

## 7. Writing your Introduction

### 1) Which of these things should your introduction do?

- capture the interest of your reader
- introduce the main idea of the essay
- give some background information
- explain how your essay will be organized

### 2) How long should your introduction be?

3%     8%     25%     50%

### 3) Read the introduction below.

From November 20, 2007, the Japanese Justice Ministry started requiring that all foreigners who enter Japan be fingerprinted and have their photo taken. The reason the government gave for this was to prevent terrorism. However, as they essay will show, the policy is flawed and does nothing to prevent terrorism. The Japanese government should stop fingerprinting foreigners who enter Japan.

The first section of this essay will provide some background information on the fingerprinting of foreigners, both in America and Japan. The next section will examine the Japanese governments arguments for fingerprinting foreigners. The section after that will present evidence as to why foreigners should not be fingerprinted. The final section will provide suggestions for the Japanese government and press.

### 4) What is the thesis statement of the essay? Underline it.

### 5) How many sections will the essay have, including the Introduction and Conclusion?

One opinion is that your essay introduction should not be more than 8% of your total essay. That means if your essay is 1500 words, your introduction shouldn't be more than about 120 words

What does your introduction need to do?	How can you do it?	
Capture the reader’s interest (The Hook)	ask a question give some statistics or historical facts give a personal experience	use a quotation explain a difficult word use surprising information
Introduce the main idea or point (the thesis statement)	“this essay/paper will show that” + THESIS STATEMENT	
Give background information	define important words give a brief history	give some current information
Explain the essay’s organization	use sequencers + OUTLINE	

**1. Capturing Interest**

A “hook” is a statement that usually begins an introduction. It includes a couple of sentences that catch the reader’s attention and makes them curious about the essay’s contents. There are many strategies experienced writers use to get the readers’ attention. Six common strategies are:

- 1. asking a question
- 2. giving some statistics or historical facts
- 3. giving a personal experience
- 4. using a quotation
- 5. explaining an important or difficult word
- 6. using surprising information

**Read the hooks below. Which strategy is the writer using? Number the hooks from 1-6:**

- Global warming can be defined as the gradual increase in the overall temperature of the earth's atmosphere.
- Why is our world getting warmer?
- When I was a child, I remember eating McDonald’s burgers out of a styrofoam container.
- Every year since the year 1971, the earth has warmed by an average of .02°C.
- If global warming continues at the rate it is now, in 100 years, San Francisco will be completely underwater.
- “If man continues producing greenhouse gasses at this rate, we are not long for this earth” (Al Gare).

**2. Giving background information**

Sometimes it is a good idea to give some background information in your Introduction. Background information gives the reader a better understanding of the topic that you are writing about. You can give a brief history of your topic, explain some important words, or write some current information about the topic.

**3. Introducing the thesis statement**

Of course your introduction should include your thesis statement. The thesis statement is usually given just before you explain the essay’s organization.

**4. Explaining the essay’s organization**

If your essay is divided into sections, in your introduction you should explain what each section will be about and what order the sections are in. A good writer often uses sequencers to explain the organization of their essay. Here is one group of sequencers that can be used in an introduction.

Sequencer	Intention verb	Action verb
The first section the second section the following section the next section the section after that the final section	will is going to	look at consider discuss describe define explain examine explore investigate introduce review analyse present

Although your introduction will be at the beginning of your essay, some people write their introductions after they have finished the main body of their essays. This is because writers will have a better idea of their THESIS STATEMENT after they have done all of their research.

If you want, you can write a rough draft of your introduction BEFORE the main body, then rewrite the introduction AFTER you have finished the rest of your essay.



**Read the introductions below and answer the questions.**

In Japan, the birthrate has recently dropped from 1.29 children to 1.25 (Kokura, 2006). In recent years, the problem of the declining birthrate has become a serious issue in Japan. If the declining birthrate continues, various problems will be caused. The Japanese government must introduce new policies to stop the declining birthrate.

The first section of this essay will describe Japan’s declining birthrate. The next section will explain what has caused the problem and what problems might be caused in the future. The section after that will look at what is being done in other countries. The final section will give suggestions for the Japanese government.

What kind of hook does this introduction have? \_\_\_\_\_

Underline the thesis statement.

How many sections (including the introduction and conclusion) will the essay have? \_\_\_\_\_

In India there is a hierarchical system in society that is called the caste system. The caste system decides what people’s rank would be in life before they are even born. India should drop the system of the caste system. The first section of this paper will introduce the history of the caste system. The second section will show the good points of the caste system. The next section will show the bad points of the caste system. The following section will describe potential problems of the caste system in the future. The final section will discuss potential solutions to drop the caste system.

What kind of hook does this introduction have? \_\_\_\_\_

Underline the thesis statement.

How many sections (including the introduction and conclusion) will the essay have? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do one seventh of the people in the world die by starvation? There are many problems in the world, for example, lack of food, civil wars, child workers and lack of medical care. Most of these problems are in developing countries, but people in developed countries get little information about them. People should know about the problems in developing countries so we can help them. Japanese news organizations should report more on problems of poor people in developing countries.

The first section of my essay will introduce the definition of a developing country. The second section will describe the present condition of developing countries. The next section will look at arguments against reporting more on the problems of developing countries. The section after that will explain arguments for reporting on these problems. The final section will give suggestions.

What kind of hook does this introduction have? \_\_\_\_\_

Underline the thesis statement.

How many sections (including the introduction and conclusion) will the essay have? \_\_\_\_\_