
Parts of the Essay: The Introduction

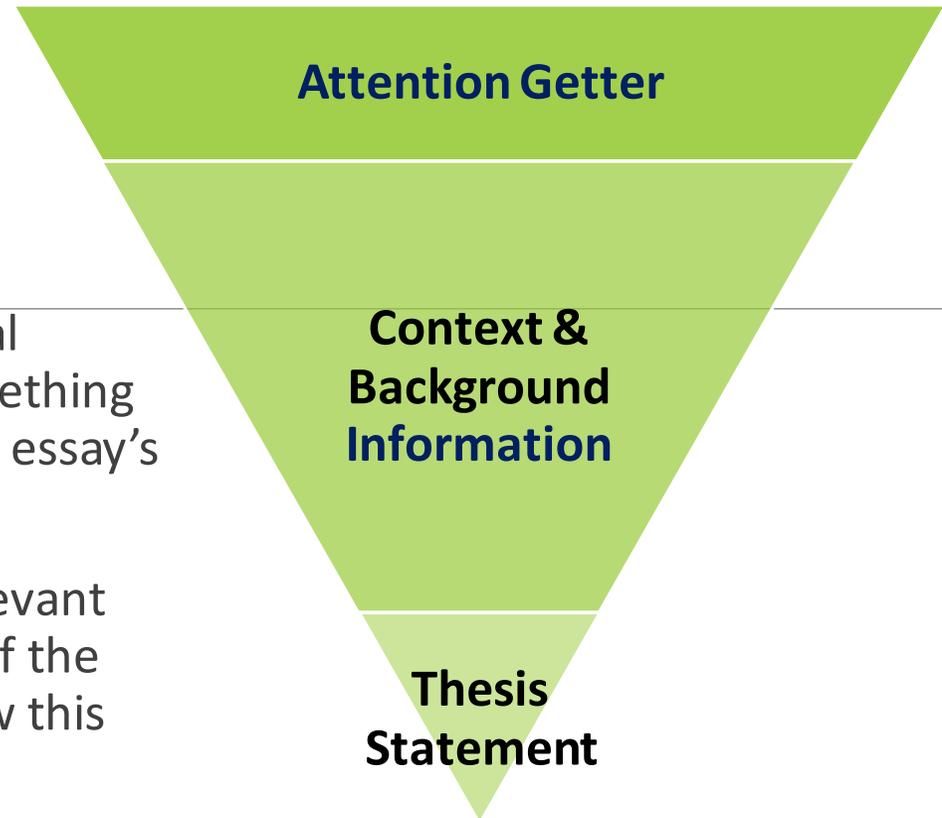
Parts

The first level is the broadest, announcing the general subject under discussion in an attention getter - something that grabs the reader's interest and is relevant to the essay's subject and tone

The second level includes sentences that provide relevant information to help readers understand the history of the issue, the context for the current discussion, and how this subject intersects with their lives

- Context: This provides important background information the reader must have on the issue, which helps explain the need for and/or relevance of the discussion and why it is a debatable one

The last level, at the tip, is the most specific.



Intro as Blueprint

You will also indicate your method of organization, such as comparison/contrast

Whatever you announce in the introduction, you must cover it in the essay



Hooking Your Reader:

EFFECTIVE ATTENTION GETTERS
FOR ESSAY INTRODUCTIONS

Why Attention Getters Matter

- **First Impressions:** The introduction sets the tone for your entire essay.
- **Engagement:** A strong hook makes the reader want to continue.
- **Relevance:** It connects the reader to your topic.

Attention Grabbers That Work

The Intriguing Question:

- "Have you ever wondered why...?"
- "What if...?"

The Startling Statistic:

- "90% of people underestimate the impact of..."
- "In the last decade, the rate of X has doubled."

The Vivid Anecdote:

- A brief story that illustrates the essay's central theme.

The Powerful Quote:

- From a relevant expert, historical figure, or literary work.

The Contrast:

- "We are on the verge of a revolution in..."
- "The conventional wisdom is wrong."

An Intriguing Question



Definition: A thought-provoking question that engages the reader and encourages them to consider the essay's topic from a different perspective. Avoid questions with obvious answers.



Example: "If you could travel back in time and change one decision in your life, would you? And what might the consequences be?"



This question invites the reader to reflect on the concept of choice and consequence, setting the stage for an essay on personal responsibility and the butterfly effect.

A Startling Fact or Statistic



Definition: A surprising or unexpected piece of data or information that grabs the reader's attention and piques their curiosity. It should be relevant to your topic and highlight its significance.



Example: "According to the World Health Organization, over 800,000 people die by suicide each year. This staggering number underscores the urgent need for greater mental health awareness and support."



(This statistic immediately draws attention to the severity of the issue and emphasizes the importance of the essay's topic.)

The Vivid Anecdote



Definition: A short, personal story that is rich in detail and evokes emotion in the reader. It should be relevant to your essay's topic and draw the reader into your world.



Example: "The icy wind howled as I huddled beneath a flimsy tarp, shivering uncontrollably. Just hours earlier, I had been confidently setting out on my first solo backpacking trip, certain of my wilderness skills. Now, lost and alone in the darkness, I wondered if I would ever see the sunrise."



This anecdote sets the stage for an essay on the importance of humility and preparedness in nature.

The Powerful Quote



Definition: A thought-provoking statement from a respected figure or relevant source. The quote should resonate with your essay's theme and offer a unique perspective.



Example: "As Maya Angelou wisely said, 'There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.' This sentiment captures the driving force behind my decision to finally speak out about my experiences with bullying."



This quote sets a powerful tone for an essay on overcoming personal struggles and finding one's voice.

