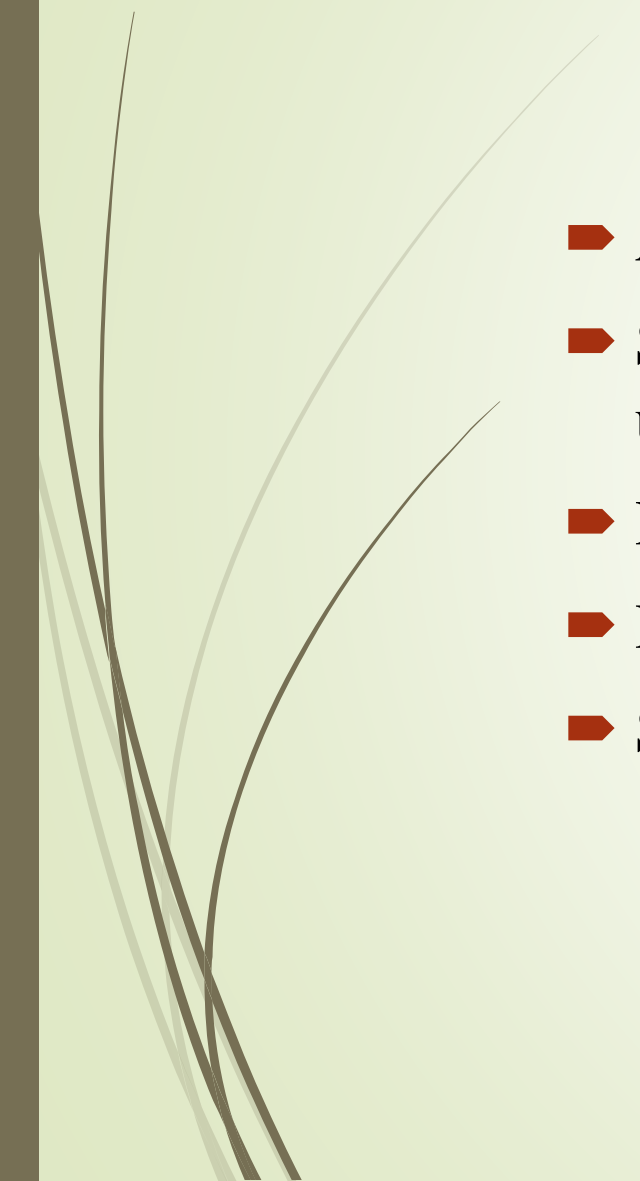




Introductory Paragraph

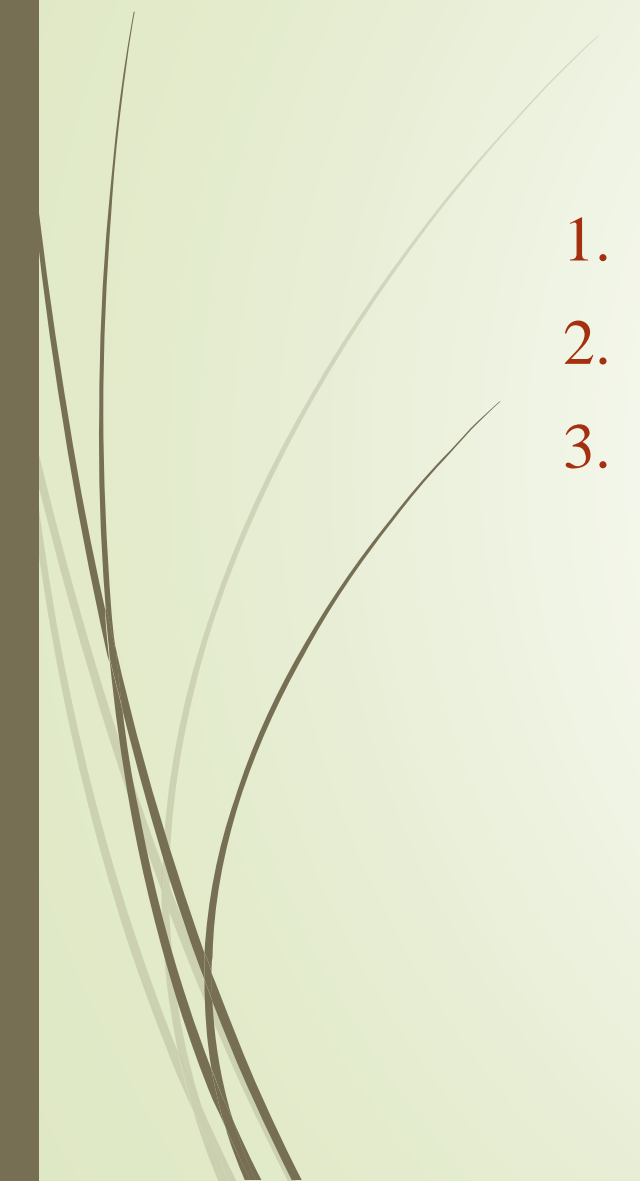


Functions of the Introduction

- Attracts the reader's interest
 - Supplies the background information that a reader may need to understand the topic
 - Provides a thesis statement
 - Presents the plan of development
 - Set tone for the rest of the essay
- 



Parts of Introductory Paragraph

1. Motivator / Attention Grabber
 2. Thesis Statement
 3. Overview of Main Body Points
- 



Motivator

- It is called “Hook” or “Attention-Grabber”
- It hooks the attention of the reader
- It must lead to thesis statement
- There are many kinds of motivators:
 - General to specific Idea
 - Use a quotation or saying
 - Ask a thought provoking question
 - Begin with a surprising fact or idea
 - Use an incident or brief story



General to Specific Idea

Broad and general statements give the readers background information about the topic and then the topic is further narrowed to thesis statement.

Example:

Bookstore shelves today are crammed with dozens of different diet books. The American public seems willing to try any sort of diet, especially the ones that promise instant, miraculous results. Authors are more than willing to invent new fad diets to cash in on this craze. Unfortunately, some of these fad diets are ineffective or even unsafe. One of the worst fad diets is the Palm Beach diet. It is impractical, doesn't achieve results, and is a sure route to poor nutrition.



Use a Quotation or Saying

Using a quotation in introductory paragraph catches readers' attention and shows that you have explored what others have to say about the subject.

Example:

"Fish and visitors," wrote Benjamin Franklin, "begin to smell after three days." Last summer, when my sister and her family came to spend their two-week vacation with us, I became convinced that Franklin was right. After only three days, I was thoroughly sick of my brother-in-law's corny jokes, my sister's endless complaints about her body, and their children's constant invasions of our privacy.



