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Hello, students. My name is Dr. Martina Shabram. And I will be your instructor for today's lesson. I'm genuinely excited to teach you these concepts. So let's get started. Today we're going to talk about paragraphs. We'll discuss what they're meant to do, how they're constructed, and what purpose each sentence fulfills.

A paragraph is a collection of sentences within a piece of writing, connected by a single focusing idea. Usually, paragraphs aren't hanging out on their own. Instead, they live inside and make up essays, books, and other lengthier kinds of writing. So let's get specific about how to build a paragraph.

Most paragraphs will be made up of three to seven sentences. They should all be focused on one governing idea. If you've covered the material about one idea sufficiently, then start a new paragraph to discuss new and related ideas. And most paragraphs should have a topic sentence, some supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence.

So if we're going to write a paragraph, it's useful to make a quick paragraph outline that includes a list of each point that paragraph needs to make in brief and in the order that you'll want to write them. For example, say I want to write a very short paragraph about why people love sandwiches. I might make an outline like this.

See how I have each point I'll need to make mentioned but I haven't filled in the details yet. That's how a good and quick outline will look. So let's break down that outline, piece by piece, and talk about what each element does.

So we said that each paragraph would have three things-- topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence. Let's look at a sample paragraph and see how each of those elements is represented.

We start with a topic sentence, which is a sentence expressing the main idea of a paragraph. This is usually the first sentence. And see how it explicitly states the main purpose or idea that we know the paragraph is going to cover?

OK, then we have the supporting sentences. Those will each do something slightly different. But as a group, they are the sentences of a paragraph that offer examples, explanation, detail, and analysis that develops the idea presented in the topic sentence.

So in general, they will each offer something that supports the main idea without just repeating that main idea. They'll add more, new, and important information that will help develop the main idea. And see how in this paragraph, these three sentences each add a new piece of support for that main idea?

Finally, most lengthy paragraphs will end with a concluding sentence, which is a sentence that either summarizes the paragraph or creates a transition to the next paragraph. So if a paragraph is all on its own, it needs a

sentence to conclude it by summarizing and reprising its info. And if its very short, it may not need too much conclusion at all.

But in general, this sentence will look like this one does. And note here that this sentence does not just rehash the topic sentence. It adds something new to the paragraph by reminding the reader of how the supporting sentences help support the main idea that the topic sentence presents.

So what did we cover today? Well, we learned about what a paragraph is, about what elements it's made up of-- topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence-- and how each of those elements looks when it's inside of a paragraph.

Well, students, I hope you had as much fun as I did. Thank you.