

Introductions and Conclusions

Introductions

A decent introductory paragraph requires creativity, thinking time, effort, and lots of revising! Begin with your hook: a quotation chosen for its appropriateness. When trying to decide on a quotation, ask yourself, “Would this quotation make me want to read this paper”? Try to create some curiosity for your reader.

- For example, a paper on the career of “lexicographer” might begin with a familiar quotation. For example:
“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” ...
- Now, use a transition to begin to move from your hook to the general area/topic surrounding your specific occupation. Here, the writer attempts to narrow the idea presented in the hook to a general discussion of “words”:
... Every child learns this adage, usually from a parent or a teacher, and usually in response to some vicious name-calling from other children. The old adage, though, is a mere platitude. ...
- Now, the writer is ready to directly present the general area/topic:
... Words can indeed hurt, and they can also make one feel good. Words carefully chosen yield enormous power. ...
- At this point in your introduction, you should be ready to narrow your discussion further by directly introducing the specific career you researched. You may do this in a number of ways; for instance, you might introduce the career in terms of its history or its value to society. Ease into it, though, by writing a clause or sentence (or two) that provides a transition:
... And, anything that important needs someone to provide care and attention. ...
- Now, directly introduce the specific topic you researched:
... In the world of words, this person is the lexicographer, a person who is involved in the principles and practices of dictionary making. ...
- Your thesis statement is next. But, don’t just jump into it. Use a transition to smooth the flow from one idea to the next:
... This important occupation offers a mix of advantages and disadvantages to those who pursue it. ...
- Present your thesis statement:
... It is clear, though, that lexicography is an intellectually stimulating field of employment, though financial rewards and career growth are generally limited.

Conclusions

Like introductions, decent conclusions require creativity, thinking time, effort, and lots of revising! Your challenge here is to summarize and draw some conclusions – WITHOUT REPEATING!!

For this paper, you are required to try a strategy called a “frame.” (You can use a frame in all kinds of writing – from informal fiction to formal business reports and most everything in between – you may be called upon to complete in college or in your chosen profession.) In the frame, you return to your hook to conclude your paper.

First, though, focus your thinking onto your thesis statement. Find a fresh and valuable perspective in which to revisit that original thesis statement. What overall conclusions can you make about this career – about this thesis statement – as a result of all this research. Help your reader! **DO NOT SIMPLY REPEAT OR PARAPHRASE EITHER YOUR ORIGINAL THESIS STATEMENT OR THE TOPIC SENTENCES FROM YOUR BODY PARAGRAPHS.**

When you get ready to end your conclusion – and complete your frame – return to your hook:

... A lexicographer’s career is spent disproving the adage about sticks and stones, convincing the world that in words there is not only pain but also pleasure; there is not only defeat but also glory; there is not only sadness but also exquisite joy. Rather than teaching children that words cannot hurt them, a lexicographer offers the words of Margaret Atwood, who said: “A word after a word after a word is power.”

DO NOT MAKE REFERENCE TO YOUR PAPER OR YOUR RESEARCH IN YOUR INTRODUCTION OR YOUR CONCLUSION! Do not use phrases like: *This paper will show that ...* or *Research showed that ...* .