STRUCTURE OF A PARAGRAPH

• What is a Paragraph?
A paragraph is composed of a group of sentences expressing one central idea and is complete in itself.

• The Topic Sentence
The topic sentence states the **main idea** of the paragraph. It generally comes at the beginning of the paragraph.

• Development of the Paragraph
The sentences following the topic sentence develop the central idea. The paragraph should have enough sentences to fully explain and support the topic sentence. Two or three sentences are usually not enough. However, each sentence must deal only with the topic in order to maintain the focus of the paragraph. Transitional words or phrases link ideas between sentences.

• The Concluding Sentence
The last sentence is important as it often restates the idea expressed in the topic sentence.

• Paragraph Patterns
  - General to Specific
    This type of paragraph begins with a general statement and moves to more specific support.
  - Specific to General
    The paragraph begins with specific information and moves to a general statement about the topic.
  - Spatial Order
    This form moves from one point to another: north to south, east to west, up to down, left to right, or in any logical order.
  - Chronological Order
    This type narrates a sequence of events from beginning to end.