

How to Write Convincing and Pertinent Opinion Texts

Part 2: Writing a Great Body

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Table montréalaise, 2013



In the opinion text, what are the two essential parts of the introduction? Write your answers below.

What do you know about the body of the opinion text? Write your answers below.

Opinion Text	Approx. 225 words
Introduction	Approx. 40 words
Body	Approx. 145 words
Conclusion	Approx. 40 words

The Opinion Text

Task 1- A : Pertinent Arguments

- Read the introduction.
- Decide if the arguments below are pertinent or not to the topic statement.
- Drag them in the right boxes on the next page. (switch to dual page display)

Is the school cafeteria food killing you?

Introduction: Beware! It will kill us all! The school cafeteria food is slowly but surely killing the student body one by one! If nothing is done about it, a whole generation will be wiped out!

My friend Thomas eats there everyday and never got sick.

On Friday, I eat at the cafeteria and I always have trouble digesting in the afternoon.

The cafeteria lady is a very nice person.

My mother argues that cafeteria food is very expensive at our school.

Cafeterias serve a lot of processed food that contain a lot of salt and sugar.



Courtesy of Grant Cochrane/Freedigitalphotos.net

**Pertinent
to
topic
sentence**

Facts and Statistics	
Examples	
Personal experiences	

**Not
pertinent
to
topic
sentence**

The Opinion Text

Task 1-B : More Practice...

Should we pay students to come to school?

Introduction:

Attending school is synonymous to slavery! It is like serving a jail sentence. No one should be forced to endure such a horrible fate unless they get some sort of financial reward in return. It is therefore a necessity that students be paid to go to school

90% of students agree that it would be a great idea to pay them.

Research shows students would be more motivated to have good grades if they were paid.

School will always be difficult.

My cousin Jane loves school and doesn't need to be paid to come to school.

My mom gives me money every time I get good grades and that motivates me.



**Pertinent
to
topic
sentence**

Facts and Statistics	
Examples	
Personal experiences	

**Not
pertinent
to
topic
sentence**

The Opinion Text

Task 1- C: Practice One Last Time...

Should teenagers be allowed to have a driver's license?

Introduction:

Injuries. Accidents. Deaths. This is what tends to happen when you hand the wheel over to teens. Teenagers are reckless and dangerous drivers. They should not be allowed to drive cars before they turn 18. The safety of the population is at stake.

People over 25 years of age
usually drive safely.

My grandfather
is a great driver.

The number of deaths
caused by reckless driving
is much higher among teens.

Young drivers often
are over confident which
leads to more accidents.

My friends say that
I drive well at night.



Image courtesy of Bill Longshaw/
Freedigitalphotos.net

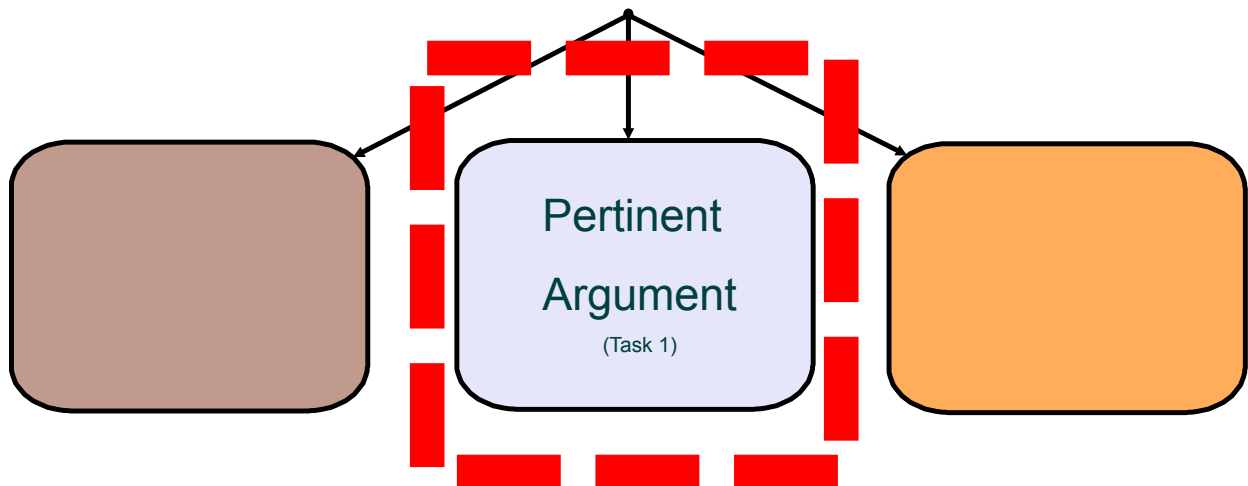
**Pertinent
to
topic
sentence**

Facts and Statistics	
Examples	
Personal experiences	

**Not
pertinent
to
topic
sentence**

We have just seen...

Body Paragraph



The Opinion Text

Task 2: Characteristics of Convincing Paragraphs

Brainstorm with your class on the characteristics of convincing paragraphs. Then compare your answers with the ones on the tab.

