|  |
| --- |
| The third major section of an academic research report, after the Introduction and Methods, is often labeled **Results** or **Findings**. In the **Results** section, you present the findings of your study in both *graphics* and in written *text*. Graphics (charts, tables, diagrams, etc.) present findings in numerical or visual terms, while the accompanying text helps the reader to focus on the most important aspects of the results and to interpret them. |

**Quantitative Data: Tables, Graphs, and Figures**

A ***table*** is a systematic presentation of information, usually in rows and columns. A ***figure*** is any non-text item that is not a table (for example, a chart, a graph, a diagram, a drawing, or a photo).

You should make your table or figure as simple and clear as possible. Computer software will allow you to automatically generate a wide variety of colourful and “fancy” graphs and charts, but a “neat, clean, and simple” look is usually preferable. Fancy graphics and artwork may actually distract rather than attract the reader, and make it more difficult for the reader to understand the data.

**Task 1: Types of Charts & Graphs**

Look at the following pairs of charts/graphs. For each pair, decide which one is easier to understand and more effective. Discuss what makes one more effective and the other ineffective. Are there still problems with the “more effective” chart/graph? What conclusions can you make about the use of each type of chart/graph?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1a  Figure 1: Example A of a pie chart | 1b  Figure 2: Example B of a pie chart |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 2a  Figure 3: Example of a column chart | 2b  Figure 4: Example of a stacked column chart |

|  |
| --- |
| 3a  Figure 5: Example of a stacked marked line chart |
| 3b  Figure 6: Example of a marked line chart |

The Three-Line Table Format

As can be seen in Task 1 above, charts and graphs do not always display data in a clear way, especially if there is a large amount of data. For this reason, academic reports usually use tables (although graphs can be used for oral presentations to create a visual impact). One way to create a simple, “clean” table that is attractive and easy to read is to use a “three-line” format. The top line indicates the beginning of the table, the second line separates the column headings from the data, and the bottom line indicates the end of the table. Table 1 below illustrates this kind of format.



Table 1: The Three-Line Table Format

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 2 |
| Category 1 | 10 | 13 | 16 |
| Category 2 | 11 | 14 | 17 |
| Category 3 | 12 | 15 | 18 |

|  |
| --- |
| If you use MS Word to create your table, you can adjust the lines by using the “Borders and Shading” option under the “Table Properties” command. First, choose “None” to hide all the lines in your table, and then add top and bottom lines in your first row and a bottom line in your last row. |

Notice that the number of the table should appear **above** the table. Tables should be numbered consecutively throughout the paper, preceded by “Table” (for example, “Table 1,” “Table 2,” “Table 3”). The title of the table should also appear above the table (numbers and titles of figures should appear below the figure). **All tables MUST have a title**, and the title should describe the content of the data as clearly and briefly as possible. Your reader should be able to understand the title of the table without referring to your written text.

The column headings should appear between the first and second lines of your table, while the row headings should appear on the left hand side. As with the title of your table, your column and row headings should be descriptive, clear, and brief. Do **NOT**, for example, use “Question 1,” Question 2,” “Question 3,” etc. for your headings. Headings that refer to your questionnaire cause unnecessary work for your readers since the readers need to flip back and forth between your table and questionnaire in order to understand the information presented in the table.

Your table should also indicate the units that are used to display your data. For example, in some cases, you might simply count up the number of people who responded to a question in a particular way, while in other cases, you might calculate the percentages. Table 2 below illustrates how the units can be indicated in the title of a table.

Table 2: Number of Responses on Nuclear Energy Policy by Occupation

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Doctors  (n=16) | Lawyers  (n=11) | Teachers  (n=16) |
| More nuclear power | 3 | 8 | 1 |
| Less nuclear power | 8 | 1 | 12 |
| Present policy is acceptable | 5 | 2 | 3 |

In this example, the title tells us the data are numerical counts. The column headings tell us the total number of respondents for each occupation.

