

Paragraph Types: Recount

Whenever you have to relate what happened in a particular situation, you will use **recount**. While you will not often be required to simply tell the story of something, **recount** paragraphs are frequently used in longer written texts and often in reflective writing tasks. In many cases, a **recount** will provide the background for other kinds of writing.

Topic Sentence identifies the point of the narrative.

Support Sentences describe and/or explain what happened in the order of occurrence: chronological order.

Concluding Sentence (optional) comments on the significance of the narrative or re-states the point of the narrative.

Useful transitional words and phrases

- first, second, third, fourth, fifth*
- before, during, while, as soon as, at the same time, after
- then, soon, next, later, finally
- in + YEAR, on + date

*NEVER go beyond 'fifth'. Use other expressions for variety.

Sample paragraph 1

On 25 April, 1975, bystanders in nine north-western European countries witnessed a brilliant fireball descending slowly into the Earth's atmosphere. The fireball began as a brightening point of light over central Switzerland, but rapidly gained in brilliance and developed a tail containing showers of sparks. It moved north-northwest over Germany, descending on a very shallow trajectory and reached a peak brightness over Düsseldorf. After crossing the Dutch border, the fireball began to break up at a height of about 25 kilometres over a point just east of Arnhem. Finally, it suffered a brilliant terminal burst at 17 kilometres over the Noordoostpolder, flying into a shower of rapidly decelerating fragments. Field searches in the area were undertaken; however, to the continuing puzzlement of scientists, no fresh fallen meteorites were found.

Sample paragraph 2

Douglas Stewart was born at Eltham, Taranaki, in New Zealand on 6 May, 1913. He was educated at New Plymouth High School and the Victoria University College, where he studied law. He abandoned law for journalism and came to Australia in 1938. After a short period of newspaper work, he joined the *Bulletin* staff, becoming the journal's chief literary and art critic. Stewart remained editor of the *Bulletin's* Red Page until 1961 when he joined Angus and Robertson as literary advisor, continuing in this role until 1973. Stewart wrote short stories, verse dramas, and poetry, as well as literary essays, autobiographical works and critical biographies. He died in Sydney in 1985.