

Components of the Body of a Research Report

1. An essential aspect of your body paragraphs is the presence of a *topic sentence*:

- The topic sentence is usually the very first sentence of the paragraph but may be the second sentence or somewhere in the middle of the paragraph.
- By placing the topic sentence first in your paragraph, however, you can state what you are going to talk about in that paragraph and then devote the rest of the paragraph to supporting and developing that point.

2. The structure of your body paragraphs:

- Begin each body paragraph with a general statement, or topic sentence, about a point that you want to make in that paragraph and then devote that entire paragraph to developing more specifically that statement, using examples and specific facts from your research to back up the points you make.
- Conclude each body paragraph by referring back to the topic sentence you used to start the paragraph.

3. Things to remember when writing your body paragraphs:

- Use the same language in your body paragraphs that you did in your introduction.
- Devote each body paragraph to only one point. DO NOT try to include too much information in each paragraph.
- Make sure that you phrase everything clearly so that your specific audience can understand what you are trying to say.
- Paragraphs are used as a way to introduce a new idea and break your paper down into a series of related points that you wish to make in support of your thesis statement.

4. Each of your paragraphs should contain these elements: **UNITY, DEVELOPMENT, and COHERENCE.**

- **Paragraph unity:** Paragraph unity means that your paragraph develops one main point that is set forth by your topic sentence and that all of the sentences in the paragraph relate to and support that main point.
- **Paragraph development:** Paragraph development means that you have included all of the necessary information, explanation, and support for your main point or topic sentence so that your readers fully understand the point you are trying to make.
- **Paragraph coherence:** Paragraph coherence means you have developed your point in an organized and logical way that shows the connections between your sentences and ideas.

5. Use **TRANSITIONS** to connect one paragraph to the next to make the whole paper cohesive. In other words, the individual points are all bound together to make one **BIG** point!

Source: Excerpted and adapted from *POWERWRITE* at Furman University