

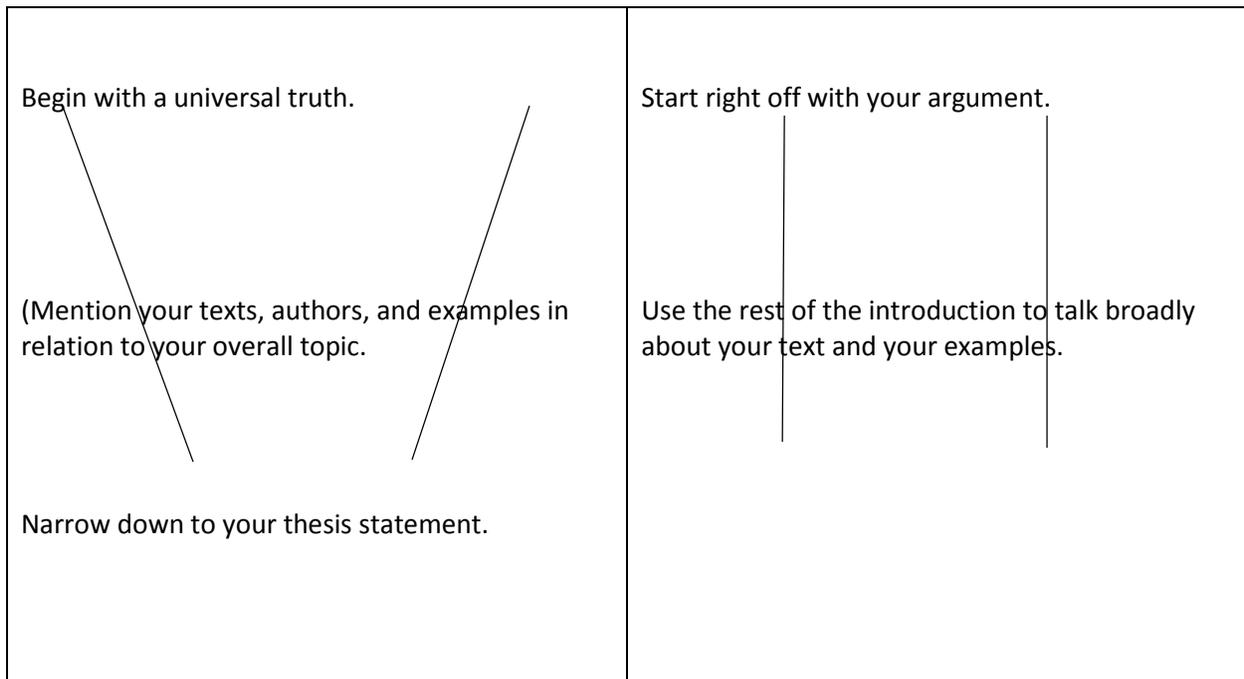
The Nuances of Essay Writing

Not all writing is the same. Doing a lab write-up is different than writing a literary analysis just as writing a persuasive essay is different than writing a research paper or a resume. You have to know and understand which type of writing you are being asked to do.

In the case of Stanley Kowalski, you are writing a literary analysis. The hallmarks of a literary essay include:

- MLA Style (in-text citations and a Works Cited page)
- A clear and overarching thesis statement
- Textual evidence
- Multiple paragraphs
- A clear introduction
- A clear conclusion
- Analysis

The Introductory paragraph: I am presenting you with two ways to look at your introductory paragraph.



Each body paragraph should present one of your major points along with your textual evidence and your analysis.

Sample Body Paragraph:

Williams uses the streetcars to illustrate Blanche's descent into madness. When Blanche first arrives in the French Quarter, she stumbles upon the Kowalski's upstairs neighbor, Eunice who asks the wandering Blanche, "What's the matter, honey? Are you lost?" (Williams 15). *Lost* is exactly what Blanche is. Belle Reve is gone; her husband is gone; her reputation is gone. In fact, Blanche has been banished altogether from her home town of Laurel. She has nowhere to go and ultimately creates a fiction that matches the way she wants to see the world rather than the way the world actually is. This unwavering denial of reality has brought Blanche to the point where she finds herself today. Blanche has lost Belle Reve—the beautiful dream—and wants nothing more than to find her way back. Her trunkful of tiaras and furs and light summer dresses help her to maintain her elaborate charade. Blanche's "desire" to be the esteemed southern belle adored by ladies and sought after by men blinds her to what she really is—a tired and desperate woman. Blanche drinks too much, has sex too much and lies too much. She is indulgent and self-absorbed. Upon her arrival at Stella's house, Blanche explains to Eunice: "They told me to take a streetcar named Desire, and then transfer to one called cemeteries" (Williams 15). Blanche's indulgence in her own fantasies has led her to the end of the line, to the loss of family, and ultimately to her own institutionalization.

Be sure to use transitions to smoothly connect your paragraphs and your ideas.

The conclusion is generally short. One strategy is to reverse the format of your introductory paragraph. In other words, start with a restatement of your thesis and expand out to the universal.