

How to Write a Research Report and Give a Presentation

A. Darwish

Things to Remember When Starting A Presentation

- Start with something to get your audience's attention.
- Tell your audience what your argument will be.
- Tell your audience how you are going to develop that argument.

Presentation Outline

Writing a Research Report

- Getting started and planning
- Sections of a typical report
- Presentation of text, maps, and illustrations
- Referencing

Presenting Your Research

- Strategies for presentation
- Designing visuals for your presentation

Writing a Research Report:

Getting Started

- Your Report Should
 - Report on the research project
 - Use research findings to develop some conclusions
 - Develop an argument about your findings

Writing a Research Report:

Getting Started

