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Academic Writing

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Chapter Eight

The 12th Lecture

Argumentative Essays

The Introductory Paragraph

there are several ways to write an introductory paragraph in an argumentative essay.

After reading your introduction, people need to **want** to read the rest of the argumentative essay - that's the impact your introduction should have.

So, here are five tips to keep in mind while writing an introduction for an argumentative essay and begin on a strong note.

1. Hook your readers

The first one or two sentences of your essay are known as the essay hook and are meant to generate interest in readers and grab their attention. Writing catchy hook is likely to increase your chances of scoring well.

From telling a joke and stating a shocking fact to sharing an anecdote and asking a rhetorical question - there are various ways to start your argumentative essay with a bang. The ideal hooks for argumentative essays are those that intrigue the reader and reel them in.

2. Introduce the topic

After writing an enticing hook, you need to go on to introduce your topic which includes what you're going to be writing about.

For example, if you're writing an argumentative essay on whether smoking needs to be banned in public places - here's where you need to introduce it first to set the foundation for everything that's coming next.

3. State the importance of your topic

Merely introducing the topic is not enough. You need to tell readers why it's important, the purpose behind choosing and most importantly, why should they bother reading it?

Are you touching upon an underlying issue, problem or phenomenon? What is

the objective of the essay? By the end of this portion, readers need to be convinced about the significance of your topic.

4. Give background information

So you've introduced them to the topic and stated its importance. Now, before you proceed to take a stand and make your arguments, it's important to establish context and give background information.

Establishing context involves the following aspects:

- Historical
- Cultural

Economic

- Political
- Social
- Physical or Geographical
- Philosophical

5. Present your thesis

Coming to the final and most important part of the introduction - the thesis statement.

The argumentative essay's thesis statement should be a crisp and clear explanation of the main argument of your essay.

It cannot be a general statement - it needs to be debatable such that people can agree or disagree with it. At the same time, it needs to be focussed on a specific topic as opposed to being vague or broad.

Your thesis statement will give your argumentative essay structure and direction as the rest of the paper will be devoted to presenting the stand you're taking and justifying it.

A Thesis Statement

Your thesis statement is only one sentence long, but it's the most important part of your argumentative essay. The thesis appears in your introductory paragraph, summarizes what your argumentative essay will be about, and primes the reader for what's to come.

These steps will help you get your point across clearly and concisely:

1. **1. Turn the topic into a question and answer it.** Set up a big question in the title of your essay or within the first few sentences. Then, build up to answering that question in your thesis statement. For example, in your title or introduction, you could pose the question, "What is the best type of sandwich?" And then answer with your thesis statement: "The best type of sandwich is peanut butter and jelly." This

method is effective because intriguing questions draw readers in and encourage them to keep reading to find the answer.

1.2. State an argument—and then refute it. Introduce an idea that contrasts with your belief, and immediately explain why you disagree with it. For example: “While some people believe peanut butter and jelly sandwiches are too simple, they’re versatile sandwiches that you can easily turn into a gourmet meal.” This method is

2. effective because it uses evidence and immediately demonstrates your credibility.

1.3. Briefly outline your main points. Introduce your main point and explain how you’ll back it up. For example: “You can turn a peanut butter and jelly sandwich into a gourmet meal by using artisanal bread, toasting the bread, and adding additional toppings.” This method is effective because it gives readers a clear idea of everything you’ll discuss in your essay. It also serves as a roadmap to help keep you organized and on track

3.