

Introduction to Topic Sentences

When you write a formal essay in English, you need to follow some rules. This unit will introduce these rules. First, you need to start your essay with a good **topic sentence**. A topic sentence introduces the paragraph. It tells the reader what your essay will be about. Most importantly, *your topic sentence should be interesting*. If your topic sentence is not interesting, the reader will not want to read your essay.

Here are some topic sentences written for essays about students' grandfathers:

My grandfather had more stories than a children's library.

Of all the people I have ever met, no one has impressed me as much as my grandfather.

When I see an old man walking down the street, I often think to myself, "I hope his life was as interesting as my grandfather's life."

When I was a child, I thought my grandfather was superman.

I have always looked forward to seeing my grandfather.

The topic sentences above are all interesting, and they make the reader want to keep reading. However, the topic sentences below are too boring:

My grandfather is a nice man.

I love my grandfather.

My grandfather makes me very happy.

Below are topic sentences written by students about their pets. Read the sentences, and write "I" if the sentence is interesting, and "B" if it is boring.

1. ____ My pet bird brings wonderful music to my life.
2. ____ I like cats, and my pet cat is a very good cat.
3. ____ Although my pet cat sleeps all day long, I'm always glad that she is in my house.
4. ____ My pet dog has eaten my homework, destroyed my shoes, and bitten my friend, but still I can never get angry at her.
5. ____ My dog is so cute, and everyone likes him.
6. ____ After having a pet rabbit for one year, I can understand why most people don't want to have these animals as pets.