A TOPIC SENTENCE IS LIKE AN UMBRELLA



It has to cover all of the material below it.

1. When writing a topic sentence for a body paragraph, it **must indicate the content of all of the paragraph. When using one for a comparison or contrast, it should state the similarity or difference.**

Examples : Look at the topic sentence. Which one acts as an umbrella statement?

Suzie likes to share her toys. Suzie is the first to offer her trucks to other children in the daycare. Her caregiver noted that “the other day Suzie was sad about Nick’s lack of toys, so she walked over and gave him her Hot Wheels car.” John also shares, but in his case it’s his lunches. When he saw Dakota without a cookie, he went into his lunchbox and “offered him 2 Oreos” even though he had none for himself.

Both Suzie and John like to share their toys. Suzie is the first to offer her trucks to other children in the daycare. Her caregiver noted that “the other day Suzie was sad about Nick’s lack of toys, so she walked over and gave him her Hot Wheels car.” John also shares, but in his case it’s his lunches. When he saw Dakota without a cookie, he went into his lunchbox and “offered him 2 Oreos” even though he had none for himself.

2. Topic sentences which indicate similarities or differences still need depth .

Ex. Both Suzie and John like to share their toys. OKAY

 Both Suzie and John share their toys, showing their generous natures. BETTER. This topic sentence shows more depth providing an interpretation of the story rather than a literal look.

 Although both Suzie and John share their toys, there are subtle differences between their actions. BETTER. Once again the writer is looking at the less literal and looking for subtleties.

CONTEXT : WHERE DOES THIS COME FROM?

1. Knowing the circumstances in which a quote was spoken can shed great light on its meaning. Without it, the meaning is not clear or mistaken.

“Oh what a wonderful day!” changes drastically if you add “Oh what a wonderful day! “ Darrell muttered as he tried to start his car whose battery had died.

Ex. “Oh shut up!” is missing context

“Oh shut up!” the father shouted impatiently at his wife who was pestering him about getting trees.

1. Context also includes using the entire thought to convey meaning instead of using it to say something it doesn’t.

ex A Game of Thrones

Out of context: “Tyrion was never much use.”

In context: “Tyrion was never much use in making a camp or breaking one.”

For example, in “Butcher Bird”:

“I don’t mind” versus

“ ‘I don’t mind,” he said mincingly.”