

What are Body Paragraphs?

- The main paragraphs that comprise the majority of your academic assignment, i.e. paragraphs that are not the introduction and conclusion.
- Body paragraphs present, develop, and explain your ideas, evidence, and arguments in detail.

Body Paragraph: Sample Structure

- 1. Topic Sentence(s):** Make your point (a declarative statement) at the beginning of the paragraph. This helps to situate the reader, who is navigating through your work.
- 2. Supporting Sentences:** These are sentences that support the point you are making in this paragraph, i.e. they support and elaborate on the topic sentence. Supporting sentences often reference and explain scholarly works in relation to the topic. They also provide analysis of the topic.
 - a. Evidence:** Include any evidence or scholarly works that support your ideas and arguments. Reflect on, explain, refute, or build on what you have included, i.e. the value of the evidence/ scholarly work in relation to the topic should be clear to the reader.
 - b. Analysis:** Expand on your point and unpack exactly what you mean, i.e. ask yourself: What? How? Why?
 - ✓ **What** pattern, trend, or insight have you identified? What is happening?
 - ✓ **How** does it emerge, or how does the evidence prove this pattern, trend, or insight? How is it happening or unfolding?
 - ✓ **Why** is it happening? Why is it significant or meaningful, or why should the reader care about this?
- 3. Concluding Sentences:** Relate your point back to the central thesis statement or key findings of your assignment. Explain the “big takeaways” that you want your reader to remember moving forward.
- 4. Transition Sentence(s):** Where appropriate, guide your reader into the next paragraph by comparing, contrasting, or likening the main point in this paragraph with/to the main point in the next paragraph.

Example: Body Paragraph

1. Topic sentence alerts the reader to the central point of the paragraph. Note that this example is also a transition sentence that guides us from the last paragraph.

2.b. Supporting sentences: the author analyses and makes interpretations based on the evidence.

4. Transition sentence leads the reader into the next paragraphs.

As well as this ban on soccer, further evidence of **practicality and external factors dictating sporting choices among the Irish revolutionary cohort** was offered by S. A. Mac Domhnaill, who in a letter to the *Evening Herald* recounted how many of his classmates at St. Vincent’s Christian Brothers School, Glasnevin came to play soccer. Mac Domhnaill stated: **“The school was equipped with one handball alley and two football pitches – one for Gaelic . . . the second for soccer. Although we were encouraged to, and did, take part in all these games, soccer was the recognised first choice and the senior team played in the Schools Cup against a number of other City and County schools and colleges. There was no such competition then for either Gaelic Football or Hurling”**.⁵⁹ The author continued by naming several former classmates who would go to play their part in the Irish Revolution. “The outstanding feature of this group” he remarked, “was not that they played soccer but, later on, were members of the IRA and willingly offered their all for Ireland”.⁶⁰ While personal preference was, as Mac Domhnaill stated, a mitigating factor in the decision to favour soccer over Gaelic games at St. Vincent’s, **the situation was compounded by the lack of organized tournaments at school level for budding GAA players. In a sense, the situation vis-à-vis competitive games, or lack thereof, shaped the experiences, and consequently, the sporting choice of the pupils in this instance.** Mac Domhnaill’s citation of a lack of competitive structures for Gaelic games at school level strikes an interesting chord with regard to the spread of soccer in the northwest of the country. Although a small number of localized cups did exist in the region, as Conor Curran has observed, **“without competitive structures regulated and enforced by its national governing body” the game struggled to develop** competitively in the region.⁷⁰ **This relationship between non-Gaelic sport and the campaign for Irish independence was particularly apparent during the period of the Irish Civil War.**

2.a. Supporting sentences: the author uses evidence to convince the reader.

3. Concluding sentence connects the paragraph to the central thesis of the work.

– Adapted from Aaron Ó Maonaigh, “In the Ráth Camp, rugby or soccer would not have been tolerated by the prisoners’: Irish Civil War attitudes to sport, 1922-3”, *Soccer & Society*, vol. 22, no. 8, pp. 834-844.