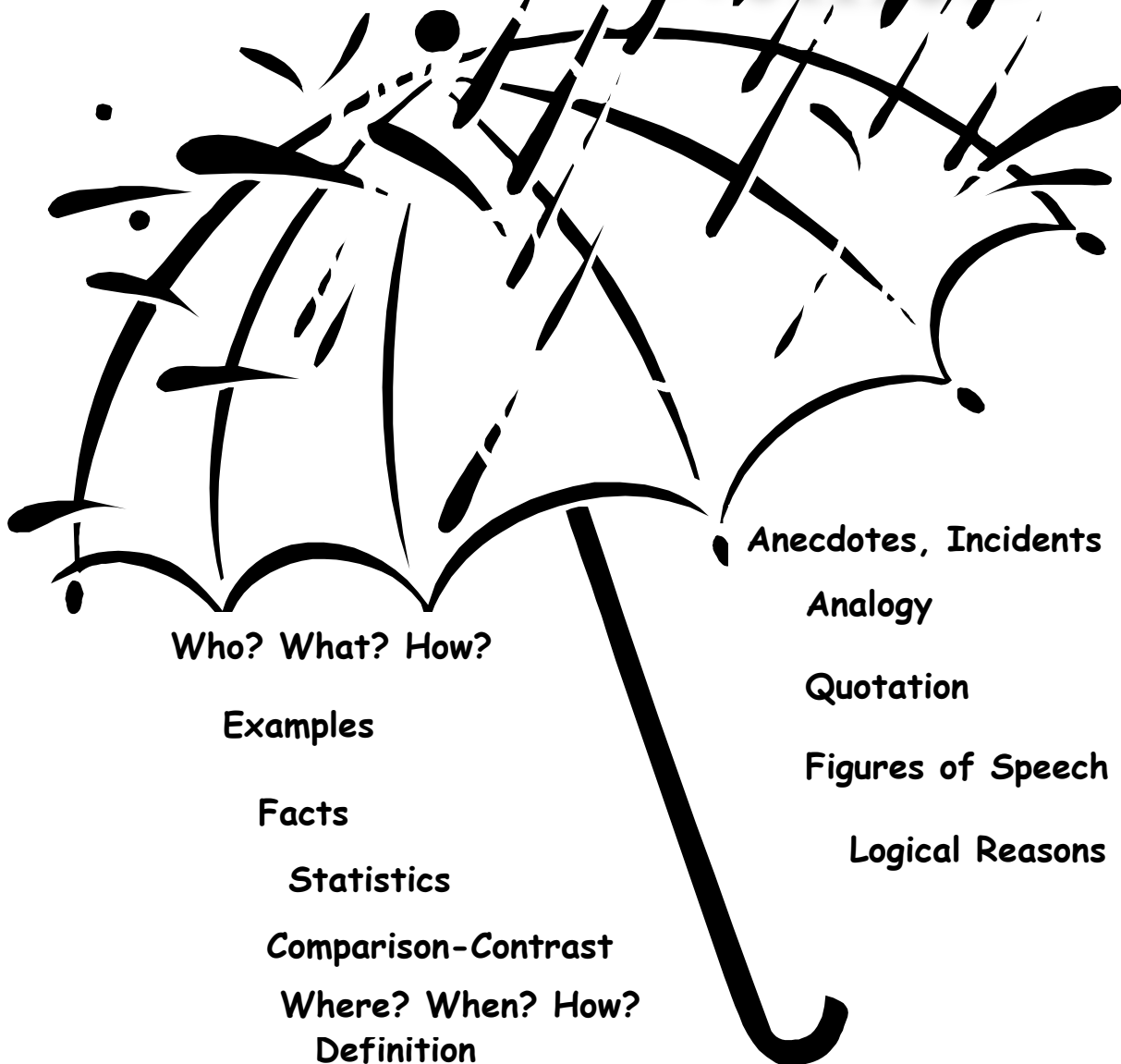


# Towards A Common Language

## Thesis Statement



## Thesis Statement/Topic Sentence

**Objective:** To examine models and non models of thesis statements/topic sentences.

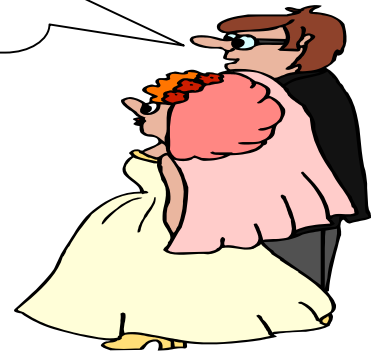
**Thesis Statement:** States the main idea of the paper; a custom made statement that controls all sentences, ideas, paragraphs in a paper; it can be stated or implied. If stated, it captures the reader's attention.

Topic Sentence has the same qualities, but it only covers a paragraph.



It is like an umbrella; it must cover everything that is underneath.

I promise;  
I vow;  
I commit.



### Definition of Non Model - Why a sentence cannot serve as a topic sentence or thesis statement

- A. Too Broad, wide, big, unwieldy, unmanageable
- B. Too small, narrow, a detail, can't cover what follows.
- C. Announces the main idea of the paper or paragraph
- D. One word can disqualify the sentence.
- E. Is a title

**Assignment:** Identify which sentence is the non model and tell why.

*I am going to write about stealing.*(Announces)  
People often steal because they are poor.

*In order to solve this math problem you must first subtract.* (B a detail)  
There are four basic steps to solving a division problem. **(Correct)**

*Barack Obama was elected President next.*(D word next disqualifies)  
*The nation changed when Barack Hussein Obama was elected President.* **(Correct)**

*Sports are important.*(A too broad)  
Sports are a needed part of a good school program. **(Correct)**

*In order to write a paragraph you need to indent.(B a detail)*

Several rules are involved in writing a paragraph. (correct)

*Yes, junk food should be eliminated from the school cafeteria.*

There is absolutely no place for junk food in the school's dietary program. (Correct)

How to look for a friend. (E a title)

A variety of traits are possessed by my best friend. (Correct)

