In this next module, we're going to talk about writing with verbs.

I want you to use strong verbs, avoid turning verbs into nouns, and avoid burying the main verb. I'm going to go over each of these three principles in turn.

The first thing is we want to use strong verbs. Verbs are what drive the English language. Verbs make sentences go. They make the sentence lively. They draw the reader in. So you need to focus on writing with verbs. Here's an example that illustrates this point. I took a sentence from a novel, and I changed a few words to make a point. My altered version says, loud music came from speakers embedded in the walls, and the entire arena moved as the hungry crowd got to its feet. Now, that's a perfectly fine sentence. It's pretty descriptive. It moves along. It draws the reader in. It's not bad, but I want you to compare that to the original version of this sentence. Loud music exploded from speakers embedded in the walls, and the entire arena shook as the hungry crowd leaped to its feet. You can see how those expressive, active, great verbs make that sentence so vivid. It draws the reader in. It brings the sentence to life. Of course, in scientific writing, we rarely get to say, exploded or shook or leaped. Uh, but we can certainly, uh, do better with verbs. A lot of times we end up just using to be verbs or provides or shows we can do better than those boring verbs.

So I want to encourage you, don't just reach for any old verb. Try to pick the right verb for your sentence. Here's an example. It's a perfectly fine sentence. It says the who reports that approximately two thirds of the world's diabetics are found in developing countries, and estimates that the number of diabetics in these countries will double in the next 25 years. We have two verbs in this sentence. We have reports and estimates, and they're fine, but we can do better. What's another way to say reports approximately? Remember I told you last week that we're going to try to avoid the use of adverbs. Well, one way to avoid adverbs is to pick the right verb that already has the adverb embedded in the verb. So a faster way to say reports approximately is to say estimates. Now, we don't want to repeat the verb estimates, so we might want to come up with a better verb for the second part of that sentence as well. Here, the authors are talking about estimating something about the future. Well, there's a better verb for that, right? How about projects? Do you see how much stronger that is? Because it gets the idea of the future right there in the verb. These are just slightly better verb choices, but they make a big difference to the sentence. So pay attention to picking the right verbs. I encourage you to use it the sorus to help you find the best verbs for every situation.

Now, to be verbs is or was, were, be, been and am….. They are highly overused in scientific writing, and they're boring. You have to use to be verb Sometimes. You can't avoid them, but they should not be the predominant verbs in your paper. When you get a chance, try going through your writing and underlining all of your verbs. See how often you use to be verbs. You might be surprised. So we are possible try to substitute those to be verbs with something a little bit more exciting, a little bit stronger. Last week, we talked about the problem of turning verbs into nouns. This is a bad habit that's firmly entrenched in academic writing. I want you to catch yourself doing this and try to turn those nouns back into verbs. Here's an example. It says during DNA damage, recognition of protein, one by protein two, results in recruitment of protein three and repression of cell proliferation genes. You can see all the nouns in that we have recognition, recruitment, repression, which could have been recognized, recruit and repress again. As I said last week, those nouns slow your reader down. It's hard for your reader to follow what's happening because we don't have any action here. And actually, when I was editing this for my student, I realized that I didn't have enough information to edit this properly. Because she used so many nouns here. She got away with being ambiguous. She actually hasn't specified which protein is doing what to which other protein. So I had to go back to her and have her draw a picture for me so that I could take this sentence and substitute verbs for nouns. So I rewrote this as During DNA damage, protein one recruits protein two and protein three, which together repress cell proliferation genes. So I'm actually being more specific in that rewrite. By turning those nouns into verbs, I was forced to give a clearer picture of what's going on. So that's also helpful for the reader. It avoids ambiguity, so you want to say exactly who does what to whom, and putting things in the active voice and using verbs forces you to do so.

