



- **An appropriate quotation**  
Sometimes a quote from a historical figure or an authority in the field can get the reader's attention.

**Peer Example:**

"How to End a Relationship," Alicia Martinez (page 136)

- **A problem the reader should know about concerning the topic**  
Sometimes the reader needs to be alerted to a problem or to the scope of the problem in order to understand your thesis

**Professional Example:**

"A Brother's Murder," Brent Staples (page 482)

- **A question that limits your topic**  
The answer to the question is your thesis.
- **A statement that popular ideas about your topic are wrong**  
State popular ideas about your topic and show how you intend to disprove them.

**Peer Example:**

"Put Away the Paddle," Tony Anderson (page 182)

- **A reference to something historical, something in the news, a current event, or a literary work**  
Establish common ground with the reader by referring to something well known that is related to the topic.

**Professional Example:**

"It's a Flat World, After All," Thomas L. Friedman (page 423)

- **A strong opinion**  
Sometimes the writer gets the reader's attention by shocking him or her through a strong statement of opinion.

## Appeal to Audience

Effective background information addresses the audience of the essay. Because background information is directed at the reader, it is important to consider your audience and what will get readers interested in your essay. For example, what would get my mother interested in an essay about dating would be different from the kind of information that would get teenagers interested. Even among teenagers, boys would be interested in different background information than girls.

In this example by a professional writer, Grace Bennet appeals to her audience, which is clearly parents of young children, by telling a story that any parent can identify with. This technique gets readers involved and makes them want to find out why telling white lies to children is not a good idea. (The complete essay is on page 409.)

### From "Why White Lies Hurt"

By Grace Bennet

- 1 "Where's my doll? We lost Baby!" cried five-year-old Ariel Rosen of Millwood, New York. Ariel, her mom Shari, my daughter Anna, and I were standing