



APSU Writing Center
Paragraph Formatting - PIE Method

How to Format a Paragraph

Every paragraph should develop a single clear idea and support it with evidence. A helpful strategy is the PIE method, which stands for Point, Illustration, and Explanation.

P - Point

- State the main idea or argument your paragraph will make. This includes your topic sentence, which gives direction to the sentences that follow.
 - **Ask yourself:** What is the key idea I want my reader to understand?

I - Illustration or Information

- Provide supporting evidence to back up your main point. This includes facts, examples, statistics, quotes, or paraphrased material from reliable sources.
 - **Example phrases:** “For instance...” or “According to recent research...”

E - Explanation

- Explain why the evidence matters and how it supports your main idea. This is where you connect the “illustration” back to the “point” and show its significance.
 - **Example phrase:** “This demonstrates that...” or “This evidence highlights...”

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P

Point or statement that gives directions:

I

Information or evidence that supports the point:

E

Explanation that wraps up the quote:



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References

Bryan Writing Center. (2023). *Using P.I.E.* Blinn College. <https://www.blinn.edu/writing-centers/pdfs/Using-P.I.E.pdf>.

Geary, M. (2016). *PIE Format*. Bristol Writing Center. https://bristolcc.edu/media/pie_format.pdf.

Las Positas Writing Center. (2023). *Writing Body Paragraphs*. Las Positas College. <https://www.laspositascollege.edu/raw/bodyparagraphs.php>.