Characteristics

My argument is
pertinent to...

- my topic sentence
- the question/issue
- my audience

My argument
contains...

- a fact or a statistic
- an example or a personal experience

The Opinion Text

Task 3: Supporting Arguments

Practice writing arguments and supporting them with a fact, a statistic, an example or a personal experience.

Look at the following example :

Topic sentence : Curfews are a great idea for teenagers and especially parents.

Argument : First of all, curfews will reduce the number of night road accidents.

- **Fact / Statistic :**

Studies show that accidents that happen at night are mainly caused by teenagers aged between 18 and 24.

- **Example :**

In Alabama, cities have witnessed significant changes.

- **Personal experience :**

All of the people I know who had accidents always had them at night.

Now, let's try to write convincing arguments together.

(ONLY for the purpose of this activity, you may invent stats or facts)

Topic Statement: School should be held all year.

Argument : _____

- Facts / Statistics

- Examples

- Personal experience

Now, it's your turn:

Topic statement: The voting age should be lowered to sixteen years of age

Argument : _____

- Facts / Statistics

- Examples

- Personal experience

Topic statement: It is difficult to eat healthy all the time.

Argument : _____

- Facts / Statistics

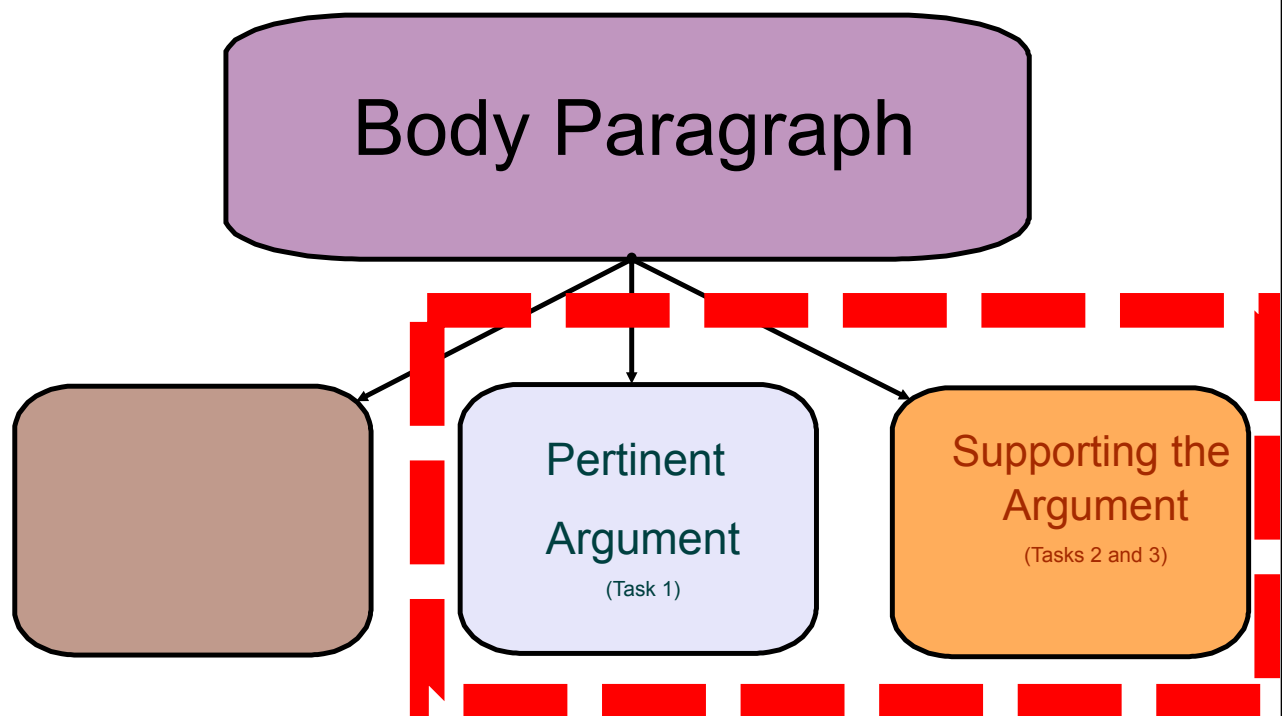
- Examples

- Personal experience

Share your answers with a partner.

Teacher chooses two students to share answers to write his/her answers on the board.

We have just seen...



You have already written an introduction to one of the following topics. Now, write the body that fits with your introduction.

Topic A: Are video games a waste of one's time?

Topic B: Does technology (social media, cell phones, etc.) tend to isolate us?

Topic C: Is it easy being a teenager today?



Task 4 : Writing My Body

Topic A: Are video games a waste of one's time?

Topic B: Does technology (social media, cell phones, etc.) tend to isolate us?

Topic C: Is it easy being a teenager today?

Paragraph 1:

Argument: _____

Fact/stat/example/personal experience: _____

Paragraph 2:

Argument: _____

Fact/stat/example/personal experience: _____

Task 5: Linking Your Paragraphs

The last thing you have to think about is how to link your paragraphs by using a variety of transitions words.

