

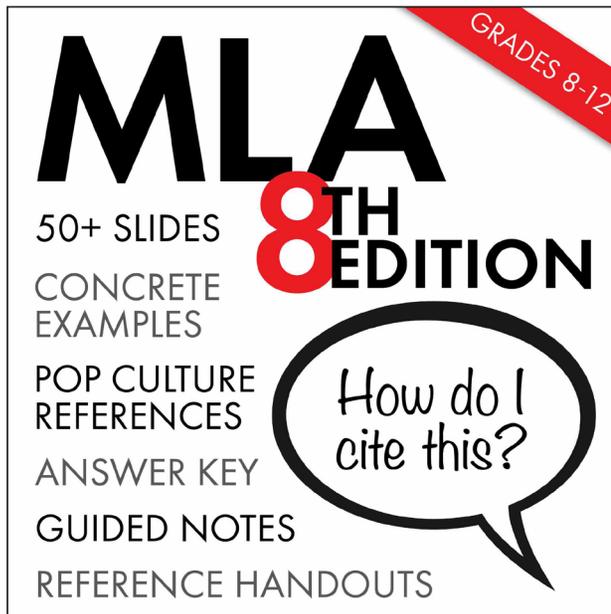
# Introductory Paragraph Format

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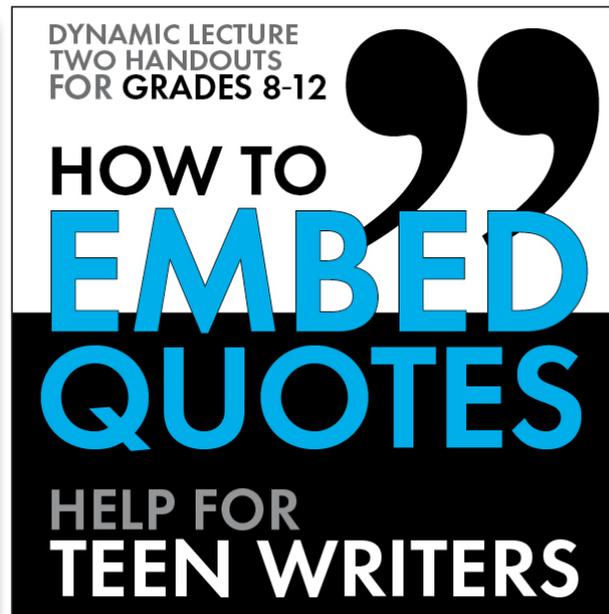


