Writing an Introduction:

**Lead** > **Tie-in**> **Controlling Idea**

**Lead:**

Sometimes you can start your composition by stating the controlling idea of your composition, but often, that type of beginning is too abrupt. You need to grab the reader’s attention first, and make the reader want to read further. You can do this with the first sentence, called a **lead.** The lead may be one of the following:

* Statement of your position on the topic
* Problem or riddle
* Surprising statistic or fact
* Question
* Brief history
* Quotation
* Catchy remark
* General, thought-provoking statement

**Tie-In**

Once you have captured the reader’s attention with your lead, you need to draw his or her attention to the controlling idea of your composition. You need to consider the audience, the topic of your composition, and your personal preference in developing a creative link between the lead and the statement of your controlling idea.

**Controlling Idea**

You practiced developing controlling ideas in the last chapter. The first paragraph is a good place to state the controlling idea because it lets the reader know the topic of the composition, your position on the topic, and how you are going to order your supporting points.

Example Introduction:

*Panama City, Florida, is the ideal place to go for a winter vacation. You may want to ski the snow-capped peaks of the Rocky Mountains, but I have enough cold weather all winter long. When Christmas break arrives, I want a taste of the warm summer sun. A wool blanket and a roaring fire may do it for some people, but I want more than a cup of hot cocoa to warm my chilled bones. I want to go someplace where I can choose from a wide assortment of water sports, enjoy the mouth-watering taste of fresh seafood, and drink in the serenity of a leisurely moonlit stroll along the beach.*

Writing a Conclusion

**Summarize, But Don’t Restate, Your Controlling Idea**

The last thing you want to do in a conclusion is to introduce a new idea. Instead, summarize the information and reasons that you have already provided. This does not mean to repeat the introduction or to restate the controlling idea. Before you say “goodbye,” remind the reader of some highlights you’ve covered along the way.

**Conclusion as Introduction in Reverse**

One effective way to write a concluding paragraph for a composition is to write a conclusion in reverse. In other words,

1. Briefly remind the reader of your controlling idea
2. Tie-in the controlling idea to your final “bod-bye,” and
3. Instead of a lead, use a “good-bye” statement.

*Panama City gives me everything I want in a vacation spot, and more: exhilarating water sports, fresh seafood, and moonlit beach walks. Year after year, my family escapes the cold northern clime by traveling south, but we never tire of the fun, the food, and the relaxation that this great vacation spot provides. However, in case you still have questions about where to go for your next winter vacation, just consider your packing list: bathing suit, towel, sun screen. Sounds good to me!*