

# PARAGRAPH ORGANIZATION

Delgado Community College

---

---

Paragraph organization refers to the way the writer conveys his or her idea. There are several ways to organize a paragraph's ideas. It depends on what the writer is trying to accomplish.

Type	Explanation
Cause and Effect	Used when analyzing a topic and what causes it (reasons) or what effects it (results).
Classifying and Dividing	Classification refers to the process of grouping things together that share similar characteristics. Dividing, or Division, refers to separating things into parts.
Comparing and Contrasting	Used when finding similarities (comparing) or finding differences (contrasting) in a topic.
Definition	Used when a writer wants to take a topic and fully explain it.
Process	Used when the writer is offering a "how to" explanation.
Descriptive	Provides specific details and vivid examples to show the reader what something looks like (uses all the senses).

---

Basic paragraph outline (except for comparing and contrasting—those either use block by block or point by point):

- I. Topic sentence: State the paragraph's main idea.
- II. Major details #1: State one point from the topic sentence.
  - a. Minor detail #1: Spend several sentences discussing major detail #1.
- III. Major detail #2: State another point from the topic sentence.
  - a. Spend several sentences discussing major detail #2.
- IV. Major detail #3: State another point from the topic sentence.
  - a. Spend several sentences discussing major detail #3
- V. Summary Sentence: Summarize paragraph content or segue into the next paragraph.