

Paragraph Analysis Checklist (A2-C1)

A quick, classroom-ready checklist + mini-rubric for diagnosing paragraph quality.

Rapid 60-second Scan

- 1 Underline the Topic Sentence (if present). If none is obvious, write '?' in the margin.
- 2 Circle the Controlling Idea (the limiter/angle that narrows the topic).
- 3 Cross out or rewrite any sentence that does not clearly support the controlling idea.
- 4 Mark transitions (e.g., however, for example, as a result). Check for overuse or gaps.
- 5 Write one 8-12 word 'so-what' note: what is the paragraph really trying to prove?

Core Criteria - 0-3 Mini-rubric (score each)

Topic Sentence

- 0 = Missing / too general
- 1 = Present but vague or too narrow
- 2 = Clear topic with a workable angle
- 3 = Precise, focused; sets a logical path

Controlling Idea

- 0 = No clear limiter; angle absent/contradictory
- 1 = Limiter exists but fuzzy or off-target
- 2 = Limiter narrows the topic appropriately
- 3 = Specific, insightful, teachable (so-what is obvious)

Unity

- 0 = Off-topic sentences compete
- 1 = Mostly on-topic with drifts
- 2 = Strong unity with minor lapses
- 3 = Every sentence supports the controlling idea

Coherence

- 0 = Jumps/gaps; weak ordering; missing transitions
- 1 = Some ordering but choppy; transitions mis/overused
- 2 = Logical ordering with adequate signals
- 3 = Smooth progression; transitions support not distract

Support & Development

- 0 = Claims without evidence; irrelevant examples
- 1 = Some support but generic/repetitive
- 2 = Relevant examples/explanations; some depth
- 3 = Specific, varied evidence that proves the point

Concluding Sentence / Closure

- 0 = Missing or introduces a new idea
- 1 = Present but mechanical/abrupt
- 2 = Brings closure or brief synthesis
- 3 = Closure with echo + so-what (no repetition)

Cohesion Signals (no overuse)

- 0 = Either absent or overloaded with connectors
- 1 = Uneven; some misused signals
- 2 = Mostly appropriate and helpful
- 3 = Precise, unobtrusive signals that glue ideas

Teacher Use (before / during / after reading)

- Before: model with a short paragraph; think-aloud to locate Topic vs Controlling Idea.
- During: students annotate with symbols (TS, CI, -> link, x off-topic).
- After: pair-and-compare scores; write one action target for revision.

Student Self-Check (A2-C1 friendly)

- Can I say my paragraph's topic in 3-5 words?
- Can I express the controlling idea in one clear sentence (so-what)?
- Does every sentence help prove that idea? If not, fix or delete it.
- Do my transitions guide the reader without noise?
- Do I end with closure (echo + so-what), not a new idea?