

Introductions:

- Present a clear and specific thesis statement
- Target a specific audience
- Provide context and background information to support thesis
- Define any key terms that pertain to discussion
- Establish tone (informative, persuasive, serious, humorous, personal, formal, or informal)

Conclusions:

- Summarize main points
- Recall key information
- Make strong, concise statements that will stay in readers' minds
- Use the same unique elements found in introduction to give the essay symmetry, such as apt quotation, provocative question, dramatic anecdote, or hard fact

What to avoid in introductions:

- Being too vague or telling readers the obvious
- Referring to writing intentions (In this essay, I will . . .)
- Using extravagant claims (This essay will prove . . .)
- Restating the assigned question
- Using clichés
- Asking questions that the essay does not answer

What to avoid in conclusions:

- Using the phrase "In conclusion . . ."
- Apologizing for inadequacy or for holding opinions
- Introducing a completely new argument or direction
- Contradicting what was said previously
- Being too sweeping (condemning the whole because of the part)

Works Cited

- Lunsford, Andrea A. *The Everyday Writer*. 5th Edition. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012. Print.
- Unknown. "How to Write an Introduction." *WhiteSmoke*. WhiteSmoke Inc., n.d. Web. 19 Nov 2012. <www.whitesmoke.com/how-to-write-an-introduction>.