

## Writing an Effective Paragraph

Some parents are losing sight of why their children play sports—and that, to the children, is what they are doing: “playing.” Many parents come to their child’s practice or game with their own agenda of win, win, win at all costs. The team winning, the points scored, who is the big scorer: these issues have replaced fun and sportsmanship for these parents. According to Sachs (2000), “These parents expect perfection from their children, the coaches and the referees” (p. 62). Playing sports is no longer for the kids. Maybe Mom or Dad were promising athletes in their youth and for one reason or another were robbed of their hopes and are pinning all of their own wants, needs, wishes, and “what ifs” on their child or children (Kehe, 2000). The major problem seems to be that these parents are not considering what the children want. According to a “Kidthink” survey conducted by Jerry Kirshenbaum (1993) for Sports Illustrated, the kids want things like “unlimited free throws until they miss in basketball, everyone having a turn to play, less violence in hockey, using their hands in soccer, and to have fun” (p. 12). *Perhaps the parents should listen to the children on this issue.*

**Topic Sentence:** This sentence identifies the main purpose of the paragraph. This sentence will share a summary of what you plan to cover in the paragraph. Normally the topic sentence is the first sentence in a paragraph. However, in some cases, it can be in other places. For the purposes of writing the paragraph for this unit, try setting up the paragraph with the topic sentence as the first sentence of the paragraph.

**Supporting Details:** These details should support and connect directly with the main idea of the paragraph. These sentences (usually 3-5 sentences) should develop the main idea to clearly explain the information adequately.

**Concluding Sentence:** This is the last sentence in the paragraph which restates the main idea. This sentence should be written differently than the topic sentence but still restate the main idea of the paragraph.