

# Series of Paragraphs

Expressing an **opinion** on a given topic using a series of paragraphs

# Examples

- Here are some examples of student work and grades from the 2010 – 2011 OSSLT.
- Review the annotation notes at the bottom of each example.

**Scoring Guide for Long Writing Topic Development  
Section VI Opinion Question 1**

Code	Descriptor
<b>Blank</b>	The pages are blank with nothing written or drawn in the space provided.
<b>Illegible</b>	The response is illegible, or irrelevant to the prompt.
<b>Off topic</b>	The response is off topic.
<b>Code 10</b>	<p>The response is related to the prompt but does not express an opinion.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <p>The response expresses an opinion with no supporting details or provides details unrelated to the opinion. There is no evidence of organization.</p>
<b>Code 20</b>	<p>The response is related to the prompt, but only part of the response expresses and supports an opinion.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <p>The response is related to the prompt, and expresses and supports an opinion, but the opinion is unclear or inconsistent. There are insufficient supporting details: too few or repetitious. There is limited evidence of organization.</p>
<b>Code 30</b>	The response is related to the prompt and expresses a clear opinion. There are insufficient and/or vague supporting details or the connection of the details to the opinion is not always clear. There is evidence of organization, but lapses distract from the overall communication.
<b>Code 40</b>	The response is related to the prompt. A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient supporting details, however only some are specific. The organization is mechanical and any lapses do not distract from the overall communication.
<b>Code 50</b>	The response is related to the prompt. A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient specific supporting details. The organization is logical.
<b>Code 60</b>	The response is related to the assigned prompt. A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient specific supporting details that are thoughtfully chosen. The organization is coherent demonstrating a thoughtful progression of ideas.

# Poor Answer

Opinion  
Topic Development  
Code 20

Is participation in extracurricular activities an important part of secondary school life?

Participation in extracurricular activities is an important part of secondary school life. Because you make friends, it's fun, and it's good for you. It can also get you healthy or if you would like to be healthy. That's why participation in extracurricular activities is an important part of secondary school life.

## Annotation:

The response is related to the prompt, and expresses and supports an opinion (*Participation in extracurricular activities is an important part of secondary school life*). There are insufficient supporting details. There is limited evidence of organization.

## Better Answer

Opinion  
Topic Development  
Code 40

Is participation in extracurricular activities an important part of secondary school life?

In my own personal opinion having extracurricular involvement is not important for secondary student. But is a good idea to be involved in if its right for that particular student.

One reason why I think extracurricular activities aren't necessary is because not all students are able to participate in these types of activities with out their personal schooling is effected. This could happen either due to uncomplete homework, missed attendance because of functions and so forth.

My second reason is because majority of teenagers in this day and age aren't interested in taking up a hobbie or a sport, unless they have previously done so in past years. Most teens want to hang out with friends, and play video games usually.

In a different view sometimes it isn't bad for students to interact in extracurricular activities because it is healthy and active, and again it all just depends on the type of student.

So Overall I feel that extracurricular

activity involvement is unnecessary but useful for health reasons.

### Annotation:

A clear and consistent opinion is developed with sufficient supporting details (*In my own personal opinion having extracurricular involvement is not important for secondary student. But is a good idea to be involved in if its right for that particular student*). There are sufficient supporting details; however, only some are specific (*uncomplete homework, missed attendance*).

The organization is mechanical (*One reason, My second reason*). There is an introduction, body and conclusion.

## Even Better Answer

Opinion  
Topic Development  
Code 50

Is participation in extracurricular activities an important part of secondary school life?

Participation in extracurricular activities are not an important part of secondary school life. The following are reasons why I believe this.

The first reason why I believe this is because everyone tells you you'll get to meet ~~so~~ so many people when in reality you probably already know most of them. You could meet people thru friends you already have, class your locker partner or just going up and talking to them. Every extracurricular activity says "you'll get to meet so many new and exciting people" you're basically just meeting people you already know.

The second reason is that it could be very costly. For some activities you have to pay for a uniform, insurance, equipment, busing money (money to pay for a bus) tournament and registration. When you add it all up it could end up costing over two hundred dollars. Some people just can't afford that.

The third reason why extra circular activities are not an important part of secondary school life is because they don't really help your grades.

and you could have to miss school which really won't help. In order to join and stay in an extra circular you have to maintain good grades and do your homework and assignments. Well when you have practice 4 times a week after school for almost two hours this could be very difficult.

Extracurricular activities may be fun and all but they are not an important part of a secondary school life.

### Annotation:

A clear and consistent opinion (*Participation in extracurricular activities are not an important part of secondary school life*) is developed with sufficient specific supporting details (*everyone tells you you'll get to meet so many people when in reality you probably already know most of them, it could be very costly, they don't really help your grades*). Reasons are developed with specific examples and explanations (*meet people thru friends, uniform, insurance, equipment, have to miss school*).

