

How to Write an Effective Introduction

A good introduction in an argumentative essay acts like a good opening statement in a trial. Just like a lawyer, a writer must present the issue at hand, give background, and put forth the main argument -- all in a logical, intellectual and persuasive way.

Start With a Hook

Start your introduction with a sentence that gets the reader interested in the topic. To pique the reader's interest, you can begin with a quote, a personal story, a surprising statistic or an interesting question.

Include Background

Providing readers with background on the topic allows them to better understand the issue being presented. This information provides context and history that can be crucial to explaining and arguing your point.

State Your Thesis

The thesis is the essence of an argumentative essay. In a single, clear sentence, it sums up what point you are trying to make. The thesis statement should assert a position on a particular issue -- one that a reader can potentially argue against.

Introduction Activity

On the back of this paper are two well-written introductions. Read through each of them carefully one time. Then go back and re-read them and mark them as follows:

- Put "quotation marks" around the hook
- Underline all of the background information
- Circle the thesis statement

****Every sentence belongs in one of these parts.

SAMPLE INTRODUCTIONS

School Choice – An Educational Custom Fit

Imagine if only one size of pants were sold in stores and government regulations wouldn't allow any other size to be made available to consumers. This may sound crazy but it's much like what's happening with the education of our nation's children. As Americans we enjoy a wide range of personal choice, and thankfully it includes our ability to select the pants that fit us best. But think for a moment about traditional public education. For decades the public school system has offered a one size fits all approach to educating our nation's children. As we approached the 21st century, the public school system began to show its age. More and more children began to fall behind in a rapidly changing environment marked by the introduction of personal computers and later the internet. Sensing a need for change, many people began to push for new educational models that would keep up with the times. This marked the beginning of the school choice movement. Both charter schools and school voucher programs are collectively referred to as "school choice" initiatives, in that they allow parents freedom to choose individualized education options for their children that are outside of the traditional "one size fits all" public school system. A school voucher program provides parents with certificates that are used to pay for education at a school of their choice, rather than the public school to which they are assigned. Charter schools on the other hand are publicly funded schools that have been freed from inefficient public school system rules and regulations in exchange for accountability to produce positive, measurable results. These agreed to results are set forth in each school's Liles 2 charter. The ability for parents to choose an education path that is best for their children is an exciting opportunity currently revolutionizing public education.

School Choice – An Unwise Option

The topic of charter schools and vouchers is an ongoing debate that is currently being argued in places from the local school board meetings to state supreme courts. Both charter schools and school voucher programs are collectively referred to as "school choice" initiatives, in that they allow parents to choose educational options for their children that are outside of the traditional public school system. A school voucher program provides parents with certificates that are used to pay for education at a school of their choice, rather than the public school to which they are assigned. Charter schools on the other hand are publicly funded schools that have been freed from some of the rules, regulations, and statutes that apply to other public schools. In exchange, charter schools have specialized accountability for producing certain results, which are set forth in each school's charter. As Americans we enjoy choices and often associate choice as something positive. Being able to choose a school may sound like a reasonable initiative on the surface, but after a closer look it has serious problems. School choice turns out to not only be a bad idea; it's also a violation of our constitution.