DEVELOPMENT BY STATISTICS

To develop a paragraph by statistics, think of the topic sentence as a general statement that needs support. Use numerical data to support the controlling idea of the topic sentence. The amount of statistical data used and the length of the paragraph depend on the complexity of the topic.

The effective use of statistics in a well-developed paragraph requires that you as a writer be especially aware of two things. First, the numerical data should be complete and precise. For example, do not say, "About half of the population of X City drinks polluted water." You must by precise by what is meant by "about." Is it 44.9% or 53.1% or 49%

Who Lives in San Antonio?

There are no Americans living in San Antonio, Texas. A 1971 survey by the Federal Bureau of Labor and Statistics revealed that 56.5% of San Antonio's population was Mexican-Americans. Another 10.3% were Afro-Americans, and 8.6% were Polish-Americans. German-Americans accounted for 7.9% of the population, while 4.2% were Chinese-Americans and 2.3% were Japanese-Americans. Various Scandinavian-Americans (Danes, Swedes) amounted to 4.1% of the people, and Slavic-Americans (Russians, Czechs, Bulgarians) made up the remaining 6.1% of the city's population. From these statistics, one may conclude that there are no Americans living in San Antonio.

Austin Bonner

PRACTICE EXERCISES

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