**Introduction**

The introduction should be designed to attract the reader's attention and give her an idea of the essay's focus.

1. Begin with an attention grabber.

The attention grabber you use is up to you, but here are some ideas:

* + Startling information  
    This information must be true and verifiable, and it doesn't need to be totally new to your readers. It could simply be a pertinent fact that explicitly illustrates the point you wish to make.  
    If you use a piece of startling information, follow it with a sentence or two of [elaboration](http://lklivingston.tripod.com/essay/body.html#elaboration).
  + Anecdote  
    An *anecdote* is a story that illustrates a point.  
    Be sure your anecdote is short, to the point, and relevant to your topic. This can be a very effective opener for your essay, but use it carefully.
  + Dialogue  
    An appropriate dialogue does not have to identify the speakers, but the reader must understand the point you are trying to convey. Use only two or three exchanges between speakers to make your point.  
    Follow dialogue with a sentence or two of [elaboration](http://lklivingston.tripod.com/essay/body.html#elaboration).
  + Summary Information  
    A few sentences explaining your topic in general terms can lead the reader gently to your thesis. Each sentence should become gradually more specific, until you reach your thesis.
  + Famous Person/Quote

A few sentences about how this topic relates to a famous person or a famous quote followed by a couple of sentences to expand on it can add star appeal to grab the reader’s attention.

* + Historical Review

Sometimes it is necessary to write a few sentences explaining background information that is needed for the reader to understand your topic. However, don’t take too long to get to the point.

1. If the attention grabber was only a sentence or two, add one or two more sentences that will lead the reader from your opening to your thesis statement.
2. Typically, you will finish the paragraph with your thesis statement.