**1. The Introductory Paragraph**

The first paragraph in an essay is called the introductory paragraph. It is the most important paragraph because most of the time the piece of writing is judged from the introduction. For such reason this paragraph should have the following characteristics:

1. It should introduce the topic by informing the reader of the topic being discussed.

2. It indicates how the topic is going to be developed, whether the essay is going to discuss causes, effects, reasons or examples.

3. it contains **the thesis statement** which is a general rule.

4. it should be inviting; it should be interesting enough to make the reader want to continue reading the rest of the essay.

**How can you grab the reader’s attention?**

The introduction should be designed in a way that whets the reader’s curiosity and give him an idea about the essay’s focus.

1. Begin with an attention grabber of hook; this could be

***● startling piece of information:*** the information should be true and verifiable, and it does not need to be totally new to your reader. Such a statement should sound surprising and quite unusual to catch the reader’s attention; for instance, a proverb or a witty quote. It has to be followed by statements of elaboration

***● Anecdote:*** a brief story that illustrates a point; it should be pertinent to the topic.

***● Dialogue:*** a short exchange between two or more speakers from which the reader can deduce what the essay is going to be about.

***● Provocative Question:*** an opening question formulated in a creative way to inform the reader about the topic.

2. The attention grabber has to be followed by some building statements to elaborate more, create come context and provide the reader with background information.

3. Finish the Paragraph with a clear thesis statement.

**2. Types of introductions:**

There are several approaches to opening up an essay: the funnel methods, the turanout, the dramatic entrance and the relevant quote.

**2.1. The Funnel Method:**

The funnel is most common approach used in planning an introduction. The ideas progress from general to specific just as the funnel is wide at the top and narrow at the bottom.

**2.2. The Turnabout:**

This type of introduction opens with few sentences summarizing a point of view that is actually the opposite of the writer’s own thesis. By the end of the introduction, the writer makes a complete *turnabout* and presents his or her thesis, which is exactly the opposite he started about with.

**2.3. The Dramatic Entrance:**

The writer may start up his essay with a brief narration, an anecdote, or a dramatic example.

**2.4. The Relevant Quote:**

The writer may start with a quoted saying made by an authority on the topic or by someone who says something relevant to what is discussed in the essay.

**2. The Thesis Statement:**

The thesis statement usually comes at the end of the introduction. It is the most important statement in the whole essay since it tells the reader **what exactly the reader is about to discuss and for what purpose.** It functions as a platform or a guide-map.

► It presents the essays general topic.

► It indicates the writer’s standpoint or opinion

► It indicates the writer’s purpose (whether to describe, narrate, convince or explain).

► It specifies the subtopics (aspects) to be discussed in detail.

(By the way, it has the same function as the topic sentence in a paragraph).

**e.g.1. Road accidents are reaching worrying rates in Algeria because of the drivers’ recklessness, carelessness and high speed.**

**e.g.2. Algeria is home to some beautiful sights such as Tassili sunset, Constantine hanged Bridge, and Chrea skiing resort.**