

# Essay writing - writing an introduction



Name:

Date:

## Read these introductions. In what aspects do they differ?

### Introduction 1:

Imagine a young woman named Sarah who dreams of becoming an engineer. However, every time she shares her ambitions, she's met with skepticism and told that engineering is a "man's job." Such stories are more common than we'd like to believe. Throughout history, women have faced numerous barriers, from being denied the right to vote to being paid less than their male counterparts for the same work. The journey towards gender equality has been long and arduous, but progress has been made. Still, many challenges remain that hinder women from reaching their full potential. Understanding the significance of women's rights is crucial in creating a society where everyone can thrive.

### Introduction 2:

In 2023, women still earn approximately 82 cents for every dollar earned by men, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. This stark fact highlights the ongoing gender pay gap that persists despite decades of advocacy and reform. Women's rights have been a contentious issue for centuries, evolving from the fight for basic suffrage to more complex issues like workplace equality and reproductive rights. Although we have seen significant progress, the journey is far from over. Addressing the multifaceted challenges women face today is essential for achieving true equality and justice.

### Introduction 3:

Some people argue that women in modern societies already have equal rights and opportunities. They point out that women can vote, work, and even run for political office. However, this perspective overlooks the subtle and systemic forms of discrimination that still exist. From the glass ceiling in corporate environments to the underrepresentation of women in STEM fields, gender inequality is far from being a relic of the past. It's crucial to recognize that the fight for women's rights is ongoing and requires continuous effort to dismantle these persistent barriers.

### Introduction 4:

"Women hold up half the sky," a Chinese proverb states, emphasizing the indispensable role women play in society. Despite this inherent value, women have historically been marginalized and denied basic rights. Over time, activists like Susan B. Anthony and Malala Yousafzai have championed the cause, leading to significant advancements in women's rights. Yet, the journey is not complete. In many parts of the world, women still face harassment, limited access to education, and lack of political representation. The quest for gender equality continues to be a vital issue that demands our attention and action.

## In what aspects do the introductions differ?

Notes

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### Step 1: The hook

The purpose of an introduction is to 'hook' the reader; to grab their attention.

**There are many examples of hooks:**

- **Quote:** Start with a relevant quote that captures the theme of your essay.
- **Statistic:** Use a surprising or interesting fact or statistic.
- **Question:** Pose a thought-provoking question.
- **Anecdote:** Share a short story that relates to your topic.
- **Bold Statement:** Make a provocative or controversial claim.
- **Counterargument:** Start with the opposite's argument and invalidate it: "Many people think that...but..."
- **Statement of fact:** Present an interesting fact.

**What are the different hooks do these introductions use?**

**Which introduction uses an anecdote to highlight the challenges faced by women in pursuing certain careers?**

☐ Introduction 1   ☐ Introduction 4   ☐ Introduction 3   ☐ Introduction 2

**Which introduction begins with a statement of fact about the gender pay gap in 2023?**

☐ Introduction 4   ☐ Introduction 1   ☐ Introduction 2   ☐ Introduction 3

**Which introduction opens with a quote to emphasize the value and role of women in society?**

☐ Introduction 1   ☐ Introduction 4   ☐ Introduction 2   ☐ Introduction 3

**Which introduction presents a counterargument to the belief that women already have equal rights and opportunities?**

☐ Introduction 1   ☐ Introduction 4   ☐ Introduction 3   ☐ Introduction 2

**Which introduction discusses historical figures and significant advancements in women's rights but emphasizes that the journey is not complete?**

☐ Introduction 4   ☐ Introduction 2   ☐ Introduction 3   ☐ Introduction 1



## Structuring an introduction

**Step 2: Context** - After your hook, you should provide some background information, historical context or a summary of the issues you're discussing.

**Step 3: The thesis statement** - The thesis is the most important part of your introduction. It is a one-sentence summary of the main point or argument of your essay.

Note: Some people prefer an explicit phrasing of the thesis statement that start with something like "In this essay I will demonstrate...", "This essay will evaluate...", others prefer an implicit transition to the main part.

## Practice writing your own introductions



### Common Mistakes to Avoid

- **Too General:** Starting with overly broad statements or clichés like "Throughout history..." or "In today's society..."
- **No Thesis:** Failing to present a clear argument or point of view.
- **No Engagement:** Using a boring hook or not using one at all.
- **Too Much Detail:** Providing too much background information in the introduction.

Assess to what extent the cartoon\* reflects what the Jongs have experienced in the US. (\* cf. our worksheet with Emma Lazarus`poem and the cartoon)

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### Tip for the teacher

To practice writing a thesis statement, continue with [this worksheet](#).