Introductions

Your introduction is your chance to make a good first impression on your reader. Your goal is to be both engaging and informative, so you can get your point across without boring your reader in the process.

Opening Sentence
Writing that first sentence on a blank page is often difficult. Here are some tips to get you started:

- Avoid global opening statements like “since the beginning of time...” They sound melodramatic and waste space that could be used for more pertinent information.
- Try not to make your first sentence too long or complicated, or you’ll risk losing the reader’s interest.
- Delve into your subject matter as quickly as possible. You need not state your thesis outright, but you don’t want your first few sentences to have nothing to do with the rest of your paper.
- Try beginning with an interesting fact or opinion that will get your reader interested right away.
- Steer away from using words like “interesting” in your introduction. They aren’t descriptive enough to be useful.

If you can’t think of the perfect opening sentence right away, don’t worry about it. Like your thesis, your introduction can be revised and refined as you write.

Middle
The middle of your introduction gives you the opportunity to insert meaningful background information about your topic. You’ve already hooked your readers with your opening sentence, and you want to prepare them for your thesis. You should take the opportunity to give a general summary of the issues you plan to deal with in your paper, but be careful how much background you give. You don’t want your introduction to be pages long, nor do you want to risk getting too specific and having little left to say in your body paragraphs.

Thesis Statement
Your thesis statement should come towards the end of your introductory paragraph. For more information, consult the handout on thesis statements.