

# Focus

Good writers **focus** on the point they want to make. The first sentence of a paragraph generally introduces the topic. All the details and supporting evidence that follow should focus on that topic. Writing without focus can confuse the reader.

**Topic** Thomas Edison loved to read.

**On Focus** Before he was 12, he had read plays by Shakespeare.

**On Focus** He borrowed hundreds of books from the Detroit library.

**Off Focus** Edison was interested in the telegraph.

**Directions** Find the two sentences that do not focus on the main idea of the paragraph. Write the sentences and explain why they do not fit.

Air travel has come a long way since its early days. The very first passengers were in for an adventure. They would sit behind the pilot in an open cockpit. The roar of the engines and the wind whipping past made air travel an exciting experience. Amelia Earhart was one of the first female pilots. Airlines later added more seats and protection from the weather, but for years flying was far from relaxing. Today's air passengers expect high speeds, comfortable seating, and movies on every flight. As a result, fewer people travel by train. Travel by airplane today is about as exciting as catching a bus!

1. Sentence: Amelia Earhart was one of the first female pilots.  
Reason: The paragraph is not about pilots.
2. Sentence: As a result, fewer people travel by train.  
Reason: This paragraph is about air travel, not trains.

**Directions** Complete one of the following sentences to begin a paragraph. Then write three sentences of your own that focus on the topic.

The best way to travel is \_\_\_\_\_.

The thing I'd like to do most is \_\_\_\_\_. Possible answer:

The best way to travel is by horse. I know that sounds weird, but horses are comfortable and fun to ride. They don't need gas, and they don't pollute the air. A horse can also be a good friend.