

## English 095- An Introduction to Introductions

The purpose of an introduction is to introduce the reader to the writer's purpose in writing the essay. After reading the introduction, the reader should know **what the main point of the paper is**, and how it connects to the topic. Of course, introductions can do other things too, like get the reader's attention (which good writing will do anyway), and provide background information. Of course, if the introduction is to tell the reader what the main point of the essay is, that means that the writer must know what that is too! In the samples below, the part of the introduction that tells the main point of the essay is in bold type, and the part that connects it to the topic is underlined. Notice that some parts are both in bold and underlined.

### Sample Introductions:

#### Sample #1: Dreading an Event

Cold sweat was running down my back. I opened my eyes, but all I could see was pitch black. My heart raced, and I could not catch my breath. I opened my mouth to scream, but nothing came out because of the great weight pressed on my chest, preventing me from breathing. My mother jolted me out of this horrifying world with a big shake. "Wake up, honey, you're dreaming again," she soothed.

**This nightmare, or a version of it, haunted my sleep over three years. It made sleeping such a terrifying experience that I grew to dread bedtime.** I started staying up later and later, until I was so tired that could barely stay awake during the day. **The dreams didn't stop until I discovered what I was so afraid of. This taught me that dreams can help us understand events from our conscious lives.**

My horrible dreams began when I was 14 years old. . . .

#### Sample #2

People dread the future for many reasons. Sometimes people get worried about trying something new, like auditioning for a play or interviewing for a new job. Other people might worry about earthquakes or fire. **We all worry when someone we love is very sick, and might die. This happened to me, and it is the time in my life when I most dreaded the future.** My little nephew was sick with cancer, and my whole family was very scared about the possibility of him dying. **When it became clear that he was going to die, and we got even more scared and sad, little Derek taught us the most important lessons I have ever learned.** We need to live every day like it matters, and we need to show the people we love just how much we love them.

#### Sample #3: Topic: Going Through a Lot of Trouble to Help My Friend

When I was growing up, my best friend was a girl named Emily. We used to do everything together, from playing with Barbie dolls, to making prank phone calls, to studying for tests. Whenever I had a problem, whether it was with my dad or math homework, Emily was there to help me. Likewise, I tried to be a good friend to her too. I often helped her with her problems, like when her younger sister stole her allowance, or when she was failing history. We were always there for each other. When we were in the tenth grade, our close friendship was really tested when Emily had a horrible problem. **When Emily found out that she was pregnant, of course I was there for her, and was willing to go through whatever I had to in order to help her.** What really complicated the issue, and made me wonder about our friendship, was that she would not tell me who the father was. **Nevertheless, I went through a lot of trouble to help Emily, and in the process, I learned what it means to love someone without expecting anything in return.**