

Grade 6

Guided Writing

Topic sentence

1- Underline the topic sentences in the following paragraphs.

USEFUL TIP: The topic sentence is general and controls the paragraph. Think about the type of questions the reader will develop in their minds as they read the topic sentence.

a. Adventure Tourism

Adventure tourism is a different way for tourists to see New Zealand. This type of tourism uses the plentiful natural resources - mountains, rivers, lakes, wilderness areas and historical sites to provide adventure, thrills and challenges which are low risk but high in excitement. For example, the coastal areas in New Zealand are great for canoeing and kayaking. White-water rafting is another popular water adventure tour. However, if you would rather keep your feet on the ground, New Zealand has over 100 developed walkways in addition to the tracks in the 12 National Parks. Because more and more tourists are interested in learning about New Zealand by doing exciting and unusual activities, adventure tourism will continue to grow.

b. Time Management

No matter how you slice it, there are only 24 hours in a day. To be successful at university, students need to learn good time-management skills. The first skill is not taking on more than you can handle. If you are a working part-time, have a family and are involved in a community organisation, then taking a full course-load at university will be too much. Another time management skill is reasonably estimating the time required to perform each of the tasks at hand. For example, deeply reading a chapter from a course text cannot be completed in between television programmes. Finally, actually doing what needs to be done seems obvious, but is a very difficult skill. You may find that cleaning out your wardrobe becomes vital when you are avoiding study. Procrastination is a time manager's enemy. By learning time management skills your university study will be successful and most importantly enjoyable.

c. Have Heart

The heart weighs about 11 ounces and is the size of a clenched fist. The heart of a man performs at about 60 to 80 beats a minute. In a year it beats some 40 million times. At each beat it takes in nearly a quarter of a pint of blood; in a single day it pumps 2,200 gallons of blood, and in the course of a single lifetime about 56 million gallons. Is there any other engine capable of carrying on such heavy work over such a long period of time without needing to be repaired? Obviously the human heart is a small yet highly efficient piece of equipment.

2- Read the following paragraphs carefully. Then select the most appropriate topic sentence for each of the paragraphs from the choices provided.

a. Thousands of new people are born on our planet every day. The number of inhabitants in the world has already reached over six billion. If the present growth rate remains unchecked, the world may soon face wide-spread starvation, poverty, and serious health problems.

_____ (topic sentence).

_____ Therefore, it is predicted that the world will face serious health problems in the near future.

_____ The rapid growth of the world's human population is the most important problem the world needs to address.

_____ One of the burning issues is the population explosion in third world countries.

b. _____ (topic sentence).

Arriving in the land below the Rio Grande River, the Spanish conquistador Hernando Cortez was surprised to see the local inhabitants raising crops that included avocados, corn, garlic and nuts. Onions, tomatoes, chili peppers and pumpkins were also grown in the rich soil. Irrigation systems were employed in some of the drier regions. The Aztec farmers also were skilful in creating terraced gardens to make the most of the rainfall and to minimize soil erosion. Evidence shows that they employed crop rotation as well as natural fertilizers to enhance the production of their farm products.

_____ The Aztecs of Mexico were a nation of accomplished farmers.

_____ Hernando Cortez discovered farming in Mexico.

_____ Mexico is blessed with rich farmland and an abundance of food products.

3- The topic sentence of each of the following paragraphs has been omitted. After a careful reading, write your own topic sentence for each.

a. Factors in success at university

The most important factor is a student's past experience of study. If a student has already developed good study habits, study at university should not be difficult. Good study habits need to be complemented by interest and motivation, factors which are important when competition gets tough. We should however not underestimate the distracting effects of financial and personal difficulties. All students have to grapple with these at some stage of their university life. Beyond the personal factors it has to be said that there is also a certain element of luck involved in success: this includes finding excellent teachers and the subject matter that inspires one to give one's best.

b. Genetic engineering: no going back?

Animal breeding for particular features may soon become obsolete with the new-found ability of scientists to work at the level of genes. On the one hand there are those who embrace the new biotechnology: genetic engineering. They argue that many genetic changes will be hugely beneficial and harmless. As long as safeguards are in place, they claim, humans would be foolish not to take advantage of the many benefits genetic engineering has to offer. Others have seen the speed with which gene manipulation can get out of hand, mixing species so that vegetable and animal are no longer distinguishable. They want to wind the clock back. But can they?
