

ACADEMIC SKILLS

Week 11

Project Execution II: Organization

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Agenda

Structure

Introductions & Conclusions

Sections & Paragraphs

Targeted Learning Outcome

Introducing and concluding (the right way)

Argument-driven paragraphs & evidence-based sections

How do you find writing introductions?

What do you think an introduction needs to do?

How do you find writing conclusions?

What do you think a conclusion needs to do?

When do you write these parts?

Introductions and Conclusions: **Two Sides of the Same Coin (?)**

Introductions and conclusions are the most important components of academic outputs; so we may wish to devote considerable time to them

They are so important because when done properly they explain to where we stand on all of the important components of the paper

In reality, we can usually combine the introduction and conclusion into a single passage at the start of the output – an “introlusion”, if you will

This approach may sound strange, but we often struggle to say anything in our conclusions; in reality we usually end up summarizing things

This phenomenon is a product of something quite reassuring though; if done properly, an introduction already spotlights conclusion material

What Introductions & Conclusions need to do

We need to start off by recognizing that introductions and conclusions are used to achieve certain things, irrespective of the topic of the paper

- A) **Focus**: What we are looking at in our paper
- B) **Argument**: What we have to say about this
- C) **Positioning**: How our argument differs from other perspectives
- D) **Methodology**: How we conducted our research and analysis
- E) **Organization**: How we organize our findings in the paper

- F) **Contribution**: How our paper enriches understandings of the world (this can be included at the end of the intro or used as a conclusion)

This is a prototype; we may deal with such matters in a different order

Introduction/Conclusion to My *Barbie* Paper

- A) Focus: Warner Bros.' *Barbie* (2023) Trailers
- B) Argument: Quality inclusive fun for liberal adults
- C) Positioning: Counter sexist reputation of Barbie toys
- D) Methodology: Derived from B. Klinger and L. Kernan
- E) Macro-Organization: 4 Sections
- F) Contribution: Heritage branding post-#MeToo post-woke



What are paragraphs?

What should they do?

How do you organize them?

Argument-Driven Paragraphs

Paragraphs are self-enclosed blocks of text that make one major point by signposting content and delivering a selection of strong evidence

I propose a formula for organizing paragraphs: it involves building a four-five point paragraph supporting a single aspect of argumentation

The Stinger: The first sentence makes an assertion that represents the main point you would like to make in the paragraph as a whole

Evidencers: Then include about three or four points that you feel are likely to persuade the reader of your stinger: 1-2 sentences per point

Outro: avoid links between paragraphs – this just leads to repetition between a sentence's outro and the stinger opening the next paragraph

Or, as an example paragraph

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Do you prefer reading essays broken into sections or those that comprise one unbroken block of writing?

Do you organize your essays into smaller blocks?

Is there an ideal number of sections an essay should include?

What Are Sections?

Sections are self-enclosed blocks of related paragraphs in which we support ONE part of our case so as to persuade readers of our position

Your essays should ideally contain circa 3 sections, each containing 3-4 paragraphs, each providing evidence in support of the thesis statement

This approach can help us as writers, as it requires we organize our ideas into coherent groups, which helps us to think about argumentation

Organizing work into sections can also help readers, because it clearly spotlights to them a key piece of evidence in a larger piece of work

Sections also enable readers to take a deep breath, thus allowing them to reflect back on the previous topic before moving on to new material

A Loose Template for Sections

A prototype section might be comprised of these components:

Title

This should give a clear sense of what the section is about

Section statement: tell the reader what the section is about and why it is important to the overall argument you are making

Paragraphs (about 3)

- These paragraphs each add an example as evidence of the assertion
- Organize them in some logical way or in terms of their importance

Final Sentence – The Outro (DESIRABLE)

Gestures to the content of the next section

Organize the following into a suitable number of sections

Give each section a title.

NB: You may drop as many points as you see fit.

