

D4909 – Introduction to Academic Writing in Sports Science

Seminar 5

Homework Tasks

1. Reading and corrections: Read the below article.

- Attempt to make corrections to the article to make it more appropriate for academic writing.
- We will review and discuss your suggestions next seminar, and look at the original article.

Alzheimer's Disease

Although it causes big problems to do with public health, only five medical treatments are allowed to be used for Alzheimer's disease (AD) and these help to control symptoms rather than change how the disease progresses. Studies of potential drug therapy have been done in patients with disease that is already showing symptoms, yet evidence suggests that the changes in the pathology associated with AD begin a few years before this. Maybe drug therapy can help in this pre-clinical stage before the neurodegenerative process is established. Techniques that allow the condition to be diagnosed much earlier, such as cerebrospinal fluid biomarkers and neuroimaging, are really important to test out this theory in clinical trials. Some results from the recent times for the trials of specific agents look really positive but definitely people should think carefully about these results. Such medicines could maybe stop dementia coming on earlier and would therefore reduce how common it is by a lot.

Original text: (Adapted from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5922703/>)

Drug Treatments in Alzheimer's Disease

Despite the significant public health issue that it poses, only five medical treatments have been approved for Alzheimer's disease (AD) and these act to control symptoms rather than alter the course of the disease. Studies of potential drug therapy have generally been undertaken in patients with clinically detectable disease, yet evidence suggests that the pathological changes associated with AD begin several years before this. It is possible that pharmacological therapy may be beneficial in this pre-clinical stage before the neurodegenerative process is established. Techniques providing earlier diagnosis, such as cerebrospinal fluid biomarkers and neuroimaging, are key to testing this theory in clinical trials. Recent results from trials of some agents are encouraging but must also be interpreted with caution. Such medicines could potentially delay the onset of dementia and would therefore markedly reduce its prevalence. However, we currently remain a good distance away from clinically available disease-modifying therapy.

2. Presentation

- Prepare a short 3 minute presentation on a topic of your choice (related to your research, further studies, other areas of writing or work you are involved or interested in, etc).

- You can prepare this as a written text and simply present / read this to the group – in order to give you further academic writing practice. You can use Powerpoint etc if you want to.
- Think about the principles of academic writing and terminology we have discussed. Try and include some of these ideas and new vocabulary into your writing / presentation.
- You can (but don't have to) submit the written text for feedback if you like.
- Please just prepare what you are able to manage in the time given before the next class.

*** Listen to presentations from the group – comments:**

Unit 5 Academic Vocabulary, Structure of Writing, Summary

1. Academic Vocabulary in Sports Science

Body Mass Index (BMI) periodization neurotransmitter VO2max
hypertrophy proprioception placebo respiratory exchange ratio (RER)
growth plates preconditioning anthropometry resting metabolic rate

*** Match the terms with the definitions below. Discuss each one with the group.**

- The amount of energy expended by the body in maintaining vital processes, eg respiration, circulation and digestion.
- maximal oxygen uptake, defined as the maximum amount of oxygen in millilitres a person can use in one minute per kg of body weight.
- The area of growing tissue near the ends of the long bones in children and adolescents. These plates determine the future length and shape of the mature bone.
- Awareness of the position of your limbs and body in three- dimensional space.
- Chemicals secreted by nerve endings that enable nerve cells to communicate with each other.

- A simple reliable method for quantifying body size and proportions by measuring body length, width, circumference (C), and skinfold thickness (SF).
- A measure of how appropriate your weight is for your height, calculated as weight in kg divided by height in metres squared. A BMI of 20-25 is considered healthy; 25-30 is overweight and 30+ is obese.
- A dummy pill (or other form of treatment) which is designed to look (and taste) like the treatment under investigation but is biologically 'inert' – ie it has no effects whatsoever. Normally taken by subjects in a control group.
- Planned variation of training over an extended period.
- Growth of lean tissue (particularly muscle) in response to training (opposite = atrophy).
- Ratio of carbon dioxide produced to oxygen consumed.
- Training designed to build a base level of conditioning to prepare the body for participation in sport or physical training.

(adapted from: <https://www.peakendurancesport.com/glossary/sports-science-glossary/>)

*** Discussion questions: what are these topics about?**

1. Is a low-carb, high-fat diet performance enhancing for athletes?
2. Is caffeine really ergogenic for everyone?
3. Are isometric loading exercises as effective as eccentric loading exercises for hamstring injury prevention? What about concentric / eccentric sets?
4. What effect does the gut microbiome have on athletic performance?
5. Can we develop real-time markers of exercise adaptation?
6. Can we use genetic testing to predict talent?
7. Do sports supplements have a cumulative effect, or is there a ceiling?

