

Sample Introductory Paragraphs

HCCS – Katy Center

Fall – 2012

Sample 1

Brent Staples' *Black Men and Public Space* stays with the reader long after it has been read. He shows how African-American men feel when they are only seen as a danger and a threat to society. He believes they can "alter public space in ugly ways" and this perception is a "hazard to them." (248) He makes all readers but especially female readers rethink why they may be frightened in the presence of a certain type of African-American male. Are they afraid because of a real danger or a stereotype they have seen on television or in film? Though Staples brings all of these things to the reader's attention, his essay is appreciated even more due to his clever word choice, thought provoking description, and understated tone throughout the essay.

Commented [WU1]: Introduction Method: Referring to Something You Have Read.

Commented [WU2]: Introduction Method: Question

Commented [WU3]: Thesis Statement: Illustrates the three reasons why the writer likes the essay.

Sample 2

Langston Hughes was born February 1, 1902, in Joplin, Missouri. He published his first poem in 1921. He left Columbia University after one year, traveling and supporting himself with odd jobs. His poetry was later promoted by Vachel Lindsay, and Hughes published his first book in 1926. He wrote poetry, stories, and plays, as well as a popular column for the *Chicago Defender*. He died May 22, 1967. He was never afraid to bare his soul in his work. One essay where he does this is *Salvation*. His ability to illustrate the voice of an impressionable boy 'going on thirteen and describe his surrounding is masterful.

Commented [WU4]: Introduction Method: Biography

Commented [WU5]: Introduction Method: Referring to Something You Have Read.

Commented [WU6]: Thesis Statement: Illustrates the two reasons why the writer likes the essay.

Sample 3

“My aunt told me that when you were saved you saw a light, and something happened to you inside? And Jesus came into your life! And God was with you from then on! She said you could see and hear and feel Jesus in your soul. I believed her. I had heard a great many old people say the same thing, and it seemed they ought to know.” (11)

Commented [WU7]: Introduction Method: Using Quotations

This passage from Langston Hughes’ *Salvation* is the central conflict problem in the essay. Langston takes what his aunt says and what he has heard from others literally, and it breaks his heart. Readers are given a front row seat into what not to do when talking about religion with children, but this is not all that is *Salvation*. There is so much more. Hughes use of description, minor character, and tone make the essay worth reading again and again.

Commented [WU8]: Introduction Method: Referring to Something You Have Read.

Commented [WU9]: Thesis Statement: Illustrates the three reasons why the reader likes the essay.

Sample 4

“GTL (Gym, Tan, Laundry),” “Who gon check me boo?,” “You’re fired,” “Pack your knives and go,” and “Make it work.” These are all popular catch phrases from reality shows like *The Jersey Shore*, *The Housewives of Atlanta*, *The Apprentice*, *Hell’s Kitchen*, and *Project Runway*. America’s is obsessed with these shows. They can’t get enough of the confrontations, fights, and drama, but would you sign up for a reality show if it embarrassed you and your family? Many people would. Not me. I value my privacy, close knit family, and peace of mind to much to join a reality show.

Commented [WU10]: Introduction Method: Interesting Fact or Detail.

Commented [WU11]: Thesis Statement: Gives reasons why the writer would not join a reality show.