Arrange these points into sections with titles

1. Older actress as voiceover
2. Parody of *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1969)
3. Barbie dolls as groundbreaking nostalgia
4. An auteur film from a female indie director
5. Centralizing marginalized groups inc. trans- and black women
6. Colorful camp aesthetic
7. Sex appeal of Margot Robie, as star of earlier male-oriented films
8. Stars of male-oriented films: Will Ferrell, Michael Cera, Ryan Gosling
9. Crude, quasi-homophobic, humor
10. Pokes fun at the absurdities of the Barbie universe
11. Women as socially dominant individuals
13. Mocks homoerotic aspects of male-on-male aggression
14. Female existential awakening
15. Female recreational celebration
16. Promotion of Sisterhood (female collectives)

One Way of Organizing this Paper: Audiences

Section 1. Older Women

1. Set-up
2. Older actress as voiceover;
3. Barbie dolls as nostalgia;
4. Parody of *2001: A Space Odyssey*

Section 2. Open-Minded Straight Men

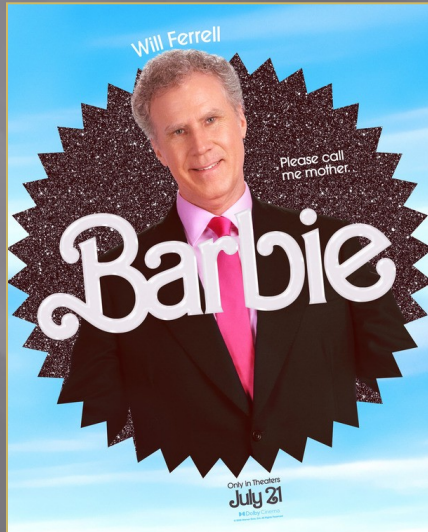
1. Set-up
2. Crude, quasi-homophobic, humor;
3. Stars of male-oriented films: Ferrell, Cera, Gosling;
4. Sex appeal of Robie,
5. Mocks homoeroticism of male-on-male aggression

Section 3. Young Liberal Women

1. Set-up
2. By a female indie director
3. Women as socially dominant
4. Promotion of Sisterhood
5. Female existential awakening

Section 4. LGBTQ+

1. Set-up
2. Centralizing marginalized groups
3. Colorful camp aesthetic
4. Pokes fun at Barbie
5. Promotes recreational celebration



Another Way of Organizing this Paper: Topics

Section 1. Heritage

1. Set-up
2. Older actress as voiceover;
3. Barbie dolls as nostalgia;
4. Parody of *2001: A Space Odyssey*

Section 2. Just Ken

1. Set-up
2. Crude, quasi-homophobic, humor;
3. Stars of male-oriented films: Ferrell, Cera, Gosling;
4. Sex appeal of Robie,
5. Mocks homoeroticism of male-on-male aggression

Section 3. Femininity

1. Set-up
2. By a female indie director
3. Women as socially dominant
4. Promotion of Sisterhood
5. Female existential awakening

Section 4. Inclusivity

1. Set-up
2. Centralizing marginalized groups
3. Colorful camp aesthetic
4. Pokes fun at Barbie
5. Promotes recreational celebration



Takeaways

If we are to maximize the quality of our work and grades, we need to present our argument and evidence in a reader-friendly fashion

Because such an approach is designed to help readers, it also stands to help us to organize our ideas and evidence in a coherent manner

Introductions introduce the paper not the topic, and include: focus, argument, positioning, organization, methods, and contributions

Aim for 3-4 sections, with a brief statement about a section's content, and about 3-4 paragraphs unpacking a single major piece of evidence

Paragraphs work similarly, the first sentence should encapsulate the whole paragraph, and then include 3-4 evidence sentences supporting it

Next Time

Date: 7 December

Instructor: Sarka

Topic: Work-in-Progress Seminar 2

Outcome: Responding to earlier feedback, and signposting arguments and organization.