

# Snappy Starts

You have to give a speech in your English class and you decide to do it on *skateboarding*.

You've researched it, outlined it, but now you have to come up with an introduction—something attention-getting.

Why not try beginning the speech with ...

## A STORY—real or imagined

On a Southern California beach in 1965 a lot of surfboards were sitting idle in the sand while their owners stared at the calm sea. Without waves there was nothing to ride. Then someone suggested riding *sidewalks* instead of waves and attached a mini-surfboard to a roller skate. A fad was born—the skateboard!

OR

## A QUESTION

What do Hula-Hoops, mini-skirts, and skateboards have in common?

They're fads that came and went. Except skateboards. They're back!

OR

## A SURPRISING OR UNUSUAL STATEMENT

The wheel has been re-invented! It's still round, but now it's made of urethane, a type of plastic. And it's responsible for the revival of a 1960's fad—skateboards.

OR

## SOMETHING THAT INVOLVES THE AUDIENCE

Everybody, close your eyes. Now, picture an empty swimming pool—without people or *water*. The pool has curved sides. Picture yourself in the pool standing on a board that's attached to roller skate-type wheels. You push off, gain speed, and ride up the side of the pool hanging horizontal and looking at the floor of the pool. That's "riding a pool" (as skateboarders call it)—a stunt that's only for the fearless.

Each one of the above techniques can be used to introduce any kind of speech—one that informs, persuades, demonstrates, or entertains. Before you write an introduction, decide which technique suits your style and is most appropriate for your topic and audience.

For practice, write a short introduction for each of the following topics. Use a different technique for each one.

A Place I'd Like to Visit  
The Person I Admire Most  
A TV Show That Appeals to All Ages  
My Favorite Spectator Sport