**Advanced:** Evaluating Thesis Statements/Topic Sentences

Assignment: Which is the best set and why? What is right or wrong with the other two sets?

How can they be improved?

**Set One:** The reasons Hoover did not believe in the direct federal relief were because of an inflated budget undermined the respect of people receiving aid, and vast bureaucracy .(B word because causes it to be a detail, vast bureaucracy is a detail)

The causes that contributed to the Great Depression. (E A title)

**Set Two** Many things caused the depression.(A Broad, formulaic)

Hoover also didn't like direct federal relief.(a detail, reason)

**Set Three:** The causes of the Great Depression were varied. (Correct, more creative)

According to Hoover, a multitude of sins would be created through direct federal relief.(Correct, more creative)

## **Writing a Thesis Statement/Topic Sentence.**

**Objective:** Using the details listed, write a topic sentence

**Assignment:** Read the list of details carefully. Write a topic sentence that covers all of the details in the group.

Topic - My Best Friend

*1. Topic Sentence: My best friend has admirable qualities (suggested)*

Logical Details: Doesn't tell my secrets  
Always ready to stand up for me  
Sympathetic attitude  
Understanding  
Not picky or mean  
Share my interests and likes same things I do.

Topic - Getting Rid of a Cold

*2. Topic Sentence: I have a sure fire formula for purging my system of a cold (suggested)*

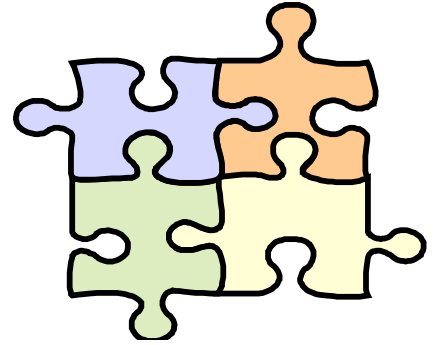
Logical Details: Get lots of rest  
Keep warm  
Take aspirin for fever or headache  
Drink plenty of liquids  
Take lots of vitamin C

Topic - Gaining Employment

*3. Topic Sentence: In order to prepare for a job, one must be prepared. (Suggested response)*

Logical Details: Dresses neatly  
No heavy make-up or unshave face  
No fancy jewelry  
No gum chewing  
Have a social security number and other necessary information  
Respectful attitude

## The Topic Sentence/Thesis Statement and the Concept of Unity



Unity is oneness.

