

PARTS OF AN INFORMATIVE ESSAY

INTRODUCTION

The introduction is the opening paragraph or section of a nonfiction text. In an informative/explanatory text, the introduction should provide readers with essential pieces of information. It should identify the topic, state the thesis, and preview the ideas that will follow in the body of the text. The introduction is also the place where the writer wants to make a good first impression. Most writers include a “hook” that is intended to engage readers’ interest and keep them reading.

HOOK

A “hook,” is a way to grab the reader’s attention. This awakens the reader’s natural curiosity and encourages him or her to read on. Hooks can ask open-ended questions, make connections to the reader or to life, or introduce a surprising fact.

THESIS STATEMENT

The thesis statement is the most important sentence in an argumentative essay, including a literary analysis, because it introduces what the writer is going to explore or attempt to prove in the essay or analysis. The thesis statement expresses the writer’s central or main idea about that topic, which is the position the writer will develop in the body of the essay. The thesis statement usually appears in the essay’s introductory paragraph and is often the introduction’s last sentence. The rest of the paragraphs in the essay all support the thesis statement with specific details, facts, evidence, quotations, and examples. The thesis statement should reappear in some form in the essay’s concluding paragraph.

A thesis statement:

- makes a clear statement about the writer’s central idea
- lets the reader know what to expect in the body of the essay
- responds fully and completely to an essay prompt
- is presented in the introduction paragraph

BODY PARAGRAPHS

Body paragraphs are the section of the essay between the introduction and conclusion paragraphs. This is where you support your thesis statement by developing your main points with evidence from the text and your own analysis. Typically, each body paragraph will focus on one main point or idea to avoid confusing the reader. The main point of each body paragraph must support the thesis statement.

TRANSITIONS

Transitions are connecting words and phrases that clarify the relationships among ideas in a text. Authors of informative/explanatory texts use transitions to help readers recognize the overall

organizational structure of the text. Transitions also help readers make connections among ideas within and across sentences and paragraphs. Also, by adding transition words or phrases to the beginning or end of a paragraph, authors guide readers smoothly through the text.

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

In informative/explanatory text, the conclusion brings the discussion to a close. It follows directly from the introduction and body of the text by referring back to the ideas presented there. A conclusion should restate the thesis statement and summarize the central idea (or ideas) covered in the body of the text. Depending on the type of text, a conclusion might also include a recommendation or solution, a call to action, or a statement of insight. Many conclusions try to connect with readers by encouraging them to apply what they have learned from the text to their own lives.

- An effective informative conclusion reinforces the thesis statement.
- An effective informative conclusion briefly mentions or reviews the strongest supporting facts or details. This reminds readers of the most relevant information and evidence in the work.
- The conclusion leaves the reader with a final thought. In informative writing, this final thought may:
 - Answer a question posed by the introduction
 - Present a last, compelling example
 - Ask a question on which the reader can reflect
 - Ask the reader to take action on an issue
 - Convey a memorable or inspiring message
 - Spark curiosity and encourage readers to learn more