

# ENGLISH COMPOSITION & COMPREHENSION

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# OBJECTIVE

- ❑ Learning about Academic Writing
- ❑ Discovering features of Academic Writing
- ❑ Myths about Academic Writing
- ❑ Do's and Don't of Academic Writing

# ACADEMIC WRITING

- ❑ Academic Writing is the kind of writing that students are required to do in school/ college/ university for academic purposes.
- ❑ It differs from other kinds of writing (personal, literary, journalistic and business writing) in several ways.
- ❑ Its differences can be explained in part by its special audience, tone and purpose.

# AUDIENCE

- ❑ Whenever you write, consider your **audience**, that is the people who will read what you have written.
- ❑ Knowing your audience will help you reach your goal of communicating the ideas clearly and effectively.
- ❑ For Example: Letter to an Employer/Friend
- ❑ You may write an essay for History, Political Science, Psychology or English Exam.
- ❑ In Academic writing, your audience is primarily your Teachers.

# TONE

☐ Tone reveals your attitude towards your subject by your

1. Choice of words
2. Grammatical structures and
3. Even by length of sentences

☐ A letter to your friend will have a personal tone. (Slang Expressions & Active forms)

☐ By contrast, technical writing would contain more passive **verb forms** and **technical vocabulary**, it would be highly **formal, impersonal tone**.

- ❑ The tone of a piece of writing is determined by **intended audience** than by its subject matter.
- ❑ For Example: An article written on Covid'19
- ❑ These scientific articles are written for a special audience of Scientists and Doctors who understand medical and technical vocabulary. They are called **Jargons**.
- ❑ However, if the same were written by newspaper or popular magazines, they would have been written in general English with technical words explained in everyday vocabulary.

# PURPOSE

- ❑ No matter what kind of writing you do, you should have a specific and clear purpose.
- ❑ In literary writing, the purpose is **to entertain**, whereas in journalistic writing usually seeks **to inform or to persuade**.
- ❑ In academic writing, your purpose will most often be to **explain**.
- ❑ It may also be to **persuade, argue and convince** your audience of the correctness of your point of view on a particular issue.

# THE PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC WRITING

- ☐ To **answer a question** the writer has been given or chosen
- ☐ To discuss a subject of common interest and give the **writer's view**
- ☐ To report on a piece of **research** the writer has conducted
- ☐ To **synthesize research** done by others on a topic



# COMMON TYPES OF ACADEMIC WRITING

Notes

Essays

Reports

Papers

Thesis

# FEATURES OF ACADEMIC WRITING

Complexity

Formality

Precision

Accuracy

Explicitness

Objectivity

Hedging

Organization

Planning

# 1. COMPLEXITY

- ❑ Academic writing is complex.
- ❑ Constructions expressing causes/reasons, results/effects, purposes, contrasts, similarities.

## 2. FORMALITY

- ❑ Academic writing is **relatively formal**.
- ❑ Avoid colloquial words and expressions: *"stuff", "a lot of", "thing", "sort of", etc.*
- ❑ Avoid contractions: *"can't", "doesn't", "shouldn't", etc.*
- ❑ Limited use of phrasal verbs (verb + particle): *"put off", "bring up", etc.* (see examples on next slide)
- ❑ Limited use of prepositions
- ❑ Avoid repetition

Verb	Particle	Example	meaning
look	up	You can <b>look up</b> any new words in your dictionary.	You can find the meaning of any new words in your dictionary.
get	through	I tried to phone her but I couldn't <b>get through</b> .	I tried to phone her but I couldn't get a connection.
Make	out	I just can't <b>make</b> Jim <b>out</b> to all.	I just can't understand Jim's behaviour.

❑ Academic writing does not use **Contractions**

1. She's decided to accept the job = Informal [She's = Contractions]  
She has decided to accept the job = Formal

Examples:

- I'll bring it tomorrow => I will bring it tomorrow
- We're very happy => We are very happy

## □ Unnecessary omission (**Ellipses**)

1. Went to Barcelona for the weekend. Lots to tell you.  
(Informal)
2. We went to Barcelona for the weekend. We have a lot  
of things to tell you. (Formal)

**ACTIVITY ON PAGE NUMBER  
9, 10, 11, AND 12**



# 3. PRECISION

- ❑ In Academic writing **facts and figures** are given precisely
- ❑ Use reliable sources for ideas
- ❑ Clarity should be maintained
- ❑ Use sentence structure that is easy to understand
- ❑ Use brief sentences and avoid unnecessary words that prolong the sentence. This is called **Verbosity**

## *Examples:*

*pets like cats, dogs, etc. → pets, such as cats and dogs,  
around half of the group → approximately 53% of the group*

# 4. ACCURACY

- ❑ Academic writing uses words and vocabulary accurately
- ❑ Terminology must be related to the topic
- ❑ Use words and phrases common in academic writing  
e.g. analyze, differ, compare
- NB: **List of Vocabulary** should be maintained for writing tasks.

