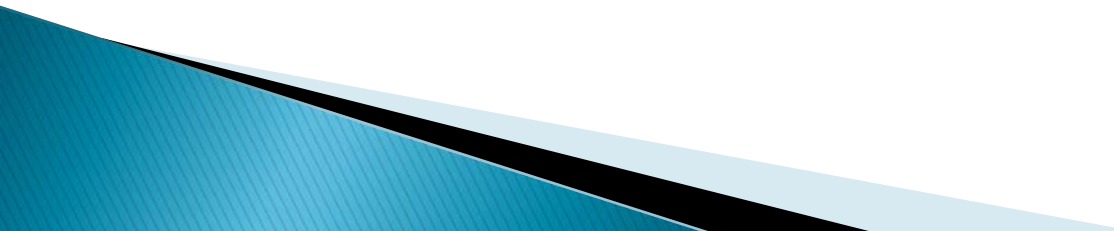


# Paragraphs

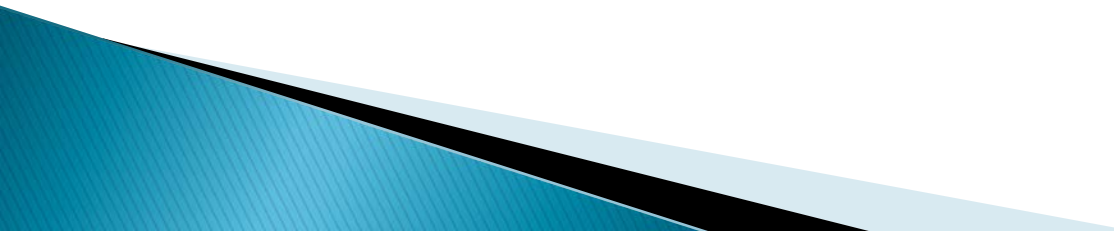
Details and Transitions

# Paragraphs

- ▶ The general subject of a paragraph or an essay is the \_\_\_\_.
  - ▶ True or false? A paragraph always has a topic?
  - ▶ The stated main idea of a paragraph is the \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_.
  - ▶ True or false? A paragraph will always have a main idea?
  - ▶ True or false? A paragraph will always have a stated main idea?
- 

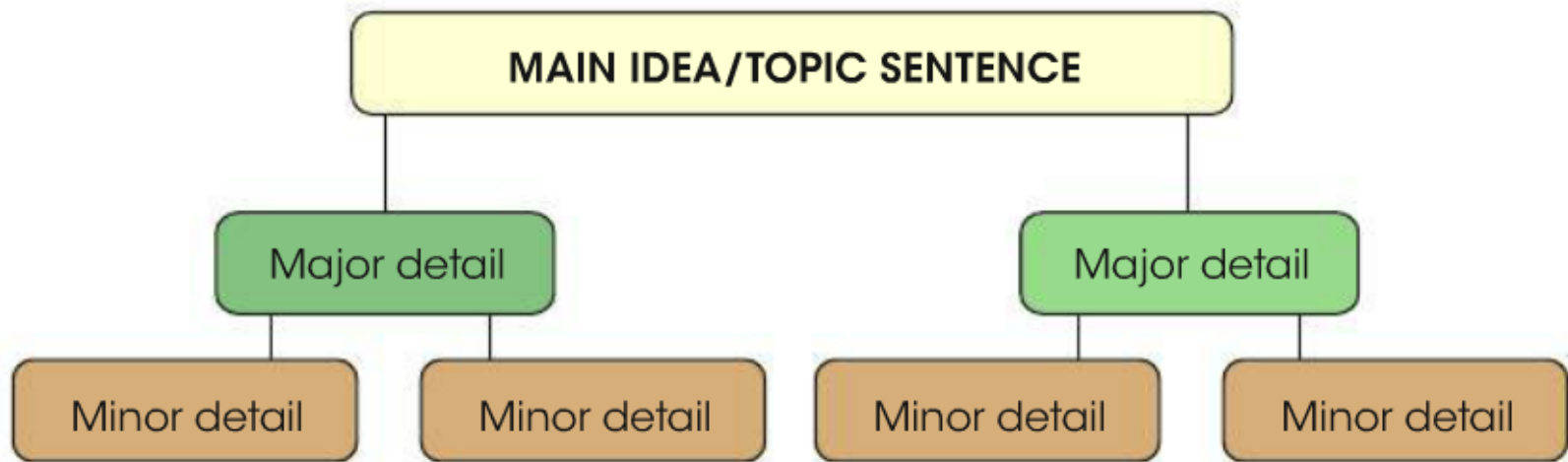
# What are supporting details?

