

The Writing Center @ EOU

5 Tips for Writing Introductions

1. Examine your prompt.

Read your assignment and be sure to fully understand what it is asking of you. Consider potential arguments relating to your topic and decide what argument you would like to make.

2. Make a good first impression.

Start your introduction with something that will catch your readers' attention. Consider opening with a meaningful anecdote, a relevant quote, or some form of example. Avoid beginning with something too general or cliché. Avoid simply declaring the purpose of your paper with sentences like, "In this essay I will discuss..." or "The topic of this essay is..."

3. Provide background without being too general.

After getting your readers' attention, provide information regarding your topic. Your introduction should give your readers a sense of what your paper is going to be about. With this in mind, it is also important that you are not too broad. Avoid using blanket statements or providing a general history of the world, so to speak. Give your readers relevant information about your topic, but don't be so broad that it is meaningless.

4. Transition to specifics.

Following some background information, you should transition to specific information relevant to your argument. Begin to include details and examples that are directly linked to your main topic. As your introduction progresses, it should continue to build the stance you are taking on your topic.

5. End your introduction with your thesis or an important thought.

In many cases it is appropriate to end your introduction with your thesis statement. However, that is not always necessary (unless otherwise stated by your professor). If you are not ending your introduction with a thesis, consider ending with a thought provoking statement or question. This last statement should prompt the reader to begin critically thinking about the coming details you will discuss in your paper.

Reference: The Writing Center At UNC-Chapel Hill, Gallaudet Tutorial & Instructional Programs, <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/intros.htm>

Eastern Oregon University Writing Center

Loso Hall 234 * Email: writingcenter@eou.edu * 541-962-3663

Campus Writing Tutors: <http://eou.mywconline.com>

Online Writing Tutors: <https://www.etutoring.org/login.cfm?institutionid=382&returnPage=>