

PARAGRAPH PUZZLES

**Hands-on and digital activities for
organizing ideas in a paragraph.**



Dear Teacher,

If your students are struggling to organize and expound upon their ideas when writing a paragraph, then these sample **Paragraph Puzzles** are perfect for you. Especially if you use a color coded system like Step Up to Writing.

In this free sampler, you'll get 4 different paragraph puzzles (in both **printable** and **digital** format) for students to organize. Each 8 sentence paragraph includes a topic sentence, 3 reasons or supporting details, 3 explanations, and a concluding sentence. If you use Step Up to Writing, that's 2 green sentences, 3 yellows, and 3 reds per paragraph.

When I've done these with paragraphs with my 4th and 5th graders, my students have learned to first group like ideas together, then use the transition phrases to help place the sentences in the correct order. These paragraph puzzles have allowed me to teach the concept of paragraph expansion and organization in a fun, hands-on way.

I'd love to hear back from you after you use this resource. You can leave your honest review on TpT or send me an email with your questions or feedback. Happy Teaching!

Betsy Newmeyer from iTeach & iWrite

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PARAGRAPH PUZZLERS

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TEACHER'S GUIDE

PREP YOUR PRINTABLE PARAGRAPH PUZZLES:

If you're looking for a quick and low-prep option for one-time usage, use the directions for student prep. But if you want to create these materials so you can use them multiple times over the years, use the teacher prep directions.

Student Prep: One-Time Usage	Teacher Prep: Long-Term Usage
1. Print out the desired paragraph. 2. Copy onto copy paper, one for each student or team. 3. If desired, copy one of the paragraph mats for each team. 4. Since the sentence puzzles are pre-scrambled, students can cut apart their own sentence strips. 5. If using the paragraph mat, students glue their sentences onto the mat.	1. For durability, print each paragraph puzzle on card stock. 2. Laminate your puzzle before cutting. 3. Cut on the dotted lines to separate the sentences. 4. Place sentence strips in a bag, envelope, or secure with a rubber band. 5. Print up your answer key

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

Students will work alone, in pairs, or in teams to correctly build or organize an 8 sentence paragraph.

GUIDED OR INDEPENDENT SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY IDEAS:

1. Have students first ID the topic sentence and conclusion. These sentences should mention the topic and the author's opinion or main idea about it.
2. Then have kids ID the supporting reasons or key facts/details.
3. Finally, look for the sentences that expound upon each of the key detail sentences. The keywords should match up. If you use Step Up to Writing, these are called the E's or reds.
4. Review all the sentence strips to ID the transition words used.
5. Put the sentence strips in the correct order, using the transition words for help.
6. Teacher will use the answer key to check for accuracy.
7. Once the paragraph is organized correctly, the team gives their paragraph a new catchy (but relevant) title. (Optional)
8. At the end, hold an activity debrief:
 - a. What details helped the team organize their sentences?
 - b. If we wanted to turn this paragraph into a full essay, what other details or examples could they include to stretch each reason/explanation (or yellow/red) sentence combo to a full paragraph?

TEACHER'S GUIDE

In addition to your paragraph puzzles and answer keys, you'll also get each paragraph written out as a full page text, not separated into individual sentences. These pages can be used in a variety of ways, listed below.

PREP YOUR PARAGRAPH PASSAGES MATERIALS:

- Print out the full-page passages you want to use
- For durability, print each passage on card stock and laminate (Optional)

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

Students will work alone, in pairs, or in teams to identify and analyze the different parts of the paragraph.

GUIDED OR INDEPENDENT SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY IDEAS:

Reading Fluency

- Read the passage aloud to practice reading fluency.

Writing Craft Skills

- What would the paragraph look like if we removed any of the explanation sentences that elaborate on the details? What could we add to expound even more on those ideas?
- How could the paragraph be stretched to be a full essay? What new details and explanations do you need to add?
- Use crayons to color code the different types of sentences in the passage. If laminated, students can use whiteboard markers or crayons to do this.
- Copy the paragraph onto paper to get the feel of how long one good paragraph might be.

Grammar Activities

- Highlight words by part of speech.
- Identify the grammatical structure of each sentence. Underline any compound sentences versus circle complex, etc.
- Find every comma in the passage. Why is that comma there? What rule might the author have used when placing that comma?

Word Work Activities

- Circle the transition words.
- Underline key vocabulary or content-specific words.
- Are there any boring or vague words that can or should be replaced?

Honestly, the options here are endless. Have fun with it!

DIGITAL RESOURCE DIRECTIONS:

YOU'LL GET . . .

