

INTRODUCTIONS

Your introduction will be the initial “grabber” for your students. Get your students attention and interest early, and you’ll have it for the rest of class. Enthusiastic, energetic, well-planned introductions are vital!

An introduction should be like watching a commercial for an ice cold glass of lemonade on a day when it’s 90 in the shade. The commercial will probably make you more thirsty than you were before. It will entice you to follow up on the commercial and not let it go without getting excited about it and acting on it. That’s exactly what an introduction should do! It should entice the students to be on the edge of their seats and anxiously awaiting the next tidbit you are about to feed them in the class.

Basic components of a sound introduction:

1. **Be positive!** Have a “this class is going to be fantastic!” attitude.
2. **Have a high energy level.** If you expect the students to have a lot of energy and enthusiasm, you should be the example.
3. **Manage students now.** Make sure everyone knows what is expected from them throughout class. Be clear and positive.
4. **Be organized.** A well prepared introduction should flow from one point to the next smoothly.
5. **Develop rapport with your students.** Learning names and using them is one important aspect of class.
6. **Have a sense of humor and have fun right away.**
7. **Include an over view** of activities the class will include.
8. **Motivate your students** to be involved and interested in class. Your students will walk in curious. Capitalize on that “window of interest”. Make class relevant to them.
9. **Cover your concepts**, main ideas, right away. What are the points of class?

Suggestions for techniques to be used in introductions:

1. Role-play - become a lost hunter for orienteering class, a drill instructor for the ropes course, a tree for trees and keys. Role-plays catch students attention and educate at the same time.
2. Storytelling - open with a story pertaining to the class. People love stories, and stories teach at many different levels.
3. Setting - Arrange your area in a physically different way. Sit on the floor in a circle, on ensolite pads, meet outside at the campfire ring, etc.
4. Challenge students - Get students thinking right away. Give them information that will make them think, rationalize, conceptualize, etc.
5. Involve the students - Look through microscopes for Forests of Lilliput, examine animal parts for animal signs, explore bird props for birds class.

The first 10-15 minutes of class are exceptionally important. More than any other specific time during class you affect the mood for the entire class. Involve and interest the students now. Their responses during the conclusion begin right here. Following a well planned introduction your students should be “thirsting” for more!