



"When people ride bikes, they use the front tire and handlebars to steer them in the right direction. The handlebars and front wheel point them where they want to go." Stop to let children share a few experiences they've had steering bikes and then continue: "The first sentence in a paragraph is very similar to the front wheel and handlebars of a bike; it tells one important thing about the paragraph so readers know where the paragraph is going."

Next, read aloud the following paragraph or a similar one that you've written on chart paper ahead of time: "The boy and his dog are always together. They play together after school and even sleep in the same room. The two of them are best friends."

Ask a student to reread the first sentence and discuss the important idea it conveys (the closeness of a boy and his dog). Note that this sentence lets us know where the paragraph is heading.

Then point to the middle of the bike and say, "People who ride bikes use the seat and the pedals in the middle to do most of the work; writers do most of their work in the middle of paragraphs by adding information (details) about the first sentence. Like short and long bike rides, some paragraphs are short with a few details, others are long, with many details." Talk about the information given in the middle of the paragraph.

Finally, point to the back of the bike and explain, "The brake is on the back tire. It helps you stop the bike." Again, compare the bike to a paragraph, saying, "The last sentence of a paragraph lets readers know that the paragraph is coming to an end. It tells one thing you want readers to remember." Talk about the information given in the end of the paragraph.

The chart below can be used to relate each part of the model paragraph to the bike. To reinforce this bike analogy, model how you would write a three-sentence paragraph based on a picture. Record your work on an enlarged copy of the *Building for Paragraphs* graphic organizer. Then, using notes on the organizer, model how to write a descriptive paragraph and how to indent the first sentence. Finally, reread your paragraph and demonstrate how you could add another sentence to the middle of it. The sentence should tell more about the idea in the first sentence. Conclude by reviewing the three basic parts of a paragraph and reminding students that they can make paragraphs longer by adding relevant details to the middle.

### Graphic Organizers

When students can focus three sentences on one narrow topic, such as finding a ten-dollar bill on the sidewalk, riding a bike down a big hill, or playing baseball with a cousin, they are

Beginning (front tire and handlebars)	Middle (seat, seat, and pedals)	End (brake and back tire)
The first sentence tells the one important thing your paragraph is about. It tells where you're going.	The middle is where you do most of the work, adding details about your topic.	The last sentence lets readers know what you want them to remember. It is like a brake. With it, your paragraph comes to a stop.