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GRADES 8-12

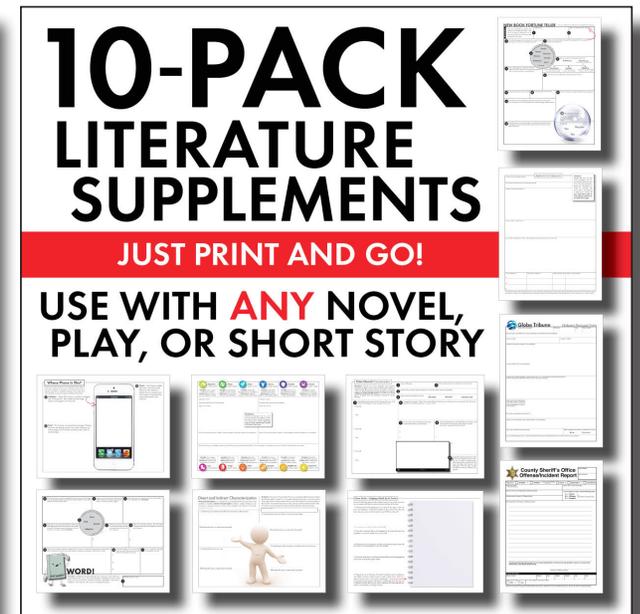
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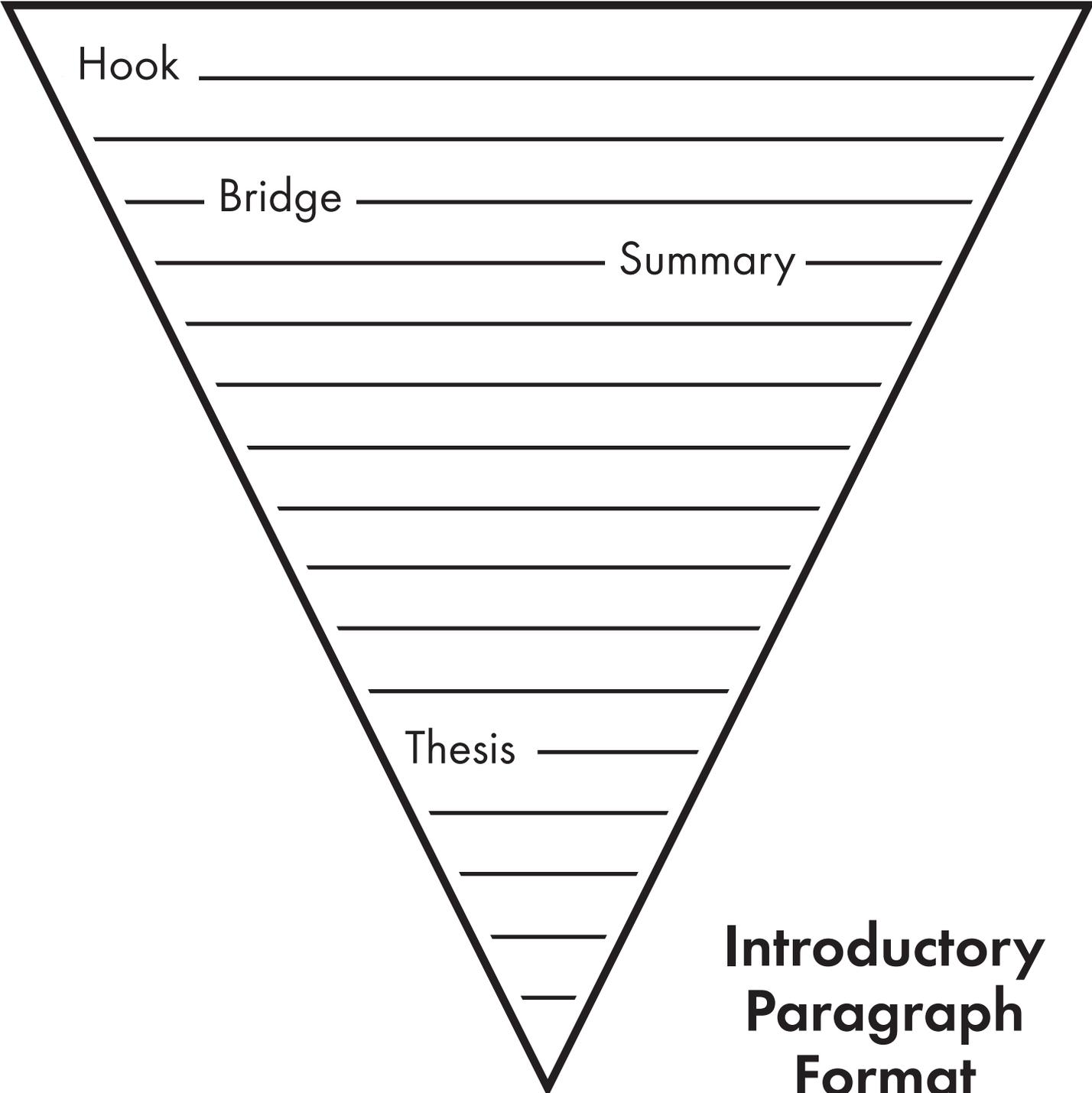


