

How To Write An Abstract

Learning Enhancement Team

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Variety is the Spice of Life!

Different Schools...

....Different Rules

- Can you use 'I' in an academic text?
- Should an essay have section headings?
- How long is a report?
- Do you use primary or secondary research?
- Footnotes, endnotes or no notes?
- Harvard style referencing or MLA? What about APA?

Which school are you in? What is acceptable and what is unacceptable in your field?

Always check in your module handbooks or with your tutor if you are concerned about appropriacy

How To Write An Abstract Aims

- To look at the structure and purpose of an abstract
- To notice the key difference between an abstract and an introduction
- To notice the key components of an abstract and how they are used effectively



Abstracts

- What?
- Where?
- When?
- How?
- Why?

The LDU also offers these *AWL Open Workshops: Introduction to Dissertations* and **How To Write A Literature Review**. You may also like to attend **Integrating Sources Into Your Writing**.

Abstract

The basic approach and methodology, usually in one sentence

The conclusion (briefly) and the broad implications of it

WHY, HOW, WHAT, SO WHAT

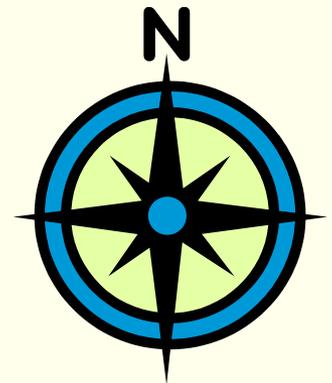
The reason behind the research being done

The main findings (results) in very few sentences

What Is An Abstract?

An abstract comes at the beginning of a dissertation, journal article or report. It acts as a summary of your project/the research and gives brief information about all the sections of your Dissertation.

What's the difference between an abstract and an Introduction?



Abstract vs. Introduction

An introduction provides the reader with some background information to your topic and introduces the rationale for the project, explaining and defining the problem. It then details the content of the Dissertation and the intended structure. It is different from the abstract in that it does not give any information about the methods, results and conclusion.

Abstract or Introduction?

“This essay is an overview of the theoretical, methodological, pedagogical, ideological and power-related issues of world Englishes: varieties of English used in diverse sociolinguistic contexts. The scholars in this field have critically examined theoretical and methodological frameworks of language use based on western, essentially monolingual and monocultural frameworks of linguistic science and replaced them with frameworks that are faithful to multilingualism and language variation. This conceptual shift affords a “pluricentric” view of English, which represents diverse sociolinguistic histories, multicultural identities, multiple norms of use and acquisition, and distinct contexts of function. The implications of this shift for learning and teaching world Englishes are critically reviewed in the final sections of this essay” (Bhatt, 2001).

Abstract or Introduction?

“This article focuses on major current theoretical and methodological issues related to what has been characterised as “World Englishes”. In the past three decade, the study of the formal and functional implications of the global spread of English, especially in terms of its range and functions and the degree of penetration in Western and, especially, non-Western societies, has received considerable attention among scholars of English language, linguistics and literature; creative writers; language pedagogues; and literary critics. It is in this context that the late Henry Kahane remarked: “English is the great laboratory of today’s sociolinguist” (1986, p495). There is now a growing consensus among scholars that there is not one English language anymore: rather there a many (McArthur 1998), most of which are disengaged from the language’s early Judeo-Christian tradition. The different English languages, studied within the conceptual framework of World Englishes, represent diverse linguistic, cultural, and ideological voices” (Bhatt, 2001).

Abstracts

As you can see, most abstracts have a number of key components – although as mentioned before, there can be variations across disciplines:

— Background information

- What the basic details of the topic are, and what the overall context of the study is

— Focus

- What the Dissertation will specifically concentrate on

— Gap

- What the literature has so far failed to satisfactorily deal with / comment on

— Purpose

- What the aim of the study is

— Methodology

- What research practices were used – this will vary considerably from field to field!

— Conclusion

- What are the key findings / contributions to the field that your research has provided to the field

Task

Identify the key components of the abstract from your hand-out.
Think about:

- Background information
- Focus
- Purpose
- Methodology
- Conclusion



Solution

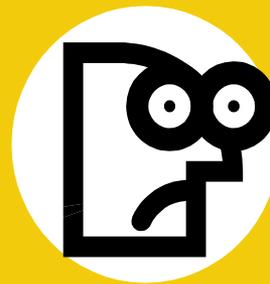
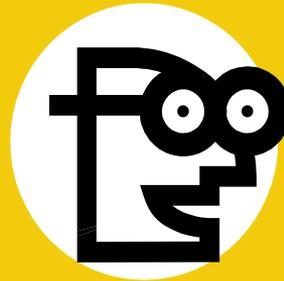
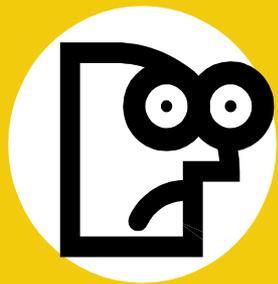
These are some suggest solutions – do you agree? Did you find other examples

- Background information: We are told that Israel has a water pollution issue and that the water pollution legislation has so far not been enforced. We are also informed that there has not been any public reaction to this.
- Focus: The writer tells us that the institutional enforcement structure will be investigated (the words „review“, „examine“ and „analyse“ tell us this) so that we can understand why Israel have not reacted to the water pollution problem
- Gap: We can assume that the questions the writer poses have so far not been addressed or have not been investigated in the same way i.e. why hasn't water pollution legislation been implemented and why has nobody reacted to this fact?
- Purpose: The writer is conducting this piece of research in order to gain an insight into the non-reaction to the non-implementation of the legislation.
- Methodology: Case-studies are used to present arguments that illustrate the lack of legislation implementation as well as law suits that demonstrate other ways of enforcing the law in these situations.
- Conclusion: The writer recommends that the Israeli public finds other forms of legislation to the ones currently being used, and also finds a way of revealing the government's mismanagement to the public.

Where now?

- Need more detailed assistance? [Book a tutorial!](#)
- Want feedback on a specific section? [Drop in to Getting Your Assignment Ready!](#)
- Want somewhere quiet to write, and get on the spot assistance? [Try The Writing Space!](#)
- Got a few quick questions? *AWL Office Hours* at [The Study Hub] are for you!
- *AWL Open Workshops* can be [booked here!](#)
 - *Suggestions:*
 - *Introduction To Dissertations*
 - *How To Write A Literature Review*
 - *Integrating Sources Into Your Writing*

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It's QUESTION TIME!!