

INTRODUCTIONS & CONCLUSIONS

While introduction and conclusion paragraphs are essential components to any paper, they can seem daunting to think about—much less write! This resource aims to offer tips and guidance that will bolster your creativity and confidence in this area.

A strong introduction paragraph effectively pulls your reader into your paper; a strong conclusion wraps your paper up well and “packs a punch” that your readers are sure to remember.

INTRODUCTIONS

You need three main components in the introduction paragraph of your essay:

1. **A hook** – In one or two sentences, capture the reader’s attention. You can do this with an interesting statistic, a fun or little-known fact, or a statement that may either take your reader by surprise or be specifically relevant to him or her. Just make sure that your hook aligns with your paper’s topic.
2. **The Main Direction** – Now is your chance to provide *supplementary information* to your hook and expound on how it connects to your thesis. You want to include the context and main topic(s) in your paper. **NOTE: Try not to cite too much research material just yet. Instead, provide more of a general overview of what your research covers later in the paper.**
3. **Thesis** – The thesis, composed of your main claim and organizing principle, is the driving point of your essay. For longer essays, your thesis will be the final sentence in your intro paragraph. Check out [this resource](#) on writing an effective thesis statement.

NOTE: The information in this section is adapted from the “Introductory Paragraphs” handout provided by the Washington State University Writing Center (writing.center.wsu.edu).

CONCLUSIONS

In your conclusion paragraph, you should:

1. **Restate your thesis statement** – Restate your thesis statement at the beginning of your conclusion paragraph, but ensure that you do not do so verbatim.
2. **Summarize your main points** – While you will want to spend at least 2-4 lines summarizing your main points, try to do so thoughtfully and succinctly to avoid redundancy.
3. **End with a satisfying statement or challenge** – Do *not* dive into new information. Instead, close your paragraph with a few lines that challenge your reader to apply what they learned, call them to action, or re-establish the importance of your topic.

Assignment: Discuss a leadership role you have had and how God used that role to grow you and your followers.

Introduction paragraph with a hook, supplementary information, & thesis statement:

When people hear the term “leader,” they are prone to think of people in high positions, such as employers, pastors, and the president of the U.S. What few people seem to realize, however, is that they all have leadership roles and that these could be within their own families or communities. Growing up, I was the oldest of six kids and had daily opportunities to lead. My siblings looked up to me and often tried to imitate the way I acted and talked: whatever I did, they wanted to do too. As I attempted to lead my siblings by example with humility, faith, and gentleness, I experienced God growing both myself and them emotionally and spiritually to be more like Him.

Conclusion paragraph with thesis statement (restated), summary, & closing statement:

Making the choice daily to lead with humility, faith, and gentleness, I felt God working in me to grow me closer to Him so that I could reflect His light more, and I saw Him doing the same for my siblings as well. I learned that leadership requires the right heart, attitude, and mindset. The qualities of a true leader—humility, love, determination, and self-sacrifice—must be nourished and demonstrated on a regular basis as I learned and am still learning to do with my siblings. It may not always be an easy task or at times even seem worth it, but it has eternal impact. Being a leader is so much more than just a title—it is a purpose and calling that bears a lot of responsibility and amazing rewards. If we realized exactly what leadership role God has placed us in right here, right now, and maintain the proper mindset and heart attitude, we could lead effectively and daily change the world for Christ.

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