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# The Introductory Paragraph

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One of the most important  
paragraphs in your essay!

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# What is the purpose of the introductory paragraph?

- Get the reader's attention
  - Set tone for the rest of the essay
  - Make a contract with the reader - what will be covered in this piece?
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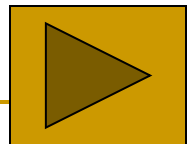
# The Parts of the Introductory Paragraph

- The Hook - Designed to grab attention immediately and give some indication about the essay's topic
  - The Transition - Moves the reader from the hook to the driving force of the essay....
  - The Thesis - Makes the contract with the reader about what will be discussed without a blatant announcement.
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# In what order do I write the introductory paragraph?

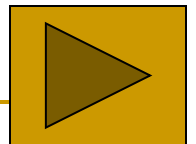
Even though the reader will read the hook first, you actually write the thesis statement first. Type your thesis statement into your document. Review your thesis statement. What comes to mind when you think about the thesis? Set your cursor **before** the thesis and insert your hook. Once you have a hook, develop a transition to guide your reader to the thesis statement.



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# What if I'm Handwriting My Essay?

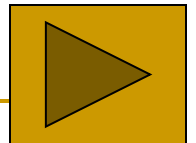
If you are handwriting an essay for a test or other situation, make sure you still write the thesis statement first. On a *separate* piece of paper, write the thesis statement. Then read over the thesis and generate a hook that will grab the reader's attention. Finally, transition to the thesis and recopy the thesis statement as the last sentence in the paragraph.



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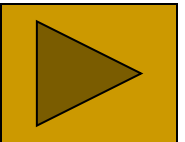
# Types of Hooks

- 1. Personal examples**
- 2. Quotations**
- 3. Facts or statistics**
- 4. Rhetorical questions**
- 5. Current events**
- 6. Contrast to the thesis statement**



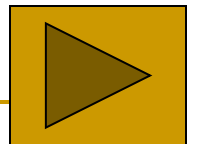
# Personal Examples

- Provides strong, dramatic incidents to use. Honesty in expressing thoughts and feelings will ring true with the reader. While you can make up the personal experience, be careful that it sounds credible.
- Personal observation - different from a personal example, an observation is something you saw happening.



# Example 1

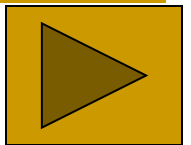
On Friday, February 19, 2011, life changed for an eighteen-year-old young man. He became very ill from a bacterial infection. His body could not fight the infection. Why? After a week of tests and examinations by several specialists, the diagnosis was made. He had leukemia, a cancer of the bone marrow. I am that young man. When a person finds out that he has cancer, just as I did, his whole world changes. *A cancer patient is affected physically, psychologically, and socially by the impact of cancer.*





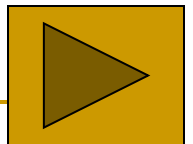
## Example 2

One morning a young mother had her seven-month old son in his stroller under the peach tree near the family pool. She walked to the kitchen to get a knife so she could peel the peach for him. Ten seconds later, she found him facedown with the stroller at the bottom of the pool. She immediately pulled him out and administered CPR to her son. If she had been gone any longer, he might have been one of the statistics that plague our country every year. *These child drownings could be greatly reduced if parents never left their children unattended around water, if pools were properly fenced, and if other safety devices were installed in or by the pool.*



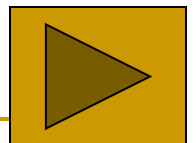
# Using Quotations

- Content of quote should be:
  - Dramatic
  - Emotionally appealing
  - Surprising
  - Humorous
- Quote does not have to be from a famous person
- Must be relevant to thesis statement



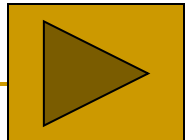
# Example 1

- “The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.” This thought by John Milton was recorded over four hundred years ago, but it is still timely for us today. He seems to be saying that we are the ones to control our lives. We can be miserable when things are going well, just as we can be happy when things are going wrong. *With this thought in mind, we can control the way we face life through our attitude, our determination, and our ability.*



