**Essay Lead/Hooks – How do you start an essay?**

Sometimes starting an essay is the hardest part. Think of an essay hook as you would a fishing hook: it's something that grabs a reader and reels him in. The hook for an essay is any interesting sentence that captures attention and keeps the reader reading.

**The hook for an essay often appears as the very first sentence(s) in the** **introduction paragraph**. It can be an interesting [quote](http://homeworktips.about.com/od/biography/tp/quotes.htm), a little-known fact, [famous last words](http://homeworktips.about.com/od/biography/a/lastwords.htm), a statistic, etc. Here are some ideas:

1. **Start with a great quote.**
   1. From the novel/text: “War turns men into beasts” (Collier and Collier 200).
   2. On the general topic: Bertrand Russell claims, “War does not determine who is right-only who is left.”
2. **Start with background information about the topic.**
   1. “Historically, war has been a fact of life.”
   2. “In America, there have been many debates over the years about the country’s involvement in war.”
3. **Start with facts/data/statistics about the topic.**
   1. “During the Revolutionary War, \_\_\_\_ number of people lost their lives.”
   2. “Before the American Revolution began, \_\_\_\_% of people were in support of freedom from England.”
4. **Start with a story/anecdote. This can be real or based on the events of the text.** 
   1. “A young son dressed as a Patriot looks sadly back at his house, not knowing if he will ever see it again.”
   2. “A young boy vomits all over himself after he watches a man get decapitated.”
5. **Start with a bold pronouncement about the topic.**
   1. “There is always another option, besides war, to achieve the same results.”
   2. “War never achieves peace.”