Paragraph Organization and Development

**THE P.I.E. PARAGRAPH**

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| **The P.I.E. Paragraph:** | | | |
| **P** | **=** | **Point** | What is the point of this paragraph?  What claim is being made?  Often, the point is the TOPIC SENTENCE. |
| **I** | **=** | **Information** | How is the point supported with specific data, experiences, or other factual material?  The information is the evidence used to support/develop the point. |
| **E** | **=** | **Explanation** | What does the provided information mean?  The explanation is the writer’s analysis, elaboration, evaluation of the point and information given, connecting the information with the point (topic sentence) and the thesis. |

Body Paragraph Example

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| **POINT**  **(topic sentence)**  INFORMATION  (paragraph body)  **EXPLANATION (relevance portion)** | **Many sexist children’s television commercials lead me to believe that girls rarely see images of themselves in active or winning situations. Often, the boy wins the game being advertised while the girls, pretty little objects, serve as his mindless cheerleaders.** In “What are TV Ads Selling to Children” John J. O’Connor claims that in many ads girls are portrayed as inferior to boys. According to O’Connor, the message these ads send to girls is that “They live in a society in which they can never be considered the best.” Some commercials that portray women this way include those for Giggle Wiggle, Shark Attack, and Frog Soccer. For instance, in the Giggle Wiggle commercial, four people play the game—two boys and two girls. During the game, only the boys move the game pieces, shouting enthusiastically when they’ve made the right moves, while the girls, basically motionless, smile vacantly and watch the boys. At the end of the game, one of the boys wins and gleefully shouts, “I win! I win!” while clapping his hands. Only then does a girl jump up and speak her one line, “Oh wow!”  **In this commercial, as in others, the girls were not the central characters, but part of the support network for the winners, the boys. In fact, none of the commercials I viewed showed a girl win a game. It is commercials like these that illustrate O’Connor’s point perfectly. The repeated message is that women cannot be winners, that their place is on the sidelines. This message impacts how women view themselves and how men view them.** |

**P.I.E. Strategies:**

**Ideas for making a POINT:**

Decide what you want to say to support your thesis based on your reaction to the readings you’ve done or other data you’ve collected.

Try categorizing your ideas and make a comment on connections or patterns you’ve found in the evidence you are using.

**Ideas for INFORMATION/support:**

Information from the readings or class discussions (paraphrases or short quotes)

Personal experience (stories, anecdotes, examples from your life)

Representations in mass media (newspapers, magazines, television)

Elements from popular culture (song lyrics, movie lines, TV characters, celebrities)

Definitions (from the dictionary, the readings, or another source)

Statistics (polls, percentages, data from research studies)

**Ideas for EXPLANATION:**

Interpret, analyze, explain the information, opinion or quote you’ve included.

Comment on the accuracy (or inaccuracy) of the quote, fact, data, information, etc.

Decipher the meaning or try to better your understanding of your observation, findings or experience.

Explain how the information supports or relates to the point of the paragraph.

**Suggest to your reader how the information you’ve included relates to or supports your THESIS.**