

3 Easy Steps

For Developing an Introductory Paragraph



The introductory paragraph announces the topic of your essay which is stated in your main point/thesis statement.

1. **Develop a main point/thesis statement:** The introductory paragraph may be written at any point in the drafting of an essay; however, be sure to have your thesis developed before you begin writing the essay. (See “6 Easy Steps for Developing a Main Point/Thesis Statement...”)
2. **Develop a general statement:** This statement begins your introductory paragraph. A general statement engages and “hooks” your reader and establishes your topic. This first sentence should spark your reader’s interest.

The following are examples of general statements for an essay about students being required to exercise during school using the main point/thesis statement:

School age children should be required to participate in school sports because they will be healthier, learn to socialize, and maintain a healthy body weight.

- a. **Startling statistic or fact:** Thirty percent of school age children are overweight.
- b. **Vivid example:** My sister Tiffany has been struggling with obesity since she was three years old.
- c. **Quotation or bit of dialogue:** “You can’t run very fast.” These words are said every day in schools across the nation.
- d. **Question:** Should the United States risk children’s health in favor of academics?
- e. **Brief story:** Imagine being a child and going to school, worried every day someone will make fun of you.
- f. **Paradoxical statement:** Eating brings great pleasure yet also pain.

3. Develop connector sentences: For a short essay, plan on creating three or four sentences that narrow to your main point/thesis statement. For example if you create the **general statement--startling statistic:** Thirty percent of school age children are overweight then your connector sentences might be:

Many overweight children ingest too many calories and are now suffering from diabetes and heart disease. This may be because many children watch far too much TV and play video games which creates isolated environments. Also, many aren’t learning any aspects of teamwork.

Thesis statement: Therefore, students should be required to participate in organized sports because sports activities will make students healthier, build social skills, and develop teamwork skills.

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PRACTICE: Use the practice topic paragraph (prompt) below to develop an introductory paragraph, then have the CSN Writing Center check your work.

Many believe our society puts entirely too much focus on the Internet. Some individuals spend far too many hours browsing nonsensical websites, playing games and using social networking when they could be reading literature, talking to people and facing the realities of their lives. Moreover, these activities don't help anyone succeed in "real" life. Conversely, some believe that the Internet has positively changed the world with access to an abundance of information, instantaneous facts and social connections. Is the Internet a valuable source, or is it an invention that is changing society in negative ways?