

Saying Hello: The Essay Introduction

Whoever said first impressions don't count basically had no idea what they were talking about. The introduction is one of the most important parts of your essay to get right. It is, after all, the first impression the reader has of your argument, and a poor introduction does not make a good impression.

Your introduction needs to do 3 things:

1. Introduce the topic
2. State your contention, and
3. Outline the main points of your argument

The introduction should be between 4 and 6 sentences – but no longer. If you find that you can't write your introduction in 4-6 sentences then you are probably starting to give too much away.

Sample introduction: *Will machines overpower the human race?*

Over the twentieth century there has been a marked increase in the developments of complex machines. Change has taken place so rapidly that some people warn that machines will soon overpower the human race. A close look at the developments that have been made and how they have happened disproves such dire predictions. Machines have developed quickly simply because human beings have programmed them to do so. Human beings have the ability to limit the potential of machines and to halt any dangerous, but unforeseen, glitches. Those people who predict the end of human power also fail to acknowledge the crucial element lacking in machines, emotion, without which machines can not have the desire or need to take over the world.

Introduce the topic

... some people warn that machines will soon overpower the human race

State your contention

A close look... disproves such dire predictions

Outline your main points

Human beings (can)

- Para 1 limit the potential of machines
- Para 2 halt... unforeseen, glitches
- Para 3 (without emotion) machines can not have the desire or need to take over

So, does the above introduction do all it should?

Sure does!