

## **ACADEMIC INTRODUCTIONS**

(by Daley-Yates, S. (n.d.). *Academic Intros*. [Hand-out] University of Huddersfield).

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### **Features of an Academic Introduction**

Read the following academic introduction written by a student on an Early Years course:

#### **The Growth and Development of Young Children**

Child development is the term used to describe how a human being changes from the moment of conception to a newborn, an infant, a child, an adolescent and then ultimately an adult; someone who has the ability to independently think, move, socialise, and communicate within the world. The study of child development and how children grow and react to their surroundings has been the subject of research, investigation and sometimes controversy for many years (Adams, 1982; Williams, 1996). Notwithstanding the diversity of opinions, it is now generally accepted that children's development can be described using four category headings: physical, personal, social and emotional, language and cognitive development. This essay aims to look at each of these areas in turn; firstly, examining the theories behind each and the factors that can influence a child's growth and development in the important years from birth to eight years. Secondly, important issues such as the nature and nurture debate will be discussed along with the other influences which are thought to have an effect on a child's early development including socio economic background, health, family, culture and environment. Finally, the role of an early years practitioner will be explored to evaluate the contribution made by professionals working with young children.

**For each sentence separate the introduction into 2 main areas.**

**Within the first main area, what else is the writer doing?**

## **The CaRS model**

In 1990, Swales, an author of several books for teaching academic English to students whose first language is not English, developed a model for writing academic introductions: Create a Research Space (CaRS model). Swales surveyed introductions from a broad spectrum of academic disciplines and discovered that there seemed to be a pattern to the way that many introductions were constructed. From this research the CaRS model was developed. A simplified version appears below.

Think of the introduction like a game of chess.

### **Move 1**

- a. By showing that the general research area is important, central, interesting, problematic, or relevant in some way.
- b. By introducing and reviewing items of previous research in the area.
- c. Providing some brief background information.
- d. Defining terms.

### **Move 2**

- a. By indicating a gap in the research.
- b. Raising a question about the previous research.
- c. Justifying why the topic under discussion is important.
- d. Focussing in on one aspect of the topic.

### **Move 3**

- a. By outlining how the question will be answered.
- b. By indicating the specific structure of the essay, report or research paper  
Firstly,...; secondly,...; thirdly,...and finally,...

### **Therefore in an academic introduction you may be:**

- Introducing the topic to the reader, giving a preview of what is to come
- Defining terms
- Suggesting the importance of the subject area
- Setting the topic within a context by providing some background information
- Referring to a gap in the research or indicating controversy
- Outlining the proposed objectives of answering the essay question

### **Typical language associated with moves in academic introductions**

#### **Move 1**

- The increasing interest in ... has heightened the need for ....
- The development of ... has led to the hope that ....
- The study of ... has become an important aspect of ....
- A central issue in ... is ....
- The growth of ... has been extensively studied in recent years.
- Many recent studies have focussed on ...

#### **Move 2**

- However, little information/work/data/research exists with regard to ...
- The research has tended to focus on ..., rather than on ....
- Although considerable research has been devoted to ... , rather less attention has been paid to ....
- The previous research has concentrated on ...

#### **Move 3**

- The purpose of this assignment is to ...
- The aim of this discussion/essay is to ...
- This essay is structured as follows; firstly, ...
- This report is divided into five sections; firstly, ...

**For more examples of academic phrases that can be used in academic introductions go to the Academic Phrasebank at:**

**<http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/>**