



Writing an Introduction

An **introduction** should capture the reader's attention and direct the reader's attention toward the topic. It should start generally and end specifically by presenting the thesis statement to end the paragraph.

Ideas for Starting an Introduction

Startling Statement

Make a statement that catches the reader's attention.

Ex: *No one writes for pleasure anymore. That is, no one writes strictly for pleasure.*

Quotation

Cite an interesting quotation relating to the topic.

Ex: *John Fletcher once said, "Ask how to live? Write, write, write anything."*

Historical Allusion

Refer to a historical person, place, or thing.

Ex: *When Jane Austin was a child, her love of writing was sparked by...*

Literary Allusion

Refer to a person, place, or thing from a written work.

Ex: *Just as Laura found an escape in her glass menagerie, many find a haven in writing...*

Description

Paint a picture in the reader's mind.

Ex: *Imagine curling up in a big, reclining chair, covered with a cozy quilt, with a cup of hot chocolate on the table and a journal and pen nearby--this is what writing for pleasure is all about.*

Narrative

Tell a brief story.

Ex: *When Charles began to write for fun, he never imagined he would save someone's life.*

Analogy

Compare the topic with a similar topic.

Ex: *Writing for pleasure is like going for a swim; one may never know how good it feels until one jumps right into it.*

Understatement

Make an ordinary statement that catches attention because of its extreme plainness.

Ex: *Writing is writing, and nothing more.*

Statistics

Quote a statistic relating to the topic.

Ex: *According to a recent survey, 87% of the people polled claimed they enjoyed creative writing but have never considered it a hobby.*

Claim

Asserting a statement as fact, preferably something unexpected.

Ex: An average house cat gains more pleasure from writing than most people do. That is, it gains pleasure from lying in the middle of whatever its owner is trying to write.

The Introductory paragraph should start out very generally, and then become gradually more specific, finally ending with the thesis statement. For advanced papers, the introduction may last longer than a paragraph; if this is the case, simply make sure that the thesis statement is placed at the very end of the introduction.

