



## MEL stands for Main Idea, Evidence, Link

The writing process involves prewriting, composing, evaluating, revising, and finally editing. MEL is simply an EASY way for you to remember the important steps of writing a strong BODY PARAGRAPH - on any topic!!

### M - Main Idea (your argument or Claim)

This is what you intend to prove in your paragraph stated in a very **direct** and concise way. (keep it simple!!)

- Should answer question posed in one sentence—rearranging
- Should NOT start in “yes” or “no” (even though you are answering a question!)
- Should state the response in one sentence using words such as DOES or DOES NOT
- Should NOT end in a colon
- Should not be wordy

### E - Evidence (example)

This is how you will prove your Main Idea. Use quotes to prove the point you have stated you will prove – in other words, be specific! Tie in your quotes in one of the ways on the attached handout. Be complete! Stick to your point! You must also make certain that this information moves along smoothly with **TRANSITIONS**. (See additional list!)

- Should always be prefaced by a *transition*
- Should prove only the main idea – nothing else
- Should use information observed or measured (by your or someone else.) \*\* QUOTES would fit in this category!
- Should not be choppy
- Should not ignore important evidence which could disprove main idea
- Define words that are not clear

### L -Link (explanation)

This explains what your evidence has proven about your MAIN IDEA in one concise sentence (or two) and/or the Link is where you tell your reader what you have learned about writing this paragraph.

- Should answer the question WHY
- Could move the reader *beyond* the main idea
- Should not repeat main idea word-for-word.

**CON – Conclusion (wrap-up!)** The last sentence of the paragraph should be a conclusion; a sentence that wraps everything up and gives your paragraph closure. This should once again stress (but reword) your first Claim or main idea.

- Should summarize information presented in paragraph
- Should restate main idea
- Should begin with a transition
- Should not oppose what you have already stated.

**TRANSITIONS are used to separate examples within paragraphs and to separate paragraphs. These are only some generic examples. Transitions can be more specialized around your own topic as well.**

**FIRST** (to replace the overused “first”)

- One example is
- First of all
- Initially
- It is important to note that
- The first piece of evidence is
- First and foremost
- It is important to first note that
- One notable example is
- The first indication of
- To begin with
- One reason is
- In the beginning
- On one hand, there is
- For example

**SECOND** (to replace the overused “second”)

- Furthermore
- Second and even more importantly
- Yet another piece of evidence is
- Still
- Next
- The next example
- On the other hand, there is
- Even more compelling is
- Similarly
- Likewise
- Moreover
- In addition
- Still another great example is
- Of course
- Also
- In the same light
- Even more interesting is
- Adding to the first example is
- Making an even stronger case is

## MEL-CON

**THIRD or FINAL** (to replace the overused “third” and “finally”)

- A final example
- Last of all
- The third and final example is
- more importantly
- The third good example is
- Most compelling is
- On top of that
- The last example (idea, reason, piece of evidence)
- The final example to note
- Most importantly
- Accordingly
- Moreover
- In addition to the first two
- In the same light
- Adding to the first two examples is
- Making an even stronger case is

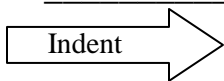
**IN CONCLUSION** (the “CON” part of MEL-CON) (to replace the overused “in conclusion” or “all in all” at the end of a paragraph)

- Accordingly
- In summary
- Consequently
- Thus
- As a result
- In short
- Therefore
- The evidence clearly points
- The evidence is clear
- No one can argue that
- Indeed
- Of course
- There is no doubt that
- There is no argument that
- In total
- Clearly

## MEL-CON PARAGRAPHS

**A Graphic Organizer to help you write the best paragraphs possible**

<b>M = Main Idea</b> (topic sentence)	<b>L = Links</b> ( <u>Your</u> explanation of how the example links to or supports the main idea)
<b>E = Evidence / Example</b> (facts)	<b>Con = Concluding Statement</b> (recap / summary)



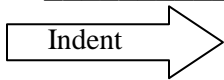
		<b>M</b> Topic Sentence
	(transition to 1 <sup>st</sup> example)	<b>E</b> First Example or Evidence
		<b>L</b> Link to topic (Explain)
	(transition to 2 <sup>nd</sup> example)	<b>E</b> First Example or evidence
		<b>L</b> Link to topic (Explain)
	(transition to 3 <sup>rd</sup> example)	<b>E</b> First Example or Evidence
		<b>L</b> Link to topic (Explain)
	(transition to conclusion)	<b>Con</b> Concluding Statement

## MEL-CON PARAGRAPHS

RECAP your 3 examples

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	(transition to conclusion)	<b>Con</b> Concluding Statement
		RECAP your 3 examples