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Hook

Bridge

Summary

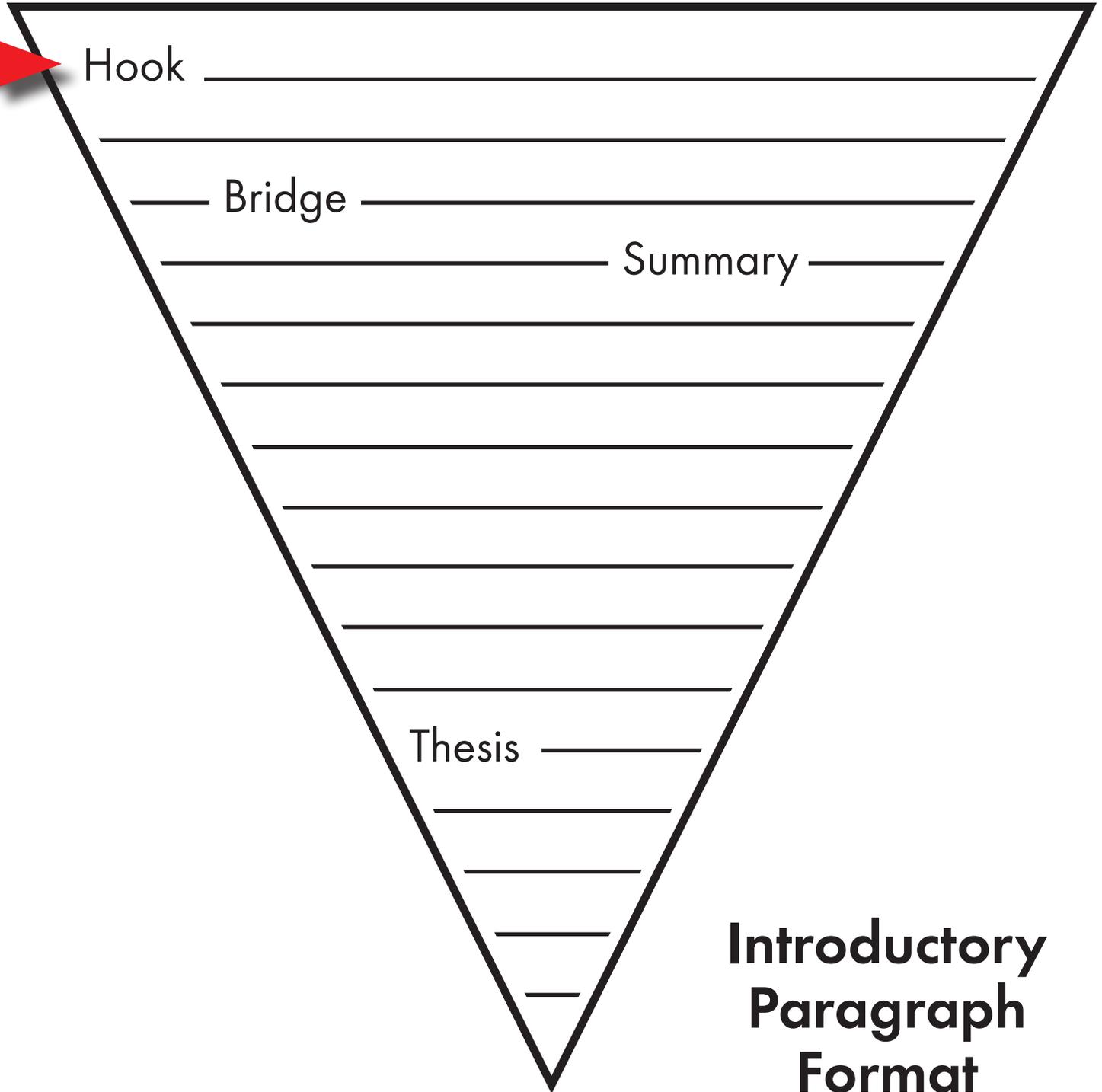
Thesis

**Introductory  
Paragraph  
Format**

**1 sentence**

Attention-grabber options:

- An analogy or metaphor
- Famous quote
- Turn a cliché on its head
- A shocking statement



