

**WRITING LITERARY ANALYSIS
ESSAYS—INTRODUCTIONS**

INTRO PARAGRAPH

Make sure you...

- Mention the title and the author of the text you are writing about (Note: If you are writing your essay by hand, underline novel titles; if you are typing your essay, italicize novel titles. Mention the author by his/her full name the first time; after that, refer to the author by the LAST NAME only.)
- Mention your topic specifically in your intro. If your topic asks you to write about theme, the word “theme” should appear in your intro. If your topic asks you to write about symbolism, the “symbol” or “symbolism” should appear in your intro.
- End with a thesis that answers the question, “So what?”

AND SPEAKING OF THESIS STATEMENTS / SO WHAT????

NOT A GREAT THESIS


- Thesis: Holden's red hunting cap symbolizes his individuality.
- (Great, but so what? Why does this matter?)

ANSWERS THE SO WHAT QUESTION

Thesis: Holden's red hunting cap symbolizes Holden's individuality; however, his self-consciousness about the hat shows us that perhaps he is not yet ready to be the unique individual he thinks he is.

AN INTRO PARAGRAPH

In J.D. Salinger's novel *The Catcher in the Rye*, the protagonist, Holden Caulfield, is a troubled teenager who often finds ways to distance himself from others. Using the excuse that other people are "phonies," Holden seems to believe that he is the only genuine, original individual he knows and often wears a red hunting hat that emphasizes his uniqueness. This red hunting cap symbolizes Holden's individuality; however, his self-consciousness about the hat shows us that perhaps he is not yet ready to be the unique individual he thinks he is.



WHY ARE INTRODUCTIONS SO IMPORTANT?

- They inform your reader of your topic. (duh...)
- They set up the body of your essay. (A strong intro makes the reader want to continue!)
- Rarely does a paper recover from a bad thesis statement.

