Introductions

Introductions act as a funnel by…

1. Beginning with a **hook** to grab readers’ attention
2. Moving from **general** statements to sentences that narrow in more specifically on the paper’s topic
3. Providing any **background** information necessary to understand the topic
4. Finally, ending with a **thesis**

**Good opening lines often grab the reader’s attention by doing one of the following:**

- Asking a provoking question
- Sharing a brief anecdote
- Making a historical comparison or contrast
- Creating an image by using description
- Describing a problem or dilemma
- Providing a startling fact

**Matters of Style:**

- Be direct and efficient in your phrasing. Avoid using expressions such as "Now I will tell you about . . .," "I would like to discuss . . .,” or "In my paper I will explain . . .,"
- Avoid absolute statements like “Everyone knows that…” or “All can agree that…”
- Avoid clichés and overused phrases like “Since the dawn of time…” and “Throughout history…”
- State your opinions as fact. Instead of saying, “I believe it is important to remember…” just say “It is important to remember.” Avoid any use of the phrases “In my opinion,” “I think,” or “I believe.”

*Look at the back of this handout to see an example*
In the following example, each sentence of the introductory paragraph is numbered to match one of the following components:

1. A general statement with a vivid “hook”
2. Brief background information about the topic
3. Sentences that begin to narrow the general topic’s focus
4. A final thesis providing a clear claim

Kabuki Style

1 Painted faces, expressive masks, and outlandish costumes—these are the building blocks of Kabuki theatre. 2 Birthed in 1603, this theatrical form has its roots in Japan and has remained a cultural staple in that region for centuries. 3 Although many facets of Kabuki have evolved over the years, one thing that has remained constant is its highly stylized aesthetic. 3 Often described as more art than performance, Kabuki theatre prioritizes visual impact over spoken dialogue while utilizing melodramatic plotlines to appeal to a wide audience. 4 Kabuki’s uniquely exaggerated style, best exemplified by the popular Minamoto character, ultimately reflects how the aristocratic art scene of the Edo period was adapted to suit the masses.