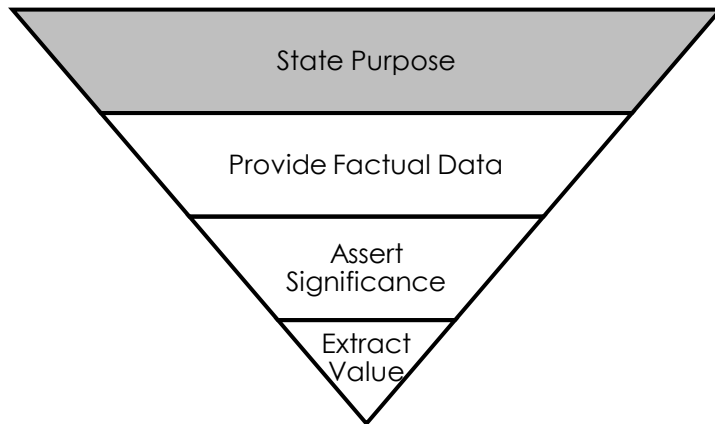


## Topic Sentences

A **topic sentence** directs the reader toward the specific content and purpose of the paragraph it introduces.



The diagram explains the logical progression of a body paragraph: The topic sentence states the purpose of the paragraph. Facts and details provide specific evidence for support. Analysis asserts the significance of the evidence. The conclusion sentence extracts the value in the paragraph.

### Preview + Purpose

An effective topic sentence contains a **preview** that identifies the content and limits the focus of the paragraph.

In addition to the preview, a topic sentence establishes the paragraph's **purpose**. This familiarizes the reader with the paragraph's relevance within the essay.

#### **Topic Sentences must:**

- Outline the entire paragraph while supporting the thesis.
- Orient the reader toward the specific point and purpose of the paragraph.
- Make a claim that is described, confirmed, and expanded on in the following paragraph.

- Does your topic sentence effectively state the content and purpose of the paragraph?
- Does your topic sentence make a claim that is defined, described, and confirmed in its subsequent body paragraph?
- Does your topic sentence make a relevant connection to the thesis of your essay?

For more information and exercises, review pg. 14 in *The Little Seagull Handbook*.