



PIE METHOD

Use this method to write a properly developed and cohesive paragraph.

P= POINT

Start your paragraph by introducing the **point** of your paragraph. This is what your paragraph is about, or what it is trying to prove. Your point *must* relate to your thesis statement. If your *point* does not relate to or support your thesis statement, then your *paragraph* most likely doesn't support your thesis. Revise or remove any paragraphs that do not support your thesis.

Your point should be introduced with a topic sentence. Your topic sentence should transition from previous ideas to the new idea or **point** of your new paragraph.

Example: The following sentence would transition from a paragraph about **people** left homeless in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina to a paragraph about the **animals** left homeless there after the hurricane. The underlined fragment shows an example of use of a transitional phrase.

In addition to thousands of people left homeless after Hurricane Katrina, thousands of animals were left without owners or homes, as well.

→ Animals left homeless in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina is the **point** of this paragraph.

Note: For more information on transitions and for a list of transitional words and phrases, please see our "Transitions" handout.

I = ILLUSTRATION

To illustrate your **point** you should use supporting evidence. This section should **illustrate** and support your point through data, examples, personal experiences, published research findings, quotes, or other factual material. Try to incorporate statistics, summaries, or direct/paraphrased quotes from relevant material. All examples used should support the point of your paragraph. If there is a sentence, phrase, or example that does not support the point of your paragraph, then it most likely does not belong there. Look to see if it would fit better in another paragraph, or consider removing it entirely.

E= EXPLANATION

Give your **explanation** of the previous examples that you used. Comment on quotes – whether you disagree or agree with them, explain statistics (could they possibly be skewed?), and analyze or interpret quotes. In this part of the paragraph, you want to make clear to the reader why the specific points you chose support your point and thus your thesis. Don't assume your examples will speak for themselves, the reader needs to have the examples explained so they know exactly how *you* (as the writer) want them to interpret the results.

EXAMPLE OF A PIE PARAGRAPH

This example is from a section on PIE in Chapter 6, "The Writing Process," written by Dr. Anne Marie Hall at the University of Arizona Writing Program.

[**Point:**] Although the bald eagle is still listed as an endangered species, its ever-increasing population is very encouraging. According to ornithologist Jay Sheppard, [**Illustration:**] "The bald eagle seems to have stabilized its population, at the very least, almost everywhere" (96). [**Explanation:**] We can assume then that there is hope for the longevity of this majestic bird.