

What should happen in an introduction?

You need to present your topic generally in an interesting manner, and then lead the reader to your specific thesis.

What does an introduction include?

- ❖ An attention-getter: an interesting or provocative statement, a question, an example, an appropriate quotation.
- ❖ An introduction and explanation of the topic, and, if necessary, definitions of terms.
- ❖ The thesis.

Any other tips?

- ❖ If using a quotation as an opener, it needs to be sandwiched: before the quote, tell who said it and in what context if known or significant; after the quotation, explain what it means relative to why you are using it.
- ❖ You may want to write your thesis and outline first, and don't be afraid to change your introduction when you've finished your paper.
- ❖ Be direct; don't just chat or be distracting.
- ❖ Make sure your introduction says something.

If several people warned you that you probably would die on a specific day in a specific day, what would you do? If you were arrogant, you would probably ignore the warnings and continue with your normal life. Throughout the first three acts of *Julius Caesar*, Caesar is warned repeatedly of the dangers that will face him on the Ides of March, but he chooses to ignore them. Why? Caesar's arrogance is the result of his absolute power and his status as divine, but results in his eventual downfall.

French writer Albert Camus said, 'One cannot be happy in exile or in oblivion. One cannot always be a stranger.' In a sense, Amanda in *The Glass Menagerie* lives as an exile, in time, and Laura lives in oblivion. They are strangers in a figurative sense. Jim, as a symbolic character, offers hope of connection to the real world for both Amanda and Laura.

There's an old song that starts, 'Everybody needs somebody sometimes.' The song identifies a truth about human existence: that none of us can be alone all the time, and that we need to come out of our alienation and marginalization to find a sense of community if we are going to survive. It is the desire for companionship that drives Lenny in Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. His desire for companionship drives his interaction with George, Crooks and Curly's wife.

A woman moves from place to place. In each new place, she finds a new set of friends and a new community. But does it change her, or does she stay the same person? To what degree does environment shape identity? This is a basic question of Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. Angelou shows that individuals have a core identity that might change in degrees based on their environment.