

# Introductory Paragraph Anatomy (For Essays On Books, Stories or Poems)

Use this guideline for writing your introductory paragraph when you are writing an essay on a book or story. Your essay will make sense and be easier to write with a good introduction.

1) **Hook Sentence** (Question, Exclamatory Sentence, General Sentence, Fact, or Statistic.)

a) Example: Who is orange, black, and mean all over? Yes! It's Shere Khan, the bully of the jungle!

2) **Summary Sentence:** A quick summary to give your reader information on the story, the author and basic information. It may be 1-2 sentences. Underline the names of books and use quotation marks around the names of poems and short stories.

a) Template: In (book/story name), (the author's name) writes about \_\_\_\_\_.

b) Example: In The Cay, Theodore Taylor writes about a boy named Philip who must overcome his prejudiced upbringing and form his own ideas about humanity and relationships.

c) Example 2: In "Cinderella", the Brothers Grimm write about a young girl who is treated horribly by her stepmother and evil stepsisters.

3) **Thesis Statement:** The point, the main idea-- what you're trying to say.

a) Example: Even though Cinderella is surrounded by bad influences, she rises above her circumstances by staying kind and is later rewarded by becoming a princess.

4) **Reasons :** These will later become your body paragraphs. See the 2 templates below:

a) \_\_\_\_\_ occurs because (reason 1), (reason 2) and (reason 3).

b) (Book Title) shows that \_\_\_\_\_ is true because (reason 1), (reason 2) and (reason 3).

c) Example: "Cinderella" shows that the idea that good always overpowers evil is true because Cinderella is always obedient to her evil stepmother (1), she is assisted by a fairy godmother for her kindness (2), and she becomes princess even though her stepfamily tries to stop her (3).

## Full Introductory Paragraph Example:

People often change through difficult circumstances. (Hook Sentence-

General Statement) In *The Cay*, Theodore

Taylor writes about a boy named Philip who is stranded on an island with a man named Timothy. Philip must overcome his prejudiced upbringing and form his own ideas about humanity and relationships as he and Timothy work together to survive. (Short Summary)

**As Philip gets to know Timothy, his character**

**changes.** (Thesis) This change occurs

because he realizes his ideas about race were wrong (1), he

becomes more independent in

thought (2) and he develops a

true friendship with someone

who is different than he is

(3) (Reasons- will later be body paragraphs).

Introductory Paragraph Template:

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(Hook Sentence).

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(Short Summary)

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(Thesis Statement a.k.a Main Idea)

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(Reasons).

## Body Paragraphs

- For every reason, you need evidence.
  - **A direct quote:** “\_\_\_\_\_”.
  - **A paraphrase:** It’s like a quote, but in your own words. A paraphrase can be considered your translation of a sentence or phrase that an author uses. (You still need to give credit to the author and follow citation guidelines.)
  - **A summary of something that happened in the story:** A summary is different from a paraphrase in that you’re not just directly translating a sentence or phrase. Usually a summary is a short explanation. It’s still

recommended to name the author or title just so that you are still crediting the source.

- For every bit of evidence, you need to write **your** analysis.
  - Your analysis should be your explanation of how the evidence supports your main idea (thesis).
- Body Paragraph Structure (First sentence):
  - **Transition word**, main idea.
  - Example: **Firstly**, “Cinderella” portrays the idea that good always overpowers evil because Cinderella always remained obedient and was rewarded for it.
- Add your first example/quote/paraphrase:

- In “Cinderella”, the Brothers Grimm describe how Cinderella listened to her step-mother and spent the entire day cleaning the house so that she could go to the ball.

(Summary)

- It is evident that Cinderella’s kindness led her to be obedient even though she was mistreated by her step-family.