

Writing Effective Introductions

Teaching Suggestions

- **Hook Sentence Reference Sheet**

- Discuss the word "hook" literally and as a metaphor .
- Read a variety of writing with an effective hook.
- Before showing students the reference handout, introduce the various types of hooks (PowerPoint available)
- Before showing students the reference handout,
 - Read a sample and ask students to match to type of hook.
 - Ask students to support their choice, discuss (OR)
 - Print copies of samples, hand one each to teams to determine type of hook.
- Provide handouts for students to use as reference.

- **Thesis Sentence Reference**

- Discuss the word "focus" literally and as a metaphor.
- Compare the general "topic" to the specific thesis examples.
- Read samples of writing with thesis removed and attempt to determine thesis.

- **Writing Introductions Practice: Hook and Thesis**

- Model process to class.
- Assign topics to teams to create hook and thesis; share and discuss.
- Assign individual practice sheet with general topic choices given by teacher.
- Assign specific types of hooks or permit students to choose hook types.

Note

- An effective introduction usually includes an additional sentence after the hook and thesis that leads the reader into the body of the paper.
- If students use the question type of hook, advanced students should be encouraged to avoid questions that can be answered by a simple "yes" or "no".

Common Core State Standards

Writing Text Types and Purposes: Career and College Ready Standard #2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

The Hook

Reference Guide



Preparing an introduction for either a paper is as important as the rest of the content. Use a "hook" to pull your reader into your topic. As part of your first paragraph, it launches your topic and leads to your thesis. The following ideas will help you avoid too-obvious clichés such as "I am going to tell you about..." or "My topic is ..."

Type of Introduction Hook	Topic	Example
Use a question	<i>Wilderness Survival</i>	How would you survive if you found yourself alone in the wilderness?
Make an announcement	<i>Realistic Fiction</i>	The characters in my favorite novels have no special powers or skills. They are people who have weaknesses and struggles like anyone else.
Make a challenging statement	<i>School Cancellation</i>	It is terrible when school is called off due to snow.
Use facts or statistics	<i>Pet Responsibilities</i>	Thirty-seven percent of American households include one or more dogs.
Use a quotation from someone	<i>A Memorable Theme Park Ride</i>	"You're going to regret this!" That's what my best friend Lisa said as I buckled into the roller coaster.
Pose a riddle or puzzle that a reader can grapple with	<i>Gardening</i>	What is sold in small envelopes, loves to be in the dirt, and lives outdoors?
Use a personal experience	<i>Siblings</i>	When my parents brought my brother home from the hospital, I wasn't too sure that I liked the idea of another person living with us.
Explain an emotion or how you felt physically	<i>Music Recital</i>	My hands were sweaty; my heart was pounding. My legs felt like rubber.

Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

Writing Effective Introductions

Practice

HOOK and THESIS



Directions: In the first column, list a general topic idea. In the second column, write a thesis sentence for that topic. Write a hook sentence in the third column that connects with that thesis. (When you write your introduction, your hook will come before your thesis.)

General Topic →	Thesis Sentence(s) →	Hook Sentence(s)
1 	1 	1
2 	2 	2
3 	3 	3

The Thesis

Reference Guide



The thesis is the sentence in your introduction paragraph that will focus your topic.

What is a Thesis?

The **thesis** of a paper

- is usually a single **sentence** in your **first paragraph**.
- it tells the reader what you will **claim** in the body of your paper.
- it tells your reader your **position** on the topic which will be **argued** in the body.
- it will **focus** your topic with an **assertion** or **point of view**.
- it tells the reader how you will interpret the **significance** of your topic.
- it points the reader toward the **direction** of how you will develop your topic.

General Topic	Focused Thesis Sentence
<i>National Parks</i>	Our national park system is in crisis and needs a dramatic increase in financial support in order to avoid irreversible damage to its resources.
<i>Nutrition</i>	A lack of factual knowledge about food and nutrition is causing many people to put their health at risk.
<i>Careers</i>	Choosing a career that is a good match will lead to a life of satisfaction and good health.
<i>Volunteering</i>	Students should be required to participate in volunteer community service as part of their middle school and high school coursework.