## Example 2

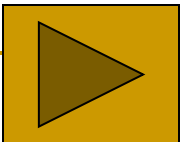
- “I am stupid. I am never going back to school.” These are the words spoken by a learning disabled child when he was in first grade. He cried as he slowly walked to his bedroom, shredding his schoolwork into small pieces. This was the first of many times when he and his parents would feel frustrated because there was nothing that they could do. Parents of children with learning disabilities have often felt unprepared to help their children with their handicaps and frustrated with attempts to seek the proper placement of them in the public-school system. The experience of school can be overwhelming for children who have trouble learning. *The learning disabled student in the public educational system must deal with academic, social, and emotional problems.*



# Using Facts or Statistics

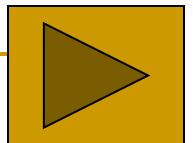
- Must be startling or unusual
- Must be from a credible source
- Use journal as a place to record both quotes and facts or statistics that might work for an introduction

“Just the facts,  
please.”



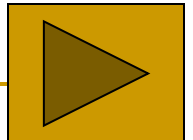
# Example 1

- In the desert regions of Arizona, solar homes date back to the pre-Columbian Indians. These people carefully designed their homes in the recesses of south-facing cliffs to receive the warmth of the winter sun. In the summer, shade was provided by overhanging cliffs. Today, solar homes are becoming popular across the country. *These solar homes, as then, must be carefully designed to use the sun efficiently in the orientation, the exterior, and the interior.*



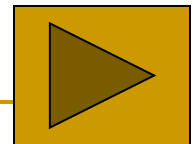
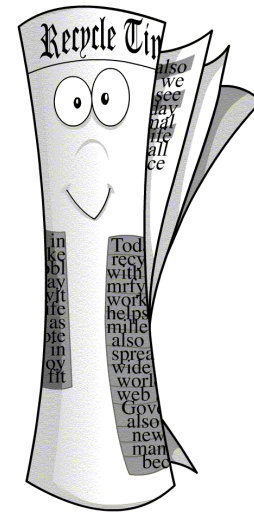
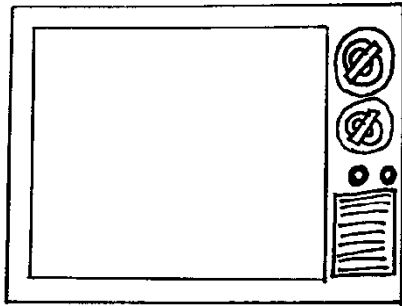
## Example 2

- According to an article in *Family Safety & First Aid*, published by Berkley Books, “... every 45 seconds a fire breaks out in an American home – 700,000 residences aflame each year. And 16 times a day somebody dies in one of these burning homes.” These statistics are frightening and should not be taken lightly. The best way to deal with the possibility of loss from fire is to plan ahead before it happens. Otherwise, it is too late. In order not to become one of these statistics, *Americans need to equip their homes with safety devices, set and adhere to safety rules, and practice a family escape plan in order to protect their families.*



# Using Current Events

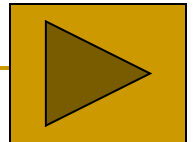
- Must be recent
- Must be important
- Should be made public by newspapers, television, or radio





# Example

- This morning's news reported that a young girl, age 5, was abducted from her parents' care while shopping. As a frantic search ensued, people across the Philadelphia area were shocked to find that the kidnapper walked up to the child and demanded that the young kindergartner leave with the woman. The child managed to escape and was found, but she experienced the scare of a lifetime. Obviously, safety procedures broke down and this poor child paid the price. *In order to assure the safety of all children, parents across the country must review safety procedures, tighten safety protocols where necessary, and assure all family members are properly trained.*



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# Works Cited

Wingersky, Joy, Jan Boerner, and Diana Holguin-Balogh.  
*Writing Paragraphs and Essays*, 3rd ed. Belmont,  
CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co, 1999. Print.

- Many of the ideas for this presentation are based on pages 242 - 253 in the above text and the above text is often directly quoted.