Parts of an Essay: Introduction

Purpose
What is an introduction?
Why is it important?

An Introduction includes:

**Elements**
- Hooks, Background, Thesis & Transitions.

**Techniques**
- Personalization, Surprise, Relevance, Clarity.

**Pitfalls to Avoid**
- Things that make your introduction seem bland, messy and unprofessional.

**Common Tips:**
- Things that should be kept in mind when writing your introduction.

**Purpose of an Introduction**
1. **Engagement:**
   Initial engagement encourages people to continue reading or listening.
2. **Contextualization:**
   Provides context for the main content.
3. **Tone:**
   Sets the tone for the rest of the piece.

**Elements of an Introduction**

**The Hook:**
- Types of hooks that can be used for the intro include: factual, statements, quotations, definition, etc.
- Make sure to keep the audience, tone, and purpose of the essay in mind when creating the hook.

**Background:**
- Helps set the context for your topic.
- Gives readers of the audience a foundation for understanding the subject matter.

**Thesis:**
- Defines the main point or argument of your work.
- Asserts a specific claim or position on an issue.
- Tells the reader or audience what to expect from the rest of your work. (serves as a guide for your reader and yourself as a writer)

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Types of Techniques

1. **Personalization:**
   Share personal connection/experience relating to the topic.

2. **Surprise/Intrigue:**
   Unexpected facts/statements/statistics.

3. **Relevance:**
   Ensure that all of the elements have a purpose. Avoid including irrelevant information.

4. **Clarity/Conciseness:**
   Use clear and straightforward language. Avoid overly complex or convoluted sentences.

5. **Structure:**
   Provide a basic structure for your writing.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

1. **Clichés and Overused Openings**
   “Once upon a time...” “In a galaxy far far away...”

2. **Overly Broad or General Statements**
   “Throughout history, people have always had dreams and aspirations.” “Don’t forget to floss.”

3. **Excessive Background Information**
   Too much information might make the reader get lost in simple content, as well as overwhelm them.

4. **Jargon or Technical Language**
   Only use it if it is appropriate.

Practical Tips for Writing an Introduction

1. Start the introduction after writing the body of the essay.
2. Revise and edit the introduction multiple times.
3. Seek feedback from peers or instructors.
4. Read and analyze great introductions in published essays for inspiration.
5. VISIT THE UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER (UWC)!!!

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