

DukeWrites Enrichment Suite

Paragraphs, part two

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[These sentences are taken from the same articles in *Deliberations* (2013) as our previous example paragraphs.]

Now that we've looked at the Broad to Specific Structure and topic sentences, let's look more closely at what follows topic sentences.

So, what follows topic sentences? Supporting sentences! These sentences, as we've seen, offer evidence and analysis of the evidence for the main idea of the paragraph.

In our previous sample paragraphs from *Deliberations*, we've seen how supporting sentences can do the following things:

They can provide evidence supporting the main idea – as in the evidence that supports the green anole as a suitable species for the study.

Supporting sentences also provide further details and description – just as in the further details that described the actions of a black domestic mammy.

Supporting sentences also provide examples as in the examples found in literature portraying a stereotypical mammy.

In addition to providing evidence, supporting sentences also provide analysis. Sometimes this analysis describes how the evidence supports the main idea. If we look at the Mammy paragraph – the sentence following the literature examples provides this analysis. The literature was partly responsible for creating the image that took root.

Another type of analysis supporting sentences can provide is explaining how the paragraph's main idea connects to the main argument of the larger text. The last sentence in the example mammy paragraph links the main idea of the paragraph to the main argument of the article.

Please pause now to take a short quiz about the function of supporting sentences. Choose the statements that best describe possible functions of supporting sentences.