

## EFFECTIVE INTRODUCTIONS

INTRODUCTIONS SHOULD GET THE READER'S ATTENTION AND STATE THE WRITER'S THESIS. THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME WAYS OF GETTING THE READER'S ATTENTION AND/OR BRINGING HIM OR HER "UP TO SPEED" ON THE WRITER'S TOPIC. THE ATTENTION-GETTER MIGHT CONTAIN THE THESIS OR IT MIGHT NOT. A COMMON PROBLEM IN AN INTRODUCTION IS THE LACK OF A SMOOTH TRANSITION BETWEEN THE ATTENTION-GETTER AND THE THESIS.

THE ATTENTION-GETTER EXAMPLES BELOW ARE FROM LOUISE G. RORABACKER, ASSIGNMENTS IN EXPOSITION, 5<sup>TH</sup> EDITION.

1. ASK A QUESTION—OFTEN OVERUSED. DON'T START EVERY PAPER WITH A QUESTION.
  - a. WHAT IS HOMECOMING? HOMECOMING IS TROUBLE. HOMECOMING IS JOY. HOMECOMING IS HURRY, EXCITEMENT, SPLENDOR, LABOR, FUN, SENTIMENTALISM.
  - b. IS MY PERSONALITY AT THE MERCY OF A GROUP OF DUCTLESS GLANDS? MODERN SCIENCE WOULD SEEM TO SAY SO.
2. MAKE A STARTLING STATEMENT—IT COULD INCLUDE A STATISTIC THAT WOULD SURPRISE READERS.
  - a. ROBOT! THE VERY TERM SETS THE IMAGINATION TO WORK AND EVOKES SCENES IN WHICH GIANT MONSTERS ARE KILLING OFF HORDS OF PEOPLE, BLOOD IS FLOWING IN STREAMS AROUND THE WRECKAGE OF BUILDINGS, AND PEOPLE ARE RUNNING HELPLESSLY TOO AND FRO.
  - b. IF YOU ARE AN "I DON'T BELIEVE IT" READER, DON'T GO ON.
3. TELL A STORY—ALSO CALLED ANECDOTE OR NARRATIVE. USED OFTEN IN NEWSMAGAZINES LIKE NEWSWEEK AND TIME. INVOLVES CHARACTERS ACTING OVER TIME.
  - a. A BUGLE SOUNDS. THE BAND STRIKES UP THE PROCESSIONAL MARCH.
  - b. SWEAT DRIPPED OFF MY FACE. MY NEW SHIRT WAS TORN. I WAS BREATHING HARD. BUT I HAD JUST WON, AT AGE TEN, MY FIRST FIGHT.
4. USE A QUOTATION—CHOOSE AN APPROPRIATE STANZA OF POETRY, VERSE FROM THE BIBLE, LINE OF PROSE, OLD SAYING, OR SONG LYRIC.

- a. AS FRANCIS BACON ONCE WROTE, "SOME BOOKS ARE TO BE TASTED, OTHERS TO BE SWALLOWED, AND SOME FEW TO BE CHEWED AND DIGESTED." ONE OF THOSE "FEW" IS CERTAINLY S. I. SAYAKAWA'S LANGUAGE IN ACTION.
  - b. "YOU WOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD ME HAD YOU WAITED." DOWSON, IN THAT LINE FROM HIS POEM OF THE SAME TITLE, WRITES THE STORY OF HIS LIFE.
5. GIVE THE HISTORY OR BACKGROUND OF THE TOPIC SO THAT THE READER CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT.
  - a. THE RAPIDLY GROWING NUMBERS OF MY IMMEDIATE FAMILY LED TO OUR DEVELOPING A NOVEL AND HIGHLY SATISFYING PROGRAM OF CHRISTMAS GIVING.
  - b. IF ENGLAND CAN BE CALLED THE MOTHER OF AUSTRALIA, AMERICA SHOULD BE NAMED ITS FATHER, FOR THE NEW COUNTRY WAS SETTLED AS AN INDIRECT RESULT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.
6. STATE THE PROBLEM TO BE DISCUSSED.
  - a. HOUSING FOR INDEPENDENT STUDENTS SHOULD BE AS DESIRABLE AND HEALTHFUL AS FOR FRATERNITY STUDENTS.
  - b. THE WOMAN IN COLLEGE TODAY IS A TYPE ENTIRELY DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE OF YESTERDAY.