The Extended Essay IS College Writing IS Academic Writing

The first thing that you'll need to understand is that writing in college is, for the most part, a particular kind of writing called "academic writing." While academic writing might be defined in many ways, there are three concepts that you need to understand before you write your first academic paper.

1. Academic writing is writing done by scholars for other scholars. Writing done by scholars for scholars? Doesn't that leave you out? Actually, it doesn't because, depending on your IE exam score, there's an excellent chance that you'll receive college credit for your IE course work. As a college student, you will be engaged in activities that scholars have been engaged in for centuries: you will read about, think about, argue about, and write about great ideas. Of course, being a scholar requires that you read, think, argue, and write in certain ways. Your extended essay can help you to understand the expectations, conventions, and requirements of scholarship.

2. Academic writing is devoted to topics and questions that are of interest to the academic community. When you write an academic paper, you must first try to find a topic or a question that is relevant and appropriate. But how do you know when a topic is relevant and appropriate? For you, that means understanding the EE guidelines for your chosen subject area. Second, understand that your paper should be of interest to others. Remember that academic writing must be more than personal response. You must write something that your readers will find useful. In other words, *you will want to write something that helps your reader to better understand your topic, or to see it in a new way.*

3. This brings us to our final point: **Academic writing should present the reader with an informed argument.** To construct an informed argument, you must first try to sort out what you *know* about a subject, what experts say about a subject, from what you *think* about a subject. Or, to put it another way, you will want to consider what *is known* about a subject and then to determine what *you* think about it. If your paper fails to inform, if it fails to argue, if it fails to analyze, if there is not a logical progression in your argument, then it will fail to meet the expectations of the academic reader.

Excerpted from **The Dartmouth Writing: Project** at http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writingJmaterials/student/ac paper/what.shtml and modified to help students understand the importance of the extended essay and how it relates to academic writing.

Extended Essay
Formal Presentation

I. Format Guidelines

A. Font: Times New Roman, 12 point.

B. Double space text (Exception: block quotations are single spaced).

D. Indent paragraphs.

E. Margins: 1" all around

F. Header top right of each page ***except*** title page (Header = Candidate code page#)

Abstract has header but no page number

Header with page numbers begins with ***Introduction***

II. Parts of the Extended Essay

A. Title page

1. Title centered on page
2. Extended Essay: Content Area
3. Candidate number
4. May 2010
5. Word Count

} Lower Right Corner of Title Page – double spaced

B. Abstract (with word count at bottom of page)

C. Table of Contents

D. Introduction – begin numbering in header

E. Body of Paper

F. Conclusion

G. Works Cited

H. Appendix, if needed

III. Points to Consider

A. Have you followed the guidelines for your subject? Are you sure your research question is acceptable within the guidelines for your specific content area?

B. Have you closely examined the scoring rubric to see if you have met the criteria for the maximum number of points?

C. Have you followed the guidelines for writing an introduction? Have you met the criteria?

D. Have you followed the guidelines for writing an abstract? Have you met the criteria?

E. Have you clearly stated your research position and supported it by building your case based evidence?

F. Do you have a strong conclusion? Have you considered implications for further development of the topic, for further research in this area?

G. Does your works cited page include ***only*** your in-text citations? Remember, if you didn't cite it in your paper, the source does not appear in your Works Cited section.

Extended Essay

What?

4000 word (16 p / 250wpp) essay

- Formal piece of scholarship reflecting independent research
- Must be over 2500 words but cannot exceed 4000 words
  - Target is 3000 words = 12 pages (250/wpp)
  - Word count applies to body of essay only
- Must be analytical rather than narrative
- Must exhibit critical thinking
- Must come from a specific list of subject areas (see below)

What Else?

- Externally assessed
- Result of approximately 40 hours of work by candidate
- Concludes with a mandatory interview (vive voce) with mentor

List of Content Areas

• Language A1 – English A1	• Information technology in a global society
• Biology	• Mathematics
• Business and management	• Music
• Chemistry	• Peace and conflict studies
• Computer science	• Philosophy
• Dance	• Physics
• Design technology	• Politics
• Economics	• Psychology
• Environmental systems and societies	• Social and cultural anthropology
• Film	• Theatre
• Geography	• Visual arts
• History	• World religions
• Human rights	

Incorporating Evidence into Your Essay

Once you have formulated your claim, your thesis or hypothesis, you should use evidence to help strengthen your thesis and any assertion you make. Be sure to present evidence that contradicts your stance, and then argue against (refute) that evidence. Use sources against each other, as if they were experts on a panel discussing your proposition.

State your claim.
Present your evidence.
Now discuss the "so what?"

Weak and Strong Uses of Evidence

To see the differences between strong and weak use of evidence, here are two paragraphs:

Weak use of evidence

Today, we are too self-centered. Most families no longer sit down to eat together, preferring instead to eat on the go while rushing to the next appointment (Gleick 148). Everything is about what we want.

This is a weak example of evidence because the evidence is not related to the claim. What does the claim about self-centeredness have to do with families eating together? The writer doesn't explain the connection.

Stronger use of evidence

Today, Americans are too self-centered. Even our families don't matter as much anymore as they once did. Other people and activities take precedence. In fact, the evidence shows that most American families no longer eat together, preferring instead to eat on the go while rushing to the next appointment (Gleick 148). Sit-down meals are a time to share and connect with others; however, that connection has become less valued, as families begin to prize individual activities over shared time, promoting self-centeredness over group identity.

This is a far better example, as the evidence is more smoothly integrated into the text, the link between the claim and the evidence is strengthened, and the evidence itself is analyzed to provide support for the claim.

Using Quotations as Evidence

One effective way to support your claim is to use quotations. However, because quotations involve someone else's words, you need to take special care when using this kind of evidence in your essay. Here are two examples using quotations:

Ineffective Use of Quotation

Today, we are too self-centered. "We are consumers-on-the-run . . . the very notion of the family meal as a sit-down occasion is vanishing. Adults and children alike eat . . . on the way to their next activity" (Gleick 148). Everything is about what we want.

This example is ineffective because the quotation is not integrated with the writer's ideas. Notice how the writer has dropped the quotation into the paragraph without making any connection between it and the claim. Furthermore, there is no discussion of the quotation's significance, which makes it difficult for the reader to see the relationship between the evidence and the writer's point.

A More Effective Use of Quotation

Today, Americans are too self-centered. Even our families don't matter as much anymore as they once did. Other people and activities take precedence, as James Gleick says in his book, *Faster*: "We are consumers-on-the-run . . . the very notion of the family meal as a sit-down occasion is vanishing. Adults and children alike eat . . . on the way to their next activity" (148). Sit-down meals are a time to share and connect with others; however, that connection has become less valued, as families begin to prize individual activities over shared time, promoting self-centeredness over group identity.

The second example is more effective because it follows the guidelines for incorporating evidence into an essay. Notice, too, that it uses a *lead-in phrase* (". . . as James Gleick says in his book, *Faster*") to introduce the direct quotation. This lead-in phrase helps to integrate the quotation with the writer's ideas. Also notice that the writer discusses and comments upon the quotation immediately afterwards, which allows the reader to seethe quotation's connection to the writer's point.

REMEMBER: Discussing the *significance* of your evidence develops and expands your paper!

Watch Your Citing

Evidence appears in essays in the form of quotations and paraphrasing. Both forms of evidence ***must be cited in your text***. Citing evidence means distinguishing other writers' information from your own ideas and giving credit to your sources. We use MLA parenthetical citations in our school district—in college your professor will tell you which style to use.

REMEMBER: The only things you don't cite in the text of your paper are your own ideas or anything that is common knowledge (appears in 3+ sources and the source did not cite it).

SOURCE: Writing Tutorial Services, Ballantine Hall 206 Indiana www.indiana.edu/~wts/

Responsibilities of the student

It is **required** that each IB Diploma student:

- choose a topic that fits into one of the subjects on the approved extended essay list (see Content Areas sheet)
- observe the regulations relating to the extended essay (including setting up, keeping, and recording meetings with mentor)
- meet deadlines
- read, understand, and follow the Academic Honesty Policy (printed on reverse)
- acknowledge all sources of information and ideas in an approved academic manner
- hand in, with the final essay, the *Mentor Timesheets* and *Individual Meeting Reports.*

It is **strongly recommended** that each student:

- start work early
- think very carefully about the research question for their essay
- plan how, when and where they will find material for their essay
- plan a schedule for both researching and writing the essay, including extra time for delays and unforeseen problems (especially important in experimental sciences)
- record sources as their research progresses rather than trying to reconstruct a list at the end (keep NoodleBib going throughout the research process)
- have a clear structure for the essay itself before beginning to write
- check and proofread the final version carefully
- make sure that all basic requirements are met (for example, all students should get full marks for the abstract).

Responsibilities of the mentor

It is **required** by IB that the mentor:

- meets with the student a minimum of 3 hours throughout the process
- encourages and supports the student throughout the research and writing of the extended essay
- discusses the choice of topic with the student and, in particular, helps to formulate a well-focused research question
- reads and comments on (but does not edit) the first draft only of the extended essay –
- monitors the progress of the extended essay to offer guidance and to ensure that the essay is the student's own work; and reads the final version to confirm its authenticity
- conducts short, concluding interview (*viva voce*) with student after the extended essay is complete.
- determines a predicted grade for the essay and signs IB EE goldenrod folder.

Understanding academic honesty and malpractice as it relates to the extended essay

Academic honesty

An authentic piece of work is one that is based on the candidate's individual and original ideas with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged. Therefore, all assignments, written or oral, completed by a candidate for assessment must wholly and authentically use that candidate's own language and expression. Where sources are used or referred to, whether in the form of direct quotation or paraphrase, such sources must be fully and appropriately acknowledged.

Malpractice

Malpractice includes:

(a) **Plagiarism**: this is defined as the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the candidate's own

(b) **Collusion**: this is defined as supporting malpractice by another candidate, as in allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another

(c) **Duplication of work**: this is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or diploma requirements

Plagiarism

Unintentional plagiarism: simply listing sources in a reference (in-text citing) or a citation (Works Cited entry) is not sufficient.

- Passages taken verbatim must be in quotations, referenced and cited.
- If you paraphrase by changing a few words, this is still a quote and must have quotation marks, reference, and citation.
- If you paraphrase in your own words, you must still reference and cite.
- If you summarize, you must still reference and cite.
- If you follow another's progression of thought or argument, even if you put it in your own words, you must reference and cite.
- E-mail messages, web sites, blogs, photographs, maps, illustrations, images —everything you find on the Internet is intellectually protected and must be referenced and cited. The abstract, introduction, content and conclusion must be the candidate's own work.

SOURCE: IBO Diploma Programme: Academic Honesty, published September 2007

The *viva voce* (concluding interview)

The *viva voce* is a short interview between the student and the supervisor, and is a recommended conclusion to the extended essay process. Students who do not attend the *viva voce* may be disadvantaged.

The *viva voce* serves the following purposes.

- A check on plagiarism and malpractice in general
- An opportunity to reflect on successes and difficulties in the research process
- An opportunity to reflect on what has been learned
- An aid to the supervisor's report

The *viva voce* should last between 10 and 15 minutes. This is included in the recommended amount of time the supervisor should spend with the student. The following are examples of questions that can be asked, which should be adapted to the particular essay and student.

- "I am not clear what you mean on page XXX. You quote Y: could you explain a little more about what this tells us?"
- "On page *** you cite Z. I couldn't find this reference (for example, web site). Could you tell me more about it?"
- "What have been the high and low points of the research and writing processes?"
- "What were the most interesting aspects of the process? Did you discover anything that surprised you?"
- "What have you learned through writing this essay? Is there any advice you would want to pass on to someone just starting out on an extended essay?"
- "Is there anything else that you would particularly like me to mention in my report?"

