



Research, Write, Present | Expository Essay

Introductory Paragraph



Key Concept

Are you ready to write your expository essay? You located credible sources and gathered accurate and reliable information. You graphically organized the information and created an outline of your essay. You are now fully prepared to write an interesting and informative essay.

Why are you writing an expository essay? Recall that the purpose of your expository essay is to explain your topic to an audience. Be sure to remember your audience whenever you write. You also need to remember the type of expository writing you are using.

The first paragraph of an essay sets the tone for what is to come. If your first paragraph introduces the topic in a clear and interesting way, then your audience will believe that the rest of the essay will be clear and interesting. If the audience believes that the rest of the essay will be clear and interesting, then they will be encouraged to keep reading the essay.

Look Ahead

Task: Draft an introductory paragraph for your expository essay.

Goal: Show that you can write an introductory paragraph that engages readers in your topic.

You may want to review an example of an *introductory paragraph* before you begin.

See the example:
[Introductory Paragraph](#)



Vocabulary

Words to Remember

This page gives basic definitions for some important terms that can help you learn about writing an introductory paragraph. You can get a more complete definition of each term from [Fact Monster](#)*.

New Words

Draft: An unfinished version of a creative work.

Introduction: The beginning of a work that leads into the main body of the work.

Paragraph: A group of sentences focusing on one idea or concept, which begins on a new line and ends with a return to a new line.

Transition: Movement from one idea or concept to another in a creative work.

Review Words

Cause: A person, group, event, idea, action, or object that produces a specific result or outcome.

Classify: Arrange people, groups, places, events, ideas, actions, or objects so that each one is assigned to a category.

Compare: Study two (or more) people, groups, places, events, ideas, actions, or objects to identify shared characteristics.

Conclusion: A judgment, decision, or solution reached for specific reasons.

Contrast: Type or graphics that work together to create a desired effect; also, study two (or more) people, groups, places, events, ideas, actions, or objects to identify distinctive characteristics.

Divide: Separate people, groups, places, events, ideas, or things so that each one is placed into a category.

Effect: A specific result or outcome produced by something said or done by a person, group, event, idea, or thing.

Essay: A short written work that makes an important point about a particular topic.

Expository: A type of writing that explains a topic or informs an audience.



Exploration

Learning from the Web

The purpose of expository writing is to explain a topic to an audience. The first paragraph of your essay should interest your audience in the topic and make them want to read more. Explore some Web sites about writing an introductory paragraph and learn to engage readers in your essay.

While you explore the following Web sites, think about the guiding questions. You may want to take notes to help you answer the questions. If you think of other questions about writing an effective first paragraph, keep those in mind too.

Guiding Questions

- How will your outline help you draft an expository essay?
- What are the important parts of an effective introductory paragraph?
- What are the common characteristics of effective introductory paragraphs?

Web Sites

Writing Paragraphs

- [Paragraph Development](#)* from [Orange Unified School District](#)*
- [Organizing the Paragraph](#)* from [Essay Info](#)*
- [Organizing the Essay](#)* from [Essay Info](#)*

Introductory Paragraphs

- [Introduction](#)* from [Essay Info](#)*
- [Introduction](#)* from [Essay Start](#)*
- [Writing Introductions](#)* from [Orange Unified School District](#)*



Information

What to Know

This page summarizes some of the information from the Web sites you explored. This information helps you learn what you need to know for this activity about writing an introductory paragraph. You may want to take notes to help you remember the most important points. You can return to the Web sites for more exploration if you want to learn more.

Writing an Effective Introductory Paragraph

Effective paragraphs are the building blocks of a well-crafted essay. A paragraph is a group of sentences focusing on a main point. The sentences present information that supports the main point. A paragraph begins on a new line and ends with a return to a new line to separate its main idea from other main ideas in the essay.

Effective paragraphs usually have at least two common characteristics:

- **State the main point of the paragraph clearly.** The main point that will be developed should be clearly stated in a sentence, often called the topic sentence. The first sentence of a paragraph is often the topic sentence.
- **Present supporting points in a logical order.** Supporting points should be presented in an order that leads readers to the main point. You should present enough information to convince the reader of each supporting point. You may want to include some specific facts, data, or quotes. The paragraph's main point should be the logical conclusion readers reach at the end of the sequence of supporting points.

An effective expository essay usually begins with an introductory paragraph that gets readers interested in the topic, includes three (or more) body paragraphs that explain the topic, and ends with a concluding paragraph that summarizes the topic.

Effective introductory paragraphs usually have at least three common characteristics:

- **Tells readers what the essay is about.** The introductory paragraph states the essay's topic in very specific terms. Many introductory paragraphs briefly describe the main points that will be made to explain the topic.
- **Engages readers in the topic.** The introductory paragraph should grab the audience's attention. You can often interest your audience in a topic by including an amusing or unexpected statement. Sometimes, the introduction challenges your audience to do or believe something surprising. Sometimes, a quote from an expert or famous person can help interest your audience in your essay.
- **Tells readers what they will get from the essay.** The last sentence of an introductory paragraph often foreshadows the conclusion of the essay. You can get your audience interested in your essay by promising a rewarding conclusion.



Task

What to Do

Complete the following task to show what you have learned about drafting an introductory paragraph. While you work through the task, think about whether you are achieving the goal. You may want to review an example of an introductory paragraph before you begin.

Task: Draft an introductory paragraph for your expository essay.

Goal: Show that you can write a paragraph that engages readers in your topic.

See the example: [First Paragraph for Global Warming](#)

1. Start a new word processing document. Always remember to type your name, the date, and a title at the top of the document.
2. Use your essay outline to draft an introductory paragraph for your expository essay.
3. Remember to save your document frequently while you work.
4. Read your introductory paragraph to make sure it states your topic clearly and engages your audience. Check with your teacher if you are unsure if your introduction is effective.
5. Review the checklist and revise your introductory paragraph to make sure it is complete.
6. Save your document.
7. Share your introductory paragraph.

Help Guide

Use the Intel® Education Help Guide to learn technology skills.

Word Processing
[Type and change words](#)
[Add date](#)

[Search the Help Guide](#)



Task Example

Student Name

Date

First Paragraph for Global Warming

No one knows for sure why the dinosaur disappeared, but it is commonly believed that a change in environment may have played a significant role. What do dinosaurs have in common with global warming? Our climate is also changing, and if we don't listen to the warning of scientists, we too, could become extinct. According to a new report released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in Paris, scientists have agreed that global warming is very likely caused by human activity, particularly the burning of fossil fuel. Global warming occurs when the gasses from the burning of fossil fuels causes the gasses that are released to become trapped causing the greenhouse effect. If the greenhouse effect becomes stronger, it could make the Earth warmer than usual." Even a little extra warming may cause problems for humans, sea life and the animal kingdom.