

Five Ways to Introduce

Homework essays require a brief single paragraph introduction as to orientate the reader, prepare them for the essay, and explicitly state the thesis statement. Usually the introduction paragraph is brief, contains less than nine sentences, and ends upon the thesis statement. Although that sounds all well and good, sometimes writer’s block kicks in and you end up with a bloated confusing introduction. Despite your best intentions, such an introduction may only make sense after a few martinis. Worse yet, you may never get to a thesis and your introduction serves only to confuse the reader.

How can you defeat writer’s block and produce a concise draft introduction? Simple--you use one of the five strategies as to build a simple and structured introduction. We will assume know the themes and basic ideas you want to incorporate into the essay. If you don’t know, then be sure to go brainstorm before writing an introduction. Or, if you wish, write the introduction after you’re done with the essay!

Strategy 1: The Most Popular Strategy: The Funnel Strategy

The funnel strategy utilizes the following paragraph structure:

- **Begins with a very broad and general opening sentence.**
- A series of statements (often cited) narrows the reader’s attention upon the themes of the essay.
- **Then finally narrows/funnels the reader’s attention upon the thesis statement as to conclude the paragraph.**

Let’s take a look at an example:

My friend and I have no luck while apartment hunting. Although we enjoy apartment hunting, we always seem to find duds. We love the carpets, furnishings, and spacious bathrooms but always end up living next to annoying neighbors. At first they appear as nice and friendly but usually end up blasting music, working upon noisy projects, or scream at football games. Although each kind of neighbor is different, they all serve to annoy me until my hair falls out.

Strategy 2: The Survey Strategy

The survey strategy opens the essay by offering an overview of the information contained in the essay. Immediately following the overview is a provocative opinion geared toward drawing in the reader.

The survey strategy utilizes the following paragraph structure:

- **An introductory sentence introducing the field of interest.**
- Two or three sentences orientating the reader to the essay.
- **Then tie up with a thought-evoking opinion.**

Let’s take a look at an example:

Research in student-centric education is exploding and there are twice as many education researchers as in the 1980s. Researchers of higher education have demonstrated not all students learn the same way and there are classes of learning styles to consider while planning a classroom. Thus, as to provide effective educational praxes, the growing pool of educators must be aware of learning styles as to enhance learning experiences.

Strategy 3: The Question Strategy

Sometimes you just need to hook a reader and drag them into your essay. There’s no reliable format for the strategy other than to open with an intriguing complex question as to draw in the reader. You may use this strategy to begin the funnel method!

Let’s take a look at an example:

Who would want to run into a Jelly Belly factory while dressed in a clown outfit? Believe it or not, many high school aged students would consider...<the intro follows>

Strategy 4: Setting the Scene

A little drama can introducing an essay. This strategy uses words describing the world contained by the agents in the essay. Thus such a strategy gives an introduction with rich description triggering the reader’s curiosity. You may use this strategy to begin the funnel method!

Let’s take a look at an example:

Coffee. The dark brown rich beverage responsible for perking up countless early morning commuters and giving hope to the drowsy student. Cups of it are served at every corners, carried by countless dedicated workers, and consumed in megatons per year...<the intro follows>

Strategy 5: The Rarely Used Definition Strategy

Some essays are grounded in an obscure or complex definition or acronym. When this happens, it’s usually smart to introduce the essay using the definition, its meaning, and why it’s important. Not only does this help the reader with your paper, it’ll also educate them about something technical and meaningful buried within the definition. This strategy is rare in academic essay writing and must be used with precision.

Let’s take a look at an example:

Educators, no matter their level of education, often confuse TOEFL and TOEIC during seminars and curriculum planning. Although both are tests assuming English as a foreign language, they measure different skill sets involving the use of English. TOEFL is an exam probing the abilities of listening, reading, and writing of short passages. TOEIC, also known as the Test of English for International Communication, focuses more upon the non-academic and professional aspects of using English in professional global environments. Thus, although both evaluate proficiency in English, they differ in intent of measurement and instrumentation.