

Hermeneutics: Observe the Purpose of a Book
Luke 1:1-4; John 20:30-31

When writing an essay, the **introduction** is usually the first paragraph that informs the reader what the article is about, its purpose and its background. It also introduces the writer to the reader who is informed of the writer's tone and writing style. In essence, why did the writer write this essay?

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught. (Luke 1:1-4, NIV)

Who is this written to?

What is this about?

Why is this important?

The **conclusion** of an essay restates the central idea of the article and is a reminder of its purpose. It answers the question, "why does this matter?" "Is there a larger meaning to this?"

Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:30-31, NIV)

Who is the author?

What is the book of John about?

Why was the book written?

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Teacher Notes

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Who is this written to?

This introduces the student to a reading technique of asking questions like: who, what, when, where, and why? In answering these questions, the student sharpens their observation of the text.

The book of Luke is intended to Theophilus.

What is this about?

Encourage the student to explore this question. Help the student see that, with careful observation, the answer can be plainly seen in the text. What did Luke do to prepare his letter to Theophilus? Did Luke observe these things first hand?

Provides some background to the student - what is known about the author that makes his letter credible?

Why is this important?

It is vitally important that the student realizes that Luke's work is the careful documentation of historical events. Unique to Christianity is that truth is based on historical reality that was verified. Faith is not a subjective and abstract concept.

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Who is the author?

The apostle John was a disciple in Jesus' inner circle, personally knew Him, and was an eyewitness of Jesus' life and works.

What is the book of John about?

An eyewitness account of Jesus' life and works that confirmed that He was indeed the Messiah. John records the testimony of John the Baptist, Jesus' own testimony and words of miracles, and fulfillment of God's Messianic prophecies (Old Testament).

Why was the book written?

Like Luke, historical documentation forms the basis of fact that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. With a belief that Jesus Christ is the Messiah who died for our sins, one receives salvation and has eternal life as Jesus Christ promised.