



Writing an Introduction

WHAT IS AN INTRODUCTION?

“Your introduction, usually one paragraph and rarely more than two, transports readers from their world into the world of your essay” (Kirszner and Mandell 51).

WHEN WRITING...

A strong introduction will peak your readers' interest and encourage them to read more of your essay. To do this your introduction should do three things:

- Identify your subject
- create interest
- state your thesis

*WRITING TIP:

Write your introduction last! Just like it would be hard to introduce a person you don't know, it's hard to introduce a piece of writing that doesn't exist yet. Get a clear idea of your writing, and then write the introduction.

STRATEGIES FOR WRITING AN INTRODUCTION

1. Background Information

a. One way to begin your essay is to provide the reader with necessary background information to understand your argument. This strategy is helpful for analysis and argumentative essays.

2. Definition

a. Another way to start is to provide a definition, especially if that definition is relevant to your discussion and argument. This method is particularly useful for definition essays.

3. Anecdote or story

a. Starting with a personal narrative is a great way to show your readers your investment in your topic and engage with them. This strategy can be used in argumentative writing as well as for personal narratives.

4. Question

a. Posing a question at the beginning of your essay shows your reader your topic right away. However, if you are going to start with a question, you want to make sure the rest of your essay works to answer that question. This tactic can be used for argumentative writing as well as history and book reports.

5. Quotation

a. Another way to begin is to start with a relevant quotation from the source material or from pop-culture or the media. If you choose this method, like the question, you want to make sure you explain the quotes connection to your argument clearly. This approach can be used for literary or rhetorical analysis.

6. Surprising Statement

a. A surprising statement can catch your reader's attention and make them want to read more. This can be used in all kinds of genres.

7. Contradiction

a. Similar to a surprising statement, a contradiction can also be used to get reader's attention because it challenges what they believe to be true. This too can be used in many genres.

8. Fact or statistic

a. You can also begin your essay with a relevant fact or statistic. This is another way to show your reader your topic and its importance. This strategy can be use in argumentative or report writing.