

# ESSAY WRITING

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## What is an Essay?

- “a short piece of writing that tells a person's thoughts or opinions about a subject” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)
- “Analytic, interpretative, or critical literary composition, usually dealing with its subject from a limited and often personal point of view” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)
- Paper, article, composition**
- Thesis, dissertation, report**



## Topic Outlines

- Basic Structure of an Essay**
- Avoiding Plagiarism**  
(Paraphrasing & Quotations)
- Citing Sources**

## Basic Structure of an Essay



## Cover

**Research Topic (in Chinese)**  
(in English)

**Team member list**  
(Authors' name)

XXXXX  
XXXXX  
XXXXX  
XXXXX  
XXXXX

**School Name:** XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
**Date:** mm/yy

5

## Title

- Concise
- Descriptive: clearly indicate the points
- Fairly self-explanatory: easy to understand without any extra information

(Go to Practice 1)

6

## Abstract

- Overview of your essay, should be readable independently of the essay, readers not in your field could understand
- Do not explain the technical details or methodology
- Word limitation (English: 300; Chinese: 150)
- Could be written after the main body of the essay is finished
- Two types: structured/ unstructured

7

## Major elements of Abstract

Background

Aim & Objective

After the Opium War (1838–1842), China realized that it must join the Eurocentric world system. This realization triggered a series of efforts to understand the nature of the world system and to locate China within that system. Thus, a fervent interest in modern cartography, world geography, and global travel ensued. In this paper I will examine geography textbooks that were published during the New Policies period (1901–1911). The comparison is to highlight the ambiguity and confusion at this early stage of Chinese learning about the world. First, some of the textbooks emphasized the world being an integrated, homogeneous system connected by intricate networks. Second, due to military defeats and territorial losses, the world was seen as a place of marking and defending China's borders in China and Russia. This paper explains why these two seemingly conflicting views could coexist. The coexistence of the two views, I argue, reflects an internal contradiction of the Eurocentric world order which was presented as both an integrated global system and a community of nation-states. In the former, the world seemed to be open and free flowing; in the latter, each nation-state must defend its own sovereignty against other nation-states.

Data collection & Methodology

**Keywords:** Global connectivity, metageography, myth of state, racial hierarchy.

Results & Discussion

(Go to Practice 2)

8

# Introduction

- Identify a research area: describe the problem/difficulty/situation that is interested
- Review current knowledge on the topic: establish what is known
- Create a research space / gap: point out what has NOT been done
- Preview or outline the topic/ subtopic in your essay: explain what you hope to do to add to the body of knowledge for filling the gap

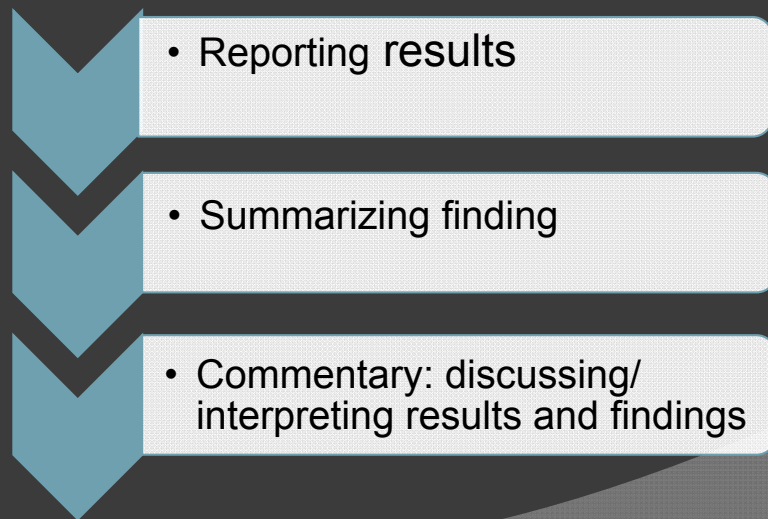
9

# Research Method & Content

- Enable other researchers to replicate the study (give clear details)
- Main ways organized the Method paragraph
  - Logical order – most common
  - Research question order – especially if a different method is used to address each question
  - Research methods order – surveys, interviews, observations

10

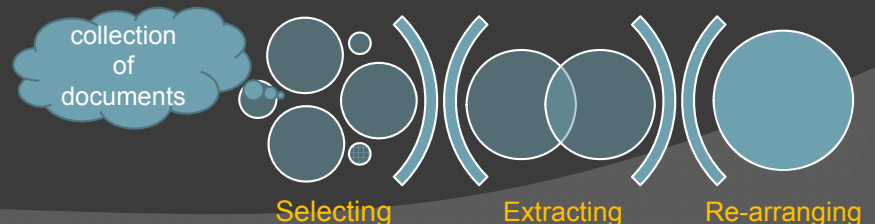
# Research Results & Discussion



11

# Reporting results

- The concepts of DATA
  - ❖ Data being gathered/collected – using experimental methods, surveys and interviews, observations, etc.
  - ❖ Data being found/selected – the works of a particular author, documents in an archive, etc. Sometimes the data is “constructed”.



## Reporting results

- Structure the results into a **single chapter**/ more than one chapter
- In the form of **tables or graphs** (data already been processed to produce outcomes)
- Make clear **connections** between your writing and tables/graphs

13

## Summarizing finding

- **Finding ≠ Result**
- Do not skip over the results to go directly to the findings
- Do not only report results
- In **qualitative and text-based research**, often report findings and then provide evidence from data

14

## Discussing/ interpreting results and findings

- Interpret results and make claims for **meaning and significance** (may point to contribution to the field)
- Makes **comparison** with previous studies (often for justification of method or procedures)
- May comment on **strength, limitations or generalizability** of results

15

## Conclusion

- How try to fill the gap/ How successful/ Impress reader
- NOT the same thing as a summary

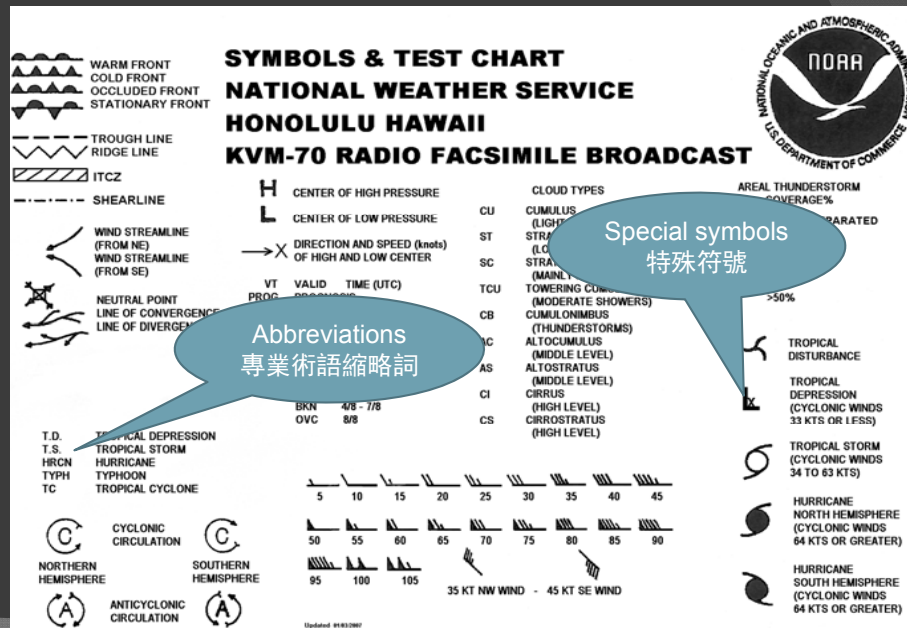
### 4 "S"

- Summary of research
- Spelling of contribution
- Statement of limitation of research
- Suggestion of further research

(Go to Practice 3)

16

# Symbol (符號) / jargon (術語) LIST



17

# Summary of Essay Structure

Experimental process	Section of Paper
What did I do in a nutshell ?	Abstract
What is the problem ?	Introduction
How did I solve the problem ?	Research Method and content
What did I find out ? What does it mean?	Research results and discussion
What is the significance? What did I suggest for the future study?	Conclusion
Whose work did I refer to ?	References (Literature Cited)
Extra Information	Appendices (optional): Chart, Table, Image, Symbol or jargon list

18

# Essay Format

**Language**

- Essay can be written in Chinese or English, not exceeding 2,500 words in Chinese or 3,500 words in English. Word count includes punctuation, but not include information on cover page, abstract, images, photos, research data, symbol or jargon list, reference list and attachments.
- The written language should be consistent, which means if choosing English as the media of writing, all the content should be written in English. If choosing Chinese, all the content should be in Chinese. (except the technical terms)
- Line spacing should be 1.5, and font size of the content should be 12pt.
- Fonts for Chinese characters should be in 新細明體, and fonts for English characters should be in Times New Roman.

**Essay Structure**

- The Essay should follow the sequence of "Cover", "Abstract", "Introduction", "Research method and content", "Research result and discussion", "Conclusion", "Symbol or jargon list" (optional) and "Reference".
- The first page should be cover page, and indicate school name, team member list and research topic.
- The suggested word limit for Abstract is not exceeding 150 words in Chinese or 300 words in English.
- Page number should be added at the right bottom of each page, and cover page as the first page.

**Numbering**

- It is suggested using Chinese number, Chinese number with bracket, Arabic number, Arabic number with bracket, Roman number or Roman number with bracket to state the sequence of the essay structure, e.g. ①, ②, ③, ④, ⑤, ⑥, ⑦, ⑧, ⑨, ⑩, ⑪, ⑫, ⑬, ⑭, ⑮, ⑯, ⑰, ⑱, ⑲, ⑳, ㉑, ㉒, ㉓, ㉔, ㉕, ㉖, ㉗, ㉘, ㉙, ㉚, ㉛, ㉜, ㉝, ㉞, ㉟, ㊱, ㊲, ㊳, ㊴, ㊵, ㊶, ㊷, ㊸, ㊹, ㊺, ㊻, ㊼, ㊽, ㊾, ㊿.

**Reference**

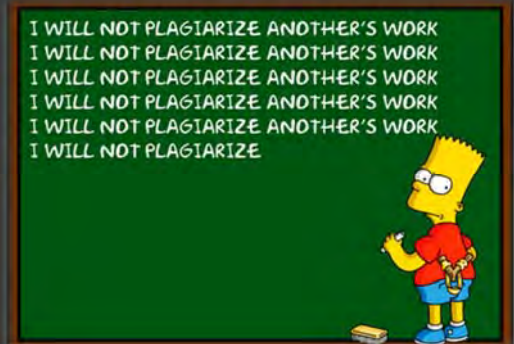
- All reference should be listed according to the mentioned sequence in the essay, and the number should be stated. When quoting the reference in the essay, number should be stated in bracket followed by the quoted sentence, e.g. XXX [1]. Author, source title (name of article), publisher, issue number, page number, and year of publication should be listed in reference.

**File Format**

- File should be saved in PDF format, with "School name" as the file name, e.g. school name.pdf

19

# Avoiding Plagiarism



20

# What is Plagiarism?

## Stealing someone's words or thoughts

- Copying words or ideas **without giving credit**
- Failing to put a **quotation** in quotation marks
- Giving **incorrect information** about the source of a quotation
- Changing words but copying the **sentence structure**
- Copying so many words or ideas from source that it makes up **most** of your work, whether you give credit or not



21

## Practice exercise

- Read the following paragraph, pls try to put this information in your essay, nevertheless with NO plagiarism.

Lawrence W C Lai, Town Planning in Hong Kong: A Critical Review (City University of HK Press, 1997), at p 12. Please try to put this information in your essay, and which one you prefer? Why?

*Historically, the rise of planning as a profession has been heavily influenced by European pre-war economic thought and political experience. The planning profession has come to encompass the techniques, activities, procedures, and management of government intervention in spatial and socioeconomic affairs in terms of the issues of externalities and public goods. It is worth noting, for example, that Pigou's The Economics of Welfare (1920) provides justification for government intervention on the grounds of resource allocation efficiency.*

22

## Paraphrasing & Quotations

23

## Paraphrasing

- To describe a fact or express someone else's thoughts **using your own words**
  - Select the most important pieces of information
  - Use your own style of writing

(Go to Practice 4)

24

# Quotations

- To use someone's **exact words** to make a particularly strong point
- Be used instead of paraphrase when the words is well-known
- **Quotation marks** around the phrase
- Add your own thoughts on what the quote means to you

Note: if something is common knowledge, you don't have to cite the source; if you are not sure, it's safer to find a source.

25

# Citing Sources

- **Cite** : to give credit to author of their creative work (a book, papers, interviews, videos, and other spoken words)
- Don't be afraid to **use** sources -- comprehensive information
- Don't be afraid to **cite** sources -- as a credible researcher
- **Bibliography** : through it the reader be able to find and read the original sources

26

# How to cite?

- **Information included**: author's name, title, publisher, the date of published, etc.
- An **alphabetical list** or according to the **mentioning sequence (numbering)** in the essay
- Choose a **common style** for your citation
  - American Psychological Association (**APA**)  
*Social sciences (psychology, sociology), business, & nursing*
  - Modern Language Association (**MLA**)  
*Liberal arts & humanities (literature, history, philosophy)*
  - Chicago Manual of Style (**CMS**)  
*Literature, history, & arts*

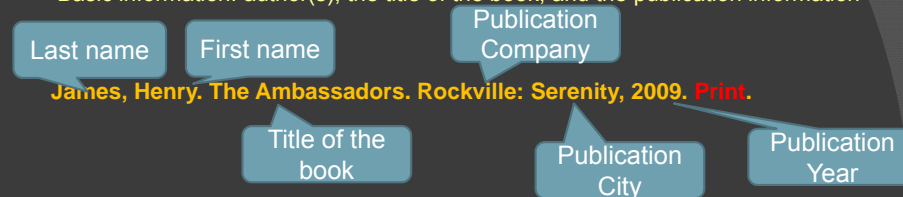
Online Writing Lab (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>)

27

# Cite a book (in MLA style)

## • Cite a book In Print

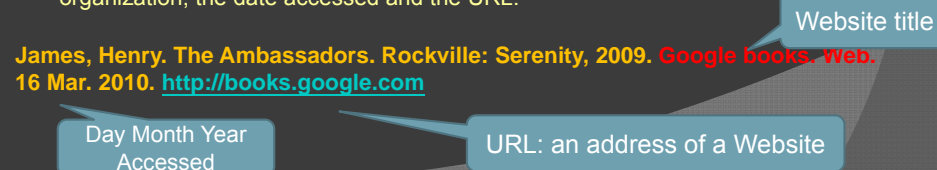
Basic information: author(s), the title of the book, and the publication information



## • Cite a Book Online

Add as much as the original publication information as possible.

Electronic publication information: title of the internet site, the editor of the site (if given), the date of electronic publication (if given), and the sponsoring institution or organization, the date accessed and the URL.



28

## Cite a Journal, Newspaper Articles

### ● Cite a Journal in Print

Basic information: author's name, the title of the article, the name of the journal, the series number/type of the journal (if given), the volume number (if given), the issue number (if given), the year of publication, the page numbers of the article, format

Last name

First name

Article Title

Journal Title

Jacoby, William G. "Public Attitudes Toward Government Spending." *American Journal of Political Science* 38.2 (1994): 336-61. Print.

●

Series  
Volume

Issue(Year  
published)

Pages

### ● Cite a Journal Online (similar to cite a book online)

29

## Cite the Internet resource

"What is Plagiarism?" Plagiarism.org. Accessed November 8, 2012. <[www.Plagiarism.org/learning\\_center/what\\_is\\_plagiarism.html](http://www.Plagiarism.org/learning_center/what_is_plagiarism.html)>

Website title

Title of the  
resource

The date you  
retrieved the  
information

URL: an address of a Website

30

## Staying organized

### ● Help you keep track of the information and the source

- Note cards: on each fact and the source where you found it
- Computer document
- Software: Endnote

31

## Summary:

### Smart strategies of writing your essay

- Finding the right sources
- Collect your thoughts: organize information
- Think for yourself: avoid plagiarism
- Present what you know: sharing information



32



Q & A

33



Thank  
you !

34