In conducting the *viva voce* and writing the report, supervisors should bear in mind the following.

- Examiners want to know that students understand any material (which must be properly referenced) that they have included in their essays. This is particularly important in subjects like mathematics. If the way the material is used in context in the essay does not clearly establish this, the supervisor can check the student's understanding in the *viva voce* and report on it.
- Minor slips in citation and referencing may lose the odd mark. If there appear to be major shortcomings, the supervisor should investigate thoroughly. No essay should be authenticated if the supervisor believes it contains plagiarism.
- In assessing criterion K (holistic judgment), examiners will take into account any information given in the report about unusual intellectual inventiveness or persistence in the face of unexpected difficulties.
- The report should not attempt to do the examiner's job. It should refer to things, largely process-related, that may not be obvious in the essay itself.
- Unless there are particular problems, the *viva voce* should end positively. Completion of a major piece of work such as the extended essay is something for students to feel good about.

Better Searching with Boolean

"Boolean" is a simple form of logic that was invented for mathematical applications but with the advent of computers it became the language used to describe the relationship between words in a computer search.

Why is it called Boolean? Because it was invented by George Boole (1815-1864), a British mathematician.

There are only three words you need to know to do a Boolean search:

AND
OR
NOT

AND – all words or phrases must appear in each result

OR – searches for either or both terms. Useful for searching for synonyms

NOT – excludes words. Actually NOT isn't used very much unless you really know what to take out of your search.

( ) - most often used to group several OR'd terms together. Controls how the computer "reads" the search; as in a mathematical equation, the words in parenthesis are processed first.

" " - in many systems quote marks indicate that you want to search the words together as a phrase.

In most online databases there is some sort of wild card to substitute for letters. Asterisk (*) and question mark (?) are very common wildcards but not the only possible. The database help screens will tell you what they are.

Examples

"moral development" AND child? [? gives the word 'child' any ending so you'd also get children]

gender AND (language OR linguistics)

More complicated examples:

1. I'd like to find materials on the psychological effects of child abuse on adults who were victims as children

Some possibilities

"child abuse" and "adult victim*" (the concept of 'psychology' would probably be present in most of the materials one would find so you could try leaving it out.)

"child abuse" and adult* and victim*

2. I'd like to find out about education in ancient Greece and Rome.

(Greece OR Greek OR Rome OR Roman) AND (educat* OR school*)

3. I'd like to know what methods are most effective in preventing teens from smoking.

Prevent* AND (teen* OR adolescent*) AND (smok* OR tobacco)

Here are a few multidisciplinary databases to try Boolean searching in. To get to them go to http://library.rochester.edu. Choose "databases". They are listed under "multidisciplinary" as a subject:

Proquest Research – both popular and scholarly articles, some full-text.

Wilson OmniFile – both popular and scholarly articles, some full-text.

How to Avoid Colloquial (Informal) Writing

While it may be acceptable in friendly e-mails and chat rooms, excessive colloquialism is a major pitfall that lowers the quality of formal written text. Here are some steps/tips that you can follow to help improve your overall writing:

Steps

1. **Understand what formal English is.** Realize that if you write the way you talk, you most likely will end up using informal English. You even may find yourself committing grammatical errors! Remember, too, that talking informally can make the listener feel more comfortable, but writing informally can make the readers think less of you. Know when to use informal English and when to use formal English, and discover which style comes more naturally to you.
2. **Understand basic English punctuation.** In fact, you should follow this rule in all of your writing (although it is particularly important in formal English). Punctuating your writing as you go along can reduce your risk of leaving out punctuation marks. In a formal letter, you use a colon, not a comma, as in "Dear John:"
3. **Realize that some punctuation is not acceptable in extremely formal English.** The dash, the parenthesis, and the exclamation mark are not universally acceptable. In the most formal English, you should use the exclamation mark only when a character screams, "Fire!" or "Help!" You should avoid the parenthesis and the dash at all times in this style unless you quote an author who used them first. You should avoid the parenthesis and the dash in discourse that you transcribe yourself. Try to replace your dashes with colons in formal writing.
4. **Avoid using common colloquial words and expressions.** Again, these are words that, while acceptable in speech, should not be used in formal writing. Colloquial words and phrases are called "colloquialisms." There are also solecisms, such as "ain't," which are grammatical errors. Finally, there are non-words, combinations of letters and characters that do not form real words, such as "alot." If you are in doubt about a certain word, look it up in the dictionary. If the dictionary makes no comment about it, but it sounds informal to you, consult another dictionary. A dictionary will label an incorrect word such as "ain't" as "nonstandard" and informal word as "informal," "colloquial," or "slang." Some dictionaries also include phrases. For example, when you look up "to put up with" ("to tolerate") in the dictionary, you will see that it is informal.
5. **"Omit needless words."** Some adverbs and phrases significantly reduce the formality of your writing while adding little to it. A good phrase to delete is "you know." This phrase implies that you know what the reader knows or is thinking while reading your paper; you do not have this power. Some adverbs, such as "well" starting a sentence, often are needless. Starting a sentence with "well" can be useful in everyday writing as a way to contrast the sentence with what came before. Many writers, however, use "well" too often.
6. **Avoid contractions.** Contractions dramatically reduce the formality of your composition. Depending on how formal you need to be, you may want to avoid all contractions or use fewer contractions in your writing than you would use in your speech. "Cannot" is

preferable to "can't" in formal contexts. Some contractions such as "o'clock" (for "of the clock") are so commonplace that they are condemned in only the most formal writing.

7. **Try to avoid the first and second person.** Formal writing often tries to be objective, and the pronouns "I" and "you" tend to imply subjectivity. Phrases such as "I think that" can be deleted from a sentence when it is obvious that this is the author's opinion. Using the pronoun "I" is almost always acceptable in personal writing, and the pronoun "you" is almost always acceptable in letters and how-to's. In the most formal writing, "we" replaces "I," and "one" replaces "you." "One" also may be useful when you have a statement that does not apply to all of your readers. Finally, "one" can be useful in a letter when you have a statement that applies not to the reader but to people in general.
8. **Do not hesitate to split an infinitive even in the most formal writing when it is warranted.** See How to Learn Perfect English As a Native English Speaker, tip one for a thorough explanation.
9. **Do not be afraid to separate the auxiliary (helping) verb and the main verb.** See How to Learn Perfect English As a Native English Speaker, tip two for a thorough explanation.
10. **Know when to end a sentence with a preposition (even in the most formal of English).** See How to Learn Perfect English As a Native English Speaker, tip three for a thorough explanation.
11. **Always include the relative pronoun.** In speech and casual writing, you can say, "That was the boy I saw on the street" and make yourself clear. In formal writing, you should say, "He was the boy whom I saw on the street." In this style, you should be sure to always include "whom" even when it is not necessary to your meaning. Also consider this example: "There were five students who were complaining about the homework." If the relative pronoun is omitted, "complaining" becomes a kind of postpositive adjective, and the sentence is written completely in the neuter voice, with "were" as the only real verb.
12. **Do not start a sentence with a coordinating conjunction.** In the written language, do not use coordinating conjunctions such as "and" or "but" to start a sentence. In formal English, try to start sentence with "additionally," (or "moreover") "nevertheless," and "alternatively." In casual writing, you can start sentences with "also," but avoid this in formal English unless the word "also" is modifying a verb (usually in the imperative mood): "Also read Chapters Two and Three." Coordinating conjunctions are meant to join words and phrases, so a coordinating conjunction is left dangling without a role to play when a sentence begins with a coordinating conjunction. Simply attach the sentence that starts with a coordinating conjunction to the previous sentence; this produces a compound sentence. You also may use "additionally," "also," "either," "though," and "however" instead of starting with "and" and "but." You should tuck the words "also" and "however" in your sentence, not using them to start a sentence. "Though," coming at the very end of your sentence, can prove a painless alternative to starting your sentence with "but": "The passive voice can make your writing more formal. It can cause you problems, though."
13. **Develop short, choppy sentences into longer, more graceful sentences.** Formal writing generally uses longer sentences than casual writing. To make your writing more formal, try using more compound and complex sentences. Try to develop two simple sentences into one compound or complex sentence. Long sentences add variety to your writing. A

long sentence can be particularly effective when it is paired with a short sentence; the contrast grabs the readers' attention. As the last sentence shows, you also can use a semicolon to join two simple sentences, provided that they are closely related to each other.

14. **Avoid clichés.** Clichés are sayings or expressions. Clichés make your writing informal and sometimes humorous. They often make your writing unoriginal, but sometimes, you can use them to make an original play-on-words. Here are some clichés to avoid in formal writing:
    - Hercules was *as strong as an ox.*
    - I have to give *an arm and a leg* to find a parking spot during the holiday season.
    - It was *as pretty as a picture.*
15. **Avoid stage directions.** Do not commence a letter by telling the recipient what you plan to do in the letter or begin an essay by telling the reader what the paper will discuss.
    - "I am writing to you to ask you to. . . ."
    - "This paper is going to talk about how. . . ."
16. **Avoid vague words.** Vague words can be described as words that are open to interpretation or that do not express your ideas as well as more precise words would. "A few" or "enough" can often be replaced by a word that is more precise.
17. Do not hesitate to split an infinitive when it is warranted. Grammarians, teachers, and writers used to try not to split "to" and the verb because the infinitive is one word in Latin (such as "ire" for "to go"). Now, however, grammar and writing authorities have realized that avoiding the split infinitive can make a sentence unclear. According to Oxford Dictionary compilers, the split infinitive can also make your writing stronger! "To boldly go" is stronger than "to go boldly" for the same reason that a big picture surrounded by two smaller pictures becomes particularly emphatic. "To boldly go" is also more formal, not less so, than "to go boldly" because the Romans were known to put their adverbs right next to their verbs. "Boldly to go" will work, but it sounds less natural, and putting the adverb in front of "to" does not always work. (http://www.askoxford.com/asktheexperts/faq/aboutgrammar/splitinfinitives).
18. Thus, a rule that is supposed to Latinize the English language has made it less like Latin, especially considering that "to" is not part of the infinitive anyway. Consider these two sentences: 1) "Her plan is not to use the active voice" and 2) "Her plan is to not use the active voice." The first sentence translates into "It is not her plan to use the active voice" while the second sentence translates into "She is trying not to use the active voice." The split infinitive is absolutely necessary in this sentence, proving that this rule is imaginary! Also consider "to more than double": "Calcium has been shown to more than double fat excretion." "More than to double" is ungrammatical; it is just not English! The Oxford experts recommend against the use of the split infinitive in formal writing. This is not because the split infinitive is informal but because your audience will generally have "higher" standards.
19. Do not be afraid to use a "split verb phrase." Some writers who do not split infinitives refuse to split verb phrases as well, but there is no such rule. If there were such a rule, we should all be saying, "I saw her not" instead of "I didn't see her." We should also say, "You are going?" instead of "Are you going?" but "You are going?" is a Nonstandard question. The evolution of the English language proves that this rule is imaginary. In fact,

your sentences will be stronger if you decide to completely ignore this rule, especially when you use the passive voice.

20. Realize that you sometimes have to end a sentence with a preposition. Consider this line from *Robots*: "You can shine no matter what you are made of." It would be ungrammatical to write, "You can shine no matter of what you are made," and it should sound foreign to you! Also consider that like Latin, the English language is able to use intransitive verbs in the passive voice! Consider "Speak only when you are spoken to." "Spoken to" are treated as a single unit in English, and this sentence can be "corrected" only by rewriting it in the active voice: "Speak only when someone speaks to you." This sentence makes assumptions because you may be spoken to by one person or by a group. When your sentence uses a relative pronoun, try to place the preposition in front of the relative. For instance, "It was the ball by which I was hit" works better than "It was the ball that I was hit by." Your sentences will generally be stronger if you try to follow this rule. After all, few people are going to say that their favorite part of speech is the preposition, and the end of your sentence is the most important, the most emphatic part!
21. An intuitive grasp of English usage, while not infallible, is the most flexible. You will write or speak most naturally if you can focus on the ideas and their communication, instead of thinking about the rules.
22. Good communication, written or oral, is more than just good grammar and spelling. It is also organization, clarity, attention to the audience, and a host of other things. In fact, while the mechanics of communicating are good practice, they are secondary to the content and message. Put another way, if the meaning is sound, it's a simple matter to tidy up the mechanics.
23. Accept that the rules change over time. For instance, the word <u>data</u> was once strictly the plural of "datum", but has come to be used as a mass (or uncountable) noun, similar to "information" or "water".
24. Write first, fix second. Collect your ideas, then worry about the English.
25. The ability to spell is not necessarily an indicator of the ability to write, though the two skills are closely related. If spelling is not your strong point, use a dictionary or spell-checker before you publish a work or hand something in.

How to Write an Abstract

An abstract is a concise, stand-alone statement that conveys the essential information contained in an article, book, research paper, or document. Written in a direct non-repetitive style, the abstract should:

- identify the problem (research question or thesis) investigated.
- describe the scope or method of investigation.
- summarize the results.
- state the conclusion(s).

Writing the Abstract:

1. Highlight the sentences in the paper that detail the problem (objective) investigated.
2. Highlight the research question (or thesis).
3. Identify information (phrases, key words) that shows the scope and sequence of the investigation—identify but do not explain.
4. Condense the conclusion into a few concise sentences.

Words of Advice:

1. For the first draft, don't worry about length. Just try to cover all the important components that are required in the abstract. Use all the information that you highlighted and identified as you read through the essay (or article).
2. Take a word count before you begin to edit.
3. Begin editing by deleting words, phrases and sentences that are less important or provide more explanation than necessary.
4. Look for places where sentences can be combined to omit extra words or condense ideas.
5. Delete unnecessary background information.
6. Do not use jargon, abbreviations, direct quotes or citations.
7. Avoid writing in the first person (I). Rather than saying, "In this essay I discuss…", try a more formal approach by starting your abstract with as opening similar to:
    - "This essay discusses the effects of . . . . Specifically, this paper investigates (restate research question) . . ."
    - "This essay examines how . . . . It attempts to answer the question . . ."
7. Write to the required word count. If a 300 word abstract is required, get as close to the required number of words as possible.

Abstract

3 paragraphs?

Different interpretations of history have allowed 21st century academics to make different conclusions about the consequences of historical actions. The causes of 1874 War between the powerful Crapponia and the weaker Plopnova are numerous and varied. The losses suffered by Crapponia resulted in a period of regional tension and to this day, one still hears about, "The Great Squirrel War". In order to have a fuller understanding of this topic, this essay will examine the question, **To what extent was the trade embargo on the export of Crapponian squirrels the main cause of the 1874 war between Crapponia and Plopnova?**

RQ? -in bold?

To answer the question, four well-recognised causes of the war are examined: the naval threat, political maneuvering, religious tension and the squirrel trade embargo. Secondary sources were used to investigate the economic importance of the squirrel trade to the economy of Crapponia. Data taken from the archives of the Crapponian and Plopnovan governments were available through the internet. The research covers the period from 1830, when trade between the two countries was at its peak, to 1874 when the war started.

scope?

A careful evaluation of the proposed causes of the war shows that while the naval threat by Plopnova and the political maneuvering of the Crapponian leaders were important contributing factors to the war, it was the Plopnovan embargo on the export of squirrels from Crapponia that was the main cause of the war. The loss of export revenues was catastrophic to the economy, and the government was forced to declare war. A limitation of the research is that it is not possible to state whether or not the other two factors would have led to the war had there not been trade embargo.

conclusion?

(285 words)

word count

J. Blink, October 2007