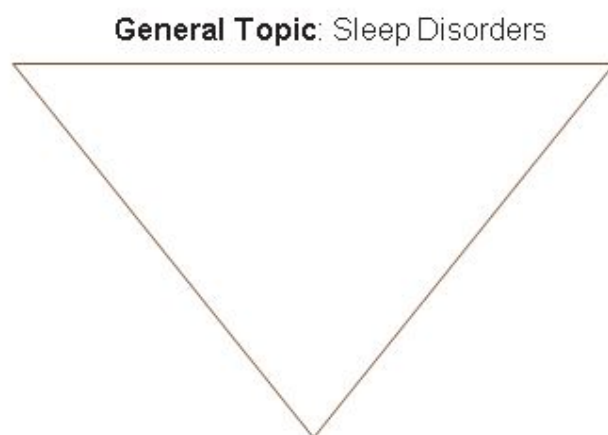


Introduction Paragraphs

Introduction Paragraphs

Your introduction paragraph should grab your reader's attention, introduce the topic of your essay, and present your thesis. (The thesis is the main idea of the essay.) You can visualize your introduction paragraph by thinking about an inverted triangle. The beginning of your introduction paragraph is general. Then you narrow down the topic to a specific idea.



Grab the reader's attention and introduce the topic. The very first sentence of your introduction should get your reader interested in your topic. The first sentence of an introduction is called a "hook." There are many types of hooks: facts, questions, problems, descriptions, etc. There is not one "perfect" hook for each essay. Your hook can help you introduce the general topic of your essay.

Don't start out too generally in your introduction paragraph. Also, don't try to introduce all of your specific main points individually in the introduction. Focus on giving background information that your reader needs to understand the topic generally.

Type of Hook	Example
Fact	Everyone needs an adequate amount of sleep.
Question	Do you get enough sleep?

Problem	Many people have a difficult time sleeping at night.
Description	Sleep is a peaceful and restful experience for most people.

Present your thesis. Present your thesis. The thesis states the main idea, or focus, of the essay. The rest of the essay will give evidence and explanations that show why or how your thesis is true.

An effective thesis—

- addresses the prompt if there is one* (i.e., answers the question).
- is usually at the end of the introduction paragraph.
- controls the content of all of the body paragraphs.
- is a complete sentence.
- does not announce the topic (e.g., "I'm going to talk about sleep.").
- should not simply be a fact (e.g., "Many people sleep.").
- should not be too general (e.g., "Sleep is good.").
- should not be too specific (e.g., "Sleep decreases the chance of developing serious medical conditions, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer, obesity, and anxiety.").
- may state main points (e.g., "Some of the best ways to prevent sleep disorders are establishing good sleep habits, doing regular exercise, and making a comfortable bedroom environment.").
- may imply main points (e.g., "Developing good habits is essential for preventing sleep disorders.").

*In some essays you write, you will not have a specific question to answer. Instead, you may need to choose your own topic. Your essay should still answer a question (e.g., How can people get better sleep?).

Example: Introduction Paragraph

Humans should typically spend a third of their life asleep. Here are a few questions to ask yourself: Do you get enough sleep? Do you fall asleep at school? Do people often tell you that you look tired? If you struggle to get enough sleep, you may have a sleep disorder. A sleep disorder is a problem that makes it difficult for your body to rest when you go to bed. You might have problems falling asleep, staying asleep, or resting peacefully while asleep. Some of the best ways to prevent sleep disorders are establishing good sleep habits, doing regular exercise, and making a comfortable bedroom environment.





This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at https://open.byu.edu/foundations_c_writin/introduction_paragra.