The Contrast Statement



Definition: Highlighting a dramatic shift or transformation to emphasize personal growth or change. It presents a "before" and "after" picture, creating intrigue.



Example: "The timid girl who once hid behind her textbooks, afraid to raise her hand in class, is now the editor-in-chief of the school newspaper, leading a team of aspiring journalists."



This contrast showcases the author's journey of overcoming shyness and embracing leadership.

Attention Grabbers to Avoid

The Overused Cliché:

- "In today's society..."
- "Since the beginning of time..."

The Dictionary Definition:

- "According to Merriam-Webster, X is defined as..."

The Vague Generalization:

- "Everyone knows that..."
- "Many people believe..."

The Irrelevant Question:

- A question that has no real connection to the essay's topic.

The Long, Rambling Introduction:

- Get to the point quickly.

Choosing the Right Hook



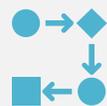
Consider Your Audience: Who are you writing for?



Match Your Tone: Is your essay serious, persuasive, humorous?



Connect to Your Thesis: The hook should lead naturally into your main argument.



Be Original: Avoid clichés and predictable approaches.

Tips for Crafting the Perfect Hook



Brainstorm: Generate several options before choosing one.



Revise: Don't be afraid to rework your hook until it's just right.

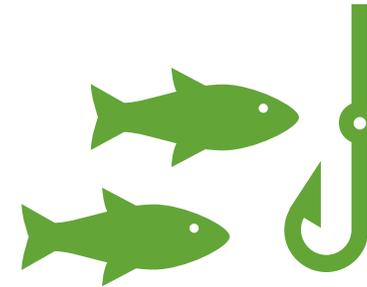


Get Feedback: Ask someone to read your introduction and give their opinion.

Why It's Worth the Effort



A well-crafted attention getter can make the difference between an essay that's read and one that's skimmed.



Take the time to find the perfect hook, and your readers will be hooked from the start!



Building a Strong Foundation:

THE ROLE OF BACKGROUND
INFORMATION IN ESSAY
INTRODUCTIONS

What is Background Information?

- Contextual details relevant to your topic
- Definitions of key terms or concepts
- Brief overview of relevant research or theories
- Historical context or current events (if applicable)





Why is Background Information Important?

- Provides context for your thesis statement
- Orients the reader to your topic
- Establishes your credibility as a writer
- Helps the reader understand the significance of your argument

Qualities of Effective Background Information

- Relevant: Directly connected to your thesis statement
- Concise: Avoid unnecessary details or tangents
- Accurate: Based on credible sources and research
- Engaging: Written in a clear and interesting style





How to Incorporate Background Information

- Start with a broad overview and narrow your focus
- Use transitional phrases to connect ideas
- Consider the knowledge level of your audience
- Avoid overwhelming the reader with too much information

Thesis Statement

The thesis for an academic essay is the last part of an introduction. Other presentations have focused on writing a thesis. Here is a quick reminder:

- The thesis is one sentence that states the point of the essay. It is the most focused and important sentence because everything in the essay must clearly relate to it.
- The thesis has 3 components:
 - Focused Subject: the topic of the essay
 - Attitude/Action: what you want people to understand or do about the topic
 - 3 Primary Support Points: reasons you will give to support your position

Thesis as the End

The thesis statement typically appears as the last sentence in an introduction paragraph for several key reasons:

1. Provides a Logical Conclusion: The introduction paragraph starts by introducing the broader topic and gradually narrows its focus. The thesis statement acts as the logical conclusion of this narrowing process, crystallizing the main argument or point the essay will explore.
2. Sets Expectations: By placing the thesis statement at the end of the introduction, you clearly signal to the reader what to expect in the rest of the essay. It acts as a roadmap, guiding their understanding and anticipation of the content that will follow.

Thesis as the End

3. **Creates a Smooth Transition:** Ending the introduction with the thesis statement creates a seamless transition into the body of the essay. Each subsequent paragraph will then elaborate on, support, or provide evidence for the claim made in the thesis.
4. **Emphasizes Importance:** Placing the thesis statement at the end gives it a position of prominence. It's the last thing the reader sees in the introduction, leaving a lasting impression and reinforcing its significance as the central idea of the entire essay.

Thesis as the End

5. Encourages Engagement: A well-crafted thesis statement can pique the reader's interest and encourage them to continue reading. By ending the introduction with a compelling claim or argument, you leave the reader eager to discover how you will support and develop it throughout the essay.

While there may be exceptions or variations in certain cases, placing the thesis statement at the end of the introduction is a widely accepted practice in academic writing due to its effectiveness in guiding the reader, establishing expectations, and emphasizing the core message of the essay.

Extended Example: The Introduction

Attention Getter: America is a country of consumers. People buy products on a scale unlike anywhere else in the world. America also has the highest personal debt rates in the world as well. So many people are drowning under credit card and loan debts, but it does not stop them from purchasing more things, many that they do not need.

Background Information: Because people love to buy, many unscrupulous companies target uninformed consumers and prey on their need to be thinner, healthier, sexier, and happier. They do so through propaganda. It is not just a tool for politicians and dictators. Propaganda, or the art of persuading someone to do something, is a crucial aspect of sales. Some use it to promote worthy causes, like raising money to help feed children, but others use it out of greed. Though the government and consumer watch groups work hard to alert consumers about scams, too many people do not know where to find this information or that it even exists. With so many products, it is impossible to be educated about all fraud. That does not mean that people are defenseless. If they took the time to learn about propaganda techniques, they could more easily detect suspicious claims by these advertisers. This could be daunting since propaganda comes in many forms but narrowing the list down can be an important start.

Thesis: People should learn to identify the most common types of propaganda used in advertising to protect their wallet, health, and family.