

Sample Introductions

1. Karate, which, literally means "the art of empty hands," is the most widely practiced of all the martial arts. It is primarily a means of self-defense that uses the body as a weapon for striking, kicking, and blocking. Originating in the ancient Orient, the art of karate is more than 1,000 years old. It developed first as a form of monastic training and later became a method of self-defense. During the seventeenth century, karate became highly developed as an art on the Japanese island of Okinawa. Over the years, this ancient art has gained much popularity, and today karate is practiced throughout the world. More than a method of combat, karate emphasizes self-discipline, positive attitude, and high moral purpose.
2. One student looks at his neighbor's exam paper and quickly copies the answers. Another student finds out the questions on a test before her class and takes it and tells her friends. Still another student sneaks a sheet of paper with formulas written on it into the test room. What about you? Would you be tempted to cheat on an exam if you knew you wouldn't get caught? According to a recent national survey, 48 percent of American teenagers would cheat under that condition. What is causing this epidemic of cheating in our schools? Most students cheat on tests because they feel press to get into a good college, because they want to avoid the hours of studying they need in order to get high grades, or simply because they are not concerned with honesty.
3. Homicides cause the deaths of more children in Washington, D.C., than any other single type of injury, including car accidents, house fires, or drowning. Unfortunately, this phenomenon is not exclusive to Washington. The overcrowded neighborhoods of many big American cities, such as New York, Detroit, Miami, Chicago, and Los Angeles, are all plagued with serious violent crime. Types of violent crime range from arson and burglary to assault, rape, and murder. The solution to this growing problem is not to build more and bigger prisons, but rather to eliminate and deal with the causes: easy access to guns, drug use, and overwhelming poverty.
4. "Marty, a two-month-old German shepherd puppy, goes to the hospital twice a week, but not to see a veterinarian. At the Veterans' Administration Hospital, Marty is helping doctors – not the other way around. In effect Marty seems like a role reversal; animals like Marty are saving the heels of human doctors to relieve a type of pain doctors cannot treat. Their therapy is love, both giving it and helping others to return it to them." Pains ranging from dogs to trapped feet are shaking up as therapists in hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, and other institutions.