Introductions

Student Name:

Instructor:

Date:

Course

# About this DLA

## Important Note

All the activities (3) in the DLA must be completed in their entirety before receiving credit for completion. Students are welcome to meet with a tutor if they need help, but please be aware that students might need a second appointment for review and signature in that case. If your instructor wants evidence of this completed DLA, return this form to him or her with the tutor’s signature included.

## Learning Outcomes

Through computer and other independent work, you will learn various introductory strategies for specific essay topics and practice writing effective introductions.

## Activities (approximately 1 hour)

Read the information, complete the activities that follow, and be prepared to discuss your answers when you meet with a tutor.

# Understanding the Introductory Paragraph

Writing the introductory paragraph is often one of the trickiest parts of writing an essay. One reason for this difficulty is that writers have several jobs to do in the introduction. Writers must:

1. Grab the reader’s attention;
2. Introduce the topic and bring the reader into the conversation (the bridge);
3. State the thesis.

Although there is no set formula for writing a successful introduction, here are some suggestions to consider.

## Part One: Grab the Reader’s Attention

Here are some techniques to get the paper started. Remember, use a technique that is ACTUALLY interesting and not overused or cliché.

* Begin with a statistic
* Cite a relevant quotation
* Relate a personal anecdote
* Begin with a dramatic narrative
* Pose a provocative question
* Give an amazing or unusual fact
* Offer a bold opinion
* Use dialogue
* Start off by defining the problem

\*PLEASE NOTE: Defining a term is not listed above. If a definition is used to start a paper, it must be interesting. Giving a dictionary definition does not usually interest the audience in reading further.

## Part Two: Introduce the Topic and Bring the Reader into the Conversation

This section is the “guts” of an introduction. Here the writer will introduce the specifics about the topic of the essay. Often times, writers will vaguely or loosely discuss related ideas to their topic; avoid this when possible. For example, when writing a paper about *Romeo and Juliet*, specific information should be given about the play that pertains to the particular topic of the essay and also the discussion going on about the particular take on the topic. DO NOT summarize what love is!

## Part Three: State the Thesis

The thesis statement sums up the paper’s main idea in one or two sentences. It is recommended to write a preliminary thesis statement, which is an early version of the final thesis, to use as guide for the first draft. After writing the first two parts of an introduction, a writer may build on his preliminary thesis statement and use it as a final thesis statement. Remember that a thesis should be specific and should state the essay’s topic as well as the opinion of the topic. For example, the thesis of a paper on *Romeo and Juliet* might sound like this: The actions of the protagonists in *Romeo and Juliet* reflect the two reoccurring themes love and sacrifice.

# Activities

Check off each box once you have completed the activity.

## 1. Label an Introduction

Read the following introductory paragraph; then underline and label the different elements of an introduction: hook (grabs the reader’s attention), the bridge (takes the reader from the introductory sentences to the thesis) and finally the thesis (controls the entire essay).

According to the MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) website, 10, 839 people will die in a drunk driving accident this year alone. This staggering statistic highlights the fact that the state of California, along with the rest of the nation, has a problem with society involving drinking and driving. Prohibition is not the answer, as history has demonstrated. But there is a practical answer to be found in a law. The legal BAC (blood-alcohol concentration) while driving should be lowered from .08 percent to .04 percent for three strong reasons.

## 2. Write an Introduction

Choose **ONE** of the five topics below and write an introduction on a separate sheet of paper. When writing, make sure to include, the hook, bridge and thesis statement.

1. Discuss the reasons people form cliques or the effects of cliques on those inside and outside the group.
2. Discuss the reasons for the growing population of homeless in the U.S.
3. Discuss a challenge you have faced in your life, focusing on the way it has affected you and the way in which you have overcome it.
4. Analyze the effects of parental expectations on you or another person.
5. Analyze the reasons you have set a particular goal.

## Choose 3a or 3b Below

## 3a. Revise Your Own Writing

Locate an essay you have previously written or one you are presently working on and identify the previously-mentioned elements of an introduction. If you are missing any or all of the three pieces or are unhappy with any part of your introduction, revise it to include the three different tenets of an introduction. Bring your essay with the added identifying marks and revisions with you to the tutoring session.

**If you do not have your own essay to work with, please complete the supplemental activity below (3b).**

## 3b. Rewrite an Introduction

Read the following sample introduction. Rewrite it on the sheet of paper you used to draft the earlier introduction (2). When you revise, first figure which of the three elements needs revision. Then, revise accordingly. Be prepared to tell your tutor both what you thought needed revision and why you revised it accordingly.

When it comes to school, we have friends, clubs, assignments and professors come to our mind, and there is no doubt that students are the major group of a school. As part of the school, one can either be a passive student or not, but there is something different between the active students and the passive student.

## 4. Review

Go to https://mtsac2.mywconline.com and use the [Mt. SAC Writing Center Appointment System](https://mtsac2.mywconline.com/) to make a DLA appointment, or sign-up to see a tutor on the “**Walk-in**” list in the Writing Center. During your session with a tutor, explain your understanding of effective introductions. Refer to your own graded writing (or the completed activity) and explain the choices you have made for each section. Consider the main concept you learned in this DLA. How will knowledge of these concepts affect your writing?

Student’s Signature:

Tutor’s Signature

Date:

Date:

If you are an individual with a disability and need a greater level of accessibility for any document in The Writing Center or on The Writing Center’s website, please contact the Mt. SAC Accessible Resource Centers for Students, [access@mtsac.edu](mailto:access@mtsac.edu), (909) 274-4290.

Revised 04/12/2022