

Writing an Introduction

The purpose of an introduction is to capture your reader's attention and establish what you want to say. An effective introduction can start with a quotation, a question, an anecdote, and intriguing fact, or a description that hooks the reader to keep reading.

A Quote

"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." With these words, Neil Armstrong signaled his success as the first man to set foot on the moon...

A Question

What would it be like if all the birds in the world suddenly stopped their singing?

An Anecdote

When my brother was nineteen, he volunteered in a homeless shelter making sure people had a safe place to spend the night. He told me once that he would never forget the time he met...

A Fact

More than a million new web pages appear each day on the Internet...

A Description

Along the murky bottom of the ocean floor, at the deepest part of the ocean, lies the giant squid, a creature so elusive that few people have ever seen it. For hundreds of years, no one knew it really existed—although tales of sea monsters had long hinted of it.

Sample paragraph

When I first came to teach in the Bethel School District in 1974, we had not passed a building bond levy for over 10 years, our schools were run-down, and community support was limited. As a result, the district turned to year around school to deal with the financial and overcrowding issues in our schools. Now, 30 years later, the once small district has grown to a large district with award-winning programs. So what is responsible for Bethel's current success? A strong academic curriculum, great student sports and activity programs, and wonderful, dedicated employees.

Sample Paragraph: Jennie Lin, Grade 10, St John's School, Houston, Texas

"As the country that played a prominent role in the formation of the United Nations, the United States of America has been a leader in the UN Community for the past five decades. The U.S. and the UN have shared and still share similar ideals of maintaining international peace, encouraging worldwide respect for equal rights and human right, and achieving international cooperation in solving global problems. However, many critics have argued that the U.S. no longer needs the UN—that the U.S. should reduce its role in the only viable international organization whose foundation consists of so many American principles. Although these critics may have some valid concerns, the U.S. needs to remain a leader in the UN community for three main reasons: The UN affects Americans positively, UN successes and projects significantly outweigh the costs and failures, and U.S. leadership is important to global society.

Drafting Body Paragraphs

When writing the body of an essay, refer to your outline. Each heading in your outline will become the main idea of one of your paragraphs. To move smoothly from one idea to another, use transitional words or phrases. As you draft, include supporting details to support the ideas that you present.

Transition Words

For Chronological Order:	<i>First, second, next, then, and finally</i>
For Spatial Order:	<i>Next to, beside, above, below, beyond, and around.</i>
For Order of Importance:	<i>More important, less important, most important, and least important</i>
Comparison & Contrast Order:	<i>Likewise, similarly, in contrast, a different kind, and another difference</i>
Cause and Effect Order:	<i>One cause, another effect, as a result, consequently, and therefore</i>

Part by Part Order:

Any words or phrases that include anything that indicates the relationship or connection between the ideas

Drafting a Conclusion

In the conclusion, bring together the main ideas you included in the body of your essay and create a sense of closure to the issue you raised in your thesis. There is no single right way to conclude a piece of writing.

Possibilities include:

- Making a generalization
- Restating the thesis and major supporting ideas in different words
- Summarizing the points made in the rest of the essay
- Drawing a lesson or moral
- Calling on the reader to adopt a view or take an action
- Expanding on your thesis or main idea by connecting it to the reader's own interests
- Linking your thesis to a larger issue or concern