Underline the transitions words in this paragraph :

First of all, whales are an endangered species in some parts of the world.

Additionally, a healthy lifestyle will add years to your life.

Therefore, I believe that teenagers should not vote.

Thus drivers should be even more careful when driving in winter.

Transition Words

Transition words link your paragraphs together and make your text easier to read.

Use them at the beginning and end of your paragraphs

There are different types of transition words. Drag the green transitions words to their appropriate category.

For additional ideas	
To show cause and effect	
For listing different points	

Moreover

First

Also

As a result

Therefore

Furthermore

Second

Third

Consequently

To show summary	
To show example	
To show contrast	

In conclusion

For instance

Finally

In short

On the contrary

However

For example

But

Such as

Read this text and move the linking words on the appropriate space.

Cell phones should not be allowed in theaters. _____, last night, I went to see a movie with my friends. It was a suspense movie. At the most exciting moment, the actors didn't speak and only quiet music was playing. It was very exciting, so my friend and I leaned forward listening carefully. _____, we heard a loud sound-a silly musical melody. The man behind us had a cell phone, and he was receiving a call. _____, he decided to answer it, so he spoke out loud to his friend. _____ it was very distracting, my friend and I felt annoyed. _____, we feel that people must turn off their cell phones when they watch a movie, or not bring them at all.



In addition

Suddenly

For instance

Therefore

Because

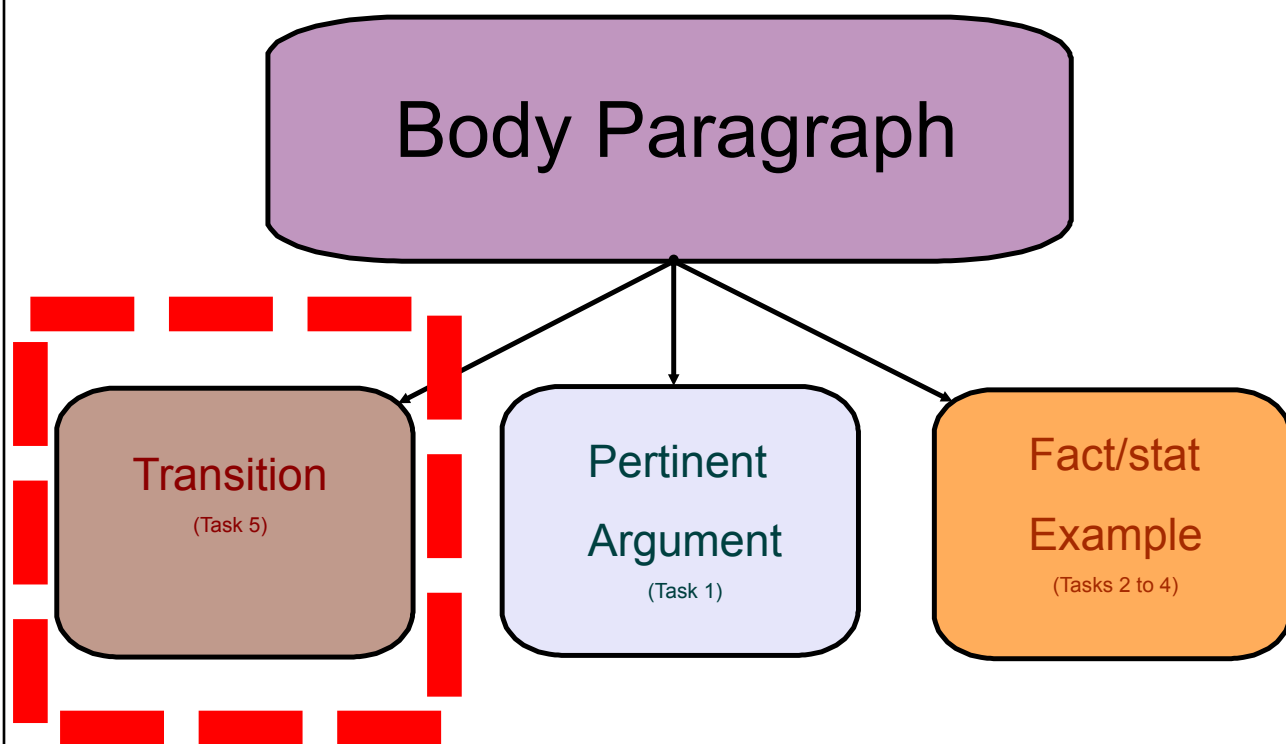
Answers

Source of text: http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Example_of_opinion_paragraph

Now go back to the text you wrote at task 4.

Insert transition words where appropriate.

We have just seen...



Can you identify the different parts of the opinion text?
Drag the statements into the right boxes.

Use discourse markers
(first, second, therefore, next, etc.)
to ensure transitions.

State main idea.
(thesis or topic sentence)

End with a strong statement,
a question, an opening to a broader
perspective or possible solutions.

Summarize your main points
by using different points.

Provide details and
arguments for each argument.

Begin with an
attention-getting sentence.
(captivating sentence, hook sentence).

One argument per paragraph.