**Supporting details** – Facts and ideas that prove or explain the main idea of a paragraph.

- ▶ **Major details** – Ideas that directly explain the main idea.
  - ▶ **Minor details** – Data, examples, and minor details that provide additional information about or further explain one of the major details.
- 

# Functions of the skin

Directions: Identify the topic, main ideas, and supporting details.

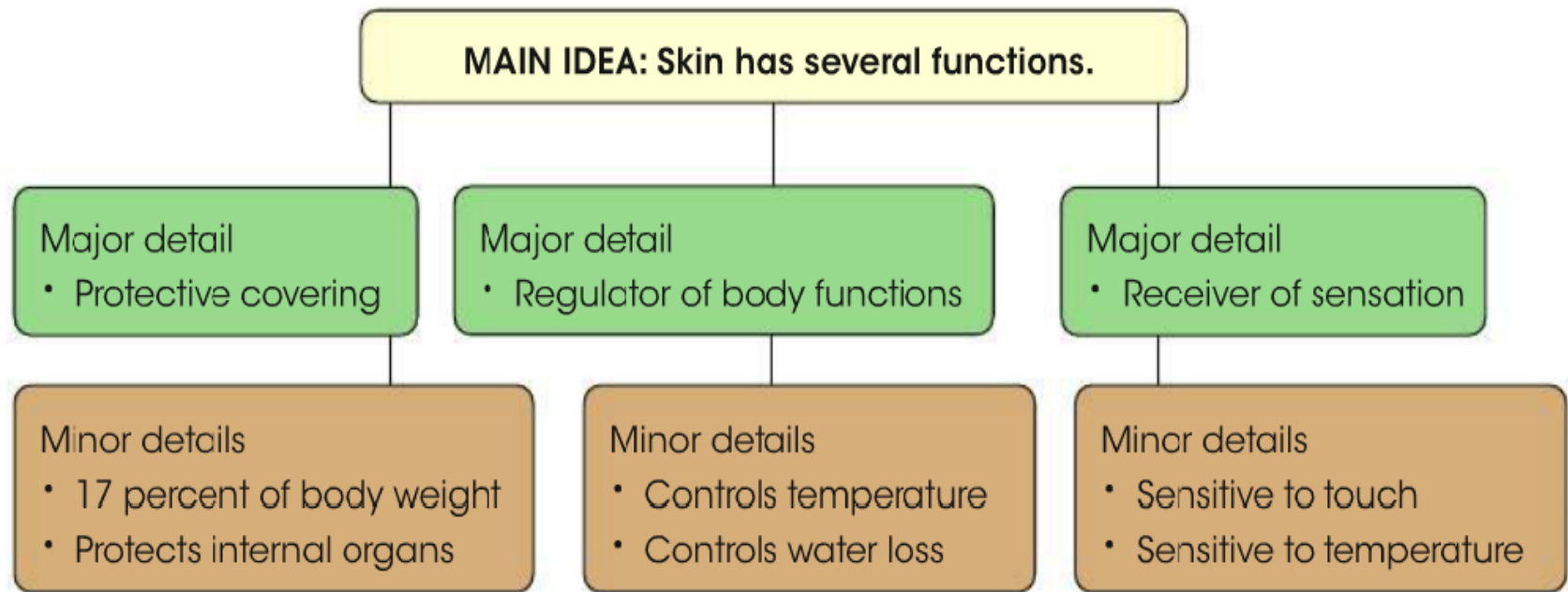


Read the following paragraph and study the diagram that follows.