Ask a Thought Provoking Question

Questions grasp reader's curiosity instantly without any effort.

Example:

Who is a hero? A guy slamming bad guys down or some stylish dude, or do we also use this “word” to refer to some real life people. Well, if we think about real life heroes, who is a hero to you? To me a hero is someone who goes through a lot of hardships but at the ends tries to help other people with the same problem he went through. My hero is Dave Pelzer.



Begin with a surprising Fact or Idea

A surprising fact or idea arouses the reader's curiosity about how you will support this initial startling statement.

Example:

Millions of Law-abiding Americans are physically addicted to caffeine and most of them do not even know it. Caffeine is a powerful central nervous system stimulant with substantial addiction potential. When deprived of their caffeine, addicts experience often severe withdrawal symptoms, which may include a throbbing headache, disorientation, constipation, nausea, sluggishness, depression, and irritability. As with other addictive drugs, heavy users develop a tolerance and require higher doses to obtain the expected effect.



Use an Incident or Brief Story

Stories are naturally interesting. They appeal to a reader's curiosity. The story should be brief and should be related to your main idea.

Example:

Early Sunday morning the young mother dressed her little girl warmly and gave her a candy bar, a picture book, and a well-worn stuffed rabbit. Together, they drove downtown to a Methodist church. There the mother told the little girl to wait on the stone steps until children began arriving for Sunday school. Then the young mother drove off, abandoning her five-year old because she couldn't cope with being a parent anymore. This incident is one of thousands of cases of child neglect and abuse that occur annually. Perhaps the automatic right to become a parent should no longer exist. Would-be parents should be forced to apply for parental licenses for which they would have to meet three important conditions.



