Writing the Introduction

*[Techniques & Formula]*

*Creating The Hook*

In each example below, the first sentence draws the reader in and makes the reader want to find out what point the interesting sentence will ultimately lead them to. As you’ll see, there are many methods to capture your reader’s interest.

**Surprising fact:** *The pentagon has twice as many bathrooms as are necessary.* The famous government building was constructed in the 1940s, when segregation laws required that separate bathrooms be installed for people of African descent. This building isn’t the only American icon that harkens back to this embarrassing and hurtful time in our history. Across the United States there are many examples of leftover laws and customs that reflect the racism that once permeated American society.

**Startling question**: *Is suicide a legitimate option when life throws her most horrible events in one’s direction?* To many, the answer would be no. But, to Romeo and Juliet, the answer was a sorrowful yes. Yet, upon closer inspection of young Romeo’s actions in William Shakespeare’s The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, one can detect the simplicity by which all this woe could have been avoided.

**Humor:** *When my older brother substituted fresh eggs for our hard-boiled Easter eggs, he didn’t realize our father would take the first crack at hiding them.* My brother’s holiday ended early that particular day in 1991, but the rest of the family enjoyed the warm April weather, outside on the lawn, until late into the evening. Perhaps it was the warmth of the day and the joy of eating Easter roast while Tommy contemplated his actions that make my memories of Easter so sweet. Whatever the true reason, the fact is that my favorite holiday of the year is Easter Sunday.

**Quotation from a well-known person (or a famous quote):** *Hillary Rodham Clinton once said that “There cannot be true democracy unless women's voices are heard.”* In 2006, when Nancy Pelosi became the nation’s first female Speaker of the House, one woman’s voice rang out clear. With this development, democracy grew to its truest level ever in terms of women’s equality. The historical event also paved the way for Senator Clinton as she warmed her own vocal chords in preparation for a presidential race.

**Curiosity (strange but interesting facts):** *A duck’s quack doesn’t echo.* Some people might find a deep and mysterious meaning in this fact.

**Definition:** *A homograph is a word with two or more pronunciations.* Produce is one example; wound is another. My life is a series of event homographs with two clear pronunciations: mine and my parents’. Despite our sometimes terse relationship, though, we actually see eye-to-eye on what our all-time favorite family vacation is…

**Anecdote (a very short, yet amusing, story):** *Yesterday morning I watched as my older sister left for school with a bright white glob of toothpaste gleaming on her chin. I felt no regret at all until she stepped onto the bus …*

*Introduction Tips*

* **You should definitely avoid the following expressions in the introduction:** 
  1. “Now, I will tell you about…”
  2. “I would like to discuss…”
  3. “In my paper, I will explain…”
  4. “The subject of this paper will be…”
* **Keep “I think,” “I feel,” and “I believe” statements out of the introduction**
* **With rare exceptions, your claim should be the last sentence of your introduction**
* **The whole point of writing an introduction is to hook the reader into wanting to read the rest of your essay. So, after you’ve written the first draft of your introduction, read it out loud and ask yourself if your introduction will compel someone to continue reading.**

*Introduction Formula = AG + R2AG + T3 + C*

**AG** = ATTENTION-GETTER (**Has some connection to claim**.)

**R2AG** = RESPONSE TO, OR EXPLANATION OF, ATTENTION-GETTER

**T3** = TRANSITION FROM AG TO CLAIM – SHOULD SOMEHOW CONNECT THE TWO

**C** – GIVE CLAIM [SUBJECT + OPINION ON SUBJECT] (Sometimes a topic sentence)