Another common thing we do in academic writing is we take a nice, spunky verb, turn it into a boring now, and pair it with a boring verb. We've seen a few examples of this already. Now, don't ask me why we do this. It's extremely common, but it makes very little sense. You can see things like obtain estimates of Well, estimate was a nice, spunky verb, which we turned into a boring now estimate. And then we paired it. We have a weak verb obtain. Of course, we want to just turn these back into the verb form. So instead of obtain estimates of we should just say, estimate has seen an expansion just say has expanded. Provides a method logic emphasis just say emphasizes methodology, taken assessment of assess I can give you lots of examples of this. So instead of provide a review of, just say, review, offer confirmation of, just say, confirm, make a decision of Decide shows a peak, peaks. Provide a description of describe, see how much better that is. There's nothing to be gained by paring these nice verbs with boring verbs and turning them into nouns.

My final point on verbs is you don't want to bury the main verb. What I mean by that is you want to make sure that the main verb of the sentence, which is also called the predicate, is up close to the subject, near the start of the sentence. The reason is that the readers are waiting for the verb. Until the reader gets to the verb, they don't know where you are going. So if you put too much distance between the subject of the sentence and the main verb, you're going to lose your reader.

Here's an example to illustrate this. I call this the case of the buried predicate. The sentence is hard to read. It says One study of 930 adults with multiple sclerosis M-S receiving care, and one of two managed care settings are in a fee for service setting, found that only two thirds of those needing to contact a neurologist for an M-S related problem in the prior six months had done so. Notice how difficult that sentence is to make sense of the subject of the sentence. Is the study, OK, but we get this long description of the study, and we don't get to the predicate to the main verb until found. By the time you get to the found, you've lost your reader, because there's too much clutter in between the subject and the predicate of that sentence.

Well, there's a simple fix for this one. Okay, I fix this one by doing nothing other than moving the verb found up. I took all of that description of the study and set it deciding comma. So I rewrote as one study found that of 930 adults with MS who were receiving care in one of two managed care settings or in a fee for service setting, only two thirds of those needing to contact a neurologist for an MS related problem in the prior six months had done so. Notice how the readers not bothered by all of that descriptive stuff, as long as the reader has already got the verb. So try to keep that verb close to the subject near the start of the sentence. I'm going to show you some more examples of this principle in the next module.