Thesis Statement

- Thesis statement is the main point or central idea of the essay
- It tells reader that what is the topic of the essay and what is the main point
- The topic of the thesis statement should not be too broad or too narrow
- General topic should be narrowed down
- Thesis statement must make a point about a limited subject




Vacations

**Summer
vacation**

Camping

First camping trip

**My first camping trip was
a disastrous experience**



Subject+Opinion+Main Points=Thesis Statement

- Subject: The topic or material you are writing about
- Opinion: The attitude, position, or feeling you have regarding your topic (subject)
- Main Points: Facts and reasons used to support your *opinion* about your *subject*



Baseball Cards

Subject

- Collecting Baseball cards

Opinion

- Is a good investment

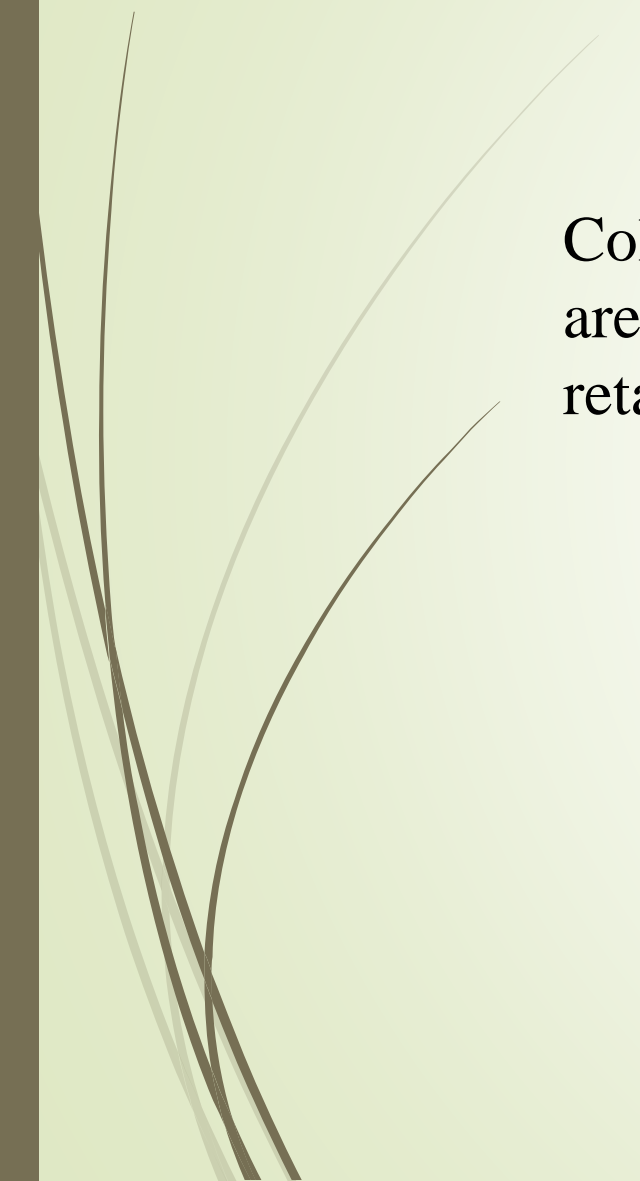
Main Points

- Relatively inexpensive when new
- Become valuable
- Retain value



Thesis Statement

Collecting baseball cards is a good investment because baseball cards are relatively inexpensive when new, become valuable quickly, and retain the value indefinitely.





