages. We use them so often that we no longer regard them as foreign.

Let's look at some weather words we've borrowed.

'Cyclone' is from a Greek word.

'Monsoon' is a Portuguese word.

'Typhoon', which is a tropical cyclone or hurricane, is from the Chinese 'tai feng' meaning 'extreme wind'.

'Tsunami', a large, destructive wave caused by an earthquake, is from the Japanese word meaning 'harbour wave'.

A 'tornado' is a violent windstorm that circulates around a centre. It's from Spanish and it means 'turning storm'.

So, in our glossary of words belonging to the field of weather conditions we can include

'cyclone',

'thunderstorm',

'monsoon',

'typhoon',

'tsunami',

and 'tornado'

Listen to Jim using some of these words.

Around Darwin we get **tropical cyclones** because we're close to that hot water to the north of us. We also get **continental thunderstorms** that come off the land, very violent thunderstorms with a mixture of hot arid dry air and hot, humid air. We get monsoons, **classic monsoons**, where, where the **northwest monsoons** come in for weeks on time.

Let's finish today by writing a simple paragraph using our new weather words.

The *topic* is 'English words', and the *controlling idea* is that 'many come from other languages'.

My main idea will be expressed in my *topic sentence*:

"Many words used in English originally came from other languages."

My *supporting sentence* will add:

"We use them so often we no longer regard them as foreign."

I can use a *developing sentence* to give examples:

"Monsoon, tornado and tsunami are words from Portuguese, Spanish and Japanese."

Lastly, I might finish with another *supporting sentence* that reinforces the main idea in the paragraph:

"English is always changing because it adopts new words."

I hope you can put your new weather vocabulary to good use in some interesting paragraphs.

To find more information and tips, visit our Study English website.

That's all for today. I'll see you next time on Study English. Bye bye.

