Write an Opening/Introductory Paragraph:

Guidelines for Writing an Opening Paragraph:

• Grab the reader’s attention
• Set the context/define the issue
• Acknowledge Different Opinions
• Write a Strong Thesis Statement

Prompt: Write an essay in which you explain the “bystander effect” and agree or disagree with the idea that social media will only contribute to an individual’s lack of concern or involvement with others.
Over the decades, video games have developed into a form of entertainment enjoyed by millions. There are now more types of video games than ever for children and teenagers to choose from to pass the time. However, a disturbing trend has taken place: the expanded availability and variety of violent video games. If we do not ban the sale of violent video games to minors, we are allowing children to be further exposed to violence, and this can have detrimental effect of desensitizing them towards violence. The blood, fighting, and abusive language of these video games teaches young players that violence should be accepted as a part of life when they should instead be actively taught to resist it.
Over the decades, video games have developed into a form of entertainment enjoyed by millions. There are now more types of video games than ever for children and teenagers to choose from to pass the time. However, a disturbing trend has taken place: people have accepted the expanded availability and variety of violent video games. If we do not ban the sale of violent video games to minors, we are allowing children to be further exposed to violence, and this can have the detrimental effect of desensitizing them towards violence. The blood, fighting, and abusive language of these video games teaches young players that violence should be accepted as a part of life when they should instead be actively taught to resist it.
Allow your eyes to wander around a restaurant and you’ll be hard-pressed to find people who don’t have their heads down using their cell phones to text or update their statuses—all the while sharing a meal with others at their table. Nearly 50 years ago our eyes weren’t plastered to our phones, but rather 38 New Yorkers were consumed with the stabbing cries of Catherine Genovese. However, ingesting her pleas for help were not enough to bring them to her aid— not even a phone call to the police until her perpetrator fled the scene some 30 minutes later as she lay there dying from multiple stab wounds. Bystanders, yes, witnessing and still unable (and unwilling) to get involved. Some may say the social media platform provides bystanders an opportunity to have a voice—freedom through the protection of a screen-to get involved. True, social media’s effect on our ability to interact and communicate is visible in all areas of society; however, visibility and concern with action—like our victim Catherine— are two separate issues. In fact, because it is observable for all to see, social media will contribute to an individual’s lack of concern or involvement with others, thus leaving more Catherine’s behind the screen: alone, waiting, suffering, dying.
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Opening Strategies:

- The 5 W’s – the who, what, when, where and why of a situation or issue
- An interesting fact – giving a piece of information to stimulate the reader’s interest
- Taking a stand – asserting the writer’s point of view or position
- An anecdote or scenario – a short description of a situation or story illustrating a particular point
- A brief history or overview – giving the background information needed to understand the situation
- A question – asking the reader a thought-provoking question to engage interest
- A quotation or dialogue – using the exact words of a person or relating a conversation with the person that is relevant to the point being stressed
- A contrasting situation – presenting opposing sides/opinions of the situation
- A description – giving specific, vivid details to help the reader visualize the situation
- Stating the timeliness, significance, or relevance of the issue
- Combining two or more strategies above to increase the impact on the reader

Grab the reader’s attention, Set the context/define the issue, Acknowledge Different Opinions, Write a Strong Thesis Statement
Some applicable quotes:

- “In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.” James Preller, *Bystander*
- “There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest.” Elie Wiesel
- “The opposite of love is not hate, it’s indifference.” Elie Wiesel
- “We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.” Elie Wiesel
- “Because of indifference, one dies before one actually dies.” Elie Wiesel
- “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” Edmund Burke
- “Those who don’t know history are doomed to repeat it.” Edmund Burke
- “Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little.” Edmund Burke
- “Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.” Martin Luther King, Jr.