**Introductory  
Paragraph  
Format**

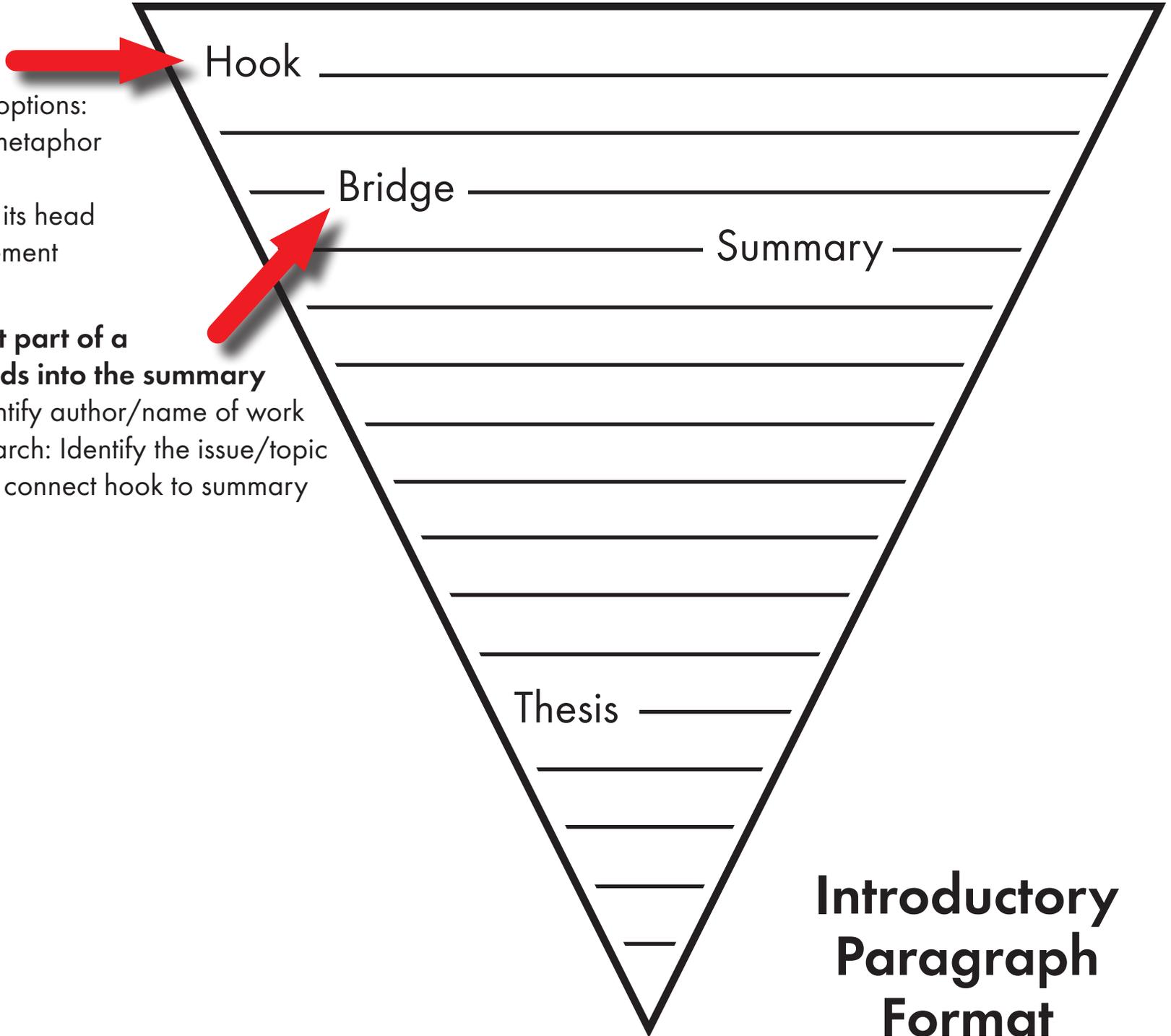
**1 sentence**

Attention-grabber options:

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- A shocking statement

**1 sentence or just part of a sentence that leads into the summary**

- Lit. analysis: Identify author/name of work
- Argument/Research: Identify the issue/topic
- Use to smoothly connect hook to summary



