CMPSC 580
Junior Seminar
Spring 2019

Lab 6 Assignment
Revising Your Introduction to Make Your Second Draft

Objectives

To improve your proposal's introduction section by asking a colleague from class to read over the text to suggest better ways to bring out the text, explain ideas and to improve the flow.

GitHub Starter Link

https://classroom.github.com/a/gsrRxAPL
This link is from Assignment 5 and will be used to contain your work for your proposal.

To use this link, please follow the steps below.

- Click on the link and accept the assignment

- Once the importing task has completed, click on the created assignment link which will take you to your newly created github repository for this lab,

- Clone this repository (bearing your name) and work locally

- As you are working on your lab, you are to commit and push regularly. The commands are the following.

    - `git add -A`
    - `git commit -m "Your notes about commit here"`
    - `git push`

"It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data.
Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories,
instead of theories to suit facts."
- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes

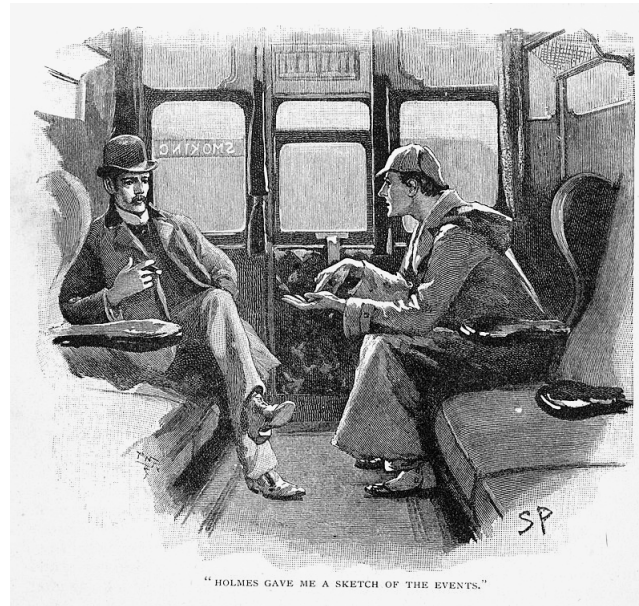"HOLMES GAVE ME A SKETCH OF THE EVENTS."

Figure 1: *What tracks are we on? What is our case, Sherlock?* Here, Sherlock Holmes is shown discussing the case with Dr. John Watson in a train. During their discussion, Holmes provides surrounding background detail, relevant to the successful start of the case. Notably, his conversation with Watson includes ample detail about the crime; the disappearance of the boot, the body, the characters and their motives, desperate game after a sum of money, the fire-breathing hound, the risks, the dangers, and the important back-story concerning the infamous and diabolical *Professor Moriarty*. Watson, looking a little overwhelmed in the Figure, is using this information to help him to get caught-up on the the adventure's details that may save lives and the case, itself, if these details are understood correctly. He also knows that this discussion is his only chance to learn of the significance of the entire case from Holmes before the action begins and the *game is afoot*. The introduction to your proposal works in a very similar way for the reader.

Introduction

A decent Introduction section in a proposal provides motivation and support for the whole body of text that follows behind it. This section may be one of the most important since it helps the reader to decide whether to continue reading your proposal, or not.

In the introduction section of a typical Sherlock Holmes story, Holmes tells Watson what he needs to know in order to understand what the case is about. During this conversation, Holmes discussing the points of interest that will need to be understood to solve the crime. In Figure 1 we note thIS introductory conversation as an adventure is about to begin.

Sadly, Holmes never says all he is thinking (adding to the suspense of the story) and so Watson is often forced to journey-on, alone, in his quest to discover the missing parts, as the case unfolds. We must note here that Watson generally becomes frustrated with Holmes and asks questions about missing details which do not get answers. Holmes ought not to write introductory pieces! Leaving out critical conversation and meaningful details of a project in the beginning will serve to damage your proposal and undermine your research! Unlike the Watsonian manner that we have come to know, your reader will not generally continue on, alone, to find the *truth* behind what you are proposing. On the contrary, leaving-out essential detail in one's Introduction will likely cause the entire document to remain an unread mystery caper.

Eliminate all other factors, and the one which remains must be the truth (What To Do)

By now in class, you should already have a working copy of an introduction section that is in need of editing. There should be at least two references to your document to support your premises and provide motivation to your proposed work. Your next step is to exchange your work with a colleague from your class to read as a peer-review. Your colleague's ideas and constructive criticism (which will come from his or her responses to the Questions in Blue, below) will be used to improve your work even further. Your responses are to be given back to the original writer using the `issue tracker` in the GitHub repository. Be sure to include your peer's name. The main deliverables of this lab are:

1. **A *Camera-Ready* introduction section**: The finalized introduction section which has been edited and is ready for instructor-reading for a grade. Note, the document size for this work should not be longer than four pages of text.

