

Effective Introductions

Organization, Development, & Style

Problem-Solution Organization

- Introduction
- Background
- Current situation
- Paragraphs illustrating the problem/need for change
- Paragraphs offering a solution
- Conclusion: visualization and call to action

Introduction: Organization & Development

- Use a hook to draw your audience in

Remember who your audience is – what will grab the attention and interest of audience?

- Establish your topic. Save your details for later – this is just your intro!
- End with a clear, direct thesis.

Example:

In order to make testing a meaningful part of the education process, states need to streamline their use of standardized tests in public education.

Introduction: Persuasion

The introduction is your first opportunity to reach and to compel your audience, so it's a great opportunity to employ persuasive writing. Develop your hook and your language to create interest and engagement.

Possible hooks:

- Quotation from your research or another source
Ernest Hemingway claimed, "There is no friend as loyal as a book."
- Imagery/description

At Johnstown Elementary School, students engage regularly in an activity know as SSR. For half an hour after recess, students with their noses in books relax in various poses around the room. Sammy might be in the class rocking chair, while Emma leans her elbows onto her desk. The room is silent except for the occasional giggle, the scraping of a chair, and the whisper of turning pages.

Introduction: Persuasion

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Possible hooks:

- Strong statement/claim

Although written text remains the foremost method for the communication of ideas, Johnstown High School students spend little to no time reading during the average school day.

- An engaging question

What is the most important factor in predicting a student's college and career readiness?

Introduction

Make sure you create a bridge from your hook into the rest of your paragraph.

The hook should not feel tacked on to the paragraph. In the example below, the phrase “loyal friend” serves as a link between the hook and the topic of books and reading.

Ernest Hemingway claimed, “There is no friend as loyal as a book.” This loyal friend serves the average student beyond entertainment and companionship.

Avoid using “you” or “we.”

Make sure your audience and purpose are clear!

Sample Introductions

- Read through the introductions of the 2 student samples I provided.
- What strengths and weaknesses do we see in each?

Goals:

- Reach our particular audience
- Establish our purpose
- Engage the reader's interest in the topic