The skin of the human body has several functions. First, it serves as a protective covering. In doing so, it accounts for 17 percent of the body weight. Skin also protects the organs within the body from damage or harm. The skin serves as a regulator of body functions. It controls body temperature and water loss. Finally, the skin serves as a receiver. It is sensitive to touch and temperature.

# Functions of the skin

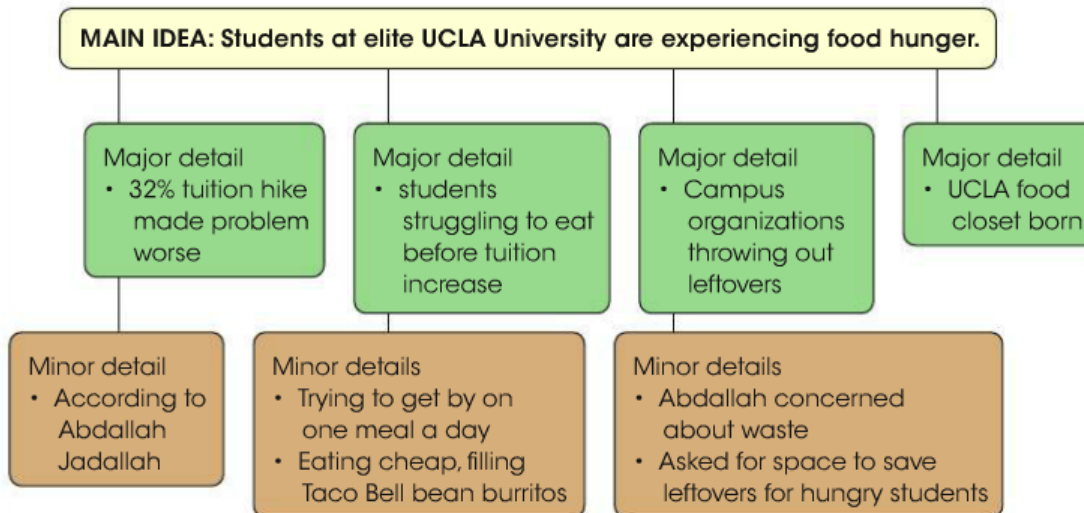
Directions: Identify the topic, main ideas, and supporting details.



The skin of the human body has several functions. First, it serves as a protective covering. In doing so, it accounts for 17 percent of the body weight. Skin also protects the organs within the body from damage or harm. The skin serves as a regulator of body functions. It controls body temperature and water loss. Finally, the skin serves as a receiver. It is sensitive to touch and temperature.

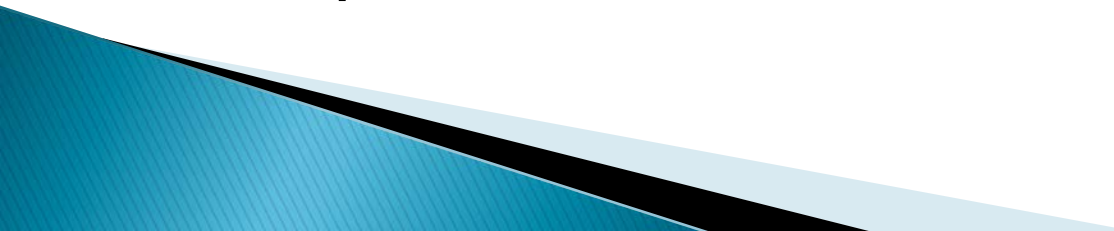
## Paragraph from “Hidden Hunger”

Two hours north of City College’s campus, at one of the nation’s most elite public universities, UCLA students are also experiencing food insecurity. Last fall’s announcement of a 32-percent tuition hike exacerbated the problem, according to senior engineering major Abdallah Jadallah. Even before the increase, he noticed that many of his classmates were struggling to feed themselves, trying to get by on one meal a day—cheap but filling Taco Bell bean burritos are a particularly popular choice for the day’s nourishment. He also noticed that many of the school’s campus organizations regularly offered refreshments at their meetings and events, the leftovers from which were then thrown away. He found the discrepancy disturbing, so he went to the university’s community programs office and requested a space to set aside leftovers for hungry students. The UCLA Food Closet was born.



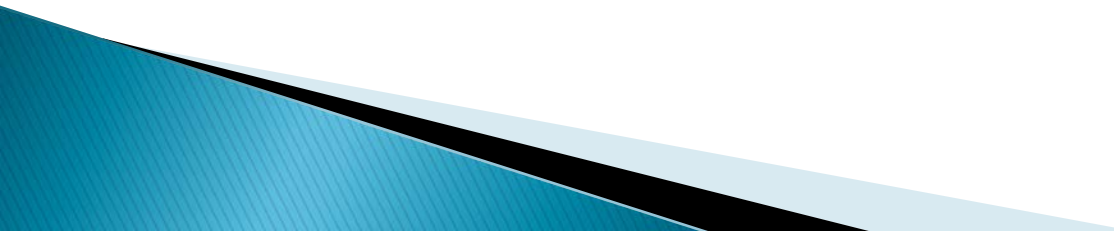
# Example 1

Directions: Identify the topic, main idea, and three supporting details.

1. Children's books contain many more male characters than female characters.
  2. Ways in which mass media affect behavior
  3. The mass media shape and reinforce sex-role expectations, which, in turn, affect our behavior.
  4. In many television shows, men are naturally more ambitious than women.
  5. Video games portray males as active and dominant and females as passive and dependent.
- 

# Example 2


Directions: Identify the topic, main idea, and three supporting details.

1. American families are widely diverse and dispel the belief in a typical American family.
  2. Many African–American families are headed by women.
  3. Latino families are strongly influenced by their culture.
  4. Diversity in American families
  5. Asian–American families have a strong sense of obligation to other family members.
- 



# Example 3

Directions: Identify the topic, main idea, and three supporting details.

1. Athletes who use Epo, a protein for blood doping, are at greater risk for heart failure.
  2. Athletes risk penalties and their health by using blood doping to enhance their performance in races.
  3. Blood doping enhances physical endurance by increasing blood oxygen.
  4. Effects of blood-doping on athletes
  5. The Festina bicycling team was banned from the 1998 Tour de France because the cyclists were suspected of using blood doping.
- 

# Types of supporting details

- ▶ Examples
- ▶ Facts or statistics
- ▶ Reasons
- ▶ Descriptions
- ▶ Steps or procedures

# Types of Supporting Details

## Examples

One way a writer may support an idea is by using examples. Examples make ideas and concepts real and understandable. In the following paragraph from the professional essay on hidden hunger (para. 2), the writer uses examples to illustrate how common it is for students to be hungry.

Asking around, Bromley-Taylor realized she was not alone. Many of her colleagues were regularly giving hungry students five dollars here and there to buy lunch or dinner. When the staff had potluck meetings, they often found students lurking by the door, eying the spread. While college students are known for their insatiable appetites, this went beyond the eternal collegiate quest for free snacks—these students were hungry because they couldn't afford food. Bromley-Taylor wanted to do something, so last November she helped launch a free bag lunch program for City students.

# Types of Supporting Details

## Facts or Statistics

Another way a writer supports an idea is by including facts and/or statistics. The facts and statistics may provide evidence that the main idea is correct. Or the facts may further explain the main idea. For example, to prove that the divorce rate is high, the author may give statistics about the divorce rate and the percentage of the population that is divorced. Notice how, in the following paragraph from the professional essay (para. 4), the main idea stated in the first sentence—that sack lunches are made available to all City College students—is supported with specific facts about the program and its operation.

At City, the nonperishable sack lunches contain some sort of protein, fruit, a bottle of water, and a couple of snacks, and are available to any of the community college's students. Since beginning in November, Bromley-Taylor says the school has handed out an average of about 10 lunches a day. Because of limited resources, students can take advantage of the lunch service only once a week, meaning that about 50 students use the program each week.

# Types of Supporting Details

## Reasons

Programs like this one are popping up at campuses from Florida to Oregon, responding to the problem of low food security among college and university students. While the question of how to stretch minimal financial aid dollars or wages from part-time work to pay for a wide range of expenses has long been an issue for students, it's only gotten worse with the recent recession, say program administrators. Parents have fewer resources to help out, there is greater competition for work-study jobs, and many schools have increased tuition to cover their expenses. On-campus meal plans are often cost-prohibitive.

# Types of Supporting Details

## Descriptions

When the topic of a paragraph is a person, object, place, or process, the writer may develop the paragraph by describing it. Descriptions are details that help you create a mental picture of the object. In the following paragraph (para. 8), the author of the professional reading describes the space that houses the UCLA Food Closet and how it is used.

The closet, really a small converted office, houses a donated refrigerator, an office cabinet that stands in as a pantry, and a table. Students can use the microwave in the building's kitchen to heat their meals, such as ramen or cans from a recent gift of ten Costco-sized cases of pork and beans. The Food Closet is kept open throughout the day so that students can come and go with relative anonymity.

# Types of Supporting Details

## Steps or Procedures

When a paragraph explains how to do something, the paragraph details are often lists of steps or procedures to be followed. For example, if the main idea of a paragraph is how to prepare an outline for a speech, then the details would list or explain the steps in preparing an outline. There is no one paragraph in the professional essay that lists steps or procedures, although paragraphs 5 and 6 describe how Bromley-Taylor came up with a model for a food assistance program based on a needs assessment, a process that includes several steps. The following paragraph is a good example of a description of a process—how fog is produced.

Warm breezes blow over the ocean. When the moist air moves from warmer to cooler waters or from warm water to cool land, it chills. As it chills, water vapor molecules begin coalescing rather than bouncing off one another upon glancing collisions. Condensation takes place, and we have fog.

—Hewitt, *Conceptual Physics*, p. 259

# Exercise 4–1

- ▶ Open page 121 in your MySkillsLab e-reader.



# Exercise 4-2

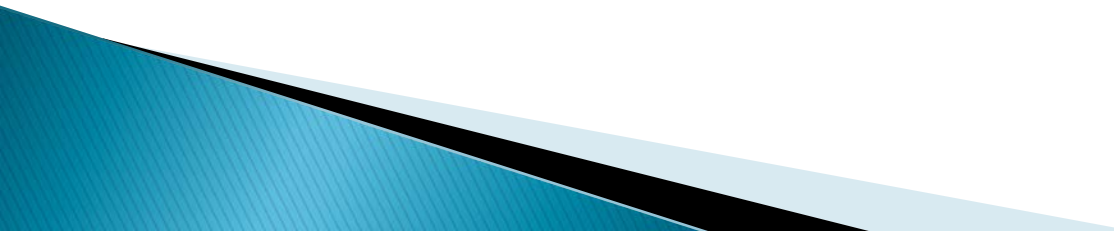
- ▶ Open page 122 in your MySkillsLab e-reader.

# Exercise 4–3

- ▶ Open page 126 in your MySkillsLab e-reader.

## Writing: Use a variety of supporting details

**Directions:** Working with a classmate, for each topic sentence, write at least three different types of details that could be used to support it. Label each detail as *example*, *fact* or *statistic*, *reason*, *description*, or *procedure*.

1. People make inferences about individuals based on the way they dress.
  2. Many retailers with traditional stores have decided to market their products through Web sites as well.
  3. Using a search engine is an effective, though not perfect, method of searching the Internet.
- 

# Common Transitions to Guide Reading and Writing

Type of Transition	Example	What Transitions Tell the Reader
Time/Sequence	_____	The author is arranging the ideas in the order in which they happened.
Example	_____ _____	An example will follow.
Enumeration	_____ _____ _____	The author is marking or identifying each major point. (Sometimes these may be used to suggest order of importance.)
_____	Also, in addition, and, further, another, as well	The author is continuing with the same idea and is going to provide additional information.
_____	_____ _____ _____	The author is switching to a different, opposite, or contrasting idea as opposed to the one previously discussed.
Comparison	_____ _____ _____	The writer will show how the previous idea is _____ to what follows.
_____	_____ _____ _____	The writer will show a connection between two or more things, how one thing caused another, or how something happened as a result of something else.
Summation	_____ _____	The writer will draw his or her ideas together.