**Features of an EFFECTIVE Introduction**

Specific

General

PROPOSITION

Link text/s to the question and key concepts

Brief plot outline or description of the text

Introduce text and author

Introduce topic and capture the reader’s interest

**3. What is the key to writing a good introduction?**

**The key to an excellent essay is an excellent proposition and this results from excellent planning.**

**The proposition (thesis statement)** **is** –

* the last sentence in your introduction

highly specific

* most often in the form of a statement
* a direct response/answer to the question.
* A statement that ‘answers the question’ and creates a framework for the argument to come
* the link between the question (general) and your answer (specific)

The proposition gives the essay ***DIRECTION AND FOCUS***.

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| GENERAL THEMATIC STATEMENT  *What is the main theme or idea that your essay will be discussing?*  *This needs to capture the reader’s interest.* |  |
| INTRODUCE TEXT  *Relate text to this broad theme or idea. Don’t forget author/director’s name.* |  |
| BRIEF PLOT OUTLINE |  |
| LINK TEXTS TO THE KEY CONCEPTS/  QUESTION  *Could be techniques, codes, conventions etc.* |  |
| PROPOSITION  *Answer the question in one sentence outlining the direction of your essay, and be specific!* |  |

USING QUOTATIONS

TIP 1

Quotations are not argument - they do not prove anything in themselves. They are EVIDENCE and are used to support the argument.

TIP 2

The best quotation is one word, then two words, then three words… – this forces you to *integrate* a quotation into your sentence/argument and use the words of the writer as your own. Rather than separating argument and evidence, you will be blending them together and this is makes a much more convincing argument.

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| **A poor example:**  *Steve is also represented as psychologically strong and in control. This is seen when he describes how he copes with being in prison: “Well. It’s all a state of mind really…When I turned my back on something, it just disappeared.” This quote shows Steve’s strength of mind and how he ignores circumstance that he cannot control by projecting himself beyond the moment.*  **A better example:**  *Steve is also represented as psychologically strong when he describes coping with prison as being a ‘state of mind’ and that he focuses on other things to make his situation ‘disappear’. This suggests that he is able to control his responses to difficult situations by projecting himself beyond the moment.* |

TIP 3

If you need to change some word in a quotation to make it fit the grammatical sense of a sentence, then place the changed words in parentheses.

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| **Example:**  Text quotation is *“Just love opening up to people”.*  To fit the following sentence, the word ‘love’ needs to be altered:  *Steve’s comment that he ‘just love(s) opening up to people’ is an example of how he frequently uses sarcasm to show his contempt for the situations in which he finds himself.*  Note the parentheses to indicate the addition of the ‘s’ to the word ‘loves’. |

TIP 4

If you need to use different parts of a quotation and want to leave some out some of it, use ellipsis (…) to indicate that the quotation has been amended.

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| **Example:**  About new housing estates:  ***“They got no smell****. No one’s ever lived in them. Or died in them.* ***They got no ghosts.”***  To only use the parts in bold:  *“They got no smell…They got no ghosts.”* |

TIP 5

To quote from a play: there are 2 types of quotations – using dialogue and using stage directions.

* Dialogue: as above
* Stage directions: do not quote the directions, but write about what the audiences sees and hears:

*After Steve realizes that Lisa has been part of the plan to deceive him he treats her violently by grabbing her and slamming onto the seat. Her fear of him is apparent when she is seen as ‘shaking uncontrollably’ as he ‘confidently’ leads her in a dance.*