College Study Habits

Subject

- College Students' study habits

Opinion

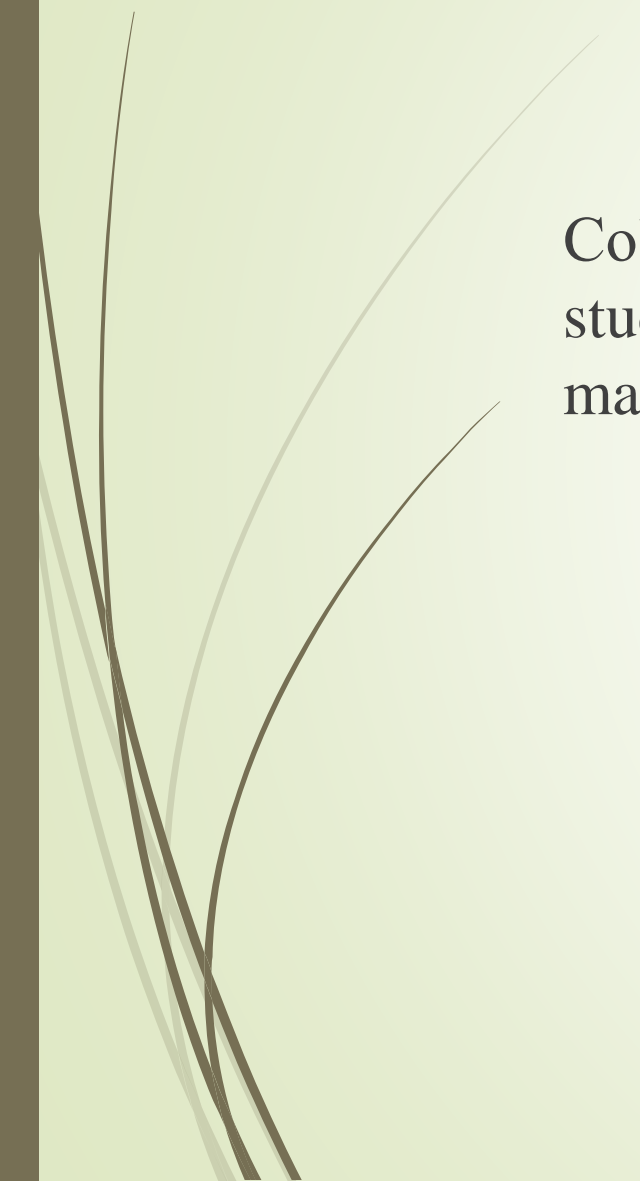
- Ways to improve

Main Points

- Study in a quiet environment
- Pay attention in class
- Manage their time well



Thesis Statement



College students' study habits can be improved by several ways by studying in a quiet environment, paying attention in class and managing their time well.



Stress in Students



Subject

- Stress in students

Opinion

- Methods to handle

Main Points

- Eating more fruits
- Breathing deeply
- Sharing feelings with friends



Thesis Statement

The three ways students can handle stress better are eating more fruit, breathing deeply and sharing their feelings with friends.

Or

Students can handle stress better by using three important methods that are eating more fruit, breathing deeply and sharing their feelings with friends.



Common Errors in Thesis Statement

1. Write statements, not announcements
 - I want to talk about the crime wave in our country
 - The recent crime wave in our city has several apparent causes
2. Avoid statements that are too broad
 - Men and women are very different
 - Men and women are often treated very differently in the work place
3. Avoid statements that are too narrow
 - The speed limit near my home is sixty-five miles per hour
 - The speed limit near my home should be lowered to fifty-five miles per hour for several reasons



Continued..

4. Make sure statements develop only one main idea
 - One of the most serious problems affecting young people today is bullying, and it is time more kids learned the value of helping others
 - One of the most serious problems affecting young people today is bullying



Activity

Identify the Topic and Controlling Idea

1. Our cafeteria would be greatly improved if several changes were made.
2. Celebrities are often poor role models because of the ways they dress, talk, and behave.
3. My first night as a security guard turned out to be one of the most frightening experiences of my life.
4. SUVs are inferior to cars because they are harder to control, more expensive, and dangerous to the environment.
5. The twentieth century produced three inventions that dramatically changed the lives of all Americans.
6. Stress in the fast-food workplace has led to serious physical, psychological, and emotional problems for employees.
7. Living in the city has certain advantages over living in the suburbs.
8. Before moving away from home, every person should have mastered certain key skills.
9. Independent mom-and-pop stores are superior to larger chain stores for a number of reasons.