

YORKWAC Infobase

Types of Paragraphs: Chronological Order

Within the basic structure of the paragraph, you have options for writing different types of paragraphs that present information in different ways.

The *chronological order* type of paragraph lists historical events in the order in which they occurred in time.

Chronological order paragraphs can become boring and repetitive if you begin every sentence with a date (“On April 15.... On May 30....”). Instead, you can use *signal words* such as **when, then, by the time, meanwhile**, etc., to make your paragraph more lively and interesting.

Note the use of signal words.

Example

The nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were the culmination of a six-month firebombing campaign begun in March 1945. By the time work on a nuclear weapon was near completion at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, a number of Japanese cities were selected as possible targets for a nuclear attack. The first atomic bomb test took place on July 16 near Alamogordo, New Mexico. When President Truman and other Allied leaders issued the Potsdam Declaration on July 26, Japan rejected the proposed terms of surrender. Truman then issued orders authorizing nuclear attacks. The first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on August 6, followed by a second atomic bomb over Nagasaki on August 9. Japan surrendered to the Allies on August 15 and signed the Instrument of Surrender on September 2, marking the end of World War II.

NOTE: In an actual writing assignment, each factual claim in the paragraph above would be accompanied by a citation of a reliable source, with a matching reference in the Works Cited list at the end of the student’s paper.

For information about different types of paragraph organization, consult the following Infosheets in the **YorkWAC Infobase**:

Infosheet #24, Basic Paragraph Format

Infosheet #26, Types of Paragraphs: Generalization and Examples

Infosheet #28, Types of Paragraphs: Steps in a Process

Infosheet #29, Types of Paragraphs: Compare and Contrast

Infosheet #30, Types of Paragraphs: Cause and Effect