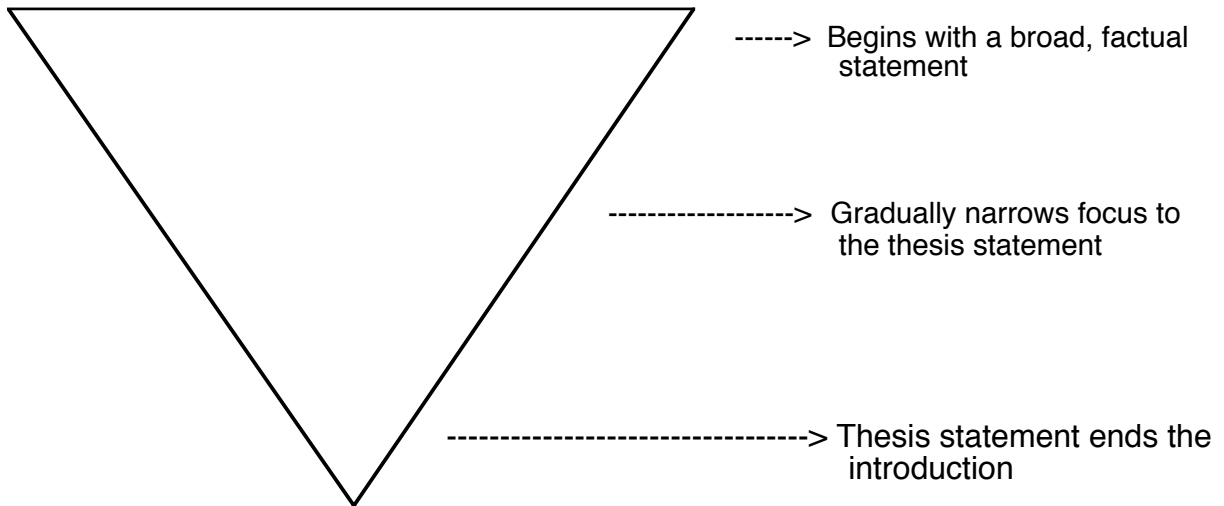


The Introductory Paragraph



1. Decide on your thesis statement first! You must know the direction of your paper before you can begin writing it.

A thesis statement is one concise arguable statement which will be the focus of an entire paper.

Example: *Mark Twain uses Jim in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn to illustrate the evils of slavery.*

An antithesis is the opposite opinion of the thesis. This is the opposite point of view from your thesis.

Example: *Mark Twain uses Jim in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn to illustrate the advantages of slavery and its social goodness.*

2. Next, pull out a theme from your thesis statement related to the literary work you are analyzing.

Example: *Slavery became a profitable but controversial enterprise during the 1700s and 1800s.*

This will connect the beginning of your introduction to the end of it.

3. Pull one word or phrase from the first sentence of your introduction and use it in the second sentence. This will connect your first two sentences together. Additionally, you need to begin to narrow your focus towards your thesis statement.

Example: *This controversy spread throughout the world and gradually invaded the minds of the American public.*

Continue to pull a word, phrase, or idea from each sentence to use in the next one. Eventually you will connect each sentence until you reach your thesis statement.

4. For a basic introductory paragraph, connect your sentences and narrow the focus in the following pattern:
 - a) Use a theme extracted from your thesis (and present in the novel)
 - b) Narrow to literature
 - c) Narrow to the literary work(s) you are using
 - d) Narrow to the character, motif, or idea in the novel
 - e) Narrow to your thesis statement

Example:

Slavery became a profitable but controversial enterprise during the 1700s and 1800s around the world. This controversy spread rapidly and gradually invaded the minds of the American public. While the debate over slavery raged in American political arenas, it also became a heated topic in the literary works of the 1800s. Mark Twain expresses his views on the subject in his American classic, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Twain's character, Jim (a black slave), embodies this argument in his struggle for freedom. Twain uses Jim to illustrate the evils of slavery.