LECTURE: PARAGRAPHS

A paragraph is a group of 5-12 related sentences about one main idea. A paragraph is a thought unit; therefore, it must be unified and coherent. The main idea of a paragraph – called the topic sentence – is usually placed at the very beginning of the thought unit. The topic sentence is a complete sentence (with a subject and a verb). It conveys both the topic and what you want to say about it. The topic sentence must be indented five spaces from the margin. You may use the tab key to move 5 spaces automatically. The other sentences (except for the last one) offer support. That is, the sentences in the middle of the paragraph give reasons, examples, quotes, statistics or other kinds of proof to support the idea proposed in the topic sentence. The final sentence offers a kind of recap or may lead (transition) to the next paragraph in a longer piece of writing. Now you know all there is to know about paragraph structure, so it’s time to start writing!