

A Brief Guide to the EE Introduction and Thesis

Introduction: The goal of the introduction is to introduce the topic and provide enough information about it in order to enable the reader to comprehend the significance of your research question. Each extended essay must have a research question. The research question is the central question you are trying to answer through your research and writing of the extended essay. This question, if properly composed, will both enable you to maintain your focus on a topic of narrow and limited scope while also help you to maintain the purpose and orientation of your entire investigation. The research question must be clearly and precisely stated in the introduction. Then, as instructed to you in your training workshops, **bold your research question.** It must be sharply focused so that it is susceptible to effective treatment within the 4000 word limit. Your extended essay will be assessed in part according to the extent to which the essay appropriately addresses and develops the specific research question. The readers will also evaluate your success in collecting information relevant to the research question. Establish the significance of the research question and explain why it is worthy of study. You may also briefly discuss why your topic is of significance to you personally, but indicate this only briefly rather than digressing into a personal storytelling. At the end of the introduction state your thesis (or hypothesis for science). Clearly identify the research question and thesis as such. Briefly and concisely preview your body by providing a “game plan” for the rest of the paper. Note that in your examples you have read, the use of the personal pronoun “I” is acceptable and even common, though do not overuse it here or use it in the much more formal body of your paper. The game plan briefly explains how you intend to answer the research question and support the thesis, that is, how you propose to proceed in the body.

Thesis – This belongs in the introduction, preferably at the end. You must take a position, construct an argument based on evidence, and defend your thesis. The entire essay must be a response to your research question and a coherent, organized, structured, logical, critical, in-depth examination and defense of your thesis. The thesis need not be one sentence long given the length of the body; however, should your thesis require a lengthier answer, keep it general, continuous, and parallel grammatical, and use a transitional word or phrase to connect the different sentences of your thesis together so your reader is absolutely clear of its location. Finally, do not use overly technical language in an attempt to sound formal. This often raises questions rather than impresses your reader. Make sure every word is clear, unambiguous, and precise.

Essentially, if your introduction were to answer just a few questions, here’s what you clearly want to answer when it’s complete:

1. What is your research question?
2. Why is the research question significant and worthy of study?
3. Why is the research question significant to you personally?
4. What is your thesis?
5. What is your game plan for the rest of the essay?