

Topic Sentences

Underline the topic sentence.

1. My mother is neither tall nor heavy, but she's the biggest person in my life. There has been no other person with a greater influence on me. Most mothers feed, wash, and clothe their children, and my mother is no exception. But more than this, she made sure that I received the finest education possible. This education was not at expensive schools or famous universities, but at home, by her knee, patiently. My mother explained to me the difference between right and wrong; the virtues of generosity, honesty, and hard work; and the importance of family and social ties. From her I understood who I was, where I belonged, and how I should spend my energies. No matter how big I might grow to be, I hope to be as great as my mother.

Underline the topic sentence.

2. The process of creating the barbecue is even more fun and important than the result. First, the family has to decide on matters such as exactly what kinds of food and in what quantities. Next, shopping is often done by two or more family members, while the others stay at home to prepare the grill, the table, and the tableware. When everyone is ready to start grilling, the smells from the roasting food and the sound of the crackling coals make everyone super hungry. A constant stream of people and dishes floods out from the kitchen onto the backyard table, just like ants finding and saving their food. Finally, when all the food is ready and the cold drinks have been poured, a barbecue symbolizes summer itself.

Create a topic sentence.

3. _____ If you are a resident of Taipei and travel overseas, one of the first things you will notice is that during the evening hours, cities seem to close their doors before the night has even begun. Supermarkets, department stores, and drugstores close before 9:00 p.m. Movies stop playing and buses and subways stop running before midnight. The sidewalks are nearly empty, and few cars venture forth on the streets. In Taipei, however, one can play 24 hours every day. Movies run until the early hours of the morning, KTVs and MTVs operate 24 hours, and crowded discos and pubs play loud music to dancers and drinkers until dawn. In Taipei, the nights are as busy as the days.

Create a topic sentence.

4. _____ Dictionaries, for example, not only contain the meaning and pronunciation of words. They can also tell us where the words come from or how to distinguish similar words. Atlases, too, not only show maps of countries; they contain interesting information about race, language, history, and biology. Encyclopedias can be entertaining: just choose one, open it up, and start learning about something you never knew before! We too often use reference books in a hurry; we should realize that they can be as much fun as they are useful.

Underline the phrase that expresses the main idea.

5. In this modern world with faster means of transportation available to more people, the train nevertheless continues to be popular. In most countries, train tickets are often sold out. Why do so many people want to take the train? Perhaps it is because they are reasonably priced--cheaper than an airplane--and have large windows from which we can comfortably view the passing world. Maybe trains are popular because they never get stuck in traffic jams, as cars and buses often do. Another reason may be that trains are older and sometimes seem a little romantic. For whatever reason, do not be surprised to see people preferring trains to other modes of transportation far into the future.

Create a topic sentence.

6. _____ Actually, they are easy to distinguish. Snack food refers to any food which is eaten between the three primary meals of breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Snack food can be any kind of food, such as leftovers, fruit, candy, and a sandwich. Junk food refers to any food which is not nutritious and may actually be bad for us, such as candy, deep-fried meat, and doughnuts. Finally, the term fast food is used for foods cooked at fast-food restaurants. Some fast food is also junk food, as it contains too much salt and oil. In short, when you want some snack food, don't eat junk food or fast food!

Underline the topic sentence.

7. Have you heard about the Japanese cartoon character Hello Kitty? The amount of attention devoted to the Hello Kitty is ridiculous. One day on the bus, I saw a young woman next to me reading a magazine. At least, I thought it was a magazine. Upon more careful inspection, I noticed that it was actually a Hello Kitty mail-order catalogue. There were at least a hundred pages of pictures of Hello Kitty clothing, pens, notebooks, furniture--anything you could imagine! The poor woman would no doubt order something from this catalogue, but after a year or two, this fad would be replaced by another. What a silly waste of money!

Create a topic sentence.

8. _____ Some people feel that having a dress code reduces students' creativity. They say that by wearing the same clothes every day, students will never learn to dress themselves for work or social occasions. They also point out that student uniforms alone can not make all students look equal because students can wear expensive watches or hair styles instead. On the other hand, other people think that dress codes allow for easy identification of students and will reduce student crimes. These people also say that uniforms save both time and money when dressing in the morning. As we can see, there are good reasons to support each side's argument. How do you feel about school uniforms?

Answers

- 1 My mother is neither tall nor heavy, but she's the biggest person in my life.
2. The process of creating the barbecue is even more fun and important than the result.
- 3 The nightlife in Taipei is very different from other cities.
- 4 Books such as dictionaries, atlases, and encyclopedias can be used for more than just reference; they can be enjoyable to read as well.
- 5 "the train nevertheless continues to be popular"
6. Three unhealthy types of food are snack food, junk food, and fast food.
7. The amount of attention devoted to the Hello Kitty is ridiculous.
- 8 There are many opinions about whether or not schools should have a dress code for students.