

M.E.A.L. Paragraph for Literature Review

MAIN IDEA. EVIDENCE. ANALYSIS. LINK.

Without each of these things, your audience will probably be unsatisfied with the paragraph you've served them. Preparing a MEAL always requires you to think of the people seated at your table: your audience

1. MAIN IDEA / THE BUN

The first sentence should state the main idea. This is the idea that pulls the paragraph's content together.

2. EVIDENCE / THE BASICS

Gather and paraphrase the evidence found in the literature that connects to the main idea.

3. ANALYSIS / THE MEAT

The analysis shows how the evidence you've gathered connects to the overall topic and the rest of the literature.

4. LINK / ANOTHER BUN

Link with a sentence that restates the main idea and/or link the paragraph to the overall thesis of the paper.

Example

- 1. Main Idea** (1) How an individual handles a stressful circumstance largely depends on knowledge and experience, as well as how the event is perceived.
- 2. Evidence** (2) Dumont and Provost (1999) suggest that adults and adolescents perceive the severity of problems differently. Younger people are likely to be frustrated by frequent daily problems whilst adults are capable of differentiating between minor stressors which can be resolved easily, and major stressors which require more attention (Dumont & Provost, 1999). Fromme and Rivet (1994) argue however those like adolescents, adults with unhealthy coping skills often turn to avoidant strategies such as alcohol to handle stress.
- 3. Analysis** (3) Thus it is clear that how adults and adolescents cope with stress does not differ in the type of coping strategies, but rather is determined by the nature of an individual's coping skills.
- 4. Link** (4) Those with an unhealthy coping repertoire will struggle to deal with stressful situations, regardless of age (Fromme & Rivet, 1994).

