



4 Abstracts

Task 1: Complete the unfinished words in the definition of an abstract.

An abstract is a concise summary of what the paper or article is about. The abstract can be read to get a quick overview. It tells the reader what to expect in your work.

Task 2: What makes a good abstract? Choose the answer that you believe is correct.

A good abstract...

- 1a) can stand alone as a unit of information
- 1b) must always be read with the original paper to be understandable to the reader

- 2a) always has a title (separate from the body of the text)
- 2b) never has a title longer than five words

- 3a) is never written in the form of one or more paragraphs
- 3b) uses well-developed structure

- 4a) contains additional comments not included in the paper
- 4b) does not contain extra information that is not included in the paper

- 5a) always uses passive structures, never contains sentences using "I" as an agent
- 5b) often uses passive structures, the usage of "I" is not forbidden (but should not be overused)

- 6a) does not usually include referencing
- 6b) may include an in-text reference

Task 3: Identify the **structural parts** of the abstract below.

- A) **background** B) **purpose** C) **particular interest/focus**
D) **overview of contents** E) **conclusion**

"Their War": The Perspective of the South Vietnamese Military in their Own Words

Despite the vast research by Americans on the Vietnam War, little is known about the perspective of South Vietnamese military, officially called the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF). The overall image that emerges from the literature is negative: lazy, corrupt, unpatriotic, apathetic soldiers with poor fighting spirits. This study recovers some of the South Vietnamese military perspective for an American audience through qualitative interviews with 40 RVNAF veterans now living in San José, Sacramento, and Seattle, home to three of the top five largest Vietnamese American communities in the nation. An analysis of these interviews yields the veterans' own explanations that complicate and sometimes even challenge three widely held assumptions about the South Vietnamese military: 1) the RVNAF was rife with corruption at the top ranks, hurting the morale of the lower ranks; 2) racial relations between the South Vietnamese military and the Americans were tense and hostile; and 3) the RVNAF was apathetic in defending South Vietnam from communism. The stories add nuance to our understanding of who the South Vietnamese were in the Vietnam War, providing some non-American perspectives of those who fought in it. In using a largely untapped source of Vietnamese history (i.e. the oral histories of Vietnamese immigrants), this project will contribute to future research on the morale of allied soldiers.

Adapted from <http://www.acrn.eu/cambridge/downloads/files/Writing%20an%20Abstract.pdf>, viewed on 12 June 2016

(217 words)

Task 4: Look again at the abstract **structural parts** above and order the sentences below into a logically flowing abstract. Decide which words are the keywords and give the abstract a title using them.

- The participants were 30 volunteer students, 15 male and 15 female, who had recently graduated from the Biology Department of Red Tree University.
- The participants were asked what influence biology education has on their attitudes regarding world peace and humanity.
- The results indicated that biology education has significant positive impact on the attitudes of the students regarding humanity and world peace.
- The responses of the participants indicated that, at the end of four-year biology education, they had more self-awareness and greater capacity to love human beings and all living creatures.
- The aim of this study was to examine whether biology education has significant impact on the attitudes of students in how they perceive humanity.
- In addition, they reported they had the feeling that they could contribute to world peace.
- Biology has always been a beneficial discipline for human beings.

Keywords: _____

Title: _____

The above is adapted from https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:BRfSxXzUa8J:https://yuwritingcenter.wikispaces.com/file/view/Writing%20an%20Abstract_exercises.pdf+&cd=1&hl=cs&ct=clnk&gl=cz viewed on 12 June 2016

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ABSTRACTS: for BETTER or for WORSE

Task 5: Read the four sample abstracts below written by students. Following the first two samples, I've shown the score which I would probably give the abstract, and my reasoning behind that score.

