

A **paragraph** is a group of sentences that develop a main idea. The main idea is usually expressed in a **topic sentence** that introduces the paragraph. The rest of the sentences in a paragraph contain supporting information. Supporting details provide explanation, facts, examples, quotations, or statistics that back up the main idea.

SAMPLE BODY PARAGRAPH

*An Immigrant's Expectations Clash with Reality in *Picture Bride**

When they arrive in America, many immigrants face difficulties that they did not expect when they decided to come to the “land of opportunity”; in overcoming these challenges, individuals demonstrate their strength and determination. In Yoshiko Uchida's *Picture Bride*, Hana leaves Japan with high hopes for her new life in America. When she imagines her new home, she envisions that it will be “luxuriously furnished with the finest of brocades and laquers, and perhaps there would be a servant” (5). These expectations are crushed when she marries Taro Takeda and moves into his apartment in San Francisco. Far from the opulent surroundings she had expected, the apartment's “drabness was not easily concealed, for the furniture was utterly cheerless” (30). Instead of a servant, Hana herself “spent several days sweeping and cleaning the three-room flat” (30). When the reality of her experience does not match her expectations, Hana is disappointed but not destroyed. Far from becoming the subject of the story, these disappointments are the backdrop for the unfolding of Hana's strong spirit and highlight her perseverance in a foreign land.