

Introducing ... the Research Paper!

Adapted from: Livingston, K. (2007). Guide to writing a basic essay. Accessed February 2, 2009, from Web site: <http://members.tripod.com/~lklivingston/essay/intro.html>.

Two reasons for an introduction:

- Attracts the reader's attention (gives them a reason to want to read what you've written);
- Gives the reader an idea of what the essay will be about.

There are several ways to begin an essay. Here are a few common ones:

- **Startling information:** Information is true and verifiable. You are telling the audience, "This is a fact, and it relates to my essay because ..."
 - Example: "Dog is often considered man's best friend. This is because ..."
 - Now you try it:

- **Anecdote:** An anecdote is a *very short story* that illustrates a point.
 - Example: "When my dog decides I am not paying close enough attention to her, she does things like grabbing the end of the toilet paper roll in her teeth and running down the hall with it streaming behind her. Despite this, I consider her one of my best friends."
 - Now you try it:

- **Dialogue:** Sometimes, writing down a short conversation between people is a good way to open an essay.
 - Example:
 - "Do you know what your dog did today?" my roommate asked when I got home. I sighed and shook my head – I loved my dog, but she could be very bratty sometimes. "Well, let me tell you, it wasn't easy to clean up ..."
 - Now you try it:

- **Summary information:** Exactly what it sounds like – the writer introduces a topic by describing it generally for a few sentences.
 - Example: "My dog didn't seem evil when you looked at her. She was small, just over 10 pounds, with large, brown eyes and pert, floppy ears. Tiny, cute, and cuddly, the only bad thing you could say about her appearance was that her tail didn't have much fur on it (she'd bitten at it a lot when she was a puppy, and it had never quite grown back)."
 - Now you try it:
