**TOPIC SENTENCES**

**Activity 1. Identifying Effective Topic Sentences**

* A topic sentence should be a complete sentence, not a phrase.
* A topic sentence should not just be a statement of fact. It should contain a topic and controlling idea, such as opinions, tips, types or steps in a process to be developed further in the paragraph.

For example:

Topic: Pets

1. I have two dogs and three cats at home.
2. How to take care of dogs and cats at your home.
3. Dogs are better than cats for a number of reasons.

Which one is the best topic sentence?

1. Is a statement of fact that is not very clear to develop.
2. Is not a sentence—it is a phrase.
3. Is the best topic sentence because it is a complete sentence and it has a topic (dogs are better than cats) and controlling idea (for a number of reasons)

Choose the best topic sentence for each topic in each number.

1. Topic: Unforgettable day
2. Yesterday was the most unforgettable day of the month.
3. Yesterday was the day after Saturday and before Monday.
4. The most unforgettable day of the month of January.
5. Topic: The oldest child
6. The oldest child in a big family of more than 3 children.
7. The oldest child is usually the most independent of all the children.
8. The oldest child in our big family of 4 children is my brother, James.
9. Topic: Choosing a job
10. Clear career path, multi-ethnic employees and opportunity for further studies made me decide to work at Global Bank.
11. I work in Global bank, a bank of 50,000 employees with offices spread out all around the world.
12. The advantages and disadvantages of working in a big international bank with offices spread out all around the world.
13. Topic: Job skills for the international job market
14. The number of international job applicants is increasing from year to year.
15. English and computer skills are basic skills needed in the international job market.
16. Two basic job skills to take to apply for a job at the international job market.
17. Topic: Driving on highways.
18. Driving on highways requires good driving skills and high concentration.
19. You need to have a type A driver’s license when you drive a car in Indonesia.
20. Important things to remember when driving on highways in Indonesia.

**Activity 2. Topic and controlling idea**

An effective topic sentence consists of a topic and controlling idea. The topic gives you the general idea of what the paragraph is about. The controlling idea gives you some idea about the details discussed in the paragraph.

Read the following topic sentences.  Each topic sentence contains a topic and a controlling idea.  Circle the topic and underline the controlling idea.

1. People can avoid getting caught in Jakarta’s traffic jams by taking the following tips.
2. There are several advantages to growing up in a small town.
3. Most international universities require a 550 point TOEFL score for a number of reasons.
4. Air pollution in this city is the terrible for a number of reasons.
5. Fixing a flat tire is easy if you follow these steps.
6. There are several enjoyable ways to travel between Jakarta and Bandung.
7. Animals in danger of becoming extinct come from a wide range of countries.
8. Effective leadership requires specific qualities that anyone can develop.
9. Industrial waste poured into the gulf of Jakarta has led to dramatic changes in its ability to support marine life.
10. In order to fully overcome flooding problem in Jakarta, the city government must address three big issues: overpopulation, employment and education.

**Activity 3. Topic Sentence and supporting details**

A paragraph consists of three parts: introduction, body and conclusion. The introduction consists of the background of the topic and the topic sentence. The body consists of the supporting sentences and the conclusion consists of the summary and sometimes also includes the final message.

**Look at the example.**

1What do you get when you cross a robot and an astronaut? 2A Robonaut! 3Robonauts have improved from 1997 up to now. 4Work on the first Robonaut began in 1997, and by 2002 Robonaut B was revealed to the public. 5Robonaut B may have featured interchangeable lower bodies, like four-wheel mode or hydraulic legs, but scientists and engineers continued to improve Robonaut. 6In February of 2010, Robonaut 2 was released to the public. 7Robonaut 2 moved four times faster than the first Robonaut. 8An advanced version of Robonaut 2 was finally tested in outer space in 2011. 9Robonaut functioned exactly as designed: to be a robot and an astronaut.

* Which one is the topic sentence? Sentence 3.
* Which ones are the supporting details? Sentences 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.
* Which one is the concluding sentence? Sentence 9.

Now, read the following paragraphs.

**Text 1.**

1From airplanes to forklifts, hydraulic power is the strength behind many amazing technologies that make doing our daily lives easy. 2How hydraulic power works can be explained in four simple steps. 3First, fluid is rapidly released into a chamber through a valve. 4As the fluid collects, the valve is slammed shut which causes a pressure spike. 5 Because the chamber is sealed, the pressure has nowhere to go. 6Finally, the hydraulic mechanism channels the pressure and provides great power. 7And that’s how, with the help of hydraulics, even grandma can stop a car with one foot.

* Which one is the topic sentence?
* Which ones are the supporting details?
* Which one is the concluding sentence?

**Text 2.**

1Many people use the words *cyborg* and *android* interchangeably when, in fact, they have different meanings. 2Both terms refer to beings powered by robotics, but an android is powered entirely by robots. 3Though androids are completely mechanical, they are designed to look like humans. 4They may have synthetic skin, hair, and other features, but no human organs. 5On the other hand, cyborgs are part human and part machine. 6They may have robotic hands, legs, or eyes, but all cyborgs have surgically implanted technologies that enhance their abilities. 7So, even though they have similarities, cyborg and android are two different types of how robotic power is utilized.

* Which one is the topic sentence?
* Which ones are the supporting details?
* Which one is the concluding sentence?