

Catchy Hooks for Essays



REMEMBER: With whatever hook you use, follow it up with a transition before you state your claim.

START WITH AN INTERESTING FACT

Example:

"Archaeologists believe, based on marks they've seen on mummies, that human beings had tattoos between 4000 and 2000 B.C. in Egypt."

STATE A THESIS (Inverted Pyramid)

Example:

"Few aspects of the American mythos really explain what the cowboy was to early America's frontier." (Pamela Swanigan, *Much the Same on the Other Side: The Boondocks and the Symbolic Frontier*)

If you have a great idea and you want to be straightforward and introduce it immediately because it is unique, do what you want. Why is this particular sentence so hooking? It intrigues the readers because using such a structure the author 'promises' she will tell us about something special. We are interested in the concept of frontier now.

USE A GREAT STORY AS AN OPENING

Example:

"In late 1979, a twenty-four-year-old entrepreneur paid a visit to a research center in Silicon Valley called Xerox PARC. He was the co-founder of a small computer startup down the road, in Cupertino. His name was Steve Jobs." (Malcolm Gladwell, *Creation Myth*)

Do you need anything else to get hooked? It is a brilliant essay starter. Stories are always effective, but stories about famous people are on top. Do the research, read great people's biographies and find correlations with the theme of your writing. Give readers a nice story, and they will enjoy it.

SET A SCENE ANOTHER TIME

Example:

"The dark blue glitter was penetrating, leaving no space for creativity. In just one stare, Mary's eyes defined a lot about her true passion, her devotion and her commitment to her cause. Most of the employees that day left the corporation once launched by Mike Myers without saying a word, but feeling completely different people." (Unknown writer)

This category of good hooks is almost the same as the previously discussed attention-grabber. The goal of the writer is to describe a certain scene taken from the fiction story or real life. No matter what the topic is, it is the effective method used to make the readers not only think but feel the emotions of heroes.

ANECDOTE/JOKE TO MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH

Example:

"A Chukcha comes into a shop and asks: "Do you have color TVs?" "Yes, we do." "Give me a green one." (Unknown author)

Every day we learn different jokes from our colleagues, family, or friends. If you want to share these funny stories with your teacher or classmates, the best way is to use anecdotes as the relaxing hook sentences. They make people both laugh and feel less stressed. Humor is one of the keys to success in our life, and a good anecdote is not an exception. In our case, the anecdote may start a serious topic like the problems people with colorblindness experience. The anecdote can serve as an introduction to the research on stereotypes about Chukcha, especially their intellect. The same anecdote may open an essay on different types of humor.

STRIKE WITH NUMBERS AND STATISTICS

Example:

"According to 2008 figures from the Pew Research Center, 97% of today's K-12 students spend many hours each week playing video games."([Keith Devlin](#), Learning Math with a Video Game)

Every time you want to draw the audience's attention, start the intro paragraph with large numbers and interesting statistics. Demonstrate that you did extensive research and created a good basis for your discussion.

SURPRISE READERS BY REVEALING A COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Example:

"We all know that a tongue has several sections which are exclusively responsible for a particular taste: sweet, sour, salty, and bitter. The idea was disproved by other studies and research."

What can be more intriguing than finding out that an idea you have had in mind for years is wrong? This is a perfect trigger, and it will get your audience hooked in a second.

CREATE AN IMAGE, SIMILE, OR METAPHOR

Example:

"To make an omelet you need not only those broken eggs but someone 'oppressed' to beat them..." ([Joan Didion](#), The Women's Movement)

Obviously, this isn't a recipe or a story about eggs. The writer starts with a very simple, everyday image, and then adds a drop of unpredictability - 'oppressed' ones to break the eggs. We call such sentence a fantastic starter and a great hook.

POSE A RHETORICAL QUESTION

Example:

"We all need food and water to live, don't we?" "People today know that the Earth is round, don't they?" "Children always find something new interesting, don't they?" "How much would one pay to save the life of their beloved ones?"

People think that all questions may have answers. There is a special type of questions known as rhetorical questions; they can be good hooks for essays on any topic. These questions have obvious answers. There is no need to explain why humans can't survive without food, how we learned that the planet is round, or why human life is priceless. It's just the way to let your reader think. It is an interesting way to start a paper on hate crime, life, existence, the universe, sense of life, moral or ethical values, etc.

ASK A QUESTION – GIVE AN ANSWER!

Examples:

"Why do novelists write essays? Most publishers would rather have a novel."([Zadie Smith](#), The Rise of the Essay)

USE THESE SPARINGLY UNLESS YOU KNOW HOW TO USE THEM WELL:

PLACE YOUR FAVORITE LITERARY QUOTE

Example:

"I wish it need not have happened in my time," said Frodo.

"So do I," said Gandalf, "and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."(J.R.R. Tolkien, The Fellowship of the Ring)

It would be a good hook in an essay of several types: a writer can choose to focus on the value of time, review "The Fellowship of the Ring" storyline, or describe the character of Gandalf. A great hook is the one which has many different applications in one text.

QUOTE FAMOUS PEOPLE YOU BELIEVE ARE WISE

Example:

"Any achievement in business is never accomplished by a single person; a team of skilled members from diversified fields is always needed." (Steve Jobs)

The wisdom of this man has no doubts. People tend to believe every single word Steve Jobs says as he has achieved amazing results, wealthy being, and a new age of technology. Such people are worth listening. It is a good idea to start a paper on business, management, leadership, marketing, or even IT from these words.