Sample 1) ***In Praise of Shadows: The Potential of a Wide Readership***

Junichiro Tanizaki's essay *In Praise of Shadows* is a well-known piece amongst those interested in the Japanese literature and culture. However, that does not mean it can only be enjoyed by readers with prior knowledge on Japan. This presentation sets as its goal to introduce this piece of literature to students of different fields of study and showcase the different possibilities for readers both familiar and unfamiliar with Japanese culture. The presentation will be divided into two parts, the source material of the first one will be the text itself, simulating the possibilities of reading with limited knowledge on Japan. In the second part a variety of further information on the essay will be introduced, such as information about the author and the historical and social background of the time it was published. This part of the presentation will represent possible scope of knowledge of a reader with greater knowledge of this topic. This shows that while the initial knowledge of each reader may differ, this essay is written in such way that does not interfere with the reading experience of either one, providing them with new information regardless of academic background. (192 words)

Joe: 7 / 8 - I would deduct at least 1 point, probably for "structure" (or something in between "structure" and "coherence"). The first few sentences are great—they explain the topic and why it's important. But after that I get very confused - lots of vague, abstract terms which aren't connected clearly and logically. Too much use of the pronoun "this" without clear antecedents. I lose track of whether the author is talking about the Tanizaki essay or their own presentation. There is no closing sentence which reminds us of what the presentation itself will offer.

Sample 2) ***Tourism in Poland***

Poland is located in Central Europe by the Balkan sea. It's neighbors are Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia and Russia. It has roughly 38 million of people living area of 312685 km². The capital is Warsaw, there the Polish president Andrzej Duda lives. The country consists of 16 vivotships. The composition of touristica and recreational centres is highly irregular. It is due to the terrain, climate and vegetation. The place attractiveness is determined also by accommodation, gastronomical, sport, cultural and free time facilities. Mountain, coastline and lake surrounding ones are the most attractive. The coast of the Balkan sea attracts tourists mainly in summer because of the beaches, swimming in the sea an iodine inhalation. The most favorite mountain region is the Carpathians, manly the Tatra Mountains and "the winter capital of Poland" Zakopane. Tourists also go to relax to Sudetenland to Jelenia Gora. Masuria and Suwalsko - Augustowska region are the lake areas. Another interesting place is Malopolska Highlands, where Swietokrzyskie mountains, Krakow and its surroundings. Spa tourism is a Polish tradition and the largest ones are located in Krynica in the Carpathians, Swieradow - in Sudetenland and Kudowa - Ciechocinek in lowlands and by the sea Kolobzerg and Miedzyzdroje. (204 words)

Joe: 2 / 8 - Points off for: title, genre, structure, spelling, vocab, grammar. There are actually a few "signpost" phrases, so I could give them that point, and it's within the word limit. But the info is so generic I would suspect potential plagiarism (translating from Wikipedia?)

Task 5a: Use the Abstract Assessment Criteria table to give each sample a score. Then explain your score. In which categories would you deduct points, and why?

Sample 3) **Star Wars - How Not to Get Lost in a Galaxy Far, Far Away ...**

Since its first release in 1977, Star Wars became a huge phenomenon in the film industry. The main purpose of this presentation is to shed light on the complicated storyline and timeline of the Star Wars universe. It is an actual topic because of the recent premiere of a new episode of this famous saga. With a new movie coming out every year, it has become an uneasy task for casual movie audience to stay oriented. The presentation has two major parts. The first part sums up the main storyline of the Star Wars as a whole. It also presents some of the main characters. The second part focuses on the problematic release order of its individual parts and tries to clarify how the movies fill the overall timeline. The presentation is meant to be as simple and clear as possible because its goal is just to show how all the parts of Star Wars fit together. In the end, the listeners should have a clear view on this complex topic. (171 words)

Sample 3) possible evaluation: ? / 8

Sample 4) **Jazz Drumming**

This presentation contains three main points that will be introduced. The first will be the subject of the Masaryk University of Arts studies, which is intended for students who are interested in more art disciplines than just one and so they can get information on the history of music, film, theater and painting. The presentation will continue on the subject of the bachelor thesis. The student is focused on the early jazz music and more specifically focused on jazz drumming. This section briefly introduces the music genre that originated in the Afro-American communities of New Orleans, United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The most comprehensive part of the presentation is focused on the individual drums that were used in early jazz music, and together they created the first drum set. The last part of this section is the historical side of percussion instruments that have been used since the beginning of civilization. The last part of this presentation briefly deals with the early drums of jazz style. (171 words)

Sample 4) possible evaluation: ? / 8