

## Effective Essay Openings:

The essay introduction must accomplish two things:

- It must capture the readers' attention.
- It must clearly introduce the topic.

There are several methods of capturing the reader's attention, depending on the audience (please note, I am leaving out a quote for the hook, because you shouldn't be starting your essays with quotes anymore):

- **Definition:** Use sparingly. Too many amateur writers use this method.
- **Question:** Ask a question in the introduction...and answer it in the body.
- **Problem:** Pose a problem in the introduction...and solve it in the body.
- **Statistics:** Make sure they're actual statistics and not something you made up on the way to the library.
- **Comparison:** Take something the reader is unfamiliar with and relate it to something they are familiar with.
- **Metaphor/Simile:** An even more effective comparison for making the complex seem simple.
- **Shocker:** Everybody likes surprises. Unfortunately, it's getting harder to shock people.
- **Summary:** A brief summary piques reader interest.
- **Anecdote:** A short humorous story relevant to the topic eases the reader into the material.
- **Expert opinion:** An expert gives you instant credibility with the reader. Make sure the expert is an actual expert and not your Uncle Fred from Topeka