

## Introductions in Essay Writing

Imagine you are flipping through TV channels and a show catches your eye. How long would you pause before moving on? A minute? Two minutes?

Readers become interested or bored by a piece of writing just about as quickly. That's why writers try to create introductions that not only tell what the writing is about but also capture the reader's attention.

### Types of Introductions

How do you write an introduction that will hook your audience? Try beginning in one of the following ways.

#### Startling or interesting facts

Put unusual information first to get your reader's attention.

#### Example

The University of Rochester's checker-playing robot is a good sport. When it loses to a person, it doesn't knock over the board. Instead it says, in a distinct machine voice, "Congrat-u-la-tions. You win".

#### Vivid, Detailed Imagery Wording

You catch people's imaginations with vivid details and wording that appeal to the five senses.

#### Example

I am up to my knees in squishy mud. It gurgles as I lift up my right leg; then it sucks from somewhere in Middle earth and pulls my rubber boot clean off. My left one is buried so solid that I can't hop to regain my balance; I lurch to the side, put my left foot down with an instant sense of doom.

Writing tip: You don't have to write your introduction first in an essay. Try starting your body first and then write your introduction after rereading your body and your ideas have begun to flow.

Also, action verbs and adjectives give more description!

### Questions

Do you wonder what is happening beyond these open doors? Everyone is curious. Writers and authors often use that curiosity to get readers and

viewers interested in their work. Ask your readers a question and they will usually want to read on.

**Example**

What happens when two cultures collide? Some things will change, but others will persist for a long, long time. Clothing styles exemplify this.

**Incidents or Anecdotes**

Most people like a good story—especially an interesting or humorous one. That's why incidents and anecdotes make good introductory material.

**Example**

It was game 2 of the 1986 World Series, The Boston Red Sox were battling the New York Mets, and the Sox fan Henry Yuen set his VCR to record the contest. Or so he thought. Yuen, a research scientist who holds degrees in mathematics, applied mathematics and law, played his tape later that evening only to find a fuzzy haze where his game was suppose to be.

**Quotations**

Starting with a quotation can also spark enough curiosity or interest to get someone to read on.

**Example**

It was a sparkling Florida morning—March 19, 1989—when Gillian Mueller, 14, who was visiting her grandmother in Ocala, called home to Long Island, N.Y., and announced, "Hi Mom. I'm off for my first swim as a tall person."