

# **Paragraphs & Sub-headings**

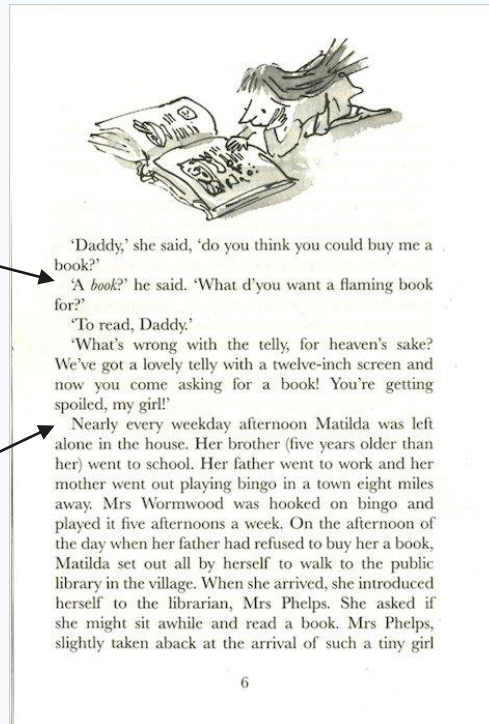
# What is a Paragraph?

In **fiction texts**, paragraphs are used to show when a writer has **changed time, place or argument, or when there is a new speaker**.

When they do this, they will start a new paragraph.

New  
speaker

Time  
change



unaccompanied by a parent, nevertheless told her she was very welcome.

"Where are the children's books please?" Matilda asked.

"They're over there on those lower shelves," Mrs. Phelps told her. "Would you like me to help you find a nice one with lots of pictures in it?"

"No, thank you," Matilda said. "I'm sure I can manage."

From then on every afternoon, as soon as her mother had left for bingo, Matilda would toddle down to the library. The walk took only ten minutes and this allowed her two glorious hours sitting quietly by herself in a cosy corner devouring one book after another. When she had read every single children's book in the place, she started wandering round in search of something else.

Mrs. Phelps, who had been watching her with fascination for the past few weeks, now got up from her desk and went over to her. "Can I help you, Matilda?" she asked.

"I'm wondering what to read next," Matilda said. "I've finished all the children's books."

"You mean you've looked at the pictures?"

"Yes, but I've read the books as well."

Mrs. Phelps looked down at Matilda from her great height and Matilda looked right back up at her.

"I thought some were very poor," Matilda said, "but others were lovely. I liked *The Secret Garden* best of all. It was full of mystery. The mystery of the room behind

Place  
change

New  
speaker


Paragraphs are separated by **beginning a new line and indenting the first part of the sentence**.

# What is a Paragraph?


In **non-fiction texts**, a **paragraph** is a **group of sentences**, which is written about the **same idea** or topic.

All about...

## Hedgehogs



Hedgehogs are a largely nocturnal species, as they are unlikely to come out during the day. In the daytime, they spend a considerable amount of time sleeping in rocks, grounds, or under bushes.



**Fascinating Facts**  
The hedgehog got its name because it roots through hedges searching for food (hedge), while grunting like a pig (hog), this is why it's called a hedgehog!  
They have about 5,000 spines. Each spine lasts about a year before it drops out and a replacement grows.

**Where Do They Live?**  
Hedgehogs can be found in almost all areas of the UK, except some of the Scottish islands. They tend to be scarce in wetland areas, pine forests and the highlands, where food and nesting sites are harder to find. Hedgehogs prefer moist habitats and live either on the ground or under the ground. They make habitats in farmlands, gardens, or even in parks. They live in nests under hedges or where ground-dwelling insects and other invertebrates are in large quantity.

**Favourite Foods**  
The hedgehog has a reputation as being the 'gardener's friend' as it loves eating so many 'pests'. Some of their favourite foods are small creatures such as insects, worms, centipedes, snails, mice, frogs and snakes.

**Staying Safe**  
Hedgehogs have sharp spines on their back, and when they are scared they curl up into a ball. Hedgehogs often roll up into a tight ball to protect themselves. As they feel threatened, they make their muscles active, which causes their spines to straighten. It is the only mammal native to Britain that has spines.