❑ **Language** must be good

❑ Introductory verbs: seems, tend, look, like, appear, to be,  
think believe, indicate, suggest

❑ Modal verbs: will, must, would, might, could

❑ Adverbs of Frequency: often, sometimes, usually

❑ That clause: It could be the case that  
It might be suggested that

❑ To-clause: It may be possible to obtain

❑ If-clause: If I were you

- Example: **Gauge**

- I tried to ***gauge (Guess)*** the weight of the box.
- A poll was conducted to ***gauge (Judge)*** consumers' attitudes.
- Use a thermometer to ***gauge (Measure)*** the temperature.

# 5. EXPLICITNESS

- ☐ Academic writing is explicit about the relationship in the text
  - ☐ Various parts of the text are interconnected
  - ☐ Connections can be made explicit by signal phrases
  - ☐ **Coherence and Cohesion**
- 
- See list of Transition Signals

# LINKING WORDS IN ENGLISH

## Emphasis

Undoubtedly

Indeed

Obviously

Particularly/ In particular

Especially

Clearly

Importantly

Absolutely

Definitely

Without a doubt

Never

It should be noted

## Addition

Additionally/ An additional

Furthermore

Also

Too

As well as that

Along with

Besides

In addition

Moreover

Not only - but also

In addition to this

Apart from this

## Contrast

Unlike

Nevertheless

On the other hand

Nonetheless

Despite / In spite of

In contrast (to)

While

Whereas

Alternatively

Conversely

Even so

Differing from

## Order

First/ Firstly

Second/ Secondly

Third/ Thirdly

Finally

At this time

Following

Previously

Before

Subsequently

Above all

Last but not least

First and foremost

# 6. OBJECTIVITY

- ❑ Academic writing is less personal and subjective

- First person pronouns such 'I' and 'We' are not used

1. **We suggest** that you leave the building after 8 pm. (More personal)

**It is suggested** that you leave the building after 8 pm. (Impersonal)

2. **I would** like to note a number of things here. (Personal)

**There** are number of things noted. (Detached)

- ❑ Emphasis on information and arguments

- ❑ Use nouns and adjectives rather than verbs and adverbs

**EXAMPLE ON PAGE NUMBER**

**13**

**ACTIVITY ON PAGE NUMBER**

**13 & 14**



# 7. HEDGING

- ☐ Academic writing is factual, simply to convey information and facts
- ☐ Take decisions about your stance on a particular subject or the strength of the claims you made
- ☐ Use phrases like “It seems, it could be suggested” etc.
- ☐ Use of modal verbs and some other words to avoid a definite statements

1.	Introductory verbs:	e.g. seem, tend, look like, appear to be, think, believe, doubt, be sure, indicate, suggest
2.	Certain lexical verbs	e.g. believe, assume, suggest
3.	Certain modal verbs:	e.g. will, must, would, may, might, could
4.	Adverbs of frequency	e.g. often, sometimes, usually
4.	Modal adverbs	e.g. certainly, definitely, clearly, probably, possibly, perhaps, conceivably,
5.	Modal adjectives	e.g. certain, definite, clear, probable, possible
6.	Modal nouns	e.g. assumption, possibility, probability
7.	That clauses	e.g. It could be the case that . e.g. It might be suggested that . e.g. There is every hope that .
8.	To-clause + adjective	e.g. It may be possible to obtain . e.g. It is important to develop . e.g. It is useful to study .

# 8. ORGANIZATION

- ❑ Academic writing is well organized.
- ❑ It flows easily from one section to the next in a logical fashion.
- ❑ A good place to start is the genre of your text. Once you have decided on the genre, the structure is easily determined.

The following genres are common in higher education.

1. Essays
2. Reports
3. Case Studies
4. Research proposals
5. Book reviews
6. Brief research reports
7. Literature reviews

8. Reflective writing

9. Introductions

10. Research methods

11. Research results

12. Research discussions

13. Writing conclusions

14. Research abstracts

15. Research dissertations & theses

# 9. PLANNING

- ❑ Academic writing is **well planned**.
- ❑ It has a specific purpose, plan and structure.
- ❑ Example:
  1. Pre- writing
  2. Writing
  3. Post- writing

**EXERCISE ON PAGE NUMBER**

**18**

# MYTHS ABOUT WRITING

- ☐ Writers only start writing when they have everything figured out
- ☐ Writing is not like sending a fax
- ☐ Writers figure out much of what they want to write as they write it. Rather than waiting, get some writing on the page—even with gaps or problems. You can come back to patch up rough spots



# GOOD GRAMMAR IS GOOD WRITING

- ❑ When people say “I can’t write,” what they often mean is they have problems with grammatical correctness
- ❑ Writing, however, is about more than just grammatical correctness
- ❑ Good writing is a matter of achieving your desired effect upon an intended audience
- ❑ Plus, no one writes perfect at the first drafts

# ACADEMIC DO'S AND DON'TS

1. What is the point of an academic paper?
2. Avoid writing in an overly formal tone
3. Avoid colloquialisms
4. Don't use exaggeration or hyperbole
5. Avoid making generalizations
6. Don't use personal pronouns or invoke the reader

WRITING IS A PROCESS,  
NOT A PRODUCT.

**THANK YOU !**