

“THIS IS WHAT I’M TALKING ABOUT!” – Topic Sentence

- A topic sentence is the unifying or main idea of a paragraph. It is often found at the beginning of the paragraph to give a reader an idea of what is coming.
 - Example: *Bacon is also a good addition to any balanced breakfast.* Bacon is healthy, wholesome, and the sound of it sizzling is enough to wake up a field of sleeping cherubs. If I could, I would eat nothing but bacon for breakfast until the day I die.
 - Notice how the example is all about bacon as a breakfast item. How do we know this? Because the Topic Sentence gives us that signal. The Topic Sentence says, “Hold on reader! We’re going to talk about BACON!”
- Remember, a good topic sentence is short and to the point, but still answers questions like “Why is this in here?”, and “Why did I put all this information together?”
- A reader should also be able to take the Topic Sentences and Thesis statement of any essay and understand what the point, stance, purpose, and/or intention of the essay is.
- Further tip-sheet reference: Thesis Statements, Paragraphs



Practice Writing Topic Sentences

The following sentences are examples of bad topic sentences. Rewrite each so that the topic is clear, narrow enough to talk about in a paragraph, and makes a claim of some kind.

- *Bad Example:* The Dust Bowl impacted many people in Oklahoma and California.
 - *Revised:* The Dust Bowl left Oklahomans with barren fields and forced many of them to migrate to California where they competed with the locals for jobs.

The first example is a bad topic sentence because it does not explain **how** the Dust Bowl impacted people in Oklahoma and California.

HINT: (If a topic sentence does not answer the questions **how** and/or **why**, then it needs to be revised.)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lions have poor quality of life in most zoos. ○ Revised: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The video game, Minecraft, is very educational. ○ Revised:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The elderly in nursing homes benefit greatly from contact with visitors. ○ Revised: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The EDGE project helps SUU’s students in the workfield. ○ Revised: