

INTRODUCTION WRITING



GRADE 4-5

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Classroom Procedure:

1. Display the following questions: What is the introduction paragraph? Why are introductions necessary? Ask the students these questions.
2. Allow for response and discussion. Ask the students how they write introductions and what should be included in an introductory paragraph. Lead students to explain that introductions have a specific structure, just like other the body paragraphs in an essay. Ask the students: What should be included in an introductory paragraph? Is there a particular structure that your teachers are looking for? Allow for response and discussion.
3. Distribute the *Writing Introductions* content pages. Read and review the information with the students. Save the final questions for the lesson closing. Use the additional resources to enhance understanding in and out of the classroom.
4. Distribute the Activity page. Read and review the instructions. Have students check their answers with a partner to see if their answers match. Allow time for completion.
5. Once completed, have students share their answers with the class. Ask the following questions: What is an attention-getting device or hook? What can be included in this section of the introduction? What is the background, and what should be included? What is a thesis statement? What is its purpose?
7. Distribute the Practice page. Check and review the students' responses.
8. Distribute the Homework page. The next day, check and review the students' responses.
9. In closing, ask students: What is the purpose of an introductory paragraph? What structure is needed in an introductory paragraph? What should be included?
10. Allow for response and discussion.

Lesson Title: **Introduction Writing**

Subject: Language Arts

Approximate Grade Level: **4 - 5**

Objectives: Students will identify the components of an introduction paragraph. They will pinpoint and craft attention-getting devices, background information for the topic, and thesis statements. Students will write introductions for various topics and purposes.

State Educational Standards*
LB.ELA.LITERACY.W.4.2, LB.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.A, and LB.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.B

Class Sessions (45 minutes): 3 class sessions

Teaching Materials/Worksheets: *Writing Introductions* Content pages (4), Activity page (1), Practice page (2), Homework page (2)

Student Supplies: Copies of the assignments, pencils, pens, or highlighters

Prepare Ahead of Time: Copy handouts.

Options for Lesson: As an alternative or introductory lesson, cut out the different parts of an introductory paragraph from a magazine (attention-getting device, background information, and the thesis statement). Mix the parts and have the students put the sentences back into order identifying each part of the introduction. This will make it easier for the students to see why the order is important when crafting and writing introductions. This process will be more straightforward for students to understand what should go next and why it makes sense.

*Lessons are aligned to meet the education objectives and goals of most states. For more information on your state objectives, contact your local Board of Education or Department of Education in your state.

Introduction Writing

Section 1 Writing Introductions

By now, you are very familiar with writing. When your teacher gives you an assignment, you immediately “take off” and answer the question. Many writing assignments or writing prompts just have you immediately answer the question, but what about longer prompts or questions?. What do you do then?

For full writing assignments or essays, you need to have an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Today, you will focus on writing introductions. **Introductory paragraphs** help you ease into your topic and get your readers ready for what you discuss in your essay or more extended writing prompt.

What is the proper structure for introductions?

Proper paragraph structure for introductions includes an **attention-getting device** or hook, **background information**, and a **thesis statement**.

A. Attention-Getting Device or Hook

- Attention-getting devices or hooks are just a few sentences long.
- The purpose of an attention-getting device or hook is to grab the audience’s attention and get them ready to read your writing.
- An attention-getting device or hook can be a question you ask your audience, a quote from a book or the Internet, or even an anecdote or made-up story.

B. Background Information

- The background section of an introduction contains sentences about the topic.
- The background section gives the readers a general overview of the topic so the audience can grasp an understanding of what they will be writing about.

C. Thesis Statement

- The thesis statement is the most crucial sentence in a writer’s essay.
- A thesis statement is the main topic of the entire essay. It is what the whole paper is about.

Introduction Writing

Section 2 Title: **Writing Introductions: Attention-getting Device**

The first element needed in an introduction is the **attention-getting device** or **hook**. Attention-getting devices or hooks are used in the opening of essays to grab the audience's attention. If you don't get the audience's attention, then the audience will not be excited to read your paper. They may even be bored!

The attention-getting device, or often called the hook, can be in different forms. You can ask the audience a question, use a quote that includes the author's name, or even tell a little a story.

Below is an example introductory paragraph about sea turtles. The attention-getting device or hook is highlighted in red.

Sea Turtles

What reptile spends almost their entire life in the ocean? The answer is a sea turtle. The only time that female sea turtles come on land is once or twice every five years. The reason they come on land is to lay their eggs. Sea turtles are very majestic creatures that many people do not understand because they are not around them. It is important to know and understand sea turtles to save them, as there are many threats against them. Sea turtles are fascinating animals due to their characteristics, and it is important to understand them so that we can protect them from harm.

What do you notice about the attention-getting device or hook? What form did the author use? Did it grab your attention? What else could the writer have used to grab your attention about sea turtles? **Write in the space a better attention-getting device or hook for this particular paragraph.** _____

The next element needed in an introductory paragraph is **background information**. The background in the introduction gives readers a bit more information before you get to your points later on in the body paragraphs.

Introduction Writing

Section 3 Title: **Writing Introductions: Background Information**

The **background information** does not have to be very specific or even long. You want to make sure that you do not bring up what you plan to mention later in your body paragraphs. If you do that, then your writing will become repetitive. The background in the introduction should contain general information about your topic. This will help the audience understand what you will be writing about so they can follow along.

Below is an example introductory paragraph about sea turtles. The background information is highlighted in red.

Sea Turtles

What reptile spends almost their entire life in the ocean? The answer is a sea turtle. **The only time that female sea turtles come on land is once or twice every five years. The reason they come on land is to lay their eggs. Sea turtles are very majestic creatures that many people do not understand because they are not around them. It is important to know and understand sea turtles to save them, as there are many threats against them.** Sea turtles are fascinating animals due to their characteristics, and it is important to understand them so that we can protect them from harm.

What do you notice about the background information? Is the author giving you too much information or too little information about the topic?

The last element in an introductory paragraph is the **thesis statement**. A thesis statement appears in the last sentence of the introduction, and it is always just one sentence long. The thesis statement describes to the audience what the entire essay will be about. The thesis statement is similar to a topic sentence. A topic sentence in a body paragraph explains what a body paragraph will be about. Similarly, a thesis statement tells what the entire essay will be covering. It is essential to include your main points in the thesis statement.

On the next page is an example introductory paragraph about sea turtles. The thesis statement is highlighted in red.

Introduction Writing

Section 4 Title: **Writing Introductions: Thesis Statement**

Sea Turtles

What reptile spends almost their entire life in the ocean? The answer is a sea turtle. The only time that female sea turtles come on land is once or twice every five years. The reason they come on land is to lay their eggs. Sea turtles are very majestic creatures that many people do not understand because they are not around them. It is important to know and understand sea turtles to save them, as there are many threats against them. **Sea turtles are fascinating animals due to their characteristics, and it is important to understand them so that we can protect them from harm.**

What do you notice about the thesis statement? From viewing the thesis statement, you should be able to tell what the author's points will be in the body paragraphs. **What is the author's point in the thesis statement?**

In summary, the introductory paragraph has three parts.

- Attention-getting device or hook
- Background information
- Thesis statement



Instructions: Below, are sentences in random order. Use scissors to cut the sentences out into strips and with a partner, glue them in the correct order to a sheet of paper. Write the letter A on the line by the sentences that are the attention-getting device or hook. Write the letter B on the line by the sentences that belong in the background section of the introduction. Write a T on the line for the thesis statement. Finally, write an X next to the sentences that do not fit into this introductory paragraph.

All About Killer Whales

- | They are looked at by visitors every day.
- | My second point is that this ruins their lifespans.
- | They also can't swim normally because they have less space.
- | Many whales are pulled out of their homes and placed into glass tanks.
- | The most known is called Sea World.
- | Killer whales should live in the wild and not in captivity because it shortens their lifespans and places them in cruel environments.
- | They do not have their privacy.
- | Where should killer whales roam?
- | This is their livelihood.
- | Killer whales are taken out of their pristine environments and are moved to aquatic amusement parks.
- | They are taken away from their families and the world they are familiar with.
- | When killer whales are locked away, they cannot hunt like they usually would in the wild.
- | Living in a glass cage is not the kind of life they are supposed to live.
- | Should they be in the open ocean, or should they be locked up in a glass cage?



Instructions: Introductions should give the readers insight into your topic and get them excited to read your writing. However, the introduction should never give away too much. Below are two different introductions. Do they have enough information for the reader to understand what the entire essay will be about?

Recycling is very important for the environment. People can recycle in their homes, at the food court in the mall, and even at school. However, not many people do. People are still throwing away paper and plastic. Citizens must be taught what to recycle, and families should receive a fine if they do not recycle.

- **Look at all three sections of the introduction. Evaluate each section for strength. Is something missing? Could a section be stronger? Explain.**

- **Looking at the thesis statement, what two points will be discussed in the body paragraphs of this essay?** _____

Did you know that the word groundhog is another name for a woodchuck? These rodents can be found all over the United States and Canada. They burrow when it is very cold or very hot to get out of the harsh elements. When they burrow in their tunnels and holes, they keep their areas clean and tidy. Groundhogs are interesting creatures with unique characteristics and have a history that is linked with the weather.

- **Look at all three sections of the introduction. Evaluate each section for strength. Is something missing? Could a section be stronger? Explain.**

- **Looking at the thesis statement, what two points will be discussed in the body paragraphs of this essay?** _____



Homework

Name _____ Date _____



Instructions: Write an introductory paragraph to an essay about the history of a sport. You can choose any sport. Use the questions to help you write the paragraph.

What is your topic for the introduction of your sports essay? _____

What form of the attention-getting device or hook will you be using? Why did you choose this particular form over another? _____

Write your attention-getting device or hook. _____

Jot down some information that you think should be included in the background section of your introduction. _____

If you were going to write this entire essay, what would your two main points be?

Write your thesis statement below. Make sure you include your two main points.

<p>Introduction to the History of _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
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Instructions: Introductions should give the readers insight into your topic and get them excited to read your writing. However, the introduction should never give away too much. Below are two different introductions. Do they have enough information for the reader to understand what the entire essay will be about?

Recycling is very important for the environment. People can recycle in their homes, at the food court in the mall, and even at school. However, not many people do. People are still throwing away paper and plastic. Citizens must be taught what to recycle, and families should receive a fine if they do not recycle.

- **Look at all three sections of the introduction. Evaluate each section for strength. Is something missing? Could a section be stronger? Explain.**

Answers will vary. The background is lacking and should include more information about the need to recycle.

- **Looking at the thesis statement, what two points will be discussed in the body paragraphs of this essay? The education of recycling and how people should be penalized for not recycling.**

Did you know that the word groundhog is another name for a woodchuck? These rodents can be found all over the United States and Canada. They burrow when it is very cold or very hot to get out of the harsh elements. When they burrow in their tunnels and holes, they keep their areas clean and tidy. Groundhogs are interesting creatures with unique characteristics and have a history that is linked with the weather.

- **Look at all three sections of the introduction. Evaluate each section for strength. Is something missing? Could a section be stronger? Explain.**

Answers will vary. The background is lacking slightly and should include more information about the history aspect, which is the second point.

- **Looking at the thesis statement, what two points will be discussed in the body paragraphs of this essay? The characteristics of groundhogs and how they are linked to weather and history.**



Homework

Name _____ Date _____



Instructions: Write an introductory paragraph to an essay about the history of a sport. You can choose any sport. Use the questions to help you write the paragraph. **Answers will vary. Check students for understanding of the 3 elements.**

What is your topic for the introduction of your sports essay? _____

What form of the attention-getting device or hook will you be using? Why did you choose this particular form over another? _____

Write your attention-getting device or hook. _____

Jot down some information that you think should be included in the background section of your introduction. _____

If you were going to write this entire essay, what would your two main points be?

Write your thesis statement below. Make sure you include your two main points.

Introduction to the History of _____

