

An Interesting Approach to Writing Introduction Paragraphs

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- **Rationale:** Writing introductions can be one of the most difficult tasks for students because it is a starting point. The first step in a long journey is always the hardest. The teacher can make this easier by doing three things: dissect the introduction, give students a task that allows them to find the parts of an introduction, then give them a task that allows them to write their own. This lesson plan takes students step by step through writing an introduction.
- **Time:** 90 minutes
- **Materials:** A handout describing an introduction. Three examples of an introduction paragraph. Appropriate (clean) personal advertisements, one for each pair of students. You can find some at <http://personals.yahoo.com/>.

Step 1: Describing an Introduction Paragraph

Pair the students. Write the parts of an introduction on the blackboard. A good idea is to create a simple example or ask for help from the students:

The Parts of an Introduction

- Hook
- Comments, and background
- Thesis Statement

An Example

- **Example topic:** "The high cost of living in Tokyo"
- **Hook:** Can you imagine how much a single day can cost if you live in Shibuya, Tokyo?
- **Comments and background:** Tokyo is one of the most expensive cities in the world. The prices of things in Tokyo are much higher than in other parts of Japan. Many people living in Tokyo have a difficult time paying for their lifestyles.
- **Thesis Statement:** Tokyo definitely is one of the most expensive cities for many reasons.

Step 2: Dissecting an Introduction

Describe the purpose of each section of an introduction.

- A "**hook**" is usually a question or comment that inspires an emotional response from the reader. It should be used to get their interest.
- **Comments and background** give a history or some information regarding the topic.
- A **thesis statement** is the last sentence in the introduction paragraph and it describes what the essay is about.

Step 3: Identifying the Parts of an Introduction in Other Works

Give copies of three introduction paragraphs to student pairs. Ask the students to identify the parts of the introduction by underlining, circling, and bracketing. Ask confirmation questions to check answers.

Step 4:

Give the students copies of personal advertisements. Students must identify the hook in the personal ad. Ask confirmation questions to check answers.

Step 5:

Students now write their own personal ad. Tell them to write their hook in all capital letters. This will make them more aware of what they are doing. Students trade papers with other pairs to evaluate. Allow 5 to 10 minutes for discussions on ways to improve their hooks. Ask for volunteers to read some good ads with great hooks.

Step 6:

Students write their own introductions for their topics. Students need to write the hook in all capital letters, the comments and background in bold or darker letters, and finally the thesis statement should be underlined.

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<http://iteslj.org/>

<http://iteslj.org/Lessons/Bologna-IntroParagraphs.html>