

RESEARCH PAPER STRUCTURE: key

TASK 1: In groups, make a list of the different parts and components of a research paper in the order in which they would typically appear in a finished manuscript. There may be variations in your lists reflecting the requirements of different subject specialisms or the journal(s) you wish to submit to. It is suggested your list may include up to 14 distinct items, though some of these are often combined (e.g. *materials and methods* or *results and discussion*) and will not necessarily always be present in all types of research paper. Which items on your list are part of the main body of the paper?

1. Title
2. Authors & Affiliation
3. Abstract
4. Introduction
5. **Materials**
6. **Methods**
7. **Results**
8. **Discussion**
9. Conclusion
10. Acknowledgements
11. References cited
12. Illustrations and figure captions
13. Tables
14. Appendices

These parts (5,6,7,8) make up the main body of the paper and may be combined.

TASK 2: In groups, and based on your own experience of reading and writing research papers, draw up some essential guidelines for writing the main sections. What sort of information should be included in each? Suggestions for the Discussion section are already given.

See advice at <http://unilearning.uow.edu.au/report/2b.html> (structure of a scientific paper/report)

TASK 3: LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS. In the different parts of your paper you will need to be able to use language to signal different patterns of organisation (the kind of language we use for defining, classifying, expressing degrees of certainty, comparing and contrasting etc). The paragraphs below, for example, illustrate comparison and contrast. Underline the words and phrases that signal comparison and contrast.

Paragraph A (comparing things)

Three personal computers, the Evesham Axis 1.33 SK, the Armani R850 P4 and the Mesh Elite 1.7 GT Pro, **were compared** with respect to the following factors: price, processor speed and size of hard disk. The Evesham Axis, which costs £1,174, is **by far the cheapest of the three**, the Armani and the Mesh Elite costing £2,467 and £1,938 **respectively**. The Evesham Axis has **the same** hard disk size **as** the Armani, 40 MB, **whereas** the Mesh Elite is **the largest** at 57 GB. Regarding the processor speed, the Armani and the Mesh Elite are **similar** - the processor speed, at 1.7 GHz, being 0.37 GHz **faster than** the Evesham Axis.

Paragraph B (comparing events and actions)

Tribes differed in their basic ways of providing for themselves. **Indians of the Southwest** lived in villages and planted their corn and squash in orderly rows. **However**, around the Great Lakes **forest Indians** hunted deer and small furbearing animals. On the Great Plains braves tracked the buffalo, **while** in the **Pacific Northwest** plentiful supplies of salmon and other fish tempted **Indians** into their canoes and kept hunger away.

Bernard Weisberger, *The impact of our past*. McGraw Hill, 1972

Paragraph C (comparing views and opinions)

In the 19th century, two **widely differing** schools of socialist thought emerged, the Utopian Socialists and the Marxians. **The first group** believed that public ownership of the means of production was a necessary goal for human happiness. **However**, they wanted to reach it gradually and peacefully, using democratic methods to make changes through the government. They believed in ballots, rather than bullets. They also felt that owners who had mines, factories or land taken away by the government should be paid for their property. People who have these beliefs today are called Socialists. **The second group**, led by Marx, **also** wanted the government to take over all private property used to produce goods. **However**, their methods were to be very different. They thought that violence or revolution would be necessary because the owners of property would fight to hold on to it. No payment should be made to these owners who lost their property. Today, those who believe in these methods are called Communists.

Edward Klevzon, *The Afro-Asian world*. Allyn & Bacon, 1971