Adapted from: <https://simplifaster.com/articles/unanswered-questions-sports-science-part-3/>

2. Structure of Academic Writing

How is an academic text usually structured? * Discuss with the group

The role of the Introduction is to:

The main body functions to:

The conclusion aims to:

*** Discuss the questions below regarding academic style:**

- Writing from the 1st person (I think, we found....) is more effective than the third person (It was found, it can be argued...):

- Academic tone may be informal and can use contractions (can't, don't etc):

- Writing in a personal style (eg using I, me, we, our..) may convey passion for a topic, which is more important than research evidence:

- Longer sentences are more effective as more ideas can be linked together to help the flow of an academic text:

- Avoiding tentative language (eg this could suggest..., we propose that...) shows lack of strength of opinion and weakens the argument in academic writing:

- Longer sentences may be used in academic writing if the appropriate use of punctuation and linking words is present:

3. Sentences and Paragraphs

Consider the following sentences – which ones are ok for academic writing? Why?

a) Whenever they reach some kind of agreement.

b) There are ten people who have applied for the job, there will be two days of interviews.

c) At the start of the second world war there were a number of countries who supported the ideals of fascism and additionally there were significant political issues going on in these countries so much that in several of them the prospect of elections in the near future seemed to be a distinct possibility.

c) Studies show that this is a common problem.

The characteristics of a sentence are:

- A complete idea

- A subject (noun or pronoun – he, she, it etc) and a verb (is, are, lives etc)

- Punctuation – capital letter at start, full stop at end, comma's etc used if sentence needs to be broken into clauses / ideas.

(Adapted from: <https://learn.solent.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=116226&chapterid=15153>)

Identify the sections of the following paragraph? What do the sections in different colours signify?

Using storytelling in educational settings can enable educators to connect with their students because of inborn tendencies to for humans to listen to stories. Written languages have only existed for between 6,000 and 7,000 years (Daniels & Bright, 1995) before then, and continually ever since in many cultures, important lessons for life were passed on using the oral tradition of storytelling. These varied from simple informative tales, to help us learn how to find food or avoid danger, to more magical and miraculous stories designed to help us see how we can resolve conflict and find our place in society (Zipes, 2012). Oral storytelling traditions are still fundamental to native American culture and Rebecca Bishop, a native American public relations officer (quoted in Sorensen, 2012) believes that the physical act of storytelling is a special thing; children will automatically stop what they are doing and listen when a story is told. Professional communicators report that this continues to adulthood (Simmons, 2006; Stevenson, 2008). This means that storytelling can be a powerful tool for connecting with students of all ages in a way that a list of bullet points in a PowerPoint presentation cannot. The emotional connection and innate, almost hardwired, need to listen when someone tells a story means that educators can teach memorable lessons in a uniquely engaging manner that is common to all cultures.

This cross-cultural element of storytelling can be seen when reading or listening to wisdom tales from around the world...

(Adapted from: <https://canvas.hull.ac.uk/courses/778/pages/paragraph-structure>)

How is a good paragraph structured in academic writing?

- **Topic sentence:** to introduce the idea of the paragraph – clearly introduces the main idea, link to previous text or paragraph.
- **Supporting paragraphs:** expand on the points introduced and support with evidence and opinion. References to previous studies, research, information or knowledge. Evidence from external sources should be referenced.
- **Analysis:** This section links together the evidence and arguments from the supporting sentences to the topic sentence, and often also to the central arguments running through the text.
- **Summary sentence and link:** A powerful way to complete a paragraph to reinforce ideas discussed during the paragraph, and aiming to link to the following paragraph to provide smooth flow and easy reading.

4. Summary: Common mistakes made in Academic Writing

Complete the sentences below by filling in the gap:

- a) A strong start to the essay or article is not made as it lacks a clear **i**_____. This initial section of the writing is crucial to outline the purpose and scope of the paper.

b) A lack of signposting and use of linking expressions leads to poor **s**_____ of the essay. It's difficult or illogical to follow for the reader and the strength of the arguments are lost.

c) Overuse of the 1st person in the writing, which makes the tone of the article too **p**_____ and not as objective.

d) The use of **t**_____ sentences is very poor or inconsistent. Each paragraph loses clarity and strength and again the overall arguments within the text are weakened.

e) **P**_____ being too short with poor development and support for the main idea introduced in the topic sentence.

f) Sentences that are too long are used or with a lack of **l**_____ words and **p**_____, leading to too many ideas introduced in one sentence which makes it confusing to follow for the reader.

g) **G**_____ errors such as subject / verb disagreement (eg they was).

h) Overuse or underuse of **c**_____ within sentences, leading to clauses within a sentence being inappropriately linked.