In some cases you may wish to present two different units of the same data. For example, in Table 2 the total number of lawyers in the study is different from the numbers of doctors and teachers. To make a comparison among the three groups easier, percentages of the responses can be calculated and included in the table. This is illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Responses on Nuclear Energy Policy by Occupation

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Doctors | | Lawyers | | Teachers | |
|  | (n=16) | % | (n=11) | % | (n=16) | % |
| More nuclear power | 3 | 18.75 | 8 | 72.72 | 1 | 06.25 |
| Less nuclear power | 8 | 50.00 | 1 | 09.09 | 12 | 75.00 |
| Present policy is acceptable | 5 | 31.25 | 2 | 18.18 | 3 | 18.75 |

**Task 2: Table Construction**

Conduct a quick, simple survey of your classmates (for example, find out what activities your classmates engaged in over the weekend). Then, use the data to create a table using the three-line format. Remember to number the table, write a descriptive title, indicate the units used, and use descriptive categories.



|  |
| --- |
| **Summary of Guidelines for Using Tables**   1. Select an appropriate layout and type of table to suit your purpose. 2. Make your tables as simple and as brief as possible. Remember the saying, “Simplicity is the key to beauty.” 3. Place small tables within your text; place large or complex tables on separate pages in an appendix. 4. Place the table as close to you textual discussion as possible, but it **should not** come before your first mention of it. 5. Write a brief, clear title for each table so that your reader can understand it without reference to your text. Place your title above the table. 6. Write brief, clear column and row headings for each table. 7. Number tables consecutively throughout the paper, preceded by *Table* (e.g., Table 3). Place the number and the title above the table. |



|  |
| --- |
| **Writing Up Your Own Research**  You will need to work with your research partner[s] outside of class time to create a table that summarizes your results. You will need to:   * Complete any necessary calculations (e.g., frequency counts, averages, percentages) * Arrange the items of your table logically (the order of items presented in your table might not be in the same order as in your questionnaire) * Construct one or more tables of your quantitative data following the guidelines above. |

**Describing Quantitative Data**

As mentioned above, the results section of your report should present the findings using **both** tables **and** written descriptions. The text describing the results will often contain three types of information, as shown in the box below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Results: Three Information Elements** | |
| Element 1: | a statement that ***locates the table*** where the information can be found |
| Element 2: | statements that present the ***most important findings*** |
| Element 3: | statements that ***comment*** on the results |

**Task 3: Discussion**

How is the three-part structure for describing results similar to (or different from) the three-part structure for presenting a citation from a source?

**Task 4: Identification**

Below is an excerpt from a Results section from the field of foreign language education. Read this section and then identify which parts correspond to the three information elements presented above.

|  |
| --- |
| **Foreign Language in the Elementary School:**  **A comparison of Achievement**  **Results**  **1** Table 1 displays the mean percentile scores on the four subtests for non-immersion and immersion French students. **2** Students in the French immersion program performed considerably better than their non-immersion peers on all four Modern Language Association tests by more than two-to-one in terms of scores obtained on each of the subtests. **3** For example, in the listening subtest, immersion students scored in the 80th percentile, while non-immersion students scored in the 14th percentile. **4** The findings indicate that the amount of exposure to a foreign language has a positive effect on student performance. **5** It appears that the intensity of immersion programs (an average of 75% of total instruction per week in French compared to approximately 10% for non-immersion) and the use of the foreign language to study basic subjects results in substantial differences in performance in all four skill areas of the MLA test.  \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*   1. Which sentence locates ***the table*** where the results can be found? \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Which sentences present the ***most important results***? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Which sentences ***comment*** on the results? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ |

**Referring to Tables**

In element 1, the *present* tense is usually used to locate your data in the table. This sentence, however, can be either in the active voice, or in the passive voice. There are certain formulaic expressions that can be used as shown in the examples below.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Element 1: Locating the Table (present tense)** | | | | | |
| Example 1:  (active voice) | Table 3 | *presents*  *summarizes*  *shows*  *displays*  *reports* | the results of the test for the 40 participants. | | |
| Example 2: (passive voice) | The results of the test for the 40 participants | | | *are presented*  *are summarized*  *are shown*  *are displayed*  *are reported* | in Table 3. |

