

Paragraph Formatting Method 3

APSU Writing Center Handout

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 directions 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...”

Point or statement that gives directions:

Information or evidence that supports the point:

Explanation that wraps up the quote:

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.

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