

## Writing an Introduction for an Argumentative Paper

In an **argumentative paper** the writer takes an arguable position on a topic. For example, someone might argue that *dogs are better pets than cats*. This is called a **claim**. Not everyone will agree that dogs are better than cats, so the claim is the big idea that the writer will argue in an essay.

An introduction to an argumentative essay must include three main parts:

- First, the introduction must introduce the reader to the essay topic.
- Secondly, the writer must introduce the claim, or arguable proposition.
- Thirdly, the claim must point the reader towards the **reasons** that the writer will develop in each of the body paragraphs (part of the claim).

**Look at the sample introduction below and highlight or underline and label the three different parts of the introduction.**

*Americans love their pets. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) estimates that Americans own approximately 70-80 million dogs and 74-96 million cats. Over 40 % of all US households have either a cat or a dog, and some have both. There are cat people and dog people. Although some people prefer cats, dogs make better pets because they are more loyal than cats, they provide protection, and they encourage their owners to exercise.*

Notice that the **claim** includes the arguable idea that *dogs are better than cats* and the reasons that will be developed in the body paragraphs, follow **because**.

In the first body paragraphs the writer will support the topic sentence that *Dogs are more loyal than cats*.

The second body paragraphs will be organized around the topic sentence that *Dogs are good at protecting an owner's home*.

The third body paragraphs will be organized around the idea that *Dogs encourage their owners to exercise*.