

Introduction Paragraphs

- An introduction paragraph primes the reader for the rest of the paper. Instead of approaching the topic blindly, the introduction provides the reader with a frame of reference for the information that follows.

Structure¹

- In the first sentence, authors **introduce the topic** with a broad opening sentence (“broad opener”) that presents the topic in a way that grabs their attention, also known as the “hook.”
- Writers then **provide the context** for the topic so that the audience will understand the evidence detailed in the body of the paper.
- Authors also use several sentences to **state the problems and consequences** or explain the **key themes** of the topic.
 1. For informative papers, writers need to outline the situations or issues surrounding the topic that they will later discuss in the body paragraphs.
 2. For argumentative papers, writers need to introduce both points of view on a topic or issue that they will later analyze in the body paragraphs.
- Lastly, writers **conclude with the thesis statement**—See the “Composing Thesis Statements” handout for more information.

Informative Example

The social network Facebook holds an unprecedented amount of influence in modern culture. If Facebook were a country, its 1,550,000,000 active accounts would make it the largest nation in the world (Statistica, 2016). Not only has a large portion of the world’s population created Facebooks accounts, but Facebook also holds an important role in many individuals’ lives. People use Facebook to create plans, keep up with old friends, relieve boredom, and much more. However, Facebook did not get to this point of influence by itself. While it is a giant, it is a giant standing on the shoulders of other giants, building on top of pre-existing successful forms of networking and communication. As with any cultural phenomenon, however, one must examine how it ought to be used in a Christian context. If Christians are to give over every aspect of their lives to the Lord, they must figure out how to effectively reveal Christ’s love as they use this medium. Though Facebook has risen to a powerful state in society by combining its predecessors’ best features, Christians must tread with caution while using it, making sure to follow the guidelines for relationships presented in the Bible.

1. Leads with broad opener/hook
- 2-4. Provides context surrounding Facebook popularity
- 5-6. States key theme: Facebook developed by building off other forms of communication.
- 7-8. Introduces other key theme by explaining issues surrounding Christianity and Facebook
9. Ends with thesis statement

Conclusion Paragraphs²

- A conclusion paragraph gives the audience an overview of the paper. It rephrases the thesis statement from the introduction and summarizes the assertions of the body paragraphs. By concluding this way, the writer confirms the thesis and solidifies the audience's understanding of the argument in its entirety.
 1. Conclusion paragraphs do not introduce new pieces of evidence. Simplicity is best for a clear or convincing message.

Structure

1. Writers begin a concluding paragraph by **reframing the thesis** to remind the audience of the overall point of the paper.
2. Next, authors **summarize the main assertions** from the body paragraphs to help the audience understand the main pieces of evidence. They reiterate the synthesis once more, showing how all of the pieces of evidence support the thesis statement.
3. Writers should include a "**call to action**" or "**future research possibilities**" if additional action or research is needed to reach a solution or solidify research findings.
4. Lastly, writers **explain how their research fits into the broader context of scholarship**, thus revealing the meaning and importance of the paper as a whole.

Informative Example

Overall, Facebook is an effective communication tool that Christians should learn to use effectively due to its ability for creating outreach opportunities and developing community. Its predecessors and influence stretched from the invention of writing at the beginning of history to modern internet developments. Facebook has risen to its present powerful state in society by building off its predecessor's best elements, such as the printing press's mass permanence, the telegraph's speed, and Friendster's social connectivity. However, Christians must tread with caution while using it, making sure to follow the guidelines for relationships presented in the Bible. In the future, Facebook could seek to extend itself beyond the realms of a typical social network. For example, Facebook could seek to reduce the barriers between people by adding technologies that simulate typical personal contact, such as group video calls. No matter where it goes next, Facebook is on the rise, constantly adding more features, and is likely to change the face of digital communications.

1. Reframed thesis statement

2-4. Summarized main assertions from body paragraphs

5-6. Included calls to action

7. Contextualized research to broader framework of the communications field