Writing an Essay
Introductory Paragraph

- Catchy attention grabber
- Title and author
- Context of the book
- Thesis statement
Catchy Attention Grabber

You want the reader to actually want to read your paper, so you need to make the first sentence stand out. Here are some ways to do that:

- A quote
- A statistic
- A question
- A story
Example:  *Wonder*

- Quote:  “Doctors have come from distant cities just to see me, stand over my bed disbelieving what they are seeing” (Palicio, pg. 10).
- Statistic:  “If August has children with someone who doesn’t have a trace of the gene, there’s a 100 percent probability that their kids will inherit the gene, but a zero percent chance that their kids will have a double dose of it, like August” (Palicio, pg. 129).
Example: *Wonder*

- A question: If I were born with a rare face deformity, how would I live my life?
- A story: When I was in elementary school, a new family moved to our small town. The new family had two boys. But these boys weren’t like “normal” boys. These two boys had a rare skin condition which caused them to look like they had third degree burns all over their bodies. Kids at school used to pick on them and play “Keep away from Nick” where they would run and Nick would try to touch them. We all thought we could get what he had if he touched us, so we stayed far away from him.
Your Turn To Practice

Think about a book you have read or a movie you have seen. Come up with an attention grabber:

- Quote
- Statistic
- Question
- Story
Title, Author, and Context

- One of the first things you need in an introductory paragraph is the title of the text and the author’s name.
- You should also include context about the book. You cannot assume your reader has read the book you are reading, so you must give him/her background on the book. This is usually about three to five sentences summarizing major parts of the book without giving away any major plot points.
Example: *Wonder*

In the book *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio, we read about a boy named August who was born with a rare face deformity. This deformity leads people to cringe when they see him, and because of this, August’s life has never been “normal”. At the beginning of the book, his mom asks August if he would like to go to middle school instead of being home-schooled anymore. At first he is unsure, but soon decides he wants to start real school. This novel takes us through August’s trials throughout his first year in middle school.
Your Turn....

- Go back to the movie or book you wrote your attention grabber about.
- Write the title, author (or director), and some context about the text. Remember, DO NOT give any big plot points away.
Thesis

- Should show direction of what the rest of the paper will talk about.
- Should answer the prompt or question.
- Needs to include the title of the book and what you will be talking about.
- **There SHOULD NOT be the pronoun I in it.**
Example: *Wonder*

In the book *Wonder*, August demonstrates bravery through going to a public school for the first time and his ability to deal with people who make fun of him.
Your Turn...

Go back to your movie/book and add a thesis, using the following prompt:

- What type of personality does the main character have?
Now, put it together...

- Go back and rewrite your whole first paragraph
  - Attention grabber
  - Title author
  - Context
  - Thesis
If I were born with a rare face deformity, how would I live my life? This is something the character August, in the book “Wonder” by R.J. Palacio struggled through. His deformity led people to cringe when they saw him, and because of this, August’s life had never been “normal”. At the beginning of the book, his mom asked August if he would like to go to middle school instead of being home-schooled anymore. At first he was unsure, but soon decides he wants to start real school. This novel takes us through August’s trials throughout his first year in middle school. In the book *Wonder*, August demonstrates bravery through going to a public school for the first time and his ability to deal with people who make fun of him.
Middle Paragraphs

- All of them should go back to answering the prompt and tie into the thesis.
- Need to include transitions between sentences and paragraphs.
- Need to include context
- Need to include a quote and analyze that quote.
- Remember, the reader has not necessarily read your book so be specific.
Example: *Wonder*

To begin, Auggie demonstrated the personality trait of bravery. He exhibited bravery when he went to school for the first time. Having a facial deformity, it was not easy for him to go out in public. People would stare at him, and little kids sometimes even looked scared. However, he chose to go school and face people. “As soon as we turned the corner, we saw all the kids in front of the school—hundreds of them talking to each other in little groups, laughing, or standing with their parents, who were talking with other parents. I kept my head way down. ‘Everyone’s just as nervous as you are,’ said Via in my ear. Just remember that this is everyone’s first day of school. Okay?’” (Palacio, pg. 36). This quote shows that Auggie was brave because on his first day he saw kids talking to one another, kids who were already friends, yet he still decided to go.
Your Turn....

● Write a middle paragraph for your paper. Look back at your introduction.
Conclusion

- Restate the thesis
- Summarize main points
- End powerfully (question or quote).
Example Conclusion

In conclusion, in the book *Wonder* Auggie shows examples of bravery, persistence, and humor. He demonstrates this through going to school for the first time, making light of things that could really hurt his feelings, and being persistent through many hard obstacles. Would you be able to exhibit these traits if you suffered from the same type of deformity as August?