It is also possible to combine element 1 (locating the data) and element 2 (summarizing the data), as shown in the following examples.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Elements 1 and 2 Combined** | | | |
|  | Element 1 | | Element 2 |
| Example 1:  (introductory phrase) | As can be seen in Table 2,  As shown in Table 2, | | students in the immersion program performed considerably better on the test than their non-immersion peers. |
|  | Element 1 | | Element 2 |
| Example 2: (subject) | Table 2 | shows  illustrates  indicates | ***that*** students in the immersion program performed considerably better on the test than their non-immersion peers. |

**Task 5: Completion**

Below are some sentences that locate the table (element 1) from different research reports. Complete each sentence by writing any appropriate verb, using the correct tense and voice, in each of the blank spaces.

1. Behavioral and cognitive effects \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Table 2.
2. Table 3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the mean scores on the four subtests.
3. As can \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Table 5, immersion students scored at the 80th percentile on the listening test, while non-immersion students scored at the 14th percentile.
4. The findings for the sample \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Table 1.
5. Table 2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that 8.6 percent of the infants in the study area had a low weight at the time of birth.
6. Table 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the respondents’ attitudes towards the proposed flexible working hours scheme.
7. Both department heads and the participants in the scheme felt that there were many benefits, as can \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Table 3.
8. Table 2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the terms and conditions offered by the two companies under investigation.

**Presenting the Findings (Element 2)**

**Task 6: Organizing your Description**

After element 1 (locating the table), you should write several sentences to highlight the most important information of your findings (element 2). You should begin with an overview, and then write several sentences to describe the data in more detail. Remember to go from the most general information to more specific details.

The following sentences are taken from the results section from a study on students’ weight management practices.

1. Number the following sentences in a logical order to form a well-written paragraph that describes the results.
2. How did you use the following to help you organize the sentences?
   * the principle of moving from general to specific
   * cohesive signals
   * information flow
3. Which sentences correspond to element 1, element 2, and element 3?
4. Which sentence of element 2 presents an overview of the data? Which sentences of element 2 present more specific details?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Order** | **Sentences** |
|  | 1. In particular, the female participates did fewer muscle-strengthening exercises, such as weight lifting, than the male respondents, and the females also engaged in training less often. |
|  | 1. However, the food choices of the two groups paint a different picture. |
|  | 1. These data indicate that females generally did fewer physical activities, but had healthier food choices than males. |
|  | 1. Generally, the females in this study chose healthier food, such as fruit, salads, and cooked vegetables, while the males tended to choose unhealthy food such as sausages, potato chips, cookies, and fried foods. |
|  | 1. In addition, the male participants engaged in more high-intensity exercises, such as jogging or rowing, whereas the females who engaged in cardio exercises chose activities of a low or moderate intensity, such as walking or bicycling. |
|  | 1. Table 1 shows the physical activities, food choices, and weight management practices among the participants by gender. |
|  | 1. It thus seems that in terms of physical exercise, the males in this study were healthier than the females. |

**Task 7: Using Quantifiers**

The presentation of your findings should be descriptive. Instead of merely repeating the numbers in your table(s), the text to describe your data should give the readers a “feeling” for the numbers. One way to do this is to use *quantifiers*. Some common *quantifiers* used in presenting results are listed below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Common Quantifiers** | |
| Most of …  More than half of …  The majority of …  The vast majority of … | Approximately two-thirds of …  Just over a third of …  Only a few … |

When using quantifiers, you need to pay careful attention to the correct prepositions and articles.

The following sentences are taken from the results sections of different research reports. Fill in the blanks with a correct word. If a blank does not require a word write “X”.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ majority \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ respondents (72%) thought that the flexible working-hours system helped in meeting their personal needs.
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ vast majority \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ people surveyed (18 out of 20) used their smartphones for text messaging.
3. Only \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ third \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ respondents expressed a willingness to finance public education through increased taxes.
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ slight majority (52%) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ women in this study reported feelings of depression two weeks after delivering their babies.
5. Less \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ half \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ participants felt that Hong Kong public hospitals responded to the questions of patients in a respectful manner.

