

Research Writing Practice: Directions for Drafting Your Paragraph

You've finished your research on a topic in *The Secret Life of Bees*. Now it is time to write your paragraph, which will include parenthetical citations to show where you found each piece of your information. Follow this basic outline:

1. **Topic Sentence**—this should clearly state the purpose of the paragraph. Think of it like a mini-thesis that addresses the prompt to which you are writing.

*Examples: The movie accurately conveys what life was like for a middle-class American family during the Great Depression.

Red Pollard's character is clearly influenced by his living during the Great Depression.

2. **Facts from the movie and your online source(s)**—you should have 5-7 sentences that compare/contrast the movie and the facts you found in your 2 sources. **YOU MUST INCLUDE PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS FOR ALL OF THE FACTS YOU USE!** Please use at least one direct quotation. Both online sources and the movie must be referenced.

*Examples: On-screen Seabiscuit becomes the crowd favorite right away, representing in many ways the average American who had been suffering as a result of a bad economy (*Seabiscuit*).

When the real Seabiscuit faced War Admiral in 1938, the race was seen by many as “the East Coast establishment of bankers and their beautiful horses versus a nation of disillusioned have-nots who championed a hero that had been beat up just like them” (Lovgren).

3. **Concluding thought**—this final sentence or two should tie up the “loose ends” of your paragraph. Consider addressing the “so what?” question. Why is your topic sentence significant?

*Examples: Seeing on screen how difficult life was during the Great Depression helps the viewer understand just how inspiring a story like Seabiscuit's would have been for people during that time.

Had Red not been a product of this time period, the story would not be as inspirational as it is.

Your grade on this assignment will be based on the following criteria:

- ____/1 Topic sentence is clear, concise, and makes a claim (addressing the prompt).
- ____/5 There is sufficient evidence from both online sources and the movie to support the claim in the topic sentence—all evidence has properly formatted parenthetical citations.
- ____/3 At least one properly formatted direct quotation is used.
- ____/1 Paragraph attempts a concluding thought that is clear, not redundant.
- ____/2 Paragraph is free of major errors—no run-ons or fragments.
- ____/2 Works Cited page is in proper format—alphabetical order, one-inch margins, labeled correctly
- ____/6 Works Cited page contains proper citations for movie and two credible online sources (2 points each)

____/20 points total