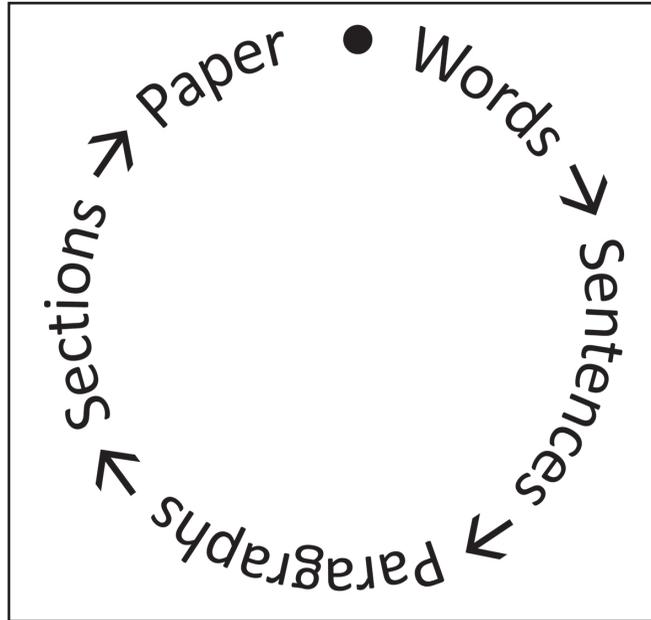


Figure 5-1. Key components of a great paper.



injury, as opposed to more than 6 months after ACL injury. The occurrence rate of articular cartilage lesions associated with an ACL injury has also been reported to be lower in the acute phase of injury (0% to 19%) than in the chronic phase (48% to 66%). Persons who participate in vigorous physical activities have been shown to be more disabled by an ACL injury than are patients who are relatively sedentary.¹

Although the general topic of the paragraph is additional knee injuries following ACL injury, there are 2 sentences that do not fit within this paragraph:

1. Women have a higher incidence rate of ACL injury than men.
2. Persons who participate in vigorous physical activities have been shown to be more disabled by an ACL injury than are patients who are relatively sedentary.

These 2 sentences are structurally sound and factually correct, but do not fit within this paragraph that describes additional knee injuries following ACL injury. Consequently, both sentences need to be removed from this paragraph and saved for a paragraph with a different focus. For example, the sentence about women having a higher incidence rate of ACL injuries would be a good supporting sentence for a paragraph describing the risk factors of ACL injuries.

Paragraph Structure

Paragraphs for scientific manuscripts are fairly straightforward and usually follow a pattern that can be adapted to most research questions. An effective paragraph has a strong topic sentence that contains the main idea or concept presented in the paragraph. Sometimes this sentence is called an *overview* or *introductory* sentence but the function is the same—introduce the idea or concept of the paragraph and frame the message of the paragraph. Usually this sentence is the first sentence of the paragraph, but it could be anywhere in the paragraph. A good topic sentence introduces the new idea and also references the idea from the previous paragraph. Often this topic sentence is of a general nature while the subsequent sentences provide more details to support the topic sentence. A short and simple topic sentence can be a powerful statement that leads the reader into the details of the paragraph.