

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Chapter 1: Reading Skills	
Introduction	4
Lesson 1—Previewing	5
Lesson 2—Finding and Using Topic Sentences	11
Lesson 3—Finding Main Ideas	15
Lesson 4—Details About Main Ideas	19
Chapter 2: Vocabulary Development	
Introduction	27
Lesson 1—Developing an Interest in Words	28
Lesson 2—Using Word Parts to Build Word Power	33
Lesson 3—Adding Words to Your Vocabulary	41
Lesson 4—Using Your Vocabulary	48
Chapter 3: Study Skills	
Introduction	58
Lesson 1—How to Concentrate	59
Lesson 2—Previewing	64
Lesson 3—Skimming	70
Lesson 4—How to Scan	74
Answer Key	80

Finding and Using Topic Sentences

Examples of Topic Sentences

Here are two short paragraphs with their topic sentences set in **boldface**. Notice that even though the paragraphs say the same thing, in one paragraph the topic sentence is at the beginning, and in the other it is at the end.

Animals living in the north have different ways of protecting themselves against the cold.

Some animals grow heavy coats of fur. Others burrow into the ground where they are better protected from the weather. Some animals are hibernators. That is, they sleep most of the time to save energy when food is scarce.

In winter, some animals grow heavy coats of fur. Others burrow into the ground where they are protected from the weather. Some animals hibernate in winter. That is, they sleep most of the time to save energy when food is scarce.

There are many ways that animals living in the north protect themselves against the cold.

Here is part of a news article that uses short paragraphs. You will notice that the first paragraph is the topic sentence. The second paragraph has two sentences that provide details and explanations.

More than 100 Navy veterans came to Montague Falls this weekend for a reunion of World War II PT boat crews.

Patrol torpedo (PT) boats were fast,

powerful crafts that took part in most major battles of the war in the Pacific.

John F. Kennedy's famous PT 109 was such a boat.

Using Topic Sentences To Make Difficult Reading Easier

Topic sentences form the framework of any writing. Each topic sentence provides the most important information in its paragraph. So if you read nothing but topic sentences you will have a very good idea of what the writing is about.

If you find a piece of writing that is hard to understand, you can simplify it by using topic sentences. Here's how:

1. Read a paragraph and mark its topic sentence.
2. Do this for all the paragraphs of the reading.
3. Make a list of the ideas you find in the topic sentences. This will give you an outline of the reading.
4. Read the outline you have made. It is a short summary of the most important ideas.
5. Once you have the most important ideas in front of you, you can go back to the reading and see how details relate to these ideas.

Developing an Interest in Words

Exercise A

Read the following article carefully. Then complete the exercise that follows it. Use the hints that are given. Check your answers in your dictionary.

Flight Training

MEDITERRANEAN SEA—Aviators on the U.S.S. *Guam* are undergoing flight training in the Harrier, an advanced aircraft that flies like a jet, yet takes off and lands like a helicopter.

“We call them ‘jump-jets,’” says pilot Walt Avery. “They just jump right off the deck!”

Harrier planes don’t need a runway. They can land on, and take off from, a clearing in the woods or the deck of a ship like the U.S.S. *Guam*, an amphibious assault ship. “We’re a double threat,” says Captain Brad Bistrek. “We can attack from the water, and we can put a landing force on the beach.

Either way, our Harriers back us up.”

The Harrier is often used as a reconnaissance aircraft, scouting the territory and reporting what it sees. But it can also provide air support for marines in trouble.

The first of the so-called jump-jets were developed by the British, who dubbed the plane “Pegasus.” The aircraft proved its worth for Great Britain in the Falklands War in 1982.

“I hope we never need them,” says Marine G. Hammer. “But I’m sure glad they’re on board!”

1. The word harrier is also the name of a bird. What kind of bird do you think this jet might be named after?
() a. a canary
() b. a nightingale
() c. a hawk
() d. an ostrich

Answer questions 2-4 on the back of this paper.

2. Pilots nicknamed the Harriers “jump-jets.” See if you can come up with a different nickname for the Harrier.
3. The word amphibious is made up of two word parts from the Greek language: amphi- and bio-. One meaning of amphi- is “two-fold”; the word part bio- means “life.”
 - a) What do you think the word amphibious means?
 - b) What does the dictionary say it means?
 - c) What is an “amphibious assault ship” (assault means attack)?
4. The Harrier was once called the Pegasus. Look up the word Pegasus in your dictionary.
 - a) What kind of an animal was Pegasus?
 - b) From what ancient country does the story about Pegasus come?