

**Writing the introductory paragraph  
for an essay about something you have read**

**GENERAL ADVICE: Remember to do this in your opening paragraph:**

- name the author
- name the work
- add a brief summary
- build a bridge to your thesis (a transition)
- state your thesis at the end of the paragraph

**Example #1**

Let's assume that we read the essay "Car-Buying Hints for Beginners" by Felecia Wadsworth. Wadsworth's essay presented several recommendations for first-time car buyers to avoid being stuck with a lemon or spending more than the car is worth. Let's assume that we, too, have been victims of poor car-buying decisions in the past. Because of our experience, we strongly endorse three of her suggestions and want to share them with our reader. Here is a sample thesis paragraph, ending with our thesis sentence

**Sample opening paragraph—**

**In her essay "Car-Buying Hints for Beginners," Felecia Wadsworth presents several recommendations for first-time car buyers. Her hope is to help her readers avoid buying a problem car or paying far more than the car is worth. I, too, was a first-time car buyer once and strongly endorse three of Wadsworth's recommendations.**

*(The body paragraphs discussing the recommendations would follow.)*

**Example #2**

Let's assume that we read an essay "Aliens Among Us" by Natalie Williams. The essay presented several "proofs" that beings from another planet were already on Earth. Let's assume that we found fault with three of her proofs:

**Sample opening paragraph—**

**In her essay "Aliens Among Us," Natalie Williams argues that evidence exists to support the conclusion that aliens from other planets are living among us. She cites as evidence crop circles, UFO reports, and Kurlean auras. Though Williams' evidence seems based on scientific principles, it falls far short of rigorous scientific inquiry. Each of the examples Williams cites is inappropriately interpreted by her and, therefore, flawed.**

*(The body paragraphs discussing the flaws in her proofs would follow.)*