

Warm up

Write two columns on the board, with the titles *Introduction* and *Conclusion*. Elicit what can go into each, making notes in the columns. When students' suggestions have dried up, present any of the elements below that haven't been mentioned yet, asking them where they would go. It is important to point out that an introduction or conclusion would hardly ever have all the elements listed, but rather a selection of them according to the topic.

Introduction: the thesis statement / background information (context) / a personal story / a surprising fact or statistic / a common misconception / a quotation

Conclusion: a summary of the main points in the essay / a warning / a recommendation / a quotation / a powerful image / a personal reflection / a call for further research

Hold a class discussion about the best order for these items in an introduction or conclusion (e.g. the thesis statement usually comes at the end of the introduction).

Using the Factsheet

There are two possible ways to use the Factsheet:

- 1 Give students the Factsheet before the lesson, so they can read it at home and come to the lesson prepared to do the Worksheet. If you use this approach, start the lesson by checking that all students have read and understood the Factsheet, and answer any questions.
- 2 Give students the Factsheet at the beginning of the lesson and start by working through it with the students.



Theory to practice

Suggested answers

- 1 background/contextual information, statistics
- 2 In this essay I will argue that the downsides of uncontrolled social media use in young people outweigh its positive effects.

Using the Worksheet

Practice

- 1  **Open the research grid you created for the essay *Is social media good or bad for young people?* Choose an article (not a blog) and analyze the introduction and conclusion.**
 - Students refer to their research grid and choose an article (better than a blog entry, which might not have a clear introduction or conclusion).
 - Ask students to read the introduction and the conclusion. First, they should attempt to assess the overall effectiveness of the paragraphs. Then they should break down each paragraph, analyzing each sentence and matching it against the Factsheet (or the board, using the two columns from the Warm up).
- 2  **In pairs, discuss the differences between an introduction and a conclusion.**
 - In pairs, students discuss the concepts of introduction and conclusion, their purposes and the differences between them.
 - Elicit some ideas and compare opinions from the class.
- 3 **Open your essay and go to the paragraph marked *Introduction*. Look at the Key features of an introduction on the Factsheet. Draft one sentence for each bullet point.**
 - Students open their essay and write a sentence for each of the components of the introduction suggested in the Factsheet.

Possible answers

Background information (context): The technological developments of the last decades have revolutionized the way we communicate with others, and one of the main tools of this transformation is social media.

A personal story: I met my best friend on social media. We were on opposite sides of an online debate, but we got talking about other things and found out we actually had a lot in common.

A surprising fact or statistic: There are 3.397 billion active social media users.

A common misconception: People believe social media is replacing face-to-face contact. However, research shows that the opposite is true: it actually fosters relationships and promotes live encounters.

A quotation: 'We're living at a time when attention is the new currency' (Pete Cashmore, founder of mashable.com).

4 Which of the sentences you wrote in Exercise 3 work best? Which ones don't work?

- Remind students that it wouldn't be recommended to have all those elements in an introduction. Ask them to select which information they want to include, and in which order (probably finishing with the thesis statement they have already produced).
- Once they have decided on the information and the order, students draft their introduction. Remind them to connect the sentences as much as possible, rather than just place them one after the other.

Suggested answer

The technological developments of the last decades have revolutionized the way we communicate with others, and one of the main tools of this transformation is social media. To put this revolution into perspective, there are currently 3.397 billion active social media users, nearly half the population of the planet. The extent of this communication has led people to believe social media is replacing face-to-face contact. However, research shows that the opposite is true: it actually fosters relationships and promotes live encounters. That is not to say that platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram don't present a number of risks, especially for younger users. In this essay, I will argue that social media, despite having its problems, can be very beneficial for young people if used appropriately.

5 Now, look at the Key features of a conclusion on the Factsheet. Draft one sentence for each bullet point.

- Students repeat the process, writing a sentence for each of the suggested components of a conclusion.

Possible answers

A warning: If parents and schools don't define clear limits to social media usage, the problems that it brings will increase exponentially in the next few years.

A recommendation: A possible way of limiting social media usage is to install apps that shut down all platforms after a predefined amount of time.

A quotation: 'Social media replaces nothing, but complements everything' (media expert Neal Schaffer).

A powerful image: I predict a world in which social media will be at the centre of our personal, academic and professional lives, managing our day from shopping to travelling, from homework assignments to TV programme choices.

A personal reflection: I don't believe social media is dangerous in itself. There are, of course, people who threaten youngsters, but that is exactly the same as in real life, and should be tackled in the same way: through education and vigilance.

A call for further research: In order to understand the true impact of social media on younger generations, there needs to be further and more extended research, looking into what type of adults these young users become.

6 Which of the sentences you wrote in Exercise 5 work best? Which ones don't work?

- As in Exercise 4, students select sentences which fit best for their conclusion. As they also have to sum up the main arguments, there might be room for even fewer of them than in the introduction.
- Students draft their conclusion, connecting their summary and extra sentences in a coherent manner.

Suggested answer

In conclusion, social media does present a number of risks for young users, including being contacted by strangers pretending to be someone else and just having your opinions echoed back to you. However, if used appropriately, it also offers fantastic opportunities both for personal and professional purposes, such as keeping in touch with old friends or meeting new ones, as well as a platform for your ideas or talents. As the media expert Neal Schaffer once said, 'social media replaces nothing, but complements everything'.

7 In pairs, compare introductions and conclusions.

- In pairs, students read each other's introductions and conclusions and give feedback based on the questions.

Reflect

8 Think about the lesson. Answer the following questions, and make notes.

- Encourage students to reflect on writing introductions and conclusions using the questions.
- Elicit some answers and hold a class discussion on the effectiveness of the strategies. Which ones did they already use? Which ones will they start using in future? Which ones do they think might not work for them?
- Now that they have written an introduction and a conclusion for their essay, tell students they now have a first draft. Are they ready to edit it and write a final version? Make clear it's OK if they feel it needs more work – even with a good first draft, editing is needed. Elicit some ideas about how students feel they could improve their essays. You could ask them to go away and produce a final version.