**Introduction**

**Facts**

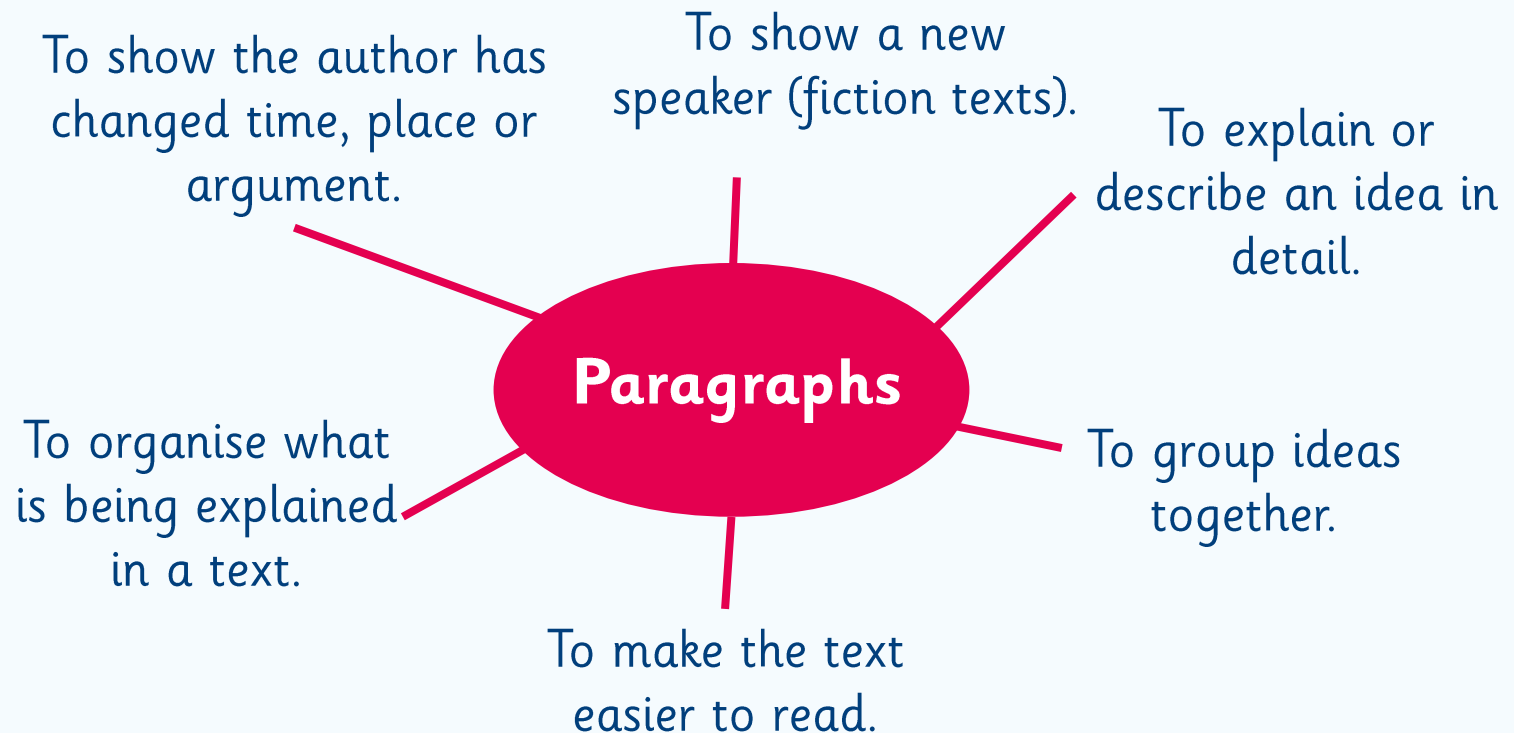
**First Paragraph**

**Second Paragraph**

**Third Paragraph**

In a **non-fiction** text, we usually see line space between each paragraph. A **subheading** is often used before each paragraph or group of paragraphs, telling us what it will be about.