- Full slideshow with all 4 paragraph puzzles
- Digital Answer Key slideshow for all 4 paragraph puzzles
- Individual slideshow for each paragraph puzzle

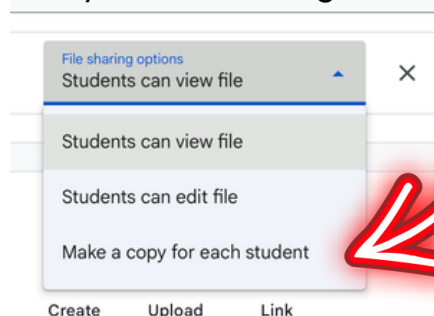
ABOUT THE DIGITAL PUZZLES:

Each of the 4 digital paragraphs are the same as the printable paragraphs. Each slide features a background with the paragraph title. Individual moveable sentence strips are placed directly on the slide, on top of the background. In order to organize and assemble the paragraph, students move the individual sentence strips around on the slide. **Note:** This activity WILL NOT WORK if the slide is in Slideshow or present-mode.

HOW TO ASSIGN A PARAGRAPH PUZZLE TO STUDENTS VIA GOOGLE CLASSROOM:

The easiest way to share these digital puzzles with your students is to create an assignment via Google Classroom or similar program. The directions below are for Google Classroom.

1. Select the paragraph puzzle that you want to assign to students.
2. Open up Google Classroom and create a new assignment.
3. List any directions you want your students to follow.
4. Attach the desired paragraph puzzle slideshow (individual paragraph slideshow).
5. Set your file sharing to: Make a copy for each student.



The Life of a Honeybee

Additionally, a single bee colony can have up to 80,000 bees, all working together to create honey and wax.

This means that without bees, we wouldn't have many of the foods we eat, like apples, almonds, and avocados.

The dance tells other bees the direction and distance to flowers and is a fascinating form of communication.

Honeybees are incredible insects with a vital role in our world.

Without a doubt, the work of a honeybee is essential to our planet's ecosystem.

The bees collect nectar and store it in their stomachs, where it mixes with enzymes before they spit it out in the honeycomb.

For instance, they pollinate plants, which helps them grow and produce fruits and vegetables.

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Should We Bring Back Extinct Animals?

Trying to force these animals into environments that are not ready for them would be cruel and unfair to the animals themselves.

For example, every dollar spent on trying to revive a long-dead animal is a dollar that could have saved a tiger or a rhino today.

Specifically, the world has completely changed since these animals were alive, and their old habitats do not exist anymore.

In the end, we should stick to protecting living animals and leave the extinct ones in the past where they belong.

The idea of bringing back animals from extinction, like the woolly mammoth, is too risky and should not happen.

We need to prioritize protecting the wildlife we still have before we start playing games with history.

First, if we brought back a massive creature like a woolly mammoth, it would struggle to find food and a safe place to live in the modern world.

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The US Government

Third, the Judicial Branch, made up of the Supreme Court and other courts, interprets the laws.

This branch includes the Senate and the House of Representatives, where elected officials debate and vote on bills.

The Supreme Court decides if laws are fair and follow the Constitution.

The President signs bills into law, commands the military, and deals with foreign policy.

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The Water Cycle

Finally, the water falls back to Earth as precipitation, like rain, snow, or hail.

First, water on the surface of lakes and oceans heats up from the sun and evaporates into the air.

The water cycle is essential for life on Earth.

Next, the water vapor cools down and condenses, forming clouds.

You can see this process in action when a cold soda can "sweats" on a hot day; the water vapor in the air condenses on the cold can.

The precipitation refills the rivers, lakes, and oceans, and the cycle begins all over again.

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Title

Topic Sentence

Key Ideas: Reasons, Facts, and Details

Elaboration: Examples, Explanations, and Evidence

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Elaboration: Examples, Explanations, and Evidence

Concluding Summary Sentence

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ANSWER KEYS

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PARAGRAPH PUZZLES

Bundle

The Importance of Recycling

Recycling is a simple way we can all help protect our environment.

For example, recycling plastic bottles and paper saves energy that would be used to create new products from raw materials.

This means that making a new plastic bottle from an old one uses less energy than making a new one from oil.

By recycling, we also reduce the amount of trash that ends up in our landfills, which helps keep our land clean.

If we don't recycle, all of our waste will just pile up in huge dumps, harming the soil and water.

Moreover, reusing old materials helps save our natural resources like trees and minerals.

Recycling paper, for instance, means fewer trees need to be cut down to make new paper.

Overall, recycling is a small action with a big positive impact on the planet.

Wind Energy

The electricity is then sent through power lines to homes and cities.

The wind pushes against the turbine's blades, causing them to rotate slowly.

Wind energy is a clean and renewable resource that helps power homes and businesses.

To capture this energy, we use large machines called wind turbines, which look like giant pinwheels.

Because wind is a natural resource that won't run out, it is considered a sustainable energy source.

Using wind power helps reduce pollution from burning fossil fuels.

The spinning motion turns a generator inside the turbine, converting the kinetic energy of the wind into electrical energy.

This energy comes from the natural movement of air across the Earth's surface, which is caused by the sun heating the Earth unevenly.

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