**Task 8: Choosing the Correct Verb Tense**

When reporting your findings (element 2), you should usually use the past tense. You should be aware, however, that in some fields, particularly engineering and economics, the present tense is sometimes used to report the findings. (Using the past tense indicates that the results were true for a particular sample at a particular time. Using the present tense, on the other hand, indicate that your findings represent “general truths.”)

The following excerpt is taken from a study about opinions of Department Heads towards a flexible working-hours scheme. Complete each blank space with the correct verb tense using the verbs in brackets.

|  |
| --- |
| **Assessing the Flexible Working Hours Scheme in ABC Company**  **Results**  Table 1 below \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (reveal) that just over a third of the Department Heads \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (feel) that the main negative affect of the scheme \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (be) the difficulty of arranging meetings. On the other hand, most of them \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (indicate) that staff morale and productivity \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (be) positively affected. Apart from these areas, Department Heads generally \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (believe) that there \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (be) few other effects. |

**Task 9: Making Comparisons**

In some studies, the findings involve making a comparison between groups. In these cases, element 2 statements are often written using comparative or superlative expressions.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Element 2: Comparison Among Groups** | | | | |
| **Group 1** | **Comparison** | | | **Group 2** |
| The professional athletes | had ***faster*** eye movements | | | ***than*** our other subjects. |
| Quartz I reactors | had a ***higher*** mass flow | | | ***than*** Quartz II. |
| Divorced mothers | spent ***twice as much*** ***time*** in employment | | | ***as*** married mothers. |
| **Superlative** | | | **Group** | |
| The **highest** incidence of cancer | | was found among Australian Indians. | | |

The following excerpt is taken from a study about the reading habits of Hong Kong Chinese students at a local university. (This is the same study you read in the beginning of the semester). Complete each blank space with a word of comparison. Use the words ***more***, ***less***, ***much***, ***as***, or ***than*** to complete the blanks.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **University Students’ Reading Habits**  **Results**  Table 5 below shows the average number of hours per week that students spent reading English and Chinese texts for both academic and non-academic purposes. The results indicate that the two groups of students spent different amounts of time reading, with English majors reading, on average, almost twice \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (15.2 hours) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Engineering majors (8.3 hours). The way that time was allocated according to the reading task was also different between the two groups. As can be seen in Table 5, Engineering students spent \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ time reading English for academic purposes (7.6 hours) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ English students (5.5). On the other hand, English majors spent \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ time reading for non-academic purpose, in both English (3.2 hours) and Chinese (4.2 hours), \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Engineering students. Engineering students spent, on average, less than one hour per week reading for non-academic purposes.  Table 5 -- Average number of hours per week spent reading   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | English majors | Engineering majors | | Hours reading Chinese texts for academic purposes | 2.3 | 0.0 | | Hours reading Chinese texts for non-academic purposes | 4.2 | 0.5 | | Hours reading English texts for academic purposes | 5.5 | 7.6 | | Hours reading English texts for non-academic purposes | 3.2 | 0.2 | |



|  |
| --- |
| Be careful with the terms “significant” and “correlation.” These terms have a technical meaning in statistics and should **not** be used unless you have performed a statistical procedure to test for significance or have calculated a correlation coefficient. Thus, you should **not** say, “*the professional athletes had significantly faster eye movements than our other subjects*,” or “f*emales have significantly better diets than boys*,” or “h*aving a part-time job is negatively correlated with good academic results*.” Instead, you can use *hedging* and the expressions “*related to”* or “*associated with”.* For example, you could make the following sentences without doing high-level statistical procedures: “The quality of diet **seems to be associated with** gender, or *“Poor academic results* ***seems to be related to*** *having a part-time job.”* |

**Commenting on your data (Element 3)**

After describing the most important data (element 2), you should then briefly comment on the data (element 3). Comments in the results can serve a variety of functions, as listed below.

|  |
| --- |
| **Functions of Comments (Element 3)** |
| 1. ***generalize*** from the results; 2. ***explain*** possible reasons for the results; 3. ***compare*** the results with results from other studies. | |

