

3 REASONS TO INDENT A PARAGRAPH

LITERATURE EXCERPTS—
Charlotte's Web, E.B. White

INFORMATIONAL TEXT EXCERPTS—
Mosquito Bite, A. Siy & D. Kinkel

1

WHEN THE SUB-TOPIC CHANGES

When the facts, information, details, or ideas shift to another facet of the topic, it's time for a new paragraph.

Wilbur's new home was in the lower part of the barn, directly underneath the cows. Mr. Zuckerman knew that a manure pile is a good place to keep a young pig. Pigs need warmth, and it was warm and comfortable down there in the barn cellar on the south side.

Fern came almost every day to visit him. She found an old milking stool that had been discarded, and she placed the stool in the sheepfold next to Wilbur's pen...

All mosquitoes need water in which to lay their eggs. Ponds, puddles, ditches, birdbaths, barrels, tree holes, and old tires provide a place for mosquito eggs to hatch and the larvae to grow.

Like butterflies, mosquitoes feed on flower nectar and plant juices. Only the females of some species feed on blood to nourish their eggs. Fewer still feed mainly on human blood. Yet just one bite from an infected mosquito can cause illness. Although its name simply means "little fly" in Spanish, the mosquito is the deadliest animal on Earth.

2

WHEN THE SETTING CHANGES

When there is a shift in time, location, mood, day, date, direction, or space writers alert their readers with an indent.

Every morning after breakfast, Wilbur walked out to the road with Fern and waited with her till the bus came...

One warm afternoon, Fern and Avery put on bathing suits and went down to the brook for a swim...

The Barn was pleasantly warm in winter...

Two days later all the eggs hatched. Culex burst out of her shell—a long, wiggling worm. She had big eyes and a hairy head that hung down into the water. She breathed through a tube in her tail, called a siphon.

On a hazy, muggy morning, Culex stretched, her pupal covering split open, and her new adult body unfolded. Gracefully, she stepped onto the water's surface. Then she flew up to a shaded branch of the oak tree to rest.

Soon after the attack, Culex and a male mosquito drifted to the ground in an insect hug. They mated.

3

WHEN THE SPEAKER CHANGES

Every time a character (dialogue) or individual (quote) speaks, a new paragraph is needed.

"How much money should I ask for him?" Fern wanted to know.

"Well," said her father, "he's a runt..."

"Found you!" shouts the girl.
"Now you're it."

"And it's your turn to hide," says the boy.