

# HOW TO WRITE A STRONG INTRODUCTION

WRITING AN ENGAGING INTRODUCTION CAN SEEM DAUNTING, BUT NEVER FEAR! YOU ONLY NEED TO KNOW THREE BASIC ELEMENTS TO WRITE AN EFFECTIVE INTRODUCTION: A **HOOK**, A **TRANSITION**, AND A **THESIS STATEMENT**.

## 1. HOOK YOUR READER.

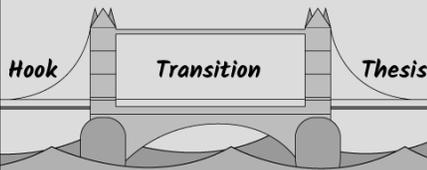


SOMETIMES CALLED A **GRABBER**, A **HOOK** IS A CREATIVE WAY TO CATCH YOUR READER'S ATTENTION AND MAKE THEM WANT TO READ MORE.

### HOOK STRATEGIES:

Unusual or Shocking Fact • Personal Anecdote or Short Story  
Vivid Description • Rhetorical Question • Quotation and Analysis

## 2. TRANSITION TO THE TOPIC.



NEXT, **TRANSITION** TO YOUR MAIN TOPIC. IN THIS SECTION, ASK YOURSELF:

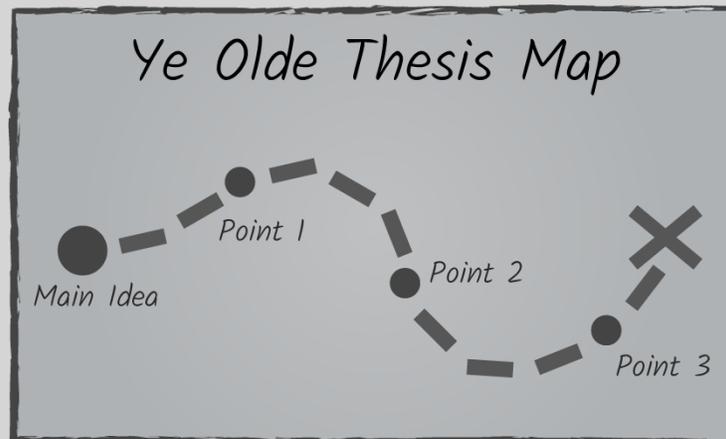
WHAT IS THE LARGER TOPIC ON WHICH I'M WRITING?

IS THERE BACKGROUND INFORMATION THE READER NEEDS?

THIS IS A MOMENT TO MAKE THAT CONNECTION, AS IT BUILDS A **BRIDGE** TO YOUR THESIS STATEMENT.

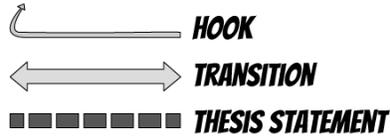
## 3. PREVIEW YOUR POINTS IN A THESIS STATEMENT.

YOUR **THESIS STATEMENT** IS THE MAIN IDEA, OR ARGUMENT, ABOUT WHICH YOU'RE WRITING; IT SHOULD ALSO PREVIEW THE POINTS YOU WILL MAKE THROUGHOUT. THINK OF IT AS A **MAP** OF IDEAS YOU'RE DRAWING FOR THE READER SO THAT THEY KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING.



YOU CAN WRITE YOUR THESIS IN ONE SENTENCE, OR YOU CAN BREAK IT UP OVER TWO SENTENCES.

# EXAMPLE INTRODUCTION



Every sixty seconds, two people die by drowning. Multiply that through the year, and that's 1.2 million lives lost in pools, rivers, lakes, and oceans. Drownings are so commonplace because many people do not recognize the signs; drowning simply does not look like we think it should. However, lifeguards know what to look for when it comes to safety around water. They are constantly watching out for peril while the public is having fun, for which they should be lauded. Lifeguards are heroes because they work in dangerous conditions, prevent accidents, and save lives.

THE HOOK USES A SHOCKING FACT TO GRAB THE READER'S ATTENTION.

THE TRANSITION BUILDS A BRIDGE FROM THE FACT IN THE HOOK TO THE MAIN ESSAY TOPIC OF LIFEGUARDS.

THE THESIS STATES THE MAIN IDEA OF THE ESSAY AND LISTS THE POINTS THE WRITER WILL DEVELOP IN SUPPORT.

## HOOK PRACTICE

**Directions:** Each of the following hooks could be used for the same essay prompt as the example above, and each uses a different hook strategy. Identify which strategy each hook uses.

A striking figure, clad in red Lycra, surveys her territory from a white tower. Black plastic masks her eyes, which scan the scene below looking for trouble. Suddenly she hears a splash and a scream. In a flash, she dives from her tower into action. Her lightning speed and super strength help her scoop the victim from the water in seconds. Before he knows what happened, the little boy she saved is safe and sound on solid ground. He turns to thank her, but she has already disappeared back to her tower, ready to save the day again.

What makes a hero? Is it feats of superhuman strength? Is it incredible cunning and courage? Or is it more self-effacing than that? Could it be that true heroism is working in service to others when you could just as easily be having fun?

My parents told me never to go swimming by myself; they claimed it was too dangerous. But one summer when I was 13, there was a particularly scorching day, and I needed to cool down. I trekked down to the beach near our house to go for a quick swim. The ocean looked clear and inviting. However, within moments of immersing myself in the cool water, I was thrust away from the shore by an aggressive rip current. My arms flailed, and I cried for help, but the water kept pulling me farther away from shore, and there was no one in sight. For a few minutes, I was sure I was going to die.

"That person who helps others simply because it should or must be done, and because it is the right thing to do, is indeed without a doubt, a real superhero" (Stan Lee). Comic book superheroes like Spiderman and Captain Marvel use their extraordinary talents to save citizens from dangerous villains. They set the standard for heroic acts. However, even their famed creator Stan Lee acknowledges that true heroes aren't defined by their capes; they are defined by a strong moral compass and acts of service to others.