**Task 10: Identifying Functions of Comments**

|  |
| --- |
| ***Exercise 4.2 – Identification***  Each comment below comes from a different research report. Identify the function of each according to the list in the preceding box. |
| 1. \_\_\_\_\_ These data indicate that performance of *Rhizobium Japonicum* strains is likely to be better under irrigated conditions. 2. \_\_\_\_\_ This difference in perceived time available for youth related activities is likely due to the additional amount of time spent on the job by divorced mothers. 3. \_\_\_\_\_ These findings are consistent with those from a larger study in which the same supplementation program increased birthweights by an average of 224 g in the months July to January. 4. \_\_\_\_\_ The reasons for this erratic pattern could be the age distribution of the children or the relatively small number of women in the sample with three or more children. 5. \_\_\_\_\_ Up to this point, these data are consistent with those of Chapman and Hutcheson (1983). |

**Task 11: Using Hedging Expressions and the Appropriate Verb Tense**

When commenting on the findings (Element 3), it is conventional to use the *present tense* or *hedging expressions*.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Element 3: Commenting on the Results**  **Present Tense and Hedging Expressions** | | | | | | |
| When the comment *compares* your results with the results of other studies, use the ***present tense***. | | | | | | |
| Example: | This ***is*** consistent with earlier findings suggesting that personal characteristics are not related to attrition rates amongst teachers. | | | | | |
| When the comment gives a *possible explanation* for the results, use a ***modal auxiliary*** to ***hedge***. | | | | | | |
| Examples: | These results | | ***can***  ***may*** | be explained by considering the voltage distribution. | | |
|  | The reason for this pattern | | | | ***could***  ***might*** | be the age distribution of the sample. |
| When the comment *generalizes* from the result, use ***hedging.*** | | | | | | |
| Example A: | Hyperactive children ***may*** be generally responsive to amphetamines. | | | | | |
| Example B: | It | ***appears***  ***seems***  ***is likely*** | that hyperactive children are **generally** responsive to amphetamines. | | | |
| Example C: | These data ***suggest*** that children who display learning problems are depending on only on cerebral hemisphere. | | | | | |

Read the following paragraph about students’ physical activities and dietary habits (this is the same paragraph you worked on in Task 6). Look at sentence 5 (which comments on the results) and do the following.

1. Circle the verbs in the sentence. What tense is used?
2. Underline any hedging expressions.

|  |
| --- |
| 1Table 1 shows the physical activities, food choices, and weight management practices among the participants by gender. 2These data indicate that females generally did fewer physical activities, but had healthier food choices than males. 3In particular, the female participates did fewer muscle-strengthening exercises, such as weight lifting, than the male respondents, and the females also engaged in training less often. 4In addition, the male participants engaged in more high-intensity exercises, such as jogging or rowing, whereas the females who engaged in cardio exercises chose activities of a low or moderate intensity, such as walking or bicycling. 5It thus seems that in terms of physical exercise, the males in this study are healthier than the females. 6However, the food choices of the two groups paint a different picture. 7Generally, the females in this study chose healthier food, such as fruit, salads, and cooked vegetables, while the males tended to choose unhealthy food such as sausages, potato chips, cookies, and fried foods. |

Now read the following paragraph describing results which compare older and younger workers. First, identify which sentences correspond to elements 1, 2, and 3. Then complete the paragraph by filling in the blanks with the following verbs. Make any necessary changes in verb tense and subject/verb agreement. Which verbs are hedging expressions?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Element 1 verbs: | present | show |  |  |
| Element 2 verbs: | be (x2) | earn | produce |  |
| Element 3 verbs: | be (x2) | appear | seem | suggest |

|  |
| --- |
| Skill Jobs in an Applied Setting  1Table 3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the data for workers holding skill jobs. 2The overall piece rate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ $6.03 for each item that the workers produced. 3On average, the older workers \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ more items per hour (12.8 items per hour) than the younger ones (9.3 per hour) and thus \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ higher wages. 4These data \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to reject the assumption that younger workers \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ more productive than older workers. 5In fact the results \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that older workers \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ more efficient than younger ones. 6Table 3 also \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that 40 accidents involving skilled workers were reported for the calendar year. 7The reported cases \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ evenly split among workers younger than 45 and those 45 and older. 8In this case, the prediction of equivalent accident rates between age groups \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to be confirmed. |



