



Academic writing

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Writing to prompts

- *What writing for your thesis have you done, and what would you like to do [in the long, medium and short term]?*
- 5 minutes' writing
- In sentences
- Private writing -- no one will read it
- To be discussed in pairs/groups

Why a 'page 98 paper'? And when?

- Early: to establish direction/focus
- Associate & dissociate with literature
- Build on research question/hypothesis
- Focus reading/thinking
- Manageable writing task: 325 words
- To develop thinking and/or for thesis?
- Late: to focus thinking/intro conclusions

Writing a page-98 paper

- My research question is ... (50 words)
- Researchers who have looked at this subject are ... (50 words)
- They argue that ... (25 words)
- Debate centres on the issue of ... (25 words)
- There is work to be done on ... (25 words)
- My research is closest to that of X in that ... (50 words)
- My contribution will be ... (50 words)

Make your 'contribution' explicit

- 'This research shows/reveals/confirms'
- 'This is a contribution in the sense that ...'
- 'This is a contribution to the extent that ...'

Internalising the debate

- ‘Some will argue that ...’
- ‘One interpretation could be ...’
- ‘However, this could be taken as ...’
- ‘This is not to say that ...’
- ‘Possible interpretations include ...’

Brown's 8 questions

1. *Who are intended readers? (3-5 names)*
2. *What did you do? (50 words)*
3. *Why did you do it? (50 words)*
4. *What happened? (50 words)*
5. *What do results mean in theory? (50 words)*
6. *What do results mean in practice? (50 words)*
7. *What is the key benefit for readers (25 words)*
8. *What remains unresolved? (no word limit)*

Brown's 8 questions

- To draft an abstract
- Not just for experimental work
- Set word limits
- Using generic structure
- Generating text you can work on later
- Write abstract first, revise it as you go
- Construct/see the whole argument

References & readings

- Murray, R & Moore, S (2006) *The handbook of academic writing: A fresh approach*. Maidenhead: Open University Press-McGraw-Hill.

References & readings

Murray, R. (2006) *How to Write a Thesis*,
2nd edition.

Murray, R. (2003) *How to Survive your
Viva*.

Murray, R. (2005) *Writing for Academic
Journals*.

Maidenhead: Open University Press-
McGraw-Hill.

Other readings

- Morss, K. & Murray, R. (2005) *Teaching at University: A Guide for Postgraduates and Researchers*. London: Sage.
- Gilbert, N. Ed. (2006) *From Postgraduate to Social Scientist: A Guide to Key Skills*. London: Sage.

See Murray, Chapter 9: 'Writing articles, books and presentations' 149-170.