

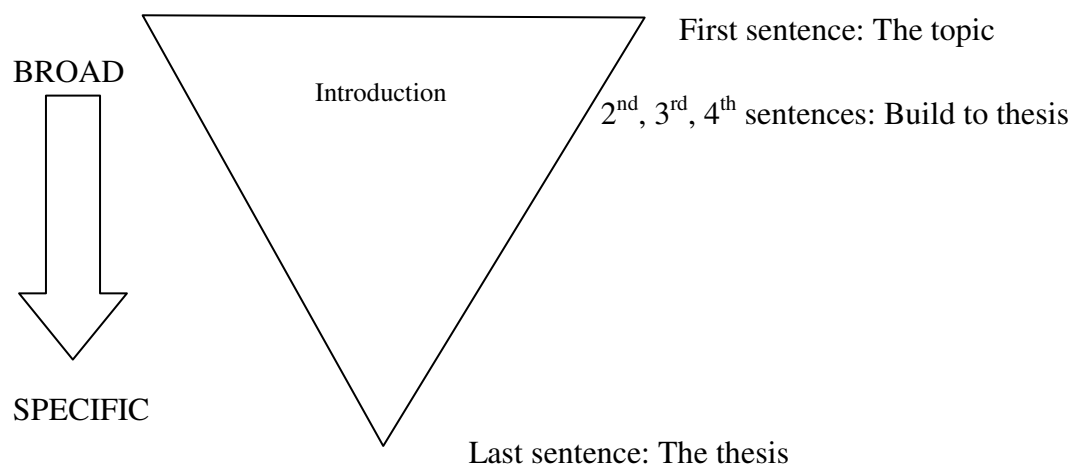
# Introductions and Conclusions for the Regents' Exam 1

## Introductions

Must be at least 3 sentences.

Should only be written once you have your thesis. It is impossible to introduce your argument when you don't yet have one.

The purpose of an introduction is to set the stage for your paper and to attract the attention of your readers. Start to focus on your thesis immediately. Avoid broad generalizations such as "Throughout history/time," "Everyone," and "Society," because they are uninteresting and do nothing to set up your argument. As the introduction progresses, move towards more specificity in your sentences until you reach your thesis.



## Methods (Topic: What considerations should be taken into account before a person gets a pet?)

1. Begin with a general statement based on a key word from the thesis. Add a sentence or two that build the ideas and arguments that lead to your thesis. Add your thesis.
  - a. Humans must carefully weigh the pros and cons before they decide to buy a pet. Owning a pet, while not as hard and time-consuming as raising a child, still requires a commitment to the animal. All pets need a secure environment, food, and plenty of love.
2. Begin with a brief story that leads to the thesis, and finish the introduction with your thesis.
  - a. Shortly before Easter, our local elementary school sponsored a fund-raising event at which classroom pets could be adopted for a small fee. One parent paid \$5 for a hamster, but on the way home he dropped it from the window of his car and the little animal ran off into the nearby woods. Apparently, the man did not think of the three most important considerations of owning a pet until he started home. All pets need a secure environment, food, and plenty of love. (*This last sentence, which gives the plan of the essay, is optional*).

## Introductions and Conclusions for the Regents' Exam 2

3. Begin with an opposing idea, then transition to your own position (however, on the other hand, unfortunately, etc.). Finish with your thesis.
  - a. It seems that many people decide to buy a pet without much forethought and they handle the experience well. Once I got my own apartment, one of the first purchases I made was a cat from the animal shelter because I wanted something to come home to each day. I thought I knew about everything required to own a pet, because I had helped take care of the class pet back in kindergarten. Unfortunately, my apartment was torn apart in two days and I lost my deposit because I had forgotten the essentials to taking care of an animal, such as a secure environment, food, and plenty of love.
4. Begin with a series of questions (that means more than 2!) that are connected to the topic. Order the questions so that they lead into the thesis.
  - a. Why is it that people consider dogs to be “a man’s best friend”? Is it because they are so happy to see their owners? Could it be that they are the most forgiving of animals, even if their owner really messes up? Even with all of the wonderful qualities in a dog, they still require proper care to keep them healthy. All pets need a secure environment, food, and plenty of love.
5. Discuss similar situations, arrangements, and ideas that relate to your topic and to the thesis, then add the thesis.
  - a. Many children grow up dreaming that they will have the ultimate playmate. Timmy had Lassie, Alec had the Black Stallion, and Aladdin had Abu. Yet these children never really consider that all pets need a secure environment, food, and plenty of love.