*Objective: identify the topic sentence and the sentence that causes the paragraph to lack unity or oneness. A topic sentence is not always the first sentence.*

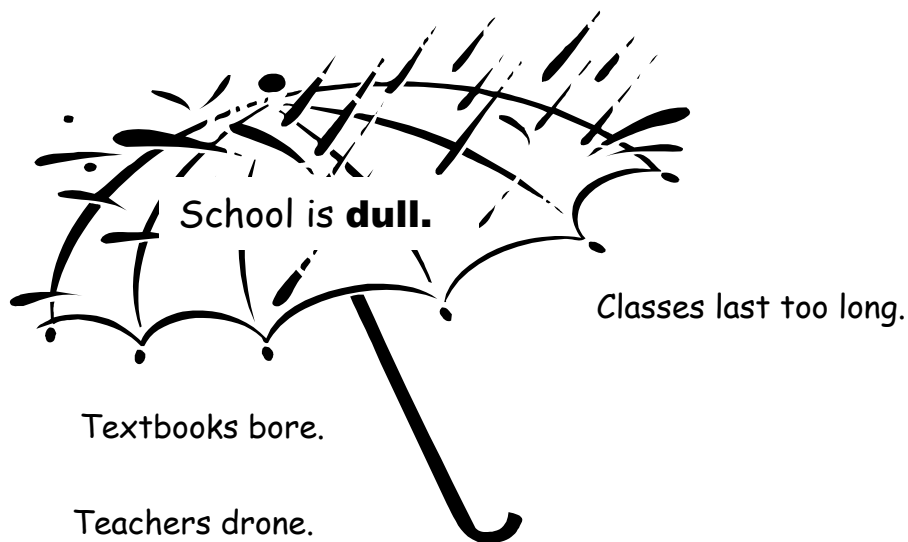
*Unity is the quality or state of being one; relevance of all parts to a single main idea.*

*A paragraph has unity when all of the details relate to a single main idea/topic sentence. .*

*A paper has unity when all ideas and paragraphs are related directly to the thesis statement.*

### MODEL/PRACTICE

#### The Umbrella Doesn't Cover! (Doesn't keep the promise)



*The sentence, "Lunch is best." keeps the umbrella from covering, or keeping its promise. Although lunch is related to school, it is NOT related to the idea of school being dull. Therefore, the work lacks unity or oneness. All of the other sentences help keep the promise/vow.*

## Unity and the Thesis Statement/Topic Sentence

**Assignment:** Underline or write the topic sentence; identify the sentence that causes the paragraph to lack unity or oneness. All sentences must STICK TO THE TOPIC SENTENCE/THESIS STATEMENT.

*Thunder and lightening kept most of us awake until 4:00 am. The roaring wind whipped the bamboo blind off of our porch and scattered pieces everywhere. This morning at dawn the road was flooded and no traffic could get through. Power lines went down and we were without electricity. **Our two cats ran and played all night as usual.** A severe thunderstorm struck the West Haven area last night.*

**Stray sentence that causes the paragraph to lack unity:** *Cats have nothing to do with the bad weather.*

*Air pollution is harmful in many different ways. Pollution can enter plants and cause problems for plants, farm animals, and animals that eat them. Pollution can cause serious changes in the weather and climate. **Motor vehicles cause pollution.** Pollution damages buildings, statues and clothes. Pollution can be a threat in health.*

**Stray sentence that causes the paragraph to lack unity:** *Paragraph discusses harm of pollution NOT what causes pollutio*

