

# Academic Writing Style

## Lesson plan

Topic: Academic Style in writing

Rationale: Brainstorming lesson on the do's and don'ts of academic writing.

Time: 60 minutes

### Procedure

1. Divide class into groups of threes or fours
2. On the board write 'academic style' and ask for some ideas. Write a couple points taken from worksheet 2 on the board (YES & NO)
3. Give 'Worksheet 1' and ask the students to write 10 No's and 7 Yes's
4. Feedback as a whole class, clarify points and then give students 'Worksheet 2'
5. Give out worksheet 3 – do the first two with the students connecting the bad style to the worksheet 2. Then students work on their own. Teacher monitors and supports individually.
6. Feedback as a whole group.

### Important:

There is not one specific accepted 'academic style' and this lesson is to highlight common ideas behind what is 'generally accepted'.

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## Worksheet 1

7 yes


Academic  
Style

10 No

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## Worksheet 2 - answers

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <p><b>NO Idomatic / colloquial (slang)</b><br/><i>Kids / boss / gonna / stuff</i></p> <p><b>NO Phrasal verbs</b><br/><i>Go up / look up</i></p> <p><b>NO Personal Pronouns</b><br/><i>I, we, In my opinion (limit use)</i></p> <p><b>NO Contractions</b><br/><i>It'll = it will / It's = it is</i></p> <p><b>NO Questions</b><br/><i>So why did the project fail?</i></p> <p><b>NO Personal adverbs</b><br/><i>Surprisingly / fortunately</i></p> | <p><b>NO number / bullet points</b></p> <p><b>NO vague language</b><br/><i>And so on.. / etc...</i></p> <p><b>NO Repetition</b><br/><i>Constant repeating same words</i></p> | <p><b>YES Passive structures</b><br/><i>We analysed the data /<br/>The data was analysed</i></p> <p><b>YES –Academic Vocabulary</b><br/><i>See A.W.L</i></p> <p><b>YES – Referencing systems</b></p> <p><b>YES Complex Grammar structures</b><br/><i>Nominalisation / noun structures</i></p> <p><b>YES Caution – tentative language</b><br/><i>Possibly / seems / appears / could / may</i></p> <p><b>YES Accurate vocabulary</b><br/><i>Difference between law / rule</i></p> <p><b>YES Precise facts / figures</b><br/><i>A few years ago / in 2014</i></p> |
|---|--|--|



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**Worksheet 3:** Underline examples of bad style and rewrite them in a more suitable way

(a) *Another thing to think about is the chance of crime getting worse.*

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(b) *Regrettably these days lots of people don't have jobs.*

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(c) *Sometime soon they will find a vaccine for malaria.*

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(d) *A few years ago the price of property in Japan went down a lot.*

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(e) *You can't always trust the numbers in that report.*

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(f) *Sadly, the high inflation led to poverty, social unrest and so on.*

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(g) *He was over the moon when he won the prize.*

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(h) *I think we should pay students to study.*

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(i) *A few years ago they allowed women to vote.*

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(j) *What were the main causes of the Russian revolution?*

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Adapted from Bailey, S. 2012. Academic Writing. Routledge: London

### **Possible Answers**

***(a) Another thing to think about is the chance of crime getting worse***

Another factor of consideration is the possibility of crime increasing.

***(b) Regrettably these days lots of people don't have jobs.***

Currently the rate of unemployment is at an unprecedented level

***(c) Sometime soon they will find a vaccine for malaria.***

In the near future a vaccine for malaria may be discovered.

***(d) A few years ago the price of property in Japan went down a lot.***

After 2013 Japanese property market in house value fell dramatically.

***(e) You can't always trust the numbers in that report.***

The numbers in that report have been proposed as fundamentally unreliable

***(f) Sadly, the high inflation led to poverty, social unrest and so on.***

The severe inflation led to poverty, social unrest and animosity towards the government. (list 3's)

***(g) He was over the moon when he won the prize.***

The prize gave the participant a considerable amount of pleasure

***(h) I think we should pay students to study.***

It is widely agreed that students should receive grants to study at tertiary level.

***(i) A few years ago they allowed women to vote.***

Women were enfranchised in 1987.

***(j) What were the main causes of the Russian revolution?***

The main causes of the Russian revolution were war and misgovernment.