

**APSU Writing Center**  
Paragraph Formatting - MEAL Method

## **How to Format a Paragraph**

Each sentence in your paragraph should connect to and support your main claim. One helpful strategy is the MEAL method, which stands for Main Idea, Evidence, Analysis, and Link.

### **M - Main Ideas**

- Begin each paragraph with a clear topic sentence that introduces new information and makes a specific, focused claim.
  - **Example:** “Strong study habits begin with effective time management.”

### **E - Evidence**

- Provide evidence that supports your topic sentence. This includes citations, paraphrased material, data, or examples from credible sources.
  - **Example phrase:** “According to Smith (2021)...”

### **A - Analysis**

- Explain how your evidence supports the main idea. Your analysis connects the evidence to your claim and shows why it matters.
  - **Example phrase:** “This research demonstrates that...”

### **L - Link or Lead Out**

- Connect your evidence and analysis back to the thesis statement. Remind readers why this information is relevant.
  - **Example phrase:** “Ultimately, managing time effectively strengthens...”

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**M**

**(Main Idea):** Introduce your paragraph topic:

**E**

**(Evidence):** Give evidence to support your topic sentence:

**A**

**(Analyze):** Analyze your evidence and explain why it is important:

**L**

**(Link back to thesis):** Link the evidence and analysis back to the thesis.



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### References

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