

Body Paragraph Structure: PIE Structure

Like a pie would just be mushy filling without its crust, a body paragraph cannot only contain evidence from other sources. It must include ideas and reasoning in your own words to make sense of that evidence within the context of your essay. The PIE method helps logically structure an entire body paragraph as one coherent part of a whole essay.

Here are the three parts of the PIE structure:

1. **Point:** Construct the main idea of the paragraph in 1-2 sentences. The point, also called the topic sentence, will discuss a specific part of your thesis.
2. **Illustrate:** Next, provide support specific and relevant support for the point. What you use depends on the purpose of your essay. For personal writing, a brief story or description can work. For academic writing, you could describe a factual event, research studies, expert details, or provide statistics. Give your sources credit with in-text citations! The length of your support will vary.
3. **Explain:** Finally, use your own words to discuss how your example supports the point. You may need to explain complex topics from the example, so the explanation will also vary. Otherwise, focus on making connections between the second and first parts of the paragraph. Remember, even if it may seem obvious to you, your goal is to make the relationships between ideas just as understandable for your reader.

Examples with labels:

Example 1- Point: One crucial technique for maintaining overall mental health is getting a good night's rest. **Illustration:** According to a study performed by Dr. Sleeperton, fewer hours spent sleeping correlated with significant comorbidities. Subjects who slept less than an average of six hours a night over a one-year period reported a higher rate of fatigue and physical ailments. Sleeperton notes that these individuals were more likely to experience further complications such as anxiety and depression (222). **Explanation:** A sufficient amount of sleep is therefore vital for living a healthy life. Getting enough sleep not only keeps one physically healthy, but it also improves mental health.

Example 2- Point: I've never visited some of the places that have had the biggest influence on who I am. I still learn as much as I can about them in hopes of seeing them one day. **Illustration:** At the top of my list is Italy. Kid-me covered my bedroom walls with posters of Italian architecture. I took four years of Italian in high school. Now I'm fluent in the language. I've even planned my perfect trip, with days spent visiting historical sites and eating delicious cuisine. **Explanation:** I may not be from Italy, and I can only hope to visit, but it's still an important part of who I am.

Try the method out yourself.

Follow the PIE structure to write a body paragraph for your own essay. Some guiding notes and writing space are included below.

Point: Introduce the focus of the paragraph in 1-2 sentences.

Illustrate: Provide a relevant supporting example and proper citation.

Explain: How does your example support this paragraph's point?