

## Moving from a Paragraph to an Essay

Here's a sample paragraph:

### Getting Support in Your Classes

Students can work with their instructors and classmates to increase their chances of succeeding in school.<sup>1</sup> **For one thing, they should understand that instructors are available for questions and extra help.**<sup>2</sup> For example, students can visit instructors during office hours or make an appointment to see their instructors at other times. **In addition, finding a "buddy" in the class is another kind of support.**<sup>3</sup> You may want to work with this person on homework and other assignments, or you can contact him/her just to ask questions. **Also, students can form a study group with other students in the class.**<sup>4</sup> Often students in these groups work together outside their class. At these study sessions they review their notes, exchange opinions about materials and assignments from the class, and help each other with questions or in weak areas of understanding. Students should try to take advantage of some of these ways to help themselves in their classes.<sup>5</sup>

Here's how to put the information in the paragraph into a longer essay:

**Introduction Paragraph** - The main idea in the topic sentence<sup>1</sup> of the paragraph will become the thesis statement in the introduction (first paragraph) of the essay. (Students can work with their instructors and classmates to increase their chances of succeeding in school.)

**Body Paragraph #1** – (The first suggestion for how to succeed in school is explained in the first body paragraph.) **For one thing, they should understand that instructors are available for questions and extra help.**<sup>2</sup> For example, students can visit instructors during office hours or make an appointment to see their instructors at other times.

**Body Paragraph #2** – (The second suggestion for how to succeed in school is explained in the second body paragraph.) **In addition, finding a “buddy” in the class is another kind of support.**<sup>3</sup> You may want to work with this person on homework and other assignments, or you can contact him/her just to ask questions.

**Body Paragraph #3** - (The third suggestion for how to succeed in school is explained in the third body paragraph.) **Also, students can form a study group with other students in the class.**<sup>4</sup> Often students in these groups work together outside their class. At these study sessions they review their notes, exchange opinions about materials and assignments from the class, and help each other with questions or in weak areas of understanding.

**Conclusion Paragraph** – (The concluding sentence from the paragraph is expanded in the conclusion of the essay.) Students should try to take advantage of some of these ways to help themselves in their classes.<sup>5</sup>

The sample paragraph is written as a complete essay on the following pages.

- 1) Read the essay,
- 2) label the paragraphs (introduction, body paragraph #1, body paragraph #2, body paragraph #3, conclusion), and
- 3) find the main ideas from the five most important sentences (the numbered sentences) in the paragraph and underline them in the essay.

## **Getting Support in Your Classes**

Choosing to attend college is an important decision, and college classes usually require much hard work. Students often have many different assignments and requirements to complete for each of their classes. In addition, many students may be busy with a job and/or family responsibilities while they are going to school. In any case, students need to find the best way to complete their classes successfully in order to reach the final goals of their education. One way is for students to work with both their instructors and classmates to increase their chances of success in school.

For one thing, students should understand that instructors are available for questions and extra help. For example, students can visit instructors during office hours or make an appointment to see their instructors at other times. In this way, students can receive personal attention and can ask specific questions about the work in the class. Also, some students may want to email their instructors. If the email exchange does not answer all the student's questions, then s/he may want to visit the instructor during office hours or make an appointment to speak to the instructor personally.

In addition, finding a "buddy" in the class is another kind of support. In establishing a "buddy," it is often helpful to exchange phone numbers or email addresses during the first week or two of classes. Then these students may contact each other with questions about the class, such as how to complete homework or other assignments, due dates, etc. Having a buddy can be especially helpful when a student is absent from a class and needs to find out about the missed work and assignments.

Students can also form a study group with other students in the class. Most often students in these groups work together outside their class. At these study sessions they review their notes, exchange opinions about materials and assignments from the class, and help each other with questions or weak areas of understanding. Studying for exams together can be very helpful because students in the group may have different strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, they can

share different ways of understanding the material in order to help each other prepare for tests.

Attending college and keeping up with the work can be very demanding. Communicating with instructors, having a buddy in the class, and participating in study groups are all ways to help a student succeed. Thus, students should try to take advantage of some of these ways to help themselves in their classes.