

Writing Literary Research Papers

Write the Lead Sentence

Name: _____ Date: _____

Try out some of these strategies for introducing your research paper. Read the examples for ideas.

1. Provide historical context for your topic.

The works of John Ronald Reuel Tolkien have enchanted tens of millions of readers for more than 80 years.

2. Make a surprising statement.

Reality is overrated.

3. Provide a powerful quotation from the author.

"The story-maker proves a successful 'sub-creator.' He makes a Secondary World which your mind can enter. Inside it, what he relates is 'true': it accords with the laws of that world. You therefore believe it, while you are, as it were, inside."

—"On Fairy Stories," J. R. R. Tolkien

4. Ask an engaging question.

What if the happy ending wasn't just a feature of faerie tales but rather a built-in part of our universe?