

Reading Enrichment
Introduction/Conclusion Workshop

Now that you have written drafts of your claim and body paragraphs, we will shift our attention to developing introduction and concluding paragraphs. Remember that everything in the essay is based on the claim, including your intro and conclusion.

Introductions

Attention-Getter or Hook:

The job here is to draw your reader's interest right away. Avoid immediately launching into your analysis of the text. Instead, think about your claim. All of us essentially have the same claim at this point (it is necessary to receive help from others to overcome difficulties in life). Your attention-getter/hook should relate directly to the claim.

Effective attention-getters can use any one of these methods (there are others, but these are a good starting point):

- 1) A personal anecdote from your own experience(s) that reflects the theme. The more specific the better. Think of it as telling a very short story from your own life.
- 2) A connection to another text (book, story, film, song, etc.). Themes are often universal, and they show up in multiple pieces of art. How do we see the theme in your claim demonstrated in other areas?
- 3) A connection to a real-life event (contemporary news stories, issues or controversies). One way to contextualize your analysis is by comparing it to an important, timely news story. Frame your argument by comparing it to an important event from today.

Your attention-getter should be short, but not too short. Somewhere in the 3-5 sentence range is appropriate.

Background:

This is where you will transition to the text itself, providing the most essential details. The following must be included:

1. Title and author
2. Basic plot summary/conflict description
3. Important characters

All of this leads towards your **claim**, which for now should be the last sentence in your introductory paragraph.

Conclusion

There's nothing more boring (or unnecessary) than a concluding paragraph that does nothing more than simply restate your claim. This is only a four paragraph essay, so your reader probably hasn't forgotten your argument. Instead let's think of ways to extend and go beyond summary. You can (and probably should) remind the reader of your claim, but don't stop there.

Here are some helpful strategies to go **beyond summary** (pick one):

1. **Revisit your attention-getter or hook.** This is a clear signifier to the reader that you're about to wrap up your analysis. For example, if you began with an anecdote from your own experiences, you can refer back to this memory and talk about how it changed your perspective. You can discuss how your claim applies to your own situation. Likewise, if your hook is a reference to another text or a contemporary news issue, you can share how your claim applies to both the issue and Cal's experiences. The possibilities are endless.
2. Think about the **overall significance** of the issue. If all our claims are based on the idea of relying on helping hands to overcome adversity, talk about the significance of having others as a support system, or why it's important to help other people.
3. Another strategy is to consider the **implications** of an issue. For example, if you are arguing that someone needs a helping hand to overcome adversity, what happens to people that aren't able to find that help? Explore different perspectives on your position and address how this applies outside of the text.

The intro and conclusion aren't places to include textual evidence (that belongs in your body paragraph). Instead, focus on the big picture (what is universal about the theme you have identified?).

And please...please, please, please...don't begin your final paragraph with "In conclusion,...".

Use the rest of this period to draft your introduction and conclusion.

You should have a finished draft of your essay completed for tomorrow's class.