The organization is logical. There is an introduction, body and conclusion.

## Key Tips to Passing the Opinion Essay



1. **Opinion Essay** is **CRITICAL** to passing the Literacy Test
2. This section is worth **100 out of a possible 400** marks. Students need to achieve 300/400 to be successful. If you **skip** the Opinion Essay you will not pass.
3. Even though the question suggests 3 paragraphs, to score *well* you need 5 paragraphs not 3!!
4. A major and easy way to do this is to include **an introduction and a conclusion**
5. Make sure you **INDENT** each paragraph (use the rule of **THUMB**) – hey..it takes up more space! (that's a positive 😊)
6. Skipping lines alone does not constitute a new paragraph - you will likely score a failing grade if you don't indent 😞 (I'm serious!)
7. **Take a Clear Stand** (for or against)– even if you don't personally agree with what you are writing. Taking a stand **FOR** or **AGAINST** the topic is more persuasive and more unified.
8. Use the full **2 pages**...even though you may feel that one page is sufficient – **TRY TO USE THEM BOTH** as ONE page looks incomplete.
9. Use Rough Copy for bullet points only (don't write your entire essay here...)



# Class Activity

- Here is a pretty good example of an opinion essay.
- Read it together as a class.
- Work through the **questions** together as a group. Use the interactive pen to record answers.
- Try completing the **class opinion piece** together.



## Opinion Piece: *Should Dogs Be Banned From Public Parks?*

Dogs are an important part of our world. They are good friends who encourage us. They should be allowed in public parks for economic, emotional and health reasons. If they are banned from parks, where would they go?

If dogs were banned from public parks, there would be huge losses in the economy. With nowhere to take dogs, who would want to buy them? Many pet stores and dog breeders would go bankrupt, and this could cause many people to be out of work. Our economy is already bad, and banning dogs from parks would make the economy even worse. The effects would be felt for a long time.

Dogs are known as “man’s best friend,” and if you can’t take your best friend to the park, many people would be upset. It is well known that dogs help make people feel better when they are sad or depressed. Dogs accept you no matter what. They don’t care how much you weigh or what kind of clothes you wear. They still wag their tails for you when you come home and are happy to see you. Banning dogs from parks will upset people and take away the positive, happy emotions a dog can give you in the first place.

*continued...*

## Opinion Piece: *Should Dogs Be Banned From Public Parks?*

*continued...*

The final reason not to ban dogs from public parks would be for health reasons. People get more exercise when they have to walk a dog. Putting limits on where you can walk a dog might also limit how much walking people do. They might just let their dog out in their back yard, and then they wouldn't be getting the exercise they need. Also, many people take their dog to the park along with their kids so if you can't take your dog to the park, you might decide not to take your kids to the park. Kids are gaining more and more weight these days, and we need to encourage them to go to parks and play to get exercise and be healthy and not to stay away from parks. Banning dogs from parks would not help improve people's health.

Overall, I am against banning dogs in public parks. I think it is not good for the economy, for our emotional side and for our health. Instead we should encourage people and dogs to use our parks. Just make sure you take a bag with you to clean up after your dog!

## Opinion Piece: *Questions*

What are the **three main reasons** for banning dogs?

Reason **1** –

Reason **2** –

Reason **3** –

What **examples** are given to support each reason?

Paragraph **1** –

Paragraph **2** –

Paragraph **3** –

*continued...*

## Opinion Piece: *Questions*

*continued...*

Where were **connecting words** and **transitions** used in the paragraph?  
(examples: also, first, next, etc.)

Where could you **add connecting words** or **transitions** in the essay?

# Opinion Piece: Class Activity

*Write an opinion piece expressing the opposite side  
i.e. arguing that dogs should be banned*

## Introductory Paragraph

Interesting Opening Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

Opinion Statement: \_\_\_\_\_

Three Main Reasons Supporting Your Opinion: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## First Supporting Paragraph

First reason supporting your opinion: \_\_\_\_\_

examples to support this reason: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*continued...*

# Opinion Piece: Class Activity

*Write an opinion piece expressing the opposite side  
i.e. arguing that dogs should be banned*

*continued...*

## Second **Supporting** Paragraph

Second reason supporting your opinion: \_\_\_\_\_

examples to support this reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Third **Supporting** Paragraph

Third reason supporting your opinion: \_\_\_\_\_

examples to support this reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Opinion Piece: Class Activity

*Write an opinion piece expressing the opposite side  
i.e. arguing that dogs should be banned*

*continued...*

### **Concluding Paragraph**

Restate Your Opinion: \_\_\_\_\_

Restate 3 Main Reasons Supporting Your Opinion: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

General Ending Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_