|  |
| --- |
| **Independent Learning**  For additional practice in describing qualitative data, you can do exercises from the online course *Road to IELTS*. Go to the ELSS website (http://elss.elc.cityu.edu.hk/ELSS/home.aspx) Scroll down to “Independent Learning,” go to “IELTS -> Programmes”, and then choose “view now” under *Road to IELTS*. You can do any of the practice activities from “Writing Task 1.” |



|  |
| --- |
| **Writing Up Your Own Research**  Work with your research partner[s] outside of class time to write up your quantitative data. Remember to:   * Highlight the important information from your table (you should have already done any necessary calculations and created a table or tables of your results) * Include three elements of information in describing your results * In element 2, give an overview of the data, and then present more specific details * Write comments after each important finding, or put a general comment after the results * Organize your description logically * Use cohesive devices and information flow to link your ideas, sentences, and paragraphs. * Use correct tenses * Use comparative and superlative expressions, if necessary |

**Describing Qualitative Data**

When analyzing qualitative data, you should look for **themes**, **patterns**, and **categories**. When writing up qualitative results, you should present these themes and sub-themes and describe them vividly and in detail. As with other types of writing, you should begin with generalizations, and then move to specific details and examples. You should use quotations and paraphrases from your interviewees to illustrate your themes and sub-themes, to give examples, and to make your description “come to life.”

**Task 12: Presenting Broad Themes**

The following paragraph is taken from a qualitative research report on conflict between parents and high-achieving children (Qin, et al, 2012). Read the extract and identify the four major themes that the writer will discuss in the results section.

|  |
| --- |
| **Findings**  Our findings indicate that the adolescents in our study struggled with many of the everyday conflicts found in previous research on Chinese American adolescents, such as routines, friends, privacy, appearance, and computer use (see Juang et al., this volume). Our in-depth examination, however, revealed four main domains of acculturation-based conflicts (i.e., parental educational pressure, especially in how this was communicated; attitudes toward other races; feelings toward parent country of origin and identity; and cultural and language barriers). Each of these four conflict domains was rooted in parent and adolescent differences in values, attitudes, and beliefs as a result of the children and parents growing up and being socialized in different cultures and due to the experiences of parents as immigrants. Our analyses of student interview data suggest that both parents and adolescents experienced some internal conflicts in their dynamic relations. We illustrate and elaborate upon these ideas below. |

Read the paragraph again. Are there any sentences, phrases, or expressions that might be useful to use in your qualitative description? Write these expressions in the box below. One suggestion is given to you to get you started.

|  |
| --- |
| Useful phrases for writing qualitative descriptions  Suggested phrase: *Our findings indicate that…* |

**Task 12: Introducing Sub-themes**

Following this overview, the writers continue their qualitative description by introducing several sub-themes of the first major theme. Read the extract and answer the questions below.

|  |
| --- |
| **Conflicts Related to Educational Pressure**  Given that all of our participants had been admitted into one of the most competitive and high-achieving schools in the country, we expected education to be less of an issue of contention at home for these adolescents. However, our findings demonstrated that education-related issues remained the most common domain of conflicts in the students’ families. Our analyses showed that conflicts did not arise simply because of high parental expectations. In many ways, the students in our sample had deeply internalized high parental expectations and were motivated to do well academically. In most families, conflicts occurred because of how these expectations were communicated. In the data analysis, we found three sub-themes around parental communication related to educational issues that often caused the most conflicts: parental repetition, parental emotional reactions to their occasional failures in school, and parents’ constant comparison of them with students who had even higher levels of achievement. |

1. Before conducting the research, the writers assumed that education would be less of an issue of conflict. Why did they have this assumption?
2. Do the results support their assumptions?
3. According to the results, why did conflicts about educational expectations occur?
4. How many sub-themes about parental communication will the authors present in the findings?
5. What are these sub-themes?
6. In the last sentence, what 6 words are used to introduce these sub-themes?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ …



**Task 13: Illustrating Sub-themes**

|  |
| --- |
| When describing what your participants said, you should **not** use their real names unless you have obtained permission to do so. It is important to keep any personal information you collect confidential. |

In the next section of the report, the writers discuss these sub-themes in detail. In doing so, the writers use a three-part pattern (notice that this three-part pattern is very similar to the pattern for describing quantitative date):

1. General statements to explain the sub-theme
2. Examples of the sub-theme in the form of quotes and paraphrases taken from the interviews
3. Comments on the quotes and paraphrases

In many cases, this pattern will continue with additional examples, and additional comments about the example.

The following extract describes the first two sub-themes in the report. Read the extract and do the following for each sub-theme:

1. Underline the general statements that explain the sub-theme
2. Circle any signal words and expressions that introduce the examples
3. Put brackets around any [comments]
4. Draw squares around the headings
5. Which four-word noun phrase is used to provide a link between the two sub-themes?

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| *Repetitions.* In more than half of the families, students talked about education being a “family matter,” causing frequent friction and tension at home. This was the case in Susan’s home. For her, she often did not want to talk about school because “I already have enough of it [at school].” Nevertheless, her mother wanted to talk about it more:  Some dinners are really like bad because she just talks sometimes and if I disagree with her, then we just start this whole argument. She’s like, “Oh, you have to do good on your SATs . . . you have to work on your essays.”. . . They just repeatedly talk about school. They would start saying something about school, and then, I would say something, and they would say something, and eventually I would touch upon a point that they don’t want me to say, and then it will get into this whole big thing. . . . It’s kind of the norm.  For Susan, her parents’ over focus on education was annoying to her. During the interviews, many students expressed a similar resentment toward their parents’ repetitions. For example, Vincent shared his feelings:  “I’m trying to live up to their standards. But sometimes it gets tiresome having them reiterate everything.”  These examples illustrate that the parents’ constant repetition of the importance of education became tiresome and annoying for the children, and eventually lead to the children’s resentment towards the parents.  *Reactions to “failures.”* Another area of conflict around education reported by students was that their parents often had very strong emotional reactions to their “failures” in school, including getting angry and yelling. This was related to the strong parental emphasis on educational outcomes partially resulting from their own immigration status. For example, in Angela’s family, she described her mother’s strong reaction, “Yeah, my mom worries. She pretends not to, but then when I fail, she really has a heart attack.” Similarly, Alex wished her parents would lighten up a bit, “They just take everything so literally, and exaggerate, like if I get one bad grade, they think, ‘Oh no, you’re going to fail school, you’re going to become one of those bad girls who do drugs’ and things like that.” Often, from the students’ perspectives, parents were “paranoid” and they attributed this paranoia to their parents’ immigrant background. Specifically, because their parents had to give up everything and start a new life in the United States, they lacked a sense of security and well-established network of support in the new society. As a result, youths felt that parents pushed their children extra hard to compensate for the potential disadvantages associated with being an immigrant. Students also believed that parents hoped their children could realize their own dreams of success in the new land. |



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| **Writing Up Your Own Research**  Work with your research partner[s] outside of class time to write up your qualitative data. Remember to:   1. Organize the data collected by finding recurring patterns, themes, or categories 2. Interpret **similar** views from the participants and explain these views 3. Contrast **different** views from the participants and interpret the differences 4. Describe the themes and sub-themes (or categories) using a three-part pattern:    1. General statements to explain the theme/sub-theme/category    2. Examples in the form of quotes and paraphrases taken from the interviews    3. Comments on the quotes and paraphrases 5. If the quotation is short (less than 40 words), you can incorporate it as part of the paragraph. If the quotation is long, it should be formatted using a block indent 6. Use pseudonyms (false names) to refer your interviewees, or use consecutive numbers (“I1 said …”, “I2 felt …” “I3 described…) 7. Use headings and subheadings to separate your themes and sub-themes 8. Use transitional expressions to link the different paragraphs and sections of your description (even if you use headings, you still need to use transitional phrases) |