

Topic Sentence

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Note: The Topic Sentence and the Thesis Statement are not the same thing.

What is a Topic Sentence?

- Main idea of the paragraph
- It is the most important sentence in every paragraph because it keys the reader in to what the paragraph is going to be about.
 - Usually it is the first sentence in the paragraph

Thesis Statement vs. Topic Sentence

- The **thesis statement** tells the reader what the entire paper is going to be about. It should have a brief statement of what every paragraph is going to be about.
 - Example:

The poinsettia should officially be labeled the Christmas flower because it is an important part of the Christmas tradition because they are often displayed in houses to inspire the Christmas spirit.
- The **topic sentence** tells what the single paragraph is going to be about with each paragraph covering a different subtopic of the thesis.
 - In a short essay, those aspects should be in your thesis statement; however, in a longer paper, the subtopics will be numerous and should not be mentioned in the thesis.
 - Example:

Paragraph 1. People put poinsettias around their house as their way of showing and spreading the Christmas spirit.

Paragraph 2. The poinsettia can signify death to an animal if it is consumed by that animal is still pretty, which influences the Christmas spirit

Paragraph 3. The poinsettia is sold during the holiday season, and the tradition of buying them has not diminished over time.

Creating the Topic Sentence

- It is important to note that the topic sentence must enlist the point the author wishes to make. If it does not, then what is the writer talking about? Every paragraph has to have a point.
- Typically, the topic sentence should contain a specific argument, which the rest of the paragraph attempts to prove.
- If the essay is not argumentative, the topic sentence should still convey why the subtopic is relevant or important.
- The topic sentence needs to be relatively broad but specific at the same time.
 - It should give just enough information to let the reader know what the writer is trying to convey.
 - It needs to leave room for explanation and support.

✚ Once the topic sentence is established, every sentence that follows should back up the topic sentence with facts and descriptions.

✚ For Example:

Topic Sentence. Poinsettias is the main flower that represents Christmas time because that is the main time we see the flower out in stores.

Descriptions. Poinsettias are only seen being sold in stores when it is

around Christmas time and for a little while thereafter. People point the flower around their houses to represent the time of year and how jolly and beautiful this time of year really is. Any other time of year stores sell flowers like roses and daisies but this particular flower can usually only be found at this specific time of year; therefore, the poinsettia is the Christmas flower.

Writing the Paper

- Introduction

- Give background
- Provide a transition
- Example:

Poinsettias are a beautiful red flower that is always seen in the homes and in stores when the time for Christmas is near. The poinsettia is an important part of the Christmas tradition because they are always being sold, they can signify death but they are still pretty, and they are often seen on display in houses to get everyone in the Christmas spirit.

- Body

- Follow the introduction
- Arguments, facts, examples, analysis / synthesis

- Conclusion

- Discuss why what you wrote is relevant and significant
- Reconfigure the ideas into a new direction. What should the reader do with all the information?

