

How To Write An Introduction For An Academic Essay

An introduction can transform your paper into an amazing analysis or a cumbersome chore. By choosing your words carefully, and *crafting* a great introduction, you can entice your reader (probably your teacher) to *want* to read your paper more than everyone else's. Writing your paper is another matter, but a great lead will set the tone and help the reader enjoy your work from start to finish.

The Four Types of Introductions

Shocking Factual Intro – State an unusual statistic or fact that jumps out at readers and draws them in.

“200,000 American teenagers die every year in drunk-driving accidents: roughly the population of Glendale, AZ.”

Anecdotal Intro – Show a short scene that illustrates the point you are trying to make.

“Suzie told her parents not to worry. She was just going to her friend’s house. But when the phone rang in her parents’ bedroom, their silence told all.”

Dialogue Intro – Show a dialogue that pertains to the topic in question.

**“Dude, I said, give me the keys.”
“It’s all right, man, I got it.”
“Dude, this isn’t funny. Give me the keys.”
“Man, you worry, too much. I’m fine.”
“I will not let you do this. Give them to me, NOW.”**

Summary Intro – The inverted pyramid. Start out with broad information about your topic, then generally narrow your ideas down into your thesis. This is a common, safe, and effective way to open a paper.

“Alcohol impairs the human mind’s ability to react to sudden, unexpected events. Reactions that might be second-nature to an ordinary person are impossible to a drunk person. Although the dangers are well-documented, drunk driving happens every weekend in every city in America. And since 1985, 12 million people have lost loved ones to a drunk driving accident. To help stop this problem, people found guilty of driving while impaired should have their license revoked for three years.”

Note: Some people will use questions or quotations as leads to essays. **NEVER DO THIS!** You are supposed to be answering a question, not asking one. Make your writing clean, and you will get your point across.

Furthermore, your words should be your own. Be proud of what you have to say. Take a stand! Let your words speak for themselves. By starting with a quotation, you are effectively saying, “This other person says what I want to say better than I can say it.” Not true! Only YOU can say exactly what you mean to say exactly how you want to say it. Use your own words, and become the person everyone else quotes in their weak papers!