2. **Your Colleague's criticism and your reflections**: The transcript of your peer's remarks from your `issue tracker` should be placed into a markdown file (named below) where you have addressed each concern and described how you incorporated this thinking into your own work, or not at all.

In this activity, you will exchange work with your colleague from class who will peer-edit your introduction section. After reading the introduction, you are both to address the Questions in Blue (below) to help you in your thinking. You are then to consider applying the ideas from these

responses to the Questions in Blue to your work. The final deliverable for this work will be an introduction that the instructor will read for your grade.

"It has long been an axiom of mine
that the little things are infinitely the most important."
- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes

Questions to Consider While Peer-Editing Writing

Be brief, but exact in your discussion of the following. There are multiple lines to help guide your thinking behind each question.

1. **Main idea**: What is the main idea of this section? What is the author writing about? In general, what does this text explain to you?

2. **A clear research problem**: What is the research problem? Has the problem been adequately discussed so that *anyone* is able to understand it? Has the discussion been written in a way that makes you *really* interested in finding some solution? How thi problem be described in detail to make it more interesting to the reader?

3. **Clear logical argument for solving the problem**: Is there a true reason to solve the research problem? Does it have a logical argument behind it using some kind of evidence? Is the evidence appropriate? Are they *Cherry-picked* happenings which just look good, but may not be characteristic of the data in general? What might be missing? Where are the weak points? Play with the argument what happens if you change parts of it? What happens if one or more assumptions is dropped from the text?

4. **Flow**: How are the subsections strung together? Does this ordering make sense? Would there be a better way to introduce the ideas? For instance, are concepts out of order? Is there discussion about the use of some technology before the technology is formally introduced?

5. **Citations**: Are there any peer-reviewed articles (not web sites, but actual scholarly articles) cited in the introduction to supply support for this work by the community? Are these articles listed in a bibliography section? Are these articles current to create a foundation of cutting-edge work?

6. **Terms**: What are the key terms that the author uses? Are these terms defined in some clear way? Have these terms been invented by the author or do they appear to be terms from the field of study?

7. **The Audience for the proposal**: Who is the audience for this text? Are they weathered computer science people who speak in jargon (a language that is used in a particular context

and may not be well understood outside that the context) with each other? Or, are they regular people with no assumed background in computer science? What does the text do to include or exclude readers? Who might be excluded from this text, according to the language?

8. **"Naturally, you see it my way, right?"**: What does the author take for granted in the writing? Does it appear that the author believes that s/he has already won-over the reader's respect and attention? What does the author assume of the reader? What would happen if the reader did not agree on these matters?

9. **First/second/third person (I/you/he, she, or it)**: Is the author present in the text and if so, how? How does the author choose to present him or herself? Does the author address the reader you directly and if so in what context? Does the author invoke a "we"? If so, is it clear who is playing the part of,"we" and who is the writer of the proposal? In your opinion, should some of these pronouns be changed to other terms? Why? Which ones?

10. **"Try avoid saying it like this because it just sounds a little cheesy ..."**: Are there any parts of the language that appear to undermine the integrity of the text? Does the text lose strength, support or enthusiasm when a particular concept is brought-up? Does something require being checked again to make sure that it should actually be included in the text?

Summary of the Deliverables

- It would be best to keep all your proposal writing in one repository and so we will be working from the one created in *assignment 5*.

- Directory **introduction/**: If you have not already done so, create a new directory in the (*assignment 5*) repository called `introduction/`. This new name will help me to grade this lab.

  - **File**, `introduction/criticism-Lab06.md`: In this directory, place your colleague's responses to the questions in blue, from above. You should have found these responses from your *issue tracker* and you may have to negotiate access on GitHub to share your work in this way.
  - **Responses to Criticism**: After each of your colleague's remarks in this file, write your own responses to these criticisms of your work. Please specify whose line belongs to whom. If you agree agree with the critical point, then write how you will contribute this thinking to your writing. If you do not agree with the critical point, discuss why this point, either, does not apply, or is not relevant to your writing.
  - **File**, `introduction/introduction-Lab06.pdf`: your finalized introduction section for your lab grade. Note, you will compile this file with LaTeX in the main directory of your repository (with the other files and bibliography). Please make a copy of the finalized introduction (as a pdf) and place it in this directory for me to find and read.

"The game is afoot."
- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Adventure of the Abbey Grange