Paragraph Format

Paragraph Structure	This is the way you organize your paragraph. A good paragraph will include topic, detail/claim(s), supporting/explaining, and a concluding sentence.
Structure of a ¶	1. Topic Sentence 2. Detail/Claim Sentence (specific, concrete) 3. Supporting/Explaining/Commentary Sentence (1-2 per detail/claim) Explains, Reason, why, means, if, so , then, etc. 4. Detail/Claim Sentence 5. Supporting/Explaining/Commentary Sentence (1-2 per detail/claim) 6. Concluding Sentence (Topic sentence reworded)
Topic Sentence	This is the subject of a paragraph. A topic sentence binds all paragraph sentences together because it provides the focus of the paragraph. It is the introduction to the paragraph.
Detail/Claim Sentences	This sentence includes details and facts about the subject.
Supporting Explaining Sentences (commentary)	This sentence explains why the detail sentence is important to the subject. It may include thoughts or ideas about the relationship of the detail sentence to the topic. For every detail, there must be at least (1) supporting sentence. You should try to use Depth and Complexity Icons to add further analysis to your paragraphs. Words include, because, explains, reason, why, if, etc.
Concluding Sentence	Similar to the topic sentence, the concluding sentence rephrases the topic while wrapping up the paragraph (¶). A concluding sentence may just reword the topic sentence *or* reword the details listed in the paragraph.

Example

If YOU were there …

You live in a town in New England during the 1770s. In the town meeting, people are hotly debating about who will have the right to vote. Most think that only men who own property should be able to vote. Some think that all property owners ~~m~~en and women ~~sh~~ould have that right. A few others want all free men to have the vote. Now it is time for the meeting to decide.

How would you have voted on this issue?

Consider reasons to LIMIT voting:

- Voters should be taxpayers.
- Voters should be educated.
- Voters should be eligible to hold political office.
- Voters should be adult citizens.

Consider reasons to WIDEN voting:

- Government applies to all people, so all people should have a voice.
- All people have rights.
- All people are equal under the law.

Topic ***I would choose to limit voting.***
Detail 1 ***Voters should be taxpayers.***
Support
Detail 2 ***Voters should be educated.***
Support
Concluding

[t] I would choose to limit voting. **[d1]** One reason why is that voters should be educated. **[s1]** Educated people are able to make better decisions *because* they understand the topic. **[d2]** Another reason why I would choose to limit voting is that voters should be adult citizens**. [s2]** The reason why voters should be adult citizens is because adults tend to make wiser and more independent decisions about issues than children do**.[c]** I would limit voting to educated people who are adults.