# Why Do We Use Paragraphs?



# Non-Fiction Texts: Sub-Headings

What are headings?

**Headings** are used to show what a page is about.

What are sub-headings?

**Sub-headings** are used to show what a paragraph is about.

The **heading** is the main title of a text.

A **sub-heading** is a heading for a paragraph or a group of paragraphs in a text.

**Sub-headings** can often be written as a question e.g.  
Where Do Hedgehogs Live?



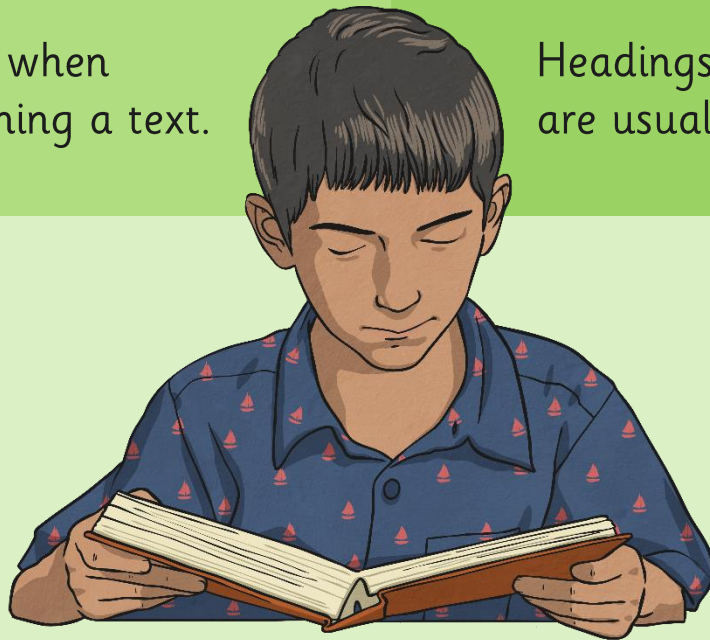
# Sub-Headings

They are helpful because they help the reader to find the information they need, quickly.

They do not need to be read from beginning to end.

They can be read when skimming or scanning a text.

Headings and sub-headings are usually capitalised.



# Using Paragraphs

**The following non-fiction text does not have paragraphs to sort the ideas. Discuss with an adult where you think the topic changes and where a new paragraph should start:**

Frogs are amphibians, which mean that they can live both on land and in the water. They are cold-blooded which means that their bodies are the same temperature as the air. When they get cold, they need to lie in the sun to warm up and when they get too warm, they need to go into the water or find a shady place to cool down. Frogs are found all over the world. They are found in every climate and on all continents except Antarctica. They are often found near any source of fresh water but they prefer water which does not move very quickly. Smaller frogs eat flies and insects, especially crickets. Larger frogs can eat mice! Frogs do not need to drink because they absorb water through their skin.

**How many paragraphs could we split this piece of text into?**



# Using Paragraphs – ANSWERS!

The text could be split into 3 paragraphs as shown below:

**As this is a non-fiction text, can you think of a good sub-heading to tell the reader what each paragraph is about?**

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Frogs are found all over the world. They are found in every climate and on all continents except Antarctica. They are often found near any source of fresh water but they prefer water which does not move very quickly.

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Smaller frogs eat flies and insects, especially crickets. Larger frogs can eat mice! Frogs do not need to drink because they absorb water through their skin.





# Sub-Headings – ANSWERS!

You may have come up with sub-headings like these:

## What Are Frogs?      OR      Frogs:

Frogs are amphibians, which mean that they can live both on land and in the water. They are cold-blooded which means that their bodies are the same temperature as the air. When they get cold, they need to lie in the sun to warm up and when they get too warm, they need to go into the water or find a shady place to cool down.

## Where Are Frogs Found?      OR      Frog Habitats:

Frogs are found all over the world. They are found in every climate and on all continents except Antarctica. They are often found near any source of fresh water but they prefer water which does not move very quickly.

## What Do Frogs Eat?      OR      Frog Diets:

Smaller frogs eat flies and insects, especially crickets. Larger frogs can eat mice! Frogs do not need to drink because they absorb water through their skin.

