**THE INTRODUCTION**

**PURPOSES OF INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPHS**

1. To get the reader’s attention
2. To establish the tone (serious, humorous, etc.)
3. To establish the subject or topic
4. To introduce the titles and authors of literature (for a literary analysis paper only)
5. To indicate the organization of the paper
6. To state a thesis

**WHAT NOT TO DO IN AN INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH**

* Do NOT use the phrase “In my opinion…”
* Do NOT announce your intentions with phrases such as “In this paper I will…” and “This paper will show…”
* Do NOT use a dictionary definition such as “The dictionary defines capital punishment as…”
* Do NOT use the pronoun “you.”

**HOW TO WRITE A GOOD LEAD-IN TO YOUR THESIS STATEMENT**

Consider one of the following types of lead-ins for your thesis statement:

1. **A shocking or intriguing statement**

Joseph Quinlan adores his beautiful, young daughter, Karen Anne---and that is why he found himself in court last week pleading for permission to let her die.

1. **An arresting statistic**

One of every nine women will develop breast cancer this year, according to a recent report prepared by the Health Information Service.

1. **A quotation**

This is a period of danger and uncertainty in the current economy, and Time magazine has reported that “Over 50,000 stock brokers have been investigated for possible fraud in the last two years.”

1. **A relevant story or anecdote**

Yesterday Billy Barnes came home at 3:30 and let himself into his house with the key he carries to school every morning. After fixing himself a snack of five Oreo cookies and grape Kool-Aid, Billy watched videos for two hours. When the doorbell rang, Billy didn’t answer it. Instead, he peered out from behind the living room curtains and waited anxiously until the stranger on his front porch walked away. At 5:30, Billy remembered that he was supposed to call his mother when he got home from school, but when he called her office, she was in a meeting and could not talk to him. Billy is seven years old; he represents a growing number of latchkey children who pay the price for their parents’ changing lifestyles.

1. **A description or emotional appeal**

With one eye blackened, one arm in a cast, and third degree burns on both her legs, the pretty, blond two-year old seeks corners of rooms, refuses to speak, and shakes violently at the sound of loud noises. Tammy is not the victim of a war or a natural disaster; rather, she is the helpless victim of her parents, one of thousands of children who suffer daily from America’s hidden crime of child abuse.

1. **Flashback/Personal experience**

The smell in the kitchen immediately took me back to the first time I smelled pumpkin pie at my grandmother’s house.

Fireworks were painting the sky, the band filled the air waves, and patriotism grabbed each parade viewer as a similar parade must have 100 years earlier at the Centennial Celebration of the Constitution.

1. **One word**

Terror. This is the only word to describe how Jenny Hawes felt as the shark inched its way toward her.

Fame. Many athletes will do anything to achieve it, even if it means resorting to illegal and unfair steroid use.

1. **Staccato/Visual Imagery**

Green grass…red clay…a white ball. These are less observed colors of the national pastime’s opening day.

1. **A catalog of relevant examples**

A two-hundred-pound teenager quit school because no desk would hold her. A three-hundred-pound chef who could no longer stand on his feet was fired. A three-hundred-fifty-pound truck driver broke furniture in his friends’ houses. All these people are now living healthier, happier, and thinner lives, thanks to the remarkable intestinal bypass surgery first developed in 1967.

1. **Refutation**

Many religious groups believe that cloning is immoral, however, the practice of cloning can serve as a benefit to the world, and it would be irresponsible to overlook the possibility of saving lives through this scientific advancement.