How to Write a Hook for an Essay

## An essay's "hook" is something in the first paragraph--usually the first sentence or two--that draws the reader in and makes him want to continue to read. The hook's tone should match that of your essay (serious, humorous, academic), and it should support your central argument or main point. You might want to wait to write a hook until the rest of the essay has been written, so you will know what you want the hook to say and how you want to say it. Instructions

* + *1.* Write down the most interesting things about your essay. Is there something surprising in what you have written? Does a specific image come to mind?
  + *2*Explain the most interesting aspect of your essay to someone else. If you're stuck, try completing these sentences:

When I was thinking about this, I couldn't believe that\_\_\_\_\_\_.

It was amazing to me that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Imagine what it's like to\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

The image I can't get out of my head is \_\_\_\_\_\_.

* + *3*Determine the aspect of your essay that would be the most interesting and compelling to someone who has no idea what you are going to say.
  + *4*Write this "most interesting" fact or image in a sentence or two. Refine it. Read it out loud. It should match the tone of the rest of your essay.
  + *5*Insert your hook into the opening paragraph of the essay. Read over the entire paragraph (or have someone else read it).

Some Examples:

Ask a question to grab the reader's attention:   
For example if you are doing an essay about dress codes ask "Why should we have dress codes?"   
  
Another good idea is to start with the quote of a famous person, for example:

"America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves." by Lincoln, if you write your essay on a politics related issue.

Nearly every successful "hook" in a piece of writing can be put into one of seven categories:   
1. Anecdote (A short account of an interesting or humorous incident)  
2. Quote from literature / other source   
3. Analogy (a comparison between two things that are similar in some way, often used to help explain something or make it easier to understand)  
4. Rhetorical question (a question not intended to elicit an answer but asked for rhetorical effect often with an assumption that only one answer is possible (as in “Who does not love his country?”))  
5. Humorous / philosophical musing   
6. Interesting statistic   
7. Attention-Grabbing statement