



Directed Learning Activity

Topic: Supporting Details

Course: English B

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME (SLO): Paragraphs should include a clear topic sentence and provide supporting details.

DLA OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE: Student will be able to generate sufficient details to produce a well-developed expository paragraph.

TIME NEEDED TO COMPLETE: 30-45 minutes (You'll need to complete the independent activity IN THE WRITING CENTER, so be sure you've allotted enough time to do so.)

INSTRUCTIONS: Get DLA handout, look over directions, go to a work station (computer, desk) to complete the independent activity, and then sign up with a tutor to review the activity.

INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY (20-30 minutes):

- A. Review the attached handout **USING SUPPORTING IDEAS AND SPECIFIC DETAILS TO DEVELOP A PARAGRAPH.**
- B. Practice using what you've learned by completing **EXERCISE 1: PRACTICE IDENTIFYING SUPPORTING IDEAS AND DETAILS IN A PARAGRAPH** and **EXERCISE 2: PROVIDING EXAMPLES FOR SUPPORTING IDEAS.**

REVIEW WITH TUTOR: (10-15 minutes)

1. Go over your answers to the **Supporting Ideas and Details Exercise** with the tutor. Feedback from the tutor will let you know if you need to be more specific in your details or if your reader will get a clear idea from the details and examples you've included.
2. If you're working on an essay of your own, check for examples and details. Try to add at least two additional specific details and/or make two existing details more specific.

Student Name _____

Date _____ Tutor Signature _____

IMPORTANT NOTE: You must complete all of the items in the Independent Activity portion of this DLA before meeting with a tutor for the Review. If your instructor wants evidence of this completed DLA, return this form to him or her with the tutor's signature included.

USING SUPPORTING IDEAS AND SPECIFIC DETAILS TO DEVELOP A PARAGRAPH

TYPES OF PARAGRAPHS:

- Introductory Paragraph – Introduce a multi-paragraph essay
- Transition Paragraph – Provide a transition from one idea to another in a long multi-paragraph essay
- Concluding Paragraphs – End a multi-paragraph essay
- Developmental Paragraphs – Develop one idea either in a one-paragraph essay or in the body of multi-paragraph essay (also called a “body paragraph”)



PARTS OF A DEVELOPMENTAL “BODY” PARAGRAPH OR ONE-PARAGRAPH ESSAY:

TOPIC SENTENCE: States the main idea of the paragraph.

SUPPORT: Develops the idea in the topic sentence using supporting details and examples. Types of details will depend on the purpose of the paragraph:

- tell a story
- show how things are alike, different, or both
- give reasons to explain something
- show a cause and effect
- describe or define something
- tell how to do something or how a process works
- persuade someone to believe or do something

CONCLUDING SENTENCE: Restates the main idea, draws a conclusion.

DEVELOPING A PARAGRAPH WITH SUPPORTING SENTENCES AND SPECIFIC DETAILS

A common way to develop a paragraph uses supporting sentences illustrated by specific details or examples. A paragraph like this might give 3 supporting reasons to explain the idea in the topic sentence. Each reason is then illustrated with specific details and examples.

Topic Sentence

Supporting Sentence 1

- Detail 1
- Detail 2
- Detail 3

Supporting Sentence 2

- Detail 1
- Detail 2
- Detail 3

Supporting Sentence 3

- Detail 1
- Detail 2
- Detail 3

Concluding Sentence (Restated Topic Sentence)

WRITE A TOPIC SENTENCE:

A topic sentence has two parts: TOPIC + FOCUS

TOPIC = SUBJECT

FOCUS = POINT YOU WANT TO MAKE ABOUT THE SUBJECT

TOPIC + **POSSIBLE FOCUS**

Oktoberfest interesting history

Oktoberfest popular holiday in Germany

Oktoberfest my favorite holiday

TOPIC SENTENCE



Oktoberfest is my favorite holiday.

GIVE SUPPORTING SENTENCES AND DETAILS:

When you're writing an essay, think of yourself as explaining your ideas to another person (your reader). Your reader wants to know your reasons (supporting sentences) for holding an opinion or feeling a certain way about an experience. The reader also needs examples and details to better picture or understand what you mean.

Topic Sentence: Oktoberfest is my favorite holiday.

Supporting Sentence 1: My family has a tradition of going to Big Bear Lake for the holiday.

