The Introduction

Understanding the Introduction (Stewart and Allen 80)
- Appears at the beginning of the essay
- Defines the range of material that you will cover
- Includes the thesis (usually at the end, but not always)
- Provides context and gives all the necessary and relevant background info – authors, works, titles, dates, places
- Classifies, defines key terms, sketches development of a situation, gives examples, anecdotes, and descriptions

Introduction Tips
- Avoid making large claims or over generalizations
- Be concise and get right to the point. Avoid philosophical tangents such as “As history shows us…”; they waste a lot of space and do not impress the reader
- The introduction does not have to be written first:
  - Often people start with a working introduction that consists mainly of their thesis
  - Once the paper is written, you will know what information you covered and this can help you write an effective introduction

The Conclusion

A convincing conclusion is a necessary part of a convincing argument. Remember that most readers remember best the last thing they read. A conclusion also serves to unify the entire paper.

Components of a Convincing Conclusion (Stewart and Allen 82)
- Reiterate your thesis
- Explain the importance of your main points
- Discuss the broader implications of the topic:

Conclusion Tips
- Move from specific to general
- Emphasize the significance of your subject:
  - After reading your essay, ask yourself “so what?” Your conclusion should provide the answer

Work Cited: