

Scientific / Academic Paper Writing Template

(based on/directly quoted from Thomson & Kamler, 2013, Jordan, 1999, and Wright, 2003)

Kind of Communication: _____
research journal, book, magazine; never a conference paper — only a draft for the article

Fit in my scholarship identity/publication plan: _____
become known for

Target Audience (precise): _____
nature of the community, its histories, debates, genres, conventions, cherished truths and current hot topics

Fit in discourse community: _____
part of which discussion, reacts to, addresses, advocates, picks up, prior research

Unique selling point/Why does it matter: _____
explicit contribution, assertion of significance, argument; 90-sec elevator talk, how would it be summarized in a literature review paper

Journal: _____
fit in discourse community, middle-ranking, respected journal, not solely high impact; follow the references (where did they publish), follow the leading scholars, research the journal (do you cite the editorial board, what does the editorial board share, does the standing of the e.b. fit the scope of the article, what reactions can you expect from its reviewers or readers, does the work have particular relevance; check last 6 issues, mission statement, purpose)

Plan B Journal (if rejected): _____

What do you want to say?

Layer 1 (text)
key idea #1: _____
key idea #2 (optional): _____
major point #1: _____
major point #2: _____
major point #3: _____
major point #4 (optional): _____

Layer 2 Reactions: _____
reactions by: editors, editorial boards, publishers' representatives, large community of journal referees; editors high standing, reviewers more mixed — newbies to experts => planned for it?

Layer 3 Reactions: _____
discourse community and publishing market, journal selection

Tiny Text Content Planning

(content + number of words, check journal standards)
Reminder: scientific writing: craft of persuasion of ideas with arguments, facts in the service of ideas, communication, sense-making, convincing

Theoretical Paper: Locate, Problematise, Argue

Locate: _____

Problematise: _____

Argue: _____

General Paper: Locate, Focus, Report, Argue

Locate: _____

Focus: _____

Report: _____

Argue: _____

Empirical Paper: Locate, Focus, Anchor, Report, Argue

"separate out a clear and succinct description of methods from the Report of the findings"

Locate: _____

Focus: _____

Anchor: _____

Report: _____

Argue: _____

Tiny Text Elements by Thomson & Kamler (2013)

Locate	<p>“placing the paper in the context of the discourse community and the field in general. Larger issues and debates are named and potentially problematised. In naming the location, the writer is creating a warrant for their contribution and its significance, as well as informing an international community of its relevance outside of its specific place of origin”</p> <p>“identified an issue and suggested that it is problematic and, by inference, that we have a different view”</p> <p>“sometimes the Locate work, for example, will be more descriptive and sometimes more argumentative”</p> <p>“... is now a significant issue (in/for) ... because ... (Expand by up to one sentence if necessary)”</p>
Problematised	<p>“an exploration of the issues outlined in Locate”</p> <p>“evaluative and makes claims about a serious shortcoming within the field. This is a kind of meta-analysis offering a bird’s eye view of a trend in an entire field”</p>
Argue	<p>“opening out the specific argument through offering an analysis. This will move beyond description and may well include a theorisation in order to explain findings. It may offer speculations, but will always have a point of view and take a stance. It returns to the opening Locate in order to demonstrate the specific contribution that was promised at the outset. It answers the ‘So what?’ and the ‘Now what?’ questions.”</p> <p>“opportunity for the writer to suggest an alternative approach which is grounded in an explicit philosophical position, the practical implications of this are indicated”</p> <p>“offer a theoretical framework and on the basis of this propose a course of action”</p> <p>“Some arguments might lead to more than one conclusion. Some may provide a challenge to existing thinking, a new lens on the problem(s) or a potential implication for a more general issue.”</p> <p>“The paper argues that ... and concludes (I conclude) by suggesting that ...”</p>
Focus	<p>“identifying the particular questions, issues or kinds of problems that the paper will explore, examine and/or investigate.”</p> <p>“designed to allow us to say something about the problem we have identified”</p> <p>“in this paper I focus on ...”</p>
Report	<p>“outlining the research, sample, method of analysis in order to assure readers that the paper is credible and trustworthy, as well as the major findings that are pertinent to the argument to be made.”</p> <p>“detail the [...] findings that have resulted from our analysis”</p> <p>“The analysis of the findings shows that ...”</p>
Anchor	<p>“The paper draws on (I draw on) findings from a study of ... which used ... in order to show that ... (expand through additional sentences)”</p> <p>research question (content)</p>

Journal Structure

Compare 5 articles to find the way articles in the journal are organized — use this structure to plan & write your article!

Default IMRAD Structure Elements

Check the journal first whether they do organize the papers this way!

Introduction (& Theory)

- use Locate & Focus
- raise interest, show why it is important, stand for it
- Synthesis of key research literature (connect to debate) the article continues/is based on in service of the argument
- Economic use of theory in own words and only what is needed (not ventriloquising)
- Citations that do not crowd the text
- End with research question

Checklist (must be clear after reading the Introduction/Theory)

- What problem was studied, and why?
- What were the researchers’ hypotheses?
- How were they derived from theory, informal observation, or intuition?
- How does this study relate to, and go beyond, past investigations of the problem?
- What questions do the researchers hope to answer with this study?
- “Other background information may be intriguing, but may not be critical to understand what the researchers did and why they did it.”

Method

- show what was done, and how, and why and allow other researcher to recreate the study to confirm (or question) its results
- adapt order to journal!

Design

- begins with an overview: broad outline of the design, alerting the reader to what he should attend

Participants

- main characters of the study are introduced: the subjects or participants
- describing their characteristics (gender, age, etc.)
- how many of them were involved

Settings and Instruments

- describe the setting: the materials (or apparatus)
- e.g. questionnaires or special equipment
- say which test using, give brief descriptions, cite appropriate sources

Procedure

- describe the plot: chronologically the procedures of the study — how it was conducted

Checklist (must be clear after reading the Method)

- How were the hypotheses translated into testable questions?
- How were the variables of interest manipulated and/or measured?
- Did the measures used adequately reflect the variables of interest? Why or why not?
- “Think about the measures researchers use while reading the method section. Do they adequately reflect or capture the concepts they are meant to measure? If a measure seems odd, consider carefully how the researchers justify its use.”
- Put yourself in the participants’ shoes
- “While reading the method section, try putting yourself in the shoes of a participant in the study, and ask yourself if the instructions given to participants seem sensible, realistic, and engaging. Imagining what it was like to be in the study will also help you remember the study’s procedure, and aid you in interpreting the study’s results.”

Report (Results) And

- how the observations collected (described in Method) were analyzed to determine whether the original hypotheses were supported
- highlight what is important
- differentiation of trivial findings from crucial findings
- results section should not be a list of the statistical analyses conducted but a description of the data, highlighting the important aspects and providing the evidential bases for any conclusions

Checklist (must be clear after reading the Results)

- Did the researchers provide evidence that any independent variable manipulations were effective [Manipulation check]?
- For example, if testing for behavioral differences between happy and sad participants, did the researchers demonstrate that one group was in fact happier than the other?
- What were the major findings of the study?
- After even the most complex statistical analysis, there will be a
- written description of what the result means conceptually. Turn your attention to these descriptions. Focus on the conceptual meaning of research findings, not on the mechanics of how they were obtained (unless you’re comfortable with statistics).
- Were the researchers’ original hypotheses supported by their observations?
- If not, look in the discussion section for how the researchers explain the findings that were obtained.

Discussion

- the explanation and interpretation of what happened (solution and end of the story)
- (4) explore the broader theoretical and practical implications of the findings, and consider how they contribute to an understanding of the problem under investigation (discussion).

Checklist (must be clear after reading the Discussion)

- What conclusions can be drawn from the study?
- What new information does the study provide about the problem under investigation?
- Does the study help resolve the problem?
- What are the practical and theoretical implications of the study’s findings?
- Did the results contradict past research findings? If so, how do the researchers explain this discrepancy?

Sources

- Thomson, P. & Kamler, B. (2013). *Writing for Peer Reviewed Journals. Strategies for getting published*. London: Routledge.
- Jordan, C. H., & Zanna, M. P. (1999). How to Read a Journal Article in Social Psychology. In R. F. Baumeister (Ed.), *The Self in Social Psychology* (pp. 461-470). Philadelphia: Psychology Press.
- Wright, D. B. (2003). Making friends with your data: Improving how statistics are conducted and reported. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 73, 123-136.

Template from: <http://www.organizingcreativity.com/2013/02/scientific-academic-paper-writing-template/>