

Exercise walk-through

Writing introductions and conclusions ■ 4.2

eXercise

You must be able to

- open with something that earns the reader's attention and sets up the thesis
- place a thesis where it can be found
- close without merely restating the introduction
- avoid the two standard failures: the empty opening and the summary ending

Method — An opening that works

Begin with the exigence, a specific case, or the objection you must overcome — anything that makes the thesis necessary. “Since the beginning of time, people have argued about education” makes nothing necessary.

Method — Placing the thesis

Usually at the end of the introduction, where the reader has enough context to understand it. A thesis in the first sentence often arrives before it can mean anything.

Method — A conclusion that earns its place

State what follows now that the argument has been made: the implication, the cost of ignoring it, the question it opens. A conclusion that summarises tells the reader what they have just read.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

State two things an effective opening can do.

Solution 2.1

Worked steps

any two of: state the exigence; give a specific case; name the objection to be overcome; establish common ground **B2**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Explain why a summary conclusion is weak.

Solution 2.2

Worked steps

it tells the reader what they have just read **B1** and adds nothing they did not already have **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 1 mark

An essay opens: “Throughout history, humans have used technology.”

- (a) State the weakness.
- (b) Rewrite the opening for an essay on classroom phone bans.

Solution 2.3

Worked steps

(a) it is general enough to open any essay and makes nothing necessary **B1**. (b) a specific opening tied to the exigence, e.g. a school that banned phones and what happened next **B2**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

A thesis is usually best placed

- A** in the first sentence
- B** at the end of the introduction
- C** in the middle of the essay
- D** in the final sentence only

Solution 3.1

Method: Placing the thesis

- A in the first sentence
- B at the end of the introduction**
- C in the middle of the essay
- D in the final sentence only



Worked steps

- B. by then the reader has the context to understand it.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

A strong conclusion most often states

- A** what was said
- B** what follows now that the argument has been made
- C** the writer's name
- D** a new thesis

Solution 3.2

- A what was said
- B what follows now that the argument has been made** 
- C the writer's name
- D a new thesis

Worked steps

- B. the conclusion states the implication of the argument.**

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 4 marks

Write an introduction of two to three sentences for: “Should museums return objects taken during colonial rule?”

Solution 3.3

Worked steps

specific opening that establishes exigence or a case **B2**; a defensible thesis placed where it can be found **B2**.