

**Genre-based Approach to Enhancing Secondary Students' English Writing Ability in Science Subjects**

City University of Hong Kong, Department of English

&

Quality Education Fund

QEF project no. 2017/0884

**Lesson 6: Writing introductions from notes**

**Introduction**

*In this lesson you will practise writing introductions to research reports by re-writing from notes the two introductions that you read last week. The first task will be to put into a logical order notes from one of the introductions ( on waste disposal) and then to re-write part of or the whole of the introduction from the notes.*

*The second task will be to re-write from notes the part of the second introduction (on texting) that reports previous research.*

*Doing these two tasks will be a good preparation for writing the introduction section of your own research report.*

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|  | ***Task 1: Organising and Writing an Introduction*** |

1. Before you begin, see how much you can remember about the report “A Study of Waste Disposal at a Hong Kong University” that you read last week.

* What problems did the report talk about?
* Where was the research carried out?
* What did the researchers try to find out?

Below are some notes that the writer of last week’s research report might have made before beginning to write the introduction. However, they are out of order. What would be the best way of ordering these notes in preparation for writing the introduction? Note that arrows indicate that one thing leads to or is the cause of another thing.

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| **A Study of Waste Disposal at a Hong Kong University**  (**Notes for the introduction)** |
| (note 1)  some types of waste (esp. by build. & chem. industries) = non-biodegradable - may release toxic materials into environment  air pollution in surrounding area |
| (note 2)  average daily quantity of municipal solid waste 2017 = 15,000 tonnes  (Hong Kong Environmental Protection Department 2019) |
| (note 3)  excessive production of waste  landfill sites filling up - full by 2020 then no longer able to accept more waste  (Robson 2017 estimates) |
| (note 4)  Previous scientific reports: mainly collected quantitative data on how much waste generated by different sectors in Hong Kong. |
| (note 5)  In HK disposal of waste = major issue |
| (note 6)  Our report:   1. How big a problem is waste disposal at CityU? 2. What are students' perceptions of problems and ways to tackle? |

1. When you are satisfied that you have arranged the notes in the most logical order, try writing the whole of the introduction looking only at the notes. As you do so, pay careful attention to the language features we examined last week. For example:

* Does each of your sentences have at least one **finite** verb?
* Is each finite verb in the correct tense?
* Do you use the correct verb forms after modal verbs?
* Do you use the best reporting verbs?

1. When you have finished writing the introduction exchange your text with the texts of at least two of your classmates. Notice any differences between your introduction and the introductions written by your classmates. Is there anything in your introduction that you now think you should change? Is there anything in your classmates’ texts that you think they ought to change?
2. Look at the original text of the introduction that your teacher will show you. Notice any differences between your version of text and the original. Is there anything in your introduction that you now think you should change? Remember that the original text is just another version. It is a good model but it is not “the right answer”.

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|  | ***Task 2: More practice in referring to previous research*** |

1. Below is a version of the introduction to the second text you read last week. This first paragraph and the last two paragraphs have been completed but the two other paragraphs (the section referring to previous research) are still in note form. Try writing the incomplete paragraphs from the notes. Pay particular attention to the use of reporting verbs.
2. As before, compare your versions of the paragraphs with those of your classmates and then with the originals, and make any changes you think are necessary.

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| **Texting can wait!**  **Introduction**    As technology has improved, the multifunctional mobile phone has become an essential part of many Hong Kong people’s lives. They use mobile phones to connect with each other by texting, calling and using social media applications. However, although mobile phones are very useful, when people use them, their reaction timesmay be affected. This can lead to dangerous situations.  **(notes for paragraph 2)**  Reed & Robinson 2008: texting increases visual + cognitive load    Richtel 2010: conversation on mobile phone -- increase cognitive load + narrow visual scan  Therefore: using mobile phones - perhaps less able to respond quickly and appropriately to sudden events  **(notes for paragraph 3)**  Several studies: using smartphone when driving can increase chance of accidents  China Gov. Report: in 2014 47.2% of road accidents in China related to use of mobile phones when driving  Pedestrians using mobile phones also at risk  Jehle 2010: users cannot control complex actions e.g. walking when texting on mobile phone  Hatfield & Murphy 2007, Hyman et al 2010: pedestrians using phones - reduced awareness + distracted attention  Richtel 2010 (statistical analysis at Ohio Uni.): from 2006 - 2008 x4 pedestrians visited hospital emergency room due to phone-related accidents than due to other factors  Although many studies such as those cited above have been done on the effects of using mobile phones while driving or walking, little information is available on the effect of using a mobile phone on the reaction time of the user in general. Therefore, research in this area is needed.  The purpose of this report is to explore and analyze the impact of mobile phones on user reaction time and to discover whether texting or calling has the greater impact on reaction time. |