

# Introductory Paragraph

## Topic Sentence:

- Names the target event

## Detail Sentences:

- Define the target event
- Provide background information about the target event
- Cover an Introductory Option

## Thesis Statement:

- Names the target event
- Names the causes of the event
- Shares the main message of the theme

# Example

## Introductory Paragraph

**Who's the Culprit?**

*The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare (1992) is a classic play in which the main characters, Romeo and Juliet, fall in love. The play takes place during Elizabethan times in Verona, Italy. Romeo and Juliet are the children of two families, the Montagues and Capulets, who are feuding with each other. The feud is violent; any time a member of one of the families dies in a fight with a member from the other family, his relatives seek revenge. Unfortunately, this scenario leads to the tragic deaths of Romeo and Juliet. Four characters woven throughout this scenario create the circumstances which cause Romeo and Juliet's tragic deaths: Juliet's mother and father, Tybalt, and Friar Lawrence.

# Detail Paragraphs

## Topic/Transition Sentence:

- Includes a transition
- Names the target event
- Names a major cause for the target event

## Lead-off Detail Sentences:

- Introduce one of the details

## Follow-up Detail Sentences:

- Provide information about the detail

# Example

## Detail Paragraph

Another character who adds to the deadly circumstances surrounding Romeo and Juliet is Tybalt, the nephew of Lady Capulet. As a member of the extended family, he considers himself a protector of the family. He indicates in Act 1 that he hates peace and he especially hates Romeo's family by stating to Benvolio Montague (Romeo's cousin), "What, drawn and talk of peace? I hate the word as I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee" (Act 1, Scene 1, Line 71). Later, when Tybalt notices the masked Romeo at the Capulet party, he is incensed that Romeo would attend the party disguised and uninvited. He indicates that he wants to kill Romeo by stating, "By my stock and honor of my kin, to strike him dead I hold it not a sin" (Act 1, Scene 5, Lines 66-67). Still later in the play, Tybalt duels with Mercutio, Romeo's close friend. When Tybalt stabs Mercutio, Romeo engages Tybalt in a duel and kills him. As a result, Romeo is banished from Verona, and he can no longer see his beloved Juliet.

# Concluding Paragraph

## Concluding Transition Sentence:

- Includes a Concluding Transition
- Names the target event
- Mentions causes in some way

## Detail Sentences:

- Cover a Concluding Option  
OR
- Summarize the causes

## Clincher Sentence:

- Names the target event
- Mentions that it was caused
- Provides the main message of the theme

# Example

## Concluding Paragraph

To conclude, the deaths of Romeo and Juliet, although by their own hands, were also caused by the actions of several of the people in their lives. Juliet's parents, by insisting that she marry a man that she did not know or love and rejecting Romeo because he is a Montague, created a situation where Juliet would become secretive and resistant. The situation also pushed Romeo to arrange an immediate and secretive wedding. Tybalt, by threatening bodily harm on the Montagues and by inciting duels, made the situation even more dire, which resulted in Romeo being banished and distant from Juliet. Juliet became even more isolated and emotional and was willing to acquiesce to Friar Lawrence's plan. Friar Lawrence did not analyze the possible wrong turns that his plan might take, and he did not act prudently. As a result of all these people's emotionally based actions, two young people suffered needless pain and death.

# Introductory Paragraph

## Topic Sentence:

- Names the target cause

## Detail Sentences:

- Define the target cause
- Provide background information about the target cause
- Can cover an Introductory Option

## Thesis Statement:

- Names the target cause
- Names the major groups of effects
- Shares the main message of the theme

# Example

## Introductory Paragraph

### What Harm Can One Lie Do?

In *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee (1960), one of the characters, Mayella Ewell, tells a “whopper” of a lie to the sheriff. Mayella, a white girl, lives with her father, Bob Ewell, and her siblings in a dilapidated cabin behind the garbage dump in Maycomb, Alabama. The Ewell family is very poor; Bob Ewell is unemployed and known to be a heavy drinker. Nineteen-year-old Mayella takes care of her younger brothers and sisters because their mother is dead. When the sheriff, Mr. Heck Tate, is called to their home by Bob Ewell, he finds that Mayella has been beaten. He later testifies that “...she was pretty bruised up when I got there, and she had a black eye comin’ ” (Lee 225). He further testifies that when he asked her who beat her up, she told him that Tom Robinson, a black man, attacked her and raped her. This lie sets in motion events that have serious consequences for other characters in the novel, including Tom Robinson, Atticus Finch, Bob Ewell, and their families.



# Detail Paragraphs

## Topic/Transition Sentence:

- Includes a transition
- Names the target cause
- Names one major group of effects

## Lead-off Detail Sentences:

- Introduce one effect related to the group of effects

## Follow-up Detail Sentences:

- Provide details about the effect

# Example

## Detail Paragraph

**Tom Robinson is, of course, the character who is most severely affected by this lie because he is innocent. Predictably, after Mayella tells the sheriff that Tom attacked her, the sheriff arrests Tom and charges him with raping Mayella. Tom is put in jail and then placed on trial. Unfortunately, an all-white jury finds him guilty of the crime, a capital offense. He is sentenced to death. While he awaits his appeal, Tom is sent to the Enfield Prison Farm. This prison is located 70 miles from his home, and he continues to be isolated from his family. This set of circumstances causes Tom to lose hope. One of his friends claims that the last thing he said to his attorney before going to the prison farm was, "Goodbye Mr. Finch, there ain't nothin' you can do now, so there ain't no use tryin' " (Lee 314). Unfortunately, soon after arriving at the prison, Tom tries to escape by running across the exercise field and scaling the fence. He is shot and killed by the guards.**

# Concluding Paragraph

## Concluding Transition Sentence:

- Includes a transition
- Names the target cause
- Mentions effects in some way

## Detail Sentences:

- Cover a Concluding Option  
OR
- Each summarizes one group of effects

## Clincher Sentence:

- Names the target cause
- Mentions effects in some way
- Provides the main message of the theme

# Example

## Concluding Paragraph

To conclude, Mayella's lie seriously affects many of the people in Maycomb, Alabama. Even though the lie was probably designed originally by her and her father to cover up his attack on her, Mayella perpetuated the lie by testifying in court against Tom. Tom, an innocent man who had generously helped Mayella numerous times around her home, is dead. Tom's children are fatherless. Atticus and his children have endured ridicule and attack. The children's lives were put in danger. Bob is dead, and his children are fatherless. Thus, the ripples that have extended outward from this lie have touched numerous folks, probably not even in Mayella's mind or realm of experience at the time she told it. Certainly, lies can be deadly, and cover ups should be avoided.