

Inverted Paragraph Format

The inverted paragraph format can be used with any expository writing project that has three or more paragraphs. It is an extension of the eleven-sentence paragraph format. Once students become familiar with the format, writing becomes more organized. It is then possible to teach additional formats.

Paragraph One: Often referred to as the introductory paragraph, this paragraph has between four and six sentences. The sentences begin with a general statement and move to a specific thesis statement.

Thesis Statement: Like a topic sentence, this must be a statement of opinion—it must state the author's point-of-view. Statements of facts do not allow the author to support opinions. Thesis statements are best when they include the points the author will support in the paragraph. Adding the points the author will support helps the reader understand the reader's point-of-view and keeps the author organized.

Incorrect: Many children attend school.

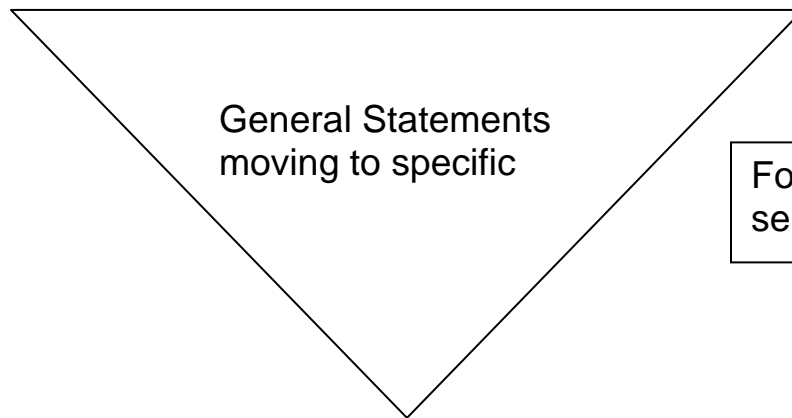
Correct: School can take many forms in the USA.

Better: Public, private, or home are three forms of schooling in the USA.

Paragraph two (or three, four, or more): In each of these paragraphs the author will support one (or all in the case of a three paragraph essay) of the opinions in the thesis statement. It is usual to have eight to ten sentences in each of these paragraphs. The first sentence is usually the topic sentence and the last is the concluding sentence. Refer to the eleven-sentence paragraph for details.

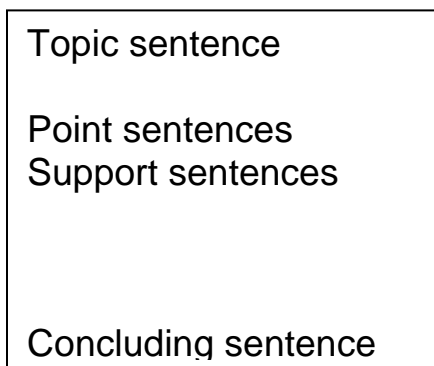
Paragraph Three (or five or six): Often referred to as the concluding paragraph, this paragraph has between four and six sentences. The first sentence restates the thesis statement and moves to a general statement.

Inverted Paragraph Format



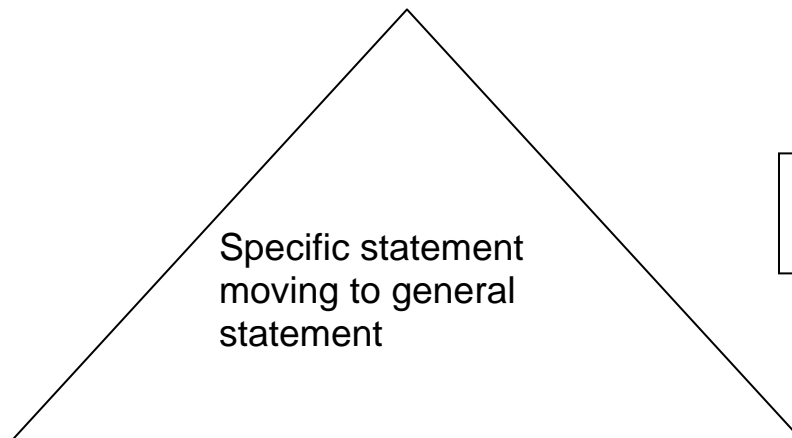
Four to six sentences

Thesis Statement



Eight to ten sentences

Thesis Statement Restated



Four to six sentences