# Introductions and Conclusions for the Regents' Exam 3

## Conclusions

Minimum 3-5 sentences.

### Purpose:

To bring all of your thesis points together in a reflective manner,

Reinforce the main points and blend them together for coherency,

Provide a feeling of closure to the essay,

Answer “So what?”, “Why is this important?”, “Why should the reader care?” in light of the entire essay and the points you have discussed.

### A conclusion can (but not all do):

- End with obvious closure that gives the essay a sense of completeness.
- Refer to an example, fact, or statistic made in the introduction.
- Leave the reader with an understanding of what to think, do, or believe about the essay's subject matter. You can do this by ending with a question that makes the reader think or commenting on the future.

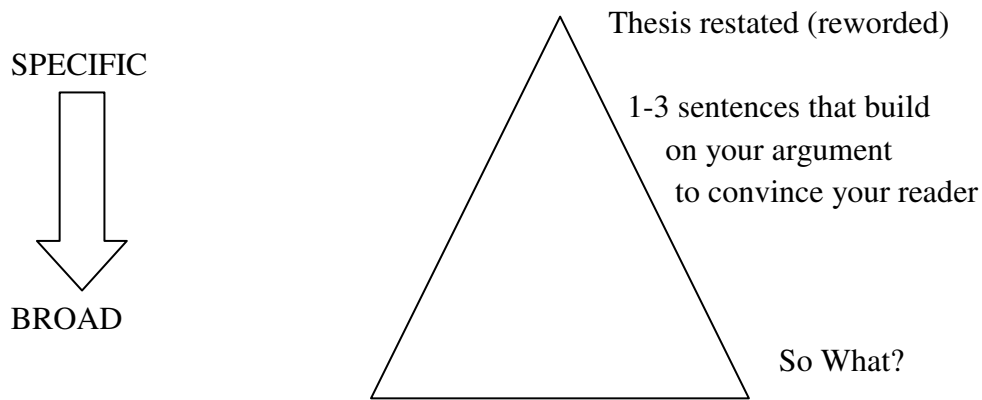
### **DO NOT:**

- Restate your introduction. Instead, bring in the points from the body of your essay and answer the “So What?” question.
- Apologize or cast doubt on your essay (ex: “Even though I’m no expert,” “this may not be convincing, but I believe it’s true.”)
- Start off in an entirely new direction with a different or broader subject, or introduce unnecessary or irrelevant details.

### **DO:**

- Revisit the thesis statement. Note: **DO NOT** copy and paste your thesis statement from the introduction. Rather, reword the thesis in an interesting or clearer manner to allow for a little more detail or complexity (i.e., now that the reader knows all of the points in your essay, how should they view the thesis?). When you do this, pause to mention the implications of the thesis, especially as it pertains to the subject matter of your essay.
- Recap (Briefly!) your argument. Remind the reader of your main points, and make sure that each point answers the “So what?” question.
- Take the conclusion one step further. This is **not** going off in a completely new direction. Rather, assume that because you have made a very solid argument, there are options for where the essay could go if you had space. In other words, since we now have X, we can discover Y. This tactic proves that you understand the complexities of your argument and that you know the argument is not closed.

# Introductions and Conclusions for the Regents' Exam 4



If you used a Method for your introduction, return to it for your conclusion (make your introduction and conclusion be “bookends” to your essay)

1. Restate (reword) your thesis in light of the points you discussed. Add a sentence or two that build out your argument. Final sentence: So what?
2. Return to the story you told and finish it in terms of your thesis. How should the reader read and understand your story now that they have read your essay?
3. Return to the opposing idea and make it clear why/how your position is better. Remember to make this conclusion very argumentative.
4. Instead of writing another series of questions, try to see how well you can broadly answer them and still argue the meat of your thesis.
5. Return to one or two of your examples and discuss your main points in terms of your examples.

Remember, by the end of your essay you should have convinced your reader of your argument. The conclusion is your final chance to do so, so make it like a lawyer’s closing statement in a courtroom.