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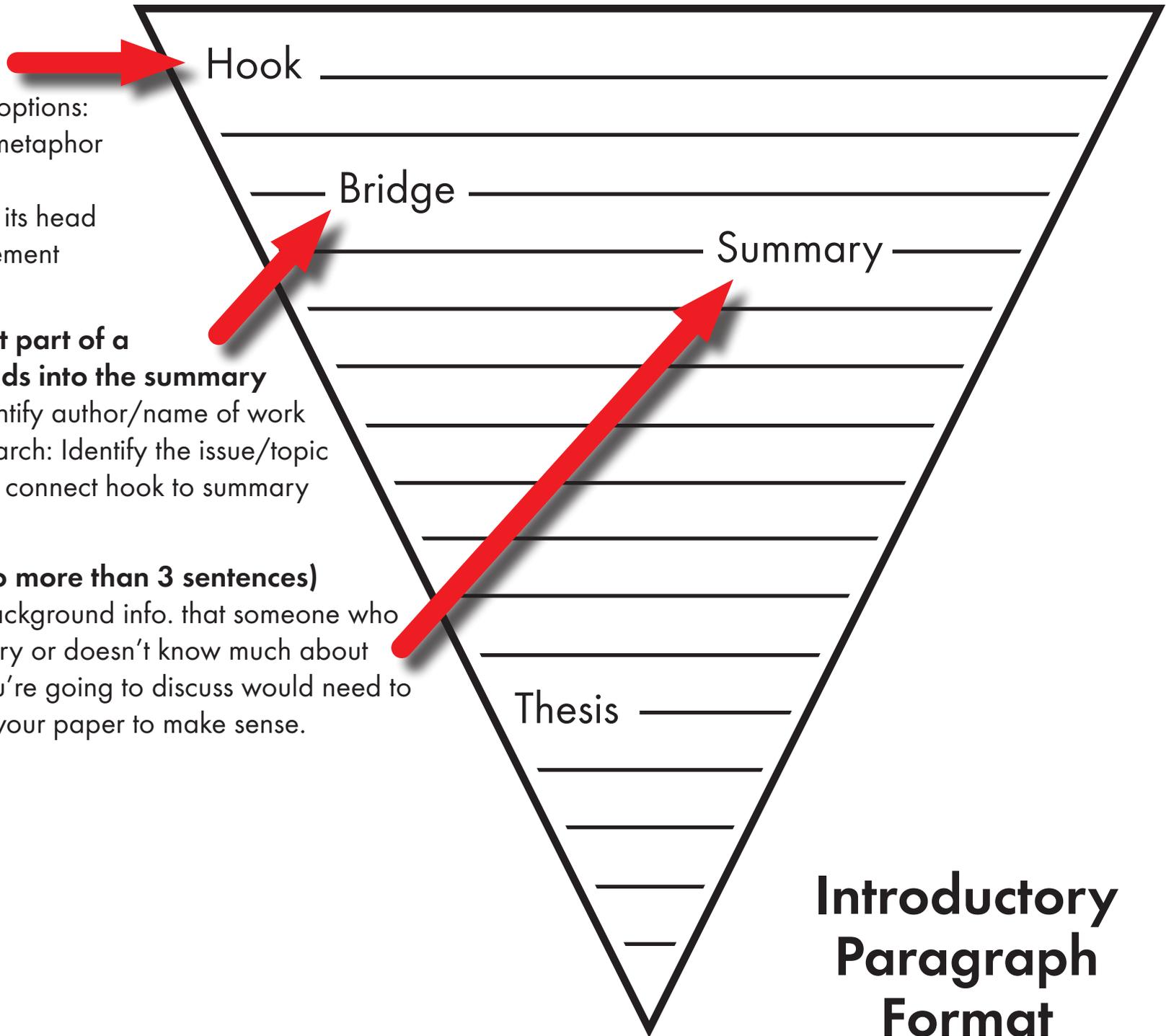
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**2-3 sentences (no more than 3 sentences)**

Give necessary background info. that someone who hasn't read the story or doesn't know much about the issue/topic you're going to discuss would need to know in order for your paper to make sense.

Keep it brief.



**Introductory Paragraph Format**

**1 sentence**

Attention-grabber options:

- An analogy or metaphor
- Famous quote
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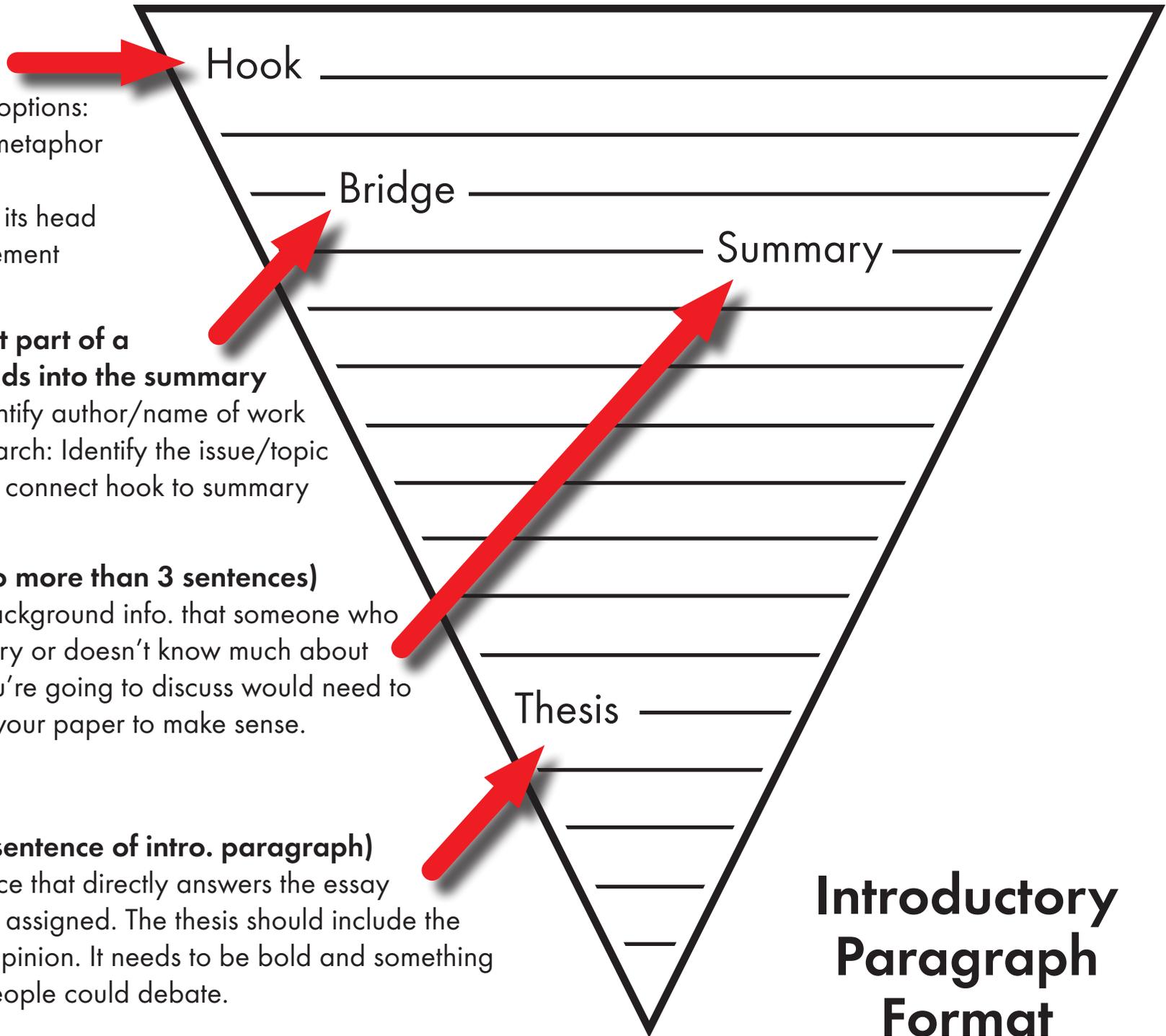
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Give necessary background info. that someone who hasn't read the story or doesn't know much about the issue/topic you're going to discuss would need to know in order for your paper to make sense.