本节我们来学习动词在写作中的用法 我们会学习运用丰富有力的动词，避免用它们的名词形式。 同时要把核心动词显示出来。 我将带你们依次回忆一下三个原则。 第一个原则是，我们想用强有力的动词 动词是语句前进的“动力” 它们带动句子发展 让句子变得生动 并吸引读者的兴趣 所以运用动词来写作非常关键 关于这一点，我举一个例子 我从一本小说里摘抄了一个句子，并做了一点修改 我修改后的版本如下：“墙上的扬声器里传来爆裂的音乐声。” “人们纷纷迫不及待地站起来，整个竞技场沉浸在一片沸腾之中。” 这个句子没有问题 它形容力很强，节奏强力，能吸引读者 这还不错 但是来看一下句子的原始版本 “震耳欲聋的音乐从墙上的扩音器喷涌而出。” “人们一跃而起，整个竞技场都在颤动。” 能感受到生动有力的动词是如何让句子栩栩如生的。 它让读者沉浸其中。 让句子活灵活现。 当然，在学术论文写作中，我们不太会用到“爆炸性巨响”或者 “震惊”或者“跳起来”这些表达 但好的动词肯定会有帮助 很多时候我们用to be, provide 跟show这些苍白的动词。 但总有更好的表达方法 所以在选择动词上不要太随便 选择最合适的那个 我们来看下面这个例子 这句话表达的不错 “WHO报道声称，世界上近乎三分之二 的糖尿病患者来自发展中国家， 这个数量预计将在未来25年里翻一番。 这个句子里有两个动词，”reports“和”estimates“。 它们可以传达这句话的意思，但有更好的选择。 ”eports approximately“还可以怎么表达？ 还记上周学过避免使用副词吗 避免使用副词的方法就是选择合适的动词 让动词本身传达出副词的意思 所以” reports approximately,“可以用”estimates“表述 但我们不想重复”estimates“ 所以要寻找另一个合适的动词。 这里作者在谈论对未来某事的预估 有什么更好的动词呢？ ”projects“怎么样？ 你能感受到这句话更强力了吗 因为这个动词本身就包含有未来的意思 这只是一个动词的替换，但产生了明显的效果。 所以选择合适的动词很重要。 我鼓励大家使用同义词词典寻找在每个语境下的 最佳动词 另外，谓语动词” is, are,was, were, be, been, am.“ 在学术论文里经常出现它们十分乏味 但有时候你必须使用他们。 你无法完全回避他们，但不能让它们主导你的论文 如果有机会，尝试通读你的论文 并把所有的动词用下划线画出来 看看你使用动词的频率。 你可能会惊讶。 所以，如果有可能，尝试着把这些动词替换成 更有趣、更具有感染力的动词。 上周，我们谈论了动词--名词转换问题 这是一个学术写作中的坏习惯。 我想让你控制自己避免自己这样做 尝试把这些名词替换成动词 我们来看下面这个例子 ”在DNA损坏中，蛋白质一对一的识别导致了 蛋白质三的募集与细胞增殖基因的阻遏。“ 你可以看到这里所有的动词 这句话使用了"recognition", "recruitment",和"representation" 这些地方本可以用"recognize", "recruit"和"represss" 我们上周学习过，这些名词形式的动词会影响读者的阅读速度 让他们难以跟上你的思路 因为这种写法不能体现出动作的执行 在我给学生修改这句话的时候 我意识到我没有足够的信息来修改 这句话中用了太多名词，意思过于模糊 她没能解释清楚哪个蛋白质对其它哪些蛋白质做了什么 所以我不得不让她画张图片来说明 我才理解了这句话，然后把这些名词替换成动词 我把这句话重写：“在DNA受损时，蛋白质1接受了蛋白质2和蛋白质3” “它们三个共同抑制了细胞增殖基因” 这句话相比之前更加明确了 通过把名词转换成动词 我们就被迫用更明确的语言来表述发生的事情 这有助于读者的理解 避免了歧义 所以在写作中应当准确地表述谁做了哪些事情 并用主动的语态表达出来。动词的使用会强迫你这样做 另一个学术写作中经常出现的问题是把生动的动词变成乏味的名词 然后跟另一个乏味的动词一块使用 前面已经展现过这种用法 没法解释为什么我们会这么做 这是非常普遍的但毫无意义 比如"obtain estimates of” “estimate”是一个有力的动词，但这句话把它变成了名词 然后跟一个苍白的动词"obtain"一块使用 当然我们想把这些变回动词形式 所以应当用“estimate”而不是"obtain estimates of" "has seen expansion in" 改成 "has expanded" “provides a methodologic emphasis” 改成 "emphasizes methodology" "take an assessment of "改成 "assess" 还有更多的例子 用"review"代替"provide a review of" 用"confirm"代替"offer confirmation of" 用"decide"代替"make a decision" 用"peak"代替"shows a peak" 用"describe"代替"provide a description of" 看出这些改变的好处了吗 把这些动词变成名词与那些乏味的动词一起使用 是毫无帮助的 我想说的最后一点是不要埋没核心动词 确保句子的主要动词也即谓语 靠近主语 并接近句字的开头部分 这是因为在读者读到谓语前 他们并不知道你想要说什么 所以如果主语与谓语之间隔了太远 读者就很难理解你的意思 这里有一个例子 即被埋没的谓语 这句话相当难读 “一个包含了930个患有多种硬化症的成年人的” “在两个托管护理机构之一或咨询费机构” “发现在应当在最初6个月向神经科医生咨询硬化症的患者中” “仅有三分之二的人做了咨询” 这句话非常难以理解 主语是“研究” 因此 但这个句子用了太长的修饰语来修饰“研究” 我们直到最后才看到谓语 当你写到谓语的时候，你已经失去了读者 因为主语与谓语之间的冗赘太多，读者无法读下去 对于这个问题，有一个简单的解决方法 我仅仅是把谓语“found”移到前面去 然后把关于这个研究的修饰语放着两个逗号中间 这句话变成“研究表明，在患有多种硬化症” “并且在两个护理机构之一或在付费护理机构接受治疗的930名成年人中” “仅有三分之二的需要在之前六个月内看神经科医生的人” “去看了医生” 只要读者已经看到了谓语 他们就不会再受大段修饰语的干扰 所以在写作中应当让谓语尽可能接近主语，并接近句子的开头 我会在下一讲给你们展示更多的这种例子