



Drafting Your Paragraph

Good writing does not just happen magically. All writers must understand that writing is a process with several steps to the goal of a finished composition. We have learned that prewriting is the first step in the writing process. Prewriting involves choosing a topic, brainstorming ideas about the topic, and organizing your ideas in order to write sentences and paragraphs.

The second step in the writing process is called drafting. **Drafting** is the process of putting your ideas on paper as sentences and paragraphs. When you draft, you begin to put all your prewriting ideas about the topic in an understandable order. Sometimes, doing this is called writing your first or rough draft.

As you begin to draft your paragraph, one of your first tasks will be to decide what the **purpose** or reason for your writing will be. People write for many different reasons. Some of them might be to entertain, to inform, or to persuade an audience. Take time to review your purpose, or reason, for writing. Some of them might be:

- You have been assigned a writing topic.
- You want to persuade someone to think the same way you do about a subject.
- You want to write an entertaining story.
- You want to present the facts about a topic.



The Writing Watch Dog says,
“Writing the first draft gives
you the chance to put
your ideas on paper as
sentences.”

NAME: _____



Drafting Your Paragraph

Another important task to perform before you write is to decide who your audience will be. A writer's **audience** is anyone who reads, sees, or hears a message or composition. Your audience may be your classmates, your parents, business people, or anyone who happens to read or hear your composition. It is important to know who the people are in your audience; what level of information they have about your subject; and the **context**, or situation, in which they will be reading your writing. The following table will help you learn about your audience.

WAYS TO LEARN ABOUT YOUR AUDIENCE

You can learn about your audience by deciding:

1. **Who They Are** (age, grade-level, children or adults, family or teachers, business or social, boys or girls, men or women, etc.)
2. **What Level of Information They Have** about your subject (student, general reader, teacher, etc.)
3. The **context**, or situation, in which they will be reading a piece of writing (as a fellow student, as a teacher, as a parent, as a businessperson, etc.)

Finally, as you prepare the first draft of your paragraph, you should always keep in mind that a good paragraph has three sections:

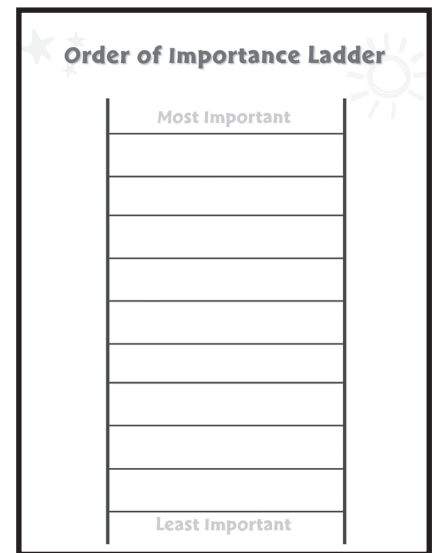
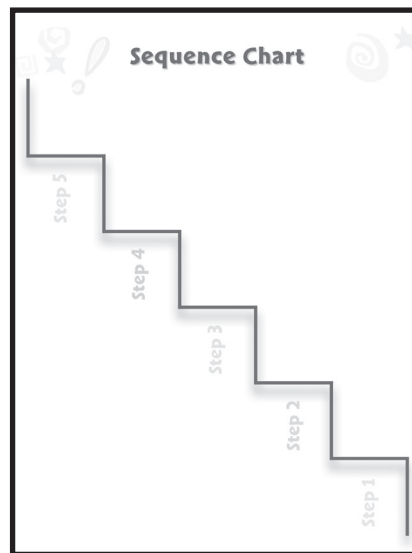
- 1) a good topic sentence,
- 2) three or more supporting or detail sentences, and
- 3) a well-written summary or closing sentence.



Using Graphic Organizers in Drafting

The second step in the writing process is called drafting. **Drafting** is the process of putting your ideas on paper as sentences and paragraphs. Many writers use graphic organizers to help them keep their ideas in order as they begin to write.

Graphic Organizers for Drafting



The **Paragraph Sandwich** graphic organizer is shaped like a giant sandwich. Students will write their topic sentence on the first slice of bread, their first, second and third supporting sentences on the slice of meat, cheese and tomato, and finally, their summary sentence on the last slice of bread.

The **Sequence Chart** graphic organizer looks like a set of stair-steps. Students will list the events in a topic in the order they happened.

The **Order of Importance Ladder** graphic organizer looks like a ladder. Students will list the events of a topic in order of their importance.