Keep it brief.

**1 sentence (last sentence of intro. paragraph)**

A powerful sentence that directly answers the essay question you were assigned. The thesis should include the subject and your opinion. It needs to be bold and something two reasonable people could debate.



**Introductory Paragraph Format**

**Hook** Love is a toxic medicine, holding the ability to both heal and harm.

**Bridge** In James Hurst's short story "The Scarlet Ibis," the narrator known only as Brother discovers this painful truth

**Summary** as he fails in his attempt to help his little brother, Doodle. Since birth, Doodle has been weak and disabled, unable to perform normal daily functions such as walking, running, and swimming. Dissatisfied with this situation, his older brother decides to teach him all of these physical activities, pushing Doodle further and further until, one day, he dies as a result of the physical strain.

**Thesis** Ultimately, Hurst uses the complicated relationship between Doodle and Brother to show that love always contains some drops of poison.

**Student sample from  
"The Scarlet Ibis"**

## "The Scarlet Ibis" Introductory Paragraph Example

### Hook

Grab your reader's attention with an interesting idea.

Love is a toxic medicine, holding the ability to both heal and harm.

### Bridge

Use a short sentence or even just a quick phrase (as the writer's done here) to link the hook idea to the specific literary work you'll discuss in the essay. Without this bridge, your introductory paragraph will feel choppy.

In James Hurst's short story "The Scarlet Ibis," the narrator known only as Brother discovers this painful truth as he fails in his attempt to help his little brother, Doodle. Since birth, Doodle has been weak and disabled, unable to perform normal daily functions such as walking, running, and swimming. Dissatisfied with this situation, his older brother decides to teach him all of these physical activities, pushing Doodle further and further until, one day, he dies as a result of the physical strain. Ultimately, Hurst uses the complicated relationship between Doodle and Brother to show that love always contains some drops of poison.

### Summary

You need to summarize elements of the story that will be important for readers to know as they work through your essay. Assume your reader does not know the original story you're discussing. You need to fill in the necessary story elements to help your reader understand the points you make in your essay. No more than three sentences here.

### Thesis

This single sentence clearly declares the topic of your essay. In this case, the thesis explains Hurst's theme. Be sure that the thesis is bold, compelling, and offers a position that could inspire two reasonable people to have an interesting debate.

### Your Assignment:

Using the four elements shown here (hook, bridge, summary, and thesis), write an introductory paragraph of your own. Choose a different theme from the story we read and follow the pattern. Don't worry; you don't have to write the entire essay. You just need to write this one introductory paragraph.