

## Writing Introductions and Conclusions

An **introductory paragraph** should create a context for your thesis statement. So, when writing an introduction, ask yourself, ‘What does the reader need to know in order to understand my thesis statement?’ Make sure you include only the most relevant information needed to build up to a specific, argumentative thesis. (The thesis statement is typically the last sentence or two of the introduction.)

### TIPS:

- Keep your audience in mind. If you are writing an essay about a specific topic, it is fair to assume your reader (usually your professor) is already familiar with that topic. There is no need to explain the meaning of specific terms, the plot of a story, etc., unless otherwise specified. Focus only on introducing the particular aspects of what you will be arguing.
- Start general and build toward the specific.
- Notice the length. To give you a rough idea, a five-page paper should have an introduction no longer than three-quarters of a page. If the introduction is too long, it is a sure sign that it includes redundant or irrelevant information. Read over the introduction several times and, with each sentence, ask yourself, ‘Does this need to be here?’ Cut what’s unnecessary.

A **concluding paragraph** should tie all of the points of your thesis statement together in order to close your argument.

**TIPS:**

- Build from specific to general. Start with restating your argument and then try to elaborate on the importance of what you've just proven.
- Synthesize, don't summarize. Don't simply repeat everything that was in your paper. The reader has read it; they know what you said. Show how the points you made fit together.
- Answer the question "So What?" Show your readers why this paper is important. Show them that your argument is relevant beyond just the paper itself.
- Redirect your readers. Give your reader something to think about, such as a way to relate your paper to a relevant issue in the "real" world.

**DROP-IN HOURS**

Monday – Thursday: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Friday: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sunday: 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.