

Expanded Paragraphs

So far you have been writing basic paragraphs with a topic sentence, three or more supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence. Sometimes you will want to give more information about each one of your supporting ideas. You will need to add sentences that provide additional details.

In **expanded paragraphs**, you need a way of letting your reader know when you are moving from one idea to the next. Here is one way to do it.

- Start with a topic sentence.
- Use the word *first*; then tell all about your first supporting idea.
- Use the word *next*; then tell all about your next supporting idea.
- Use the word *last*; then tell all about your last supporting idea.
- End with your concluding sentence.

Words such as *first*, *next*, and *last* are called **transitions**. Think of them as signals that let the reader know that you have finished writing about one supporting idea and are moving on to the next idea. Transitions help link your ideas together and make your writing flow. Transitions are followed by commas.

Exercise 1

Read the following expanded paragraph. Underline the topic sentence and the conclusion. Circle the three transitions.

A New Puppy

A new puppy is a lot of trouble. **First**, it makes a lot of noise. Whenever it is left alone it cries. A puppy sometimes keeps everybody in the family awake at night. **Next**, puppies love to chew things. They especially like shoes and socks. They chew up newspapers and magazines and even books. Nothing in the house is safe. **Last**, new puppies are not housebroken. You have to spend a lot of time cleaning up after them. A puppy is a lot of trouble, but it is worth it because it will grow up to be a loyal companion.