



## Introductions and Conclusions

### Introductions

An effective introduction secures the reader's attention, introduces the topic, and identifies the argument of the paper. Introduction length varies by genre and by length of the final essay. In most instances, your thesis or claim will come later in the introductory paragraph or passage.

If you have difficulty starting your introduction, remember that you can compose the introduction after you write and revise the body paragraphs. Several of the many approaches to writing an introduction follow. Examples can be found in the Appendix.

### Patterns for Introductions

1. Familiarize your audience with the topic under the debate. Provide the reader with background and context surrounding the controversy before you present your own argument.
2. To establish common ground, connect your topic with issues or experiences that concern your target audience. For example, if your essay argues for a ban on cell phone use while driving, you could appeal to the audience's related concerns about driving safety.
3. Define a key term that you will use throughout your paper. Take care to do more than provide a dictionary definition, which any reader can find on the open Web in seconds. Instead, provide an extended definition specific to the context of your topic and discussion.
4. Begin with a relevant quotation. Like the last method, beginning with a quotation requires care. Your quotation should have a direct connection to the discussion or topic, and your introduction should make that connection clear. (Avoid Googling general lists of quotations vaguely related to your topic: not a good idea.)
5. Narrate an anecdote for your audience. If you have personal experience with the topic at hand, you may want to tell the brief story and show how it influences your argument. Personal anecdote is only appropriate for some writing genres.
6. Begin by asking a question or identifying a problem. This technique is useful if your thesis statement (and paper) answers the question or proposes a solution to the problem.
7. State your opinion or argument at the beginning of the introduction. This method works well if what you are arguing is controversial or unique, and you need to clarify your position immediately.

## Conclusions

An effective conclusion leaves your audience with something to think about and reminds them why the issue matters. Often the conclusion sums up the argument and main points. Consideration of audience and genre should guide your approach to making an effective final impression.

### Patterns for Conclusions

1. Restate your thesis statement and summarize your main ideas. This method is employed in longer papers to remind your audience of connections between major lines of argument. In shorter papers the approach can seem redundant.
2. Present the implications of your paper. Identify and discuss any areas you consider important for future investigation or research.
3. Propose a course of action for your audience. This pattern is effective when you argue for change because you provide the audience a practical way to enact the change.
4. Narrate an anecdote for your conclusion. You can finish a story you began earlier in the essay or relate how your experiences illustrate your main point.
5. Refer back to your introduction by adding to or changing the original. If you asked a question in the introduction, the conclusion could restate the question and provide your new answer. If you framed a debate, you could argue finally for a firm position or side.
6. For evaluative essays, use your conclusion to judge whether your sources are essentially negative or positive. This type of conclusion works especially well for essays that rely on analysis of text or information.

### Examples

Examples of effective introductions and conclusions follow.

**Important:** University of Arkansas students can access the hyperlinks that follow from any PC on the campus network. Off-campus students can access the links by first logging in to the [University Libraries](#).

### Introduction Examples

1. [This introduction](#) identifies the topic, provides brief background, and establishes the ongoing controversy.
2. In the article titled "[Toxic Tears: The Darker Side of the Green Revolution,](#)" the author develops an extended definition of *Green Revolution* to make clear his use of the term.
3. An epigraph is a quotation set off from the main text [This article](#) uses an epigraph before the introduction. Note how the writer immediately connects the Roosevelt quotation to the debate.
4. [This article](#) begins with an anecdote.

5. This [student written scientific](#) article introduces a widespread problem in the first paragraph, defines several key terms in the second, and presents her research as a solution to aspect of the problem.
6. This [two-paragraph introduction](#) to an undergraduate study opens with a question in the first paragraph and presents in the second paragraph the “aim of the study” as the answer to the question.
7. Finally, [here](#) is an example of an introduction that presents the claim first and then provides background.

### Conclusion Examples

1. The conclusion of [this paper](#) summarizes the researcher’s major results and describes how the study could be improved.
2. Scroll down to the section titled “Conclusions” in [this article](#) to see a good example of the author discussing the implications of her findings for future research.
3. The final paragraph of [this article](#) calls the audience to action.
4. Read both the introduction and conclusion for [this article](#). Although the conclusion is a brief paragraph, it refers to an influence the author identified in the introduction.

## Works Consulted

Bullock, Richard and Francine Weinberg. *The Norton Field Guide to Writing with Handbook*. 2nd ed. New York: Norton & Company, 2009. Print.

Lunsford, Andrea A. *The St. Martin's Handbook*. 8th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2015. Print.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers*. 8th ed. Eds. Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M.

Williams, and the University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2013. Print.