- Detail 1: We rent a cabin there so that we can attend the Oktoberfest activities that go on at the Big Bear Convention Center all month.
- Detail 2:The center has activities for children and adults, so everyone from my little cousins to my grandparents can find something to enjoy
- Detail 3: Activities include German games, music, foods, and crafts.

WRITE A CONCLUDING SENTENCE THAT TIES TOGETHER YOUR ESSAY:

Your last sentence should do the following:

1. Restate the topic and focus
2. Recap the main points
3. Comment on the significance of the information

The family tradition, costumes, and entertainment make Oktoberfest a unique holiday.

ORGANIZE YOUR IDEAS

Writing an outline is a good way to organize your ideas to show you if you have enough supporting reasons and plenty of details and examples for each reason. In the outline that follows, each supporting reason has a Roman numeral (I,II, III). Details and examples are labeled with capital letters (A,B,C).

Topic Sentence: Oktoberfest is my favorite holiday.

I. Big Bear Tradition

SUPPORTING REASON 1

- A. Family always goes up to Big Bear Lake and rents a cabin
- B. Oktoberfest parties at Convention Center
- C. Activities for children and adults – everyone can enjoy

Details
and
Examples

II. Crazy costumes

SUPPORTING REASON 2

- A. German costumes – men in lederhosen, women dressed like Bavarian beer garden waitresses
- B. Crazy hats – chicken hats, alpine hats with a feather, beer hats
- C. Silly necklaces

Details
and
Examples

III. Entertainment

SUPPORTING REASON 3

- A. German band
- B. Dances – polka, chicken dance, pizza hut dance
- C. Contests – beer drinking, log sawing, stein holding

Details
and
Examples

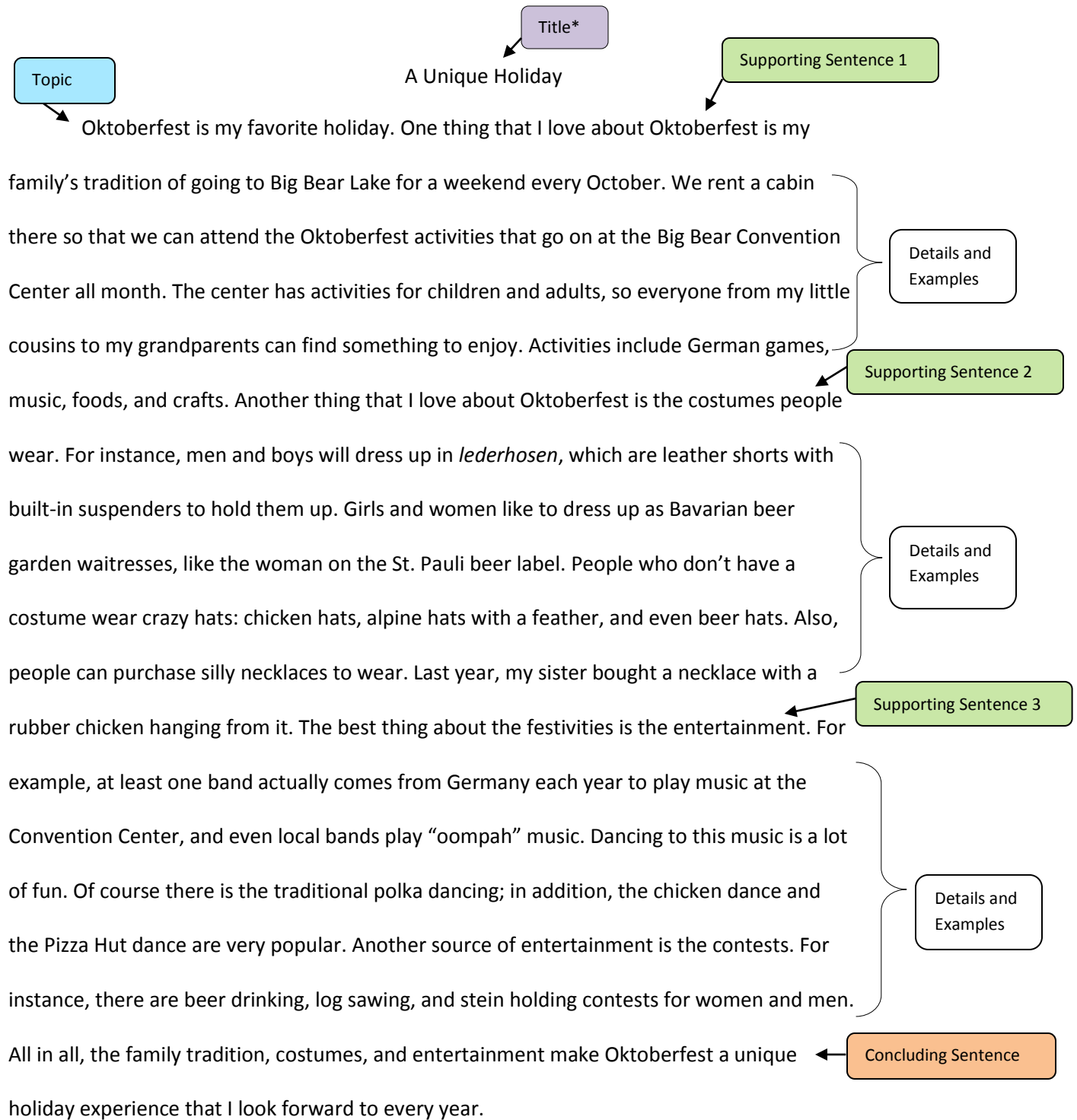
Conclusion: The family tradition, costumes, and entertainment make Oktoberfest a unique holiday experience that I look forward to every year.



Log Sawing Contest
at Big Bear
Oktoberfest

SAMPLE PARAGRAPH WITH SUPPORTING SENTENCES AND SPECIFIC DETAILS

Look at the paragraph below that gives three supporting reasons to explain why Oktoberfest is the writer's favorite holiday: the family's tradition, the costumes, and the entertainment. Notice how each supporting reason is illustrated with several details and specific examples.



*A one-paragraph essay will have a title.



When you write your paragraph, use transitions to help the reader identify

- **supporting sentences**
- **details and examples**
- **conclusion**

- **Transitions to show supporting sentences:**

First, Second, Third, Finally

First, Next, Last

For one thing, For another thing, Finally

First, More significant (important), Most significant (important)

First, Even worse (better), Worst (Best) of all

- **Transitions to show examples:**

For example,

For instance,

Also, in addition, (to add another example)

Another (to add another example)

- **Transitions to show conclusion**

Truly,

All in all,

In conclusion,

As you can see,

On the whole,

EXERCISE 1: PRACTICE IDENTIFYING SUPPORTING IDEAS AND DETAILS IN A PARAGRAPH

Instructions: Look at the sample one-paragraph essay below to fill in the missing parts of the outline that follows it. Write your answer on the blank lines.

Being a student at El Camino isn't easy. For one thing, the classwork can be challenging. My history professor expects us to listen to hour-long lectures three times a week. My sociology professor expects us to take detailed notes based on PowerPoint slides that move very quickly. Another demanding part of college is the assignments. For example, my Math 40 instructor assigns a chapter of homework before every class meeting. Last semester, my reading class had to do a group project, and getting four people together outside of class to work on the project was almost impossible, especially since one group member had two kids and another one had a full-time job. Maybe the most difficult aspect of being a student is meeting expenses. For example, students on financial aid have to fill out very involved forms that are hard to understand. And, even students who have enough money to pay for classes need to budget a lot extra for expensive books, materials, and parking that together can cost more than \$300 total. All in all, being a student at El Camino can be very challenging.

Topic Sentence: Being a student at El Camino isn't easy.

I. Classwork can be challenging (Supporting Reason)

A. listening to lectures (Example)

B. _____ (Example)

II. _____ (Supporting Reason)

A. _____ (Example)

B. reading class group project

III. Difficult to meet expenses (Supporting Reason)

A. _____ (Example)

B. _____ (Example)

Concluding Sentence: All in all, being a student at El Camino can be very challenging.

EXERCISE 2: PROVIDING EXAMPLES FOR SUPPORTING IDEAS

Instructions: Write three sentences to illustrate each of the supporting ideas below.

Topic Sentence: My cell phone is an important part of my life.

Supporting Idea 1: It lets me communicate easily anywhere and anytime.

Example 1: I can send a text message to my friend to meet me after class.

Example 2:

Example 3:

Supporting Idea 2: I can use my phone when I need to get information.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Supporting Idea 3: I can use my phone for entertainment.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Concluding Sentence: All things considered, I don't think I could live without my cell phone.