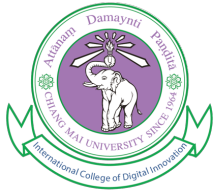# English for Academic Purposes (EAP) – Writing

Re-cap of previous lesson

- Importance of structure
- Argument structures
- Paragraphs
- Topic sentences
- Sentence structure
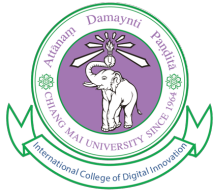- Sentence variation

5. Introductions and conclusions

Lesson aims

- Recognize the elements of a strong introduction
- Learn how to write a good conclusion
- Understand what makes a good abstract
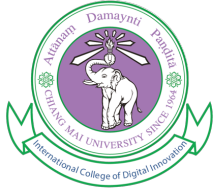- Hear about other types of summaries

Introductions

What makes this great

- Use of graphics (clear and simple)

- Movement – body language

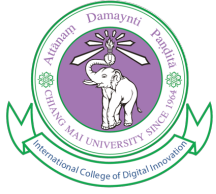- Clever, memorable way of emphasizing the significance of the product

Q1. How long had Steve Jobs been looking forward to this moment?

a) A year

✓ b) Two and a half years
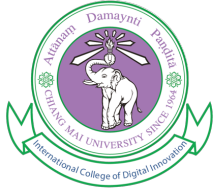
c) Five years

Q2. When did Apple introduce the Macintosh?

✓ a) 1984

b) 1985

c) 1986

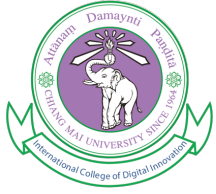**Q3**. When did Apple introduce the first iPod?

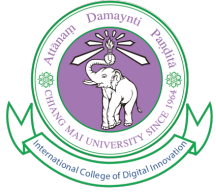a) 1999

b) 2000

✓ c) 2001

Q4. How many "revolutionary products" did Jobs say they were introducing?

a) One

b) Two

✓ c) Three

Useful vocabulary

- *Frustrated* = annoyed, angry
- *Cognition* = thinking
- *Acquisition* = learning or developing a skill

What makes these good openings?

- ...
- ...
- ...
- ...
- ...
- ...

- ...
- ...
- ...
- ...
- ...
- ...

What makes these good openings?

- Clear problem (definition) and why it's important
- Offer that they will provide a good, interesting, novel (new) solution
- Establish their authority (expertise) on the subject

- Express their passion for the subject/problem
- Use of stories – 'this was my experience'
- Efficient – get right into the subject, argument

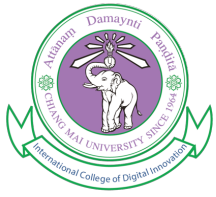All these create <u>interest</u>, <u>engagement</u>, <u>attention</u>

Don't do this

"In this essay, I will discuss blah blah blah…"

This is bad, because:

- It's boring

- The reader (the teacher) already knows what the subject is

- <u>It delays (wastes time and words) getting to points that will get you higher marks</u>

Engaging the reader's interest

- Pose (ask) a <u>provocative (challenging) or thought-provoking question</u>

- Describe a <u>puzzling (difficult) scenario or incongruity</u> (something confusing, strange, wrong, out of place)

- Cite an <u>example or case study</u> that illustrates why the research problem is important

- Open with a <u>compelling or unexpected story</u>

- Include a <u>strong or interesting quotation</u>

Conclusions

Conclusions

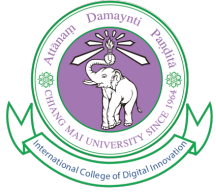- Present the final word on the issues raised

- <u>Summarize your thoughts</u>

- Communicate the <u>wider significance</u>

- Demonstrate the <u>importance of your ideas</u>

- Introduce possible <u>new or expanded ways of thinking about the problem</u>
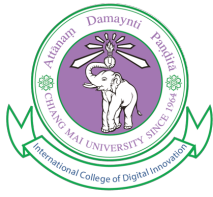
Don't do this

- <u>Include a long summary of your argument</u>

- <u>Use obvious 'concluding phrases'</u> – e.g. *"In this essay, I have discussed…"*, *"In conclusion…"*, *"To sum up…"* etc

- <u>Include new evidence</u> – any evidence or analysis that is essential to supporting your thesis statement should appear in the main body of the essay

- <u>Undermine your own argument</u> – avoid using apologetic phrases that sound uncertain or confused, e.g. *"There are good arguments on both sides of this issue"*

Emphasizing wider significance

- Warn readers of the <u>possible consequences</u> of not attending to the problem actively and seriously

- Recommend a <u>specific (clear) course of action</u>

- Cite a relevant <u>quotation or expert opinion</u> already noted in your paper
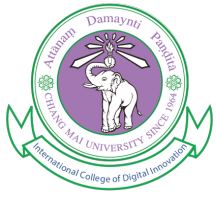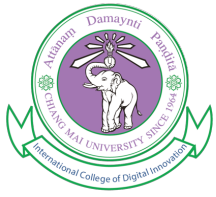
Emphasizing wider significance

- Cite a relevant <u>quotation or expert opinion</u> already noted in your paper

- Explain the consequences of your research in a way that <u>provokes action or demonstrates urgency</u>

- Restate a <u>key statistic, fact, or image</u> to emphasize the most important finding
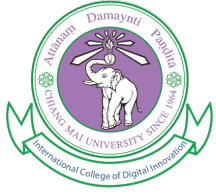
Emphasizing wider significance

- (If appropriate) Illustrate your concluding point by drawing from your <u>own life experiences</u>

- Return to an <u>anecdote, an example, or quotation</u> that you presented in your introduction, but add further insight taken from the findings of your study

- Provide a 'take-home' message, a <u>strong, short statement</u> that you want the reader to remember

Conclusions – good example

Question: Should students be allowed to have cell phones in elementary school?
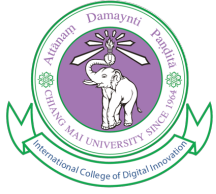
Although it's easy to see why allowing an elementary school child to have a cell phone would be convenient for after-school pickups or arranging playdates with friends, <u>there is too much evidence to show that it's generally not a good idea.</u>
1. Children already have a lot of access to media and it is the parent's responsibility to monitor their media access, which is more difficult if the child has exclusive
2. cell phone access. Cyber bullying, which is increasingly becoming a problem, is also going to be a risk when children have unlimited access to a smart phone.
3. Clearly, elementary school-aged children are not emotionally mature enough to handle the responsibility of a smart phone, and <u>the borrowing of a parent's cell phone should be highly monitored to ensure safe and healthful usage.</u>
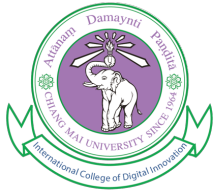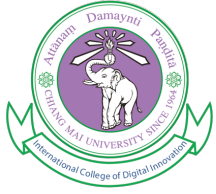
Abstracts (summaries)

Abstracts

- Shortened version of an academic paper

- Appears before the main paper

- Typically written as a single paragraph

- Intended for someone who has not read the article

- Provides concise (short) information to the reader so they can decide whether to read the article

- Written for an expert (informed) audience

Abstracts

Even if you have not been asked to write an abstract, it can still be useful to do this for an essay:

- It can help you think about what your core argument is

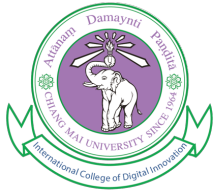- You might end up using it as your conclusion

Abstracts

Two kinds of abstract:

- Informative – summarizes the information in the main sections of the paper. It is the most common type of abstract, suitable for original research

- Descriptive – describes the structure of the document. Less common, although it might be appropriate (suitable) for results which you do not want to reveal to the reader until they have read the whole paper
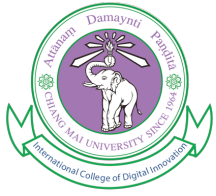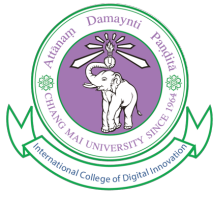
Abstracts

- For academic journal papers, an abstract will normally include the following parts:

  - Background to the research (motivation)
  - Aim of the research
  - Method – how the research was conducted
  - Results – the main findings
  - Conclusions – what the findings mean
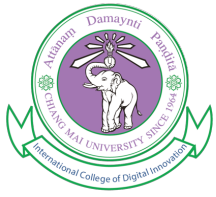 - Wider significance of the research

Is this a good abstract?

"Computer Assisted Learning (CAL) is an area which is rapidly expanding amongst Higher Education institutions as the power of available hardware rises facilitating new and innovative HE teaching and learning environments. The University Institute of recently allocated funds to stimulate a learning technology program which was generally intended to impinge on all 4 Faculties within the institution. Each faculty was asked to bring forward, software development schemes and bids for equipment and other, necessary resources such as human resources, consumables, etc…"
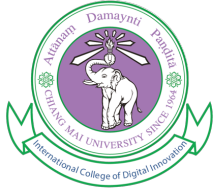
Is this a good abstract?

"The purpose of this paper is to describe the experience of a team of academics in the Department of French, School of Modern Languages within the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Studies at the University Institute of in the development of a Computer–assisted learning software program. Funding was made available from a central source to develop and implement a software program to assist French language learners to acquire vocabulary in "an innovative and measurably effective manner". The software was implemented and tested on a cohort of level 2 students who had, in general, studied French for 8 years, and staff and students were consulted with regards to their reactions."

No!

- (Way) Too long

- Implied but not stated wider significance (importance)

- Unnecessary background information (e.g. research funding)

- Lack of detail on methodology and findings

- Vague language

- Overly formal (e.g. "The purpose of this paper")

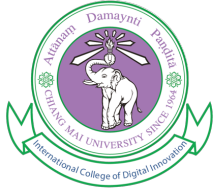- Grammatical and spelling errors

Instead

- Keep it short – <u>a few sentences only</u>

- It is written as an abstract – <u>not just an excerpt</u> (copy) of one bit of your paper/essay

- It focuses on the <u>most important points</u>

- Use the same language, terms etc you use in the main essay/paper

- It <u>makes sense on its own</u> (the reader doesn't have to read the full essay/paper)
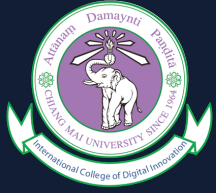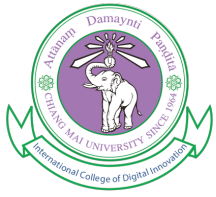
Executive summaries

Executive summaries

- Readers don't have to read the whole paper

- Typically for a wider audience

- Standalone (separate) version of the thesis in miniature (a small version)

- So, typically longer than abstracts – can consist of several pages depending on how long the report is
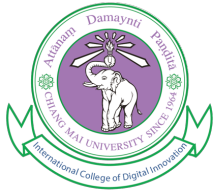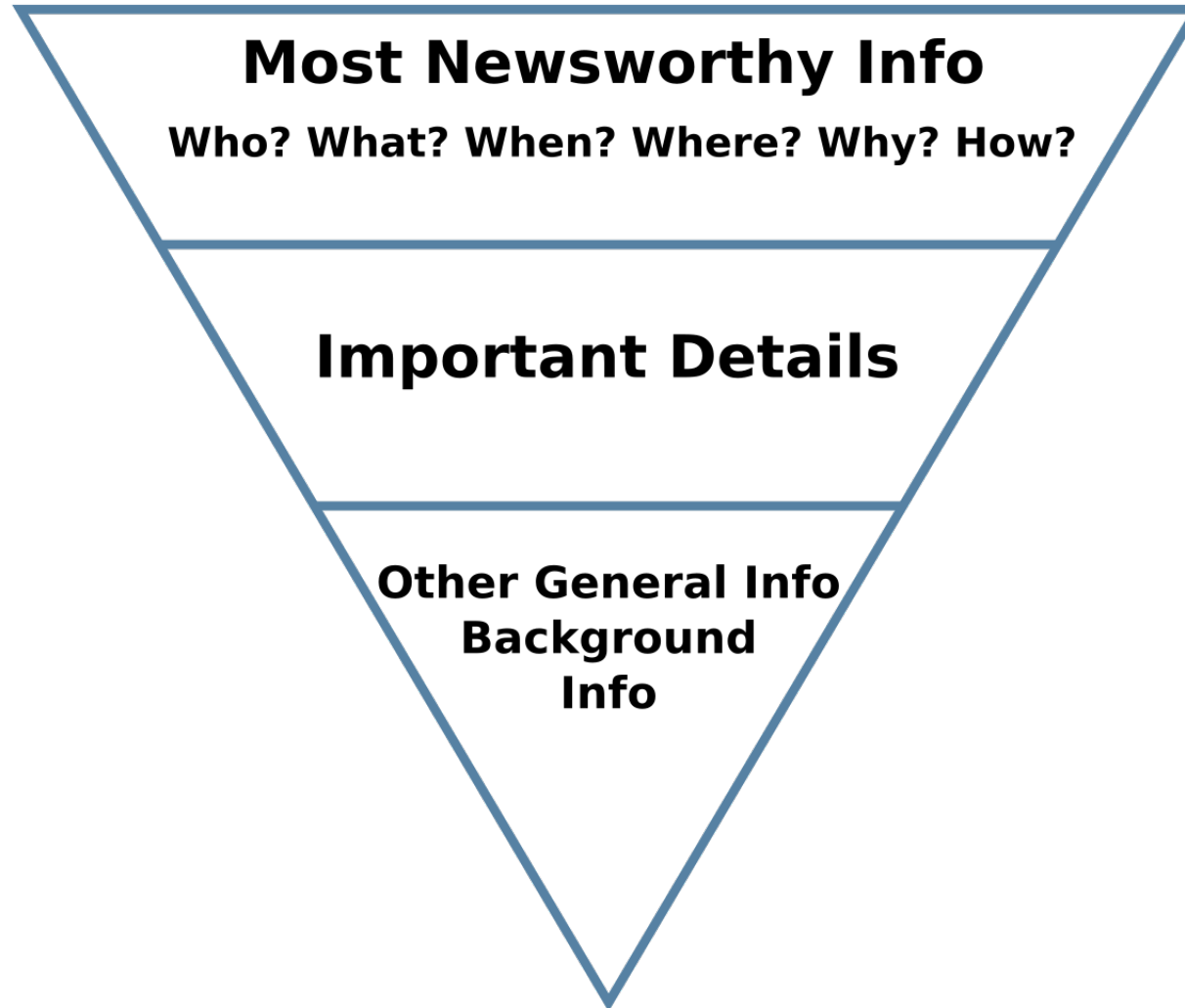
Media/web writing

The inverted pyramid

- In journalism, the inverted pyramid refers to a story structure where <u>the most important information is presented first</u>

- 'Who', 'What', 'When', 'Where', and 'Why' appear at the start of a story, followed by supporting details and background information

- Readers don't have to read the whole story

- Typically for a wider audience

The inverted pyramid

Most Newsworthy Info
Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

Important Details

Other General Info
Background
Info

Conclusion

Re-cap:
- Good introductions
- Engaging interest
- Conclusions
- Abstracts
- Executive summaries
- Media/web writing