

DIRECTIONS: Read the instructions at the beginning of each of the sections below on writing paragraphs, then complete the practice exercises which follow.

PART A **Purpose, Audience, and Tone:** Before you ever set pen to paper and start to write, you must ask answer several questions about the writing you are about to do. You have to determine the purpose, audience, and tone for your work. The *purpose* of your writing may be purely personal, like when you write in a journal or diary, imaginative, like when you write poetry or stories, or informational, like when you write essays, reviews, or business letters. Your *audience* is the person who will be reading your work. For most of the work you do in school, the audience is your teacher, and sometimes your classmates. *Tone* is a measure of how your writing comes across to the reader. Is it relaxed, personal and casual, or formal, academic and proper?

PART B **Paragraph Types:** Paragraphs can be classified into four different types: *Expository*, *Descriptive*, *Narrative*, or *Process*. Which type you use depends on the purpose you have for the paragraph you are writing.

Expository Paragraphs: If the purpose of your paragraph is to present information, opinions, or ideas then the *expository paragraph* is the type to choose. Expository paragraphs may use contrast, comparison, examples, and illustrations as writing devices to help make the point you are trying to get across. An expository paragraph starts with a topic sentence. The topic sentence tells your audience what the paragraph is going to discuss, and is followed by several body sentences which expand and provide further details on the topic sentence. Once the point or argument is made in the body of the paragraph, the closing or concluding sentence summarizes the ideas you have put forth and draws your paragraph to a logical close. Common types of expository paragraphs are comparison/contrast and example/illustration.

Descriptive Paragraphs: A *descriptive* paragraph doesn't necessarily have a topic sentence. A descriptive paragraph is used to paint a picture of an event, a person, animal or thing, in the mind's eye of the reader. *Simile* (comparing two things using the words *like* or *as*. e.g. *Her smile is like a ray of sunshine on a cloudy day.*) and *metaphor* (comparing two seemingly dissimilar things without using *like* or *as*. e.g. *Her smile lights up a room.*) are often used in this kind of paragraph. Descriptive paragraphs are used to create an atmosphere or mood, and so use words that appeal to the senses, including strong adjectives and adverbs, and often build tension or suspense that is resolved in the final sentence.

Narrative Paragraphs: If the purpose of your paragraph is to tell a story, then the *narrative* paragraph style is the one to choose. Narrative paragraphs often include dialogue between characters, use chronological order, and tell who did it, what happened, where it happened, when it happened, why it happened, and how it happened. They don't typically have a topic sentence, but should have an opening sentence which hooks the reader and encourages further reading. As well, they have an ending which brings the paragraph to a logical conclusion.

Process Paragraphs: When you are describing how to do something, the *process* paragraph is the paragraph of choice. These paragraphs are typical of cookbook recipes, repair manuals, and any other work where the series of events must be detailed to successfully complete the project at hand. Chronological (time) order, or a step-by-step description of the sequence necessary are required techniques.

PART C

Paragraph Writing Assignment: You are to write four properly constructed paragraphs, one for each of the types described previously. Attach each of the following pages to your paragraphs and hand them in for feedback from your teacher.

1. EXPOSITORY PARAGRAPH TOPICS

- This town needs more things for young people to do
- The legal driving age shouldn't be raised to 18
- The minimum wage for teens is too low
- A topic of your own choosing, which you get your teacher's approval for **before** you start writing.

2. DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH TOPICS

- Your best friend
- The first snowfall of the year
- Your favourite vacation destination
- The first flowers of spring
- A topic of your own choosing, which you get your teacher's approval for **before** you start writing.

3. NARRATIVE PARAGRAPH TOPICS

- A memorable journey to school
- The last concert you saw
- The best day of your last summer vacation
- The last movie you saw
- A topic of your own choosing, which you get your teacher's approval for **before** you start writing.

4. PROCESS PARAGRAPH TOPICS

- How to make French toast for breakfast
- How to snowboard
- How to brush your teeth
- A topic of your own choosing, which you get your teacher's approval for **before** you start writing.

Name:

Date:

EXPOSITORY PARAGRAPH MARKING CHECKLIST

- 1. Is the main idea of my paragraph clear?
- 2. Do I have a topic sentence?
- 3. Do all the supporting sentences focus on the main idea?
- 4. Are my ideas in an order that makes sense?
- 5. Did I use linking words to show how my ideas relate to each other?
- 6. Do I have a strong concluding sentence?
- 7. Did I check for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation?

TEACHER COMMENTS:

Name:

Date:

DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH MARKING CHECKLIST

- 1. Is the main idea of my paragraph clear?
- 2. Do I have a topic sentence, if applicable?
- 3. Do all the supporting sentences focus on the main idea?
- 4. Are my ideas in an order that makes sense?
- 5. Did I use linking words to show how my ideas relate to each other?
- 6. Do I have a strong concluding sentence?
- 7. Did I check for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation?

TEACHER COMMENTS:

Name:

Date:

NARRATIVE PARAGRAPH MARKING CHECKLIST

- 1. Is the main idea of my paragraph clear?
- 2. Do I have an opening sentence which hooks the reader and encourages further reading?
- 3. Do all the supporting sentences focus on the main idea?
- 4. Are my ideas in an order that makes sense?
- 5. Did I use linking words to show how my ideas relate to each other?
- 6. Do I have a strong concluding sentence?
- 7. Did I check for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation?

TEACHER COMMENTS:

Name:

Date:

PROCESS PARAGRAPH MARKING CHECKLIST

- 1. Is the main idea of my paragraph clear?
- 2. Do all the supporting sentences focus on the main idea?
- 3. Are my ideas in an order that makes sense?
- 4. Do I frequently use transitional words to clarify the sequence I am describing?
- 5. Did I use linking words to show how my ideas relate to each other?
- 6. Do I have a strong concluding sentence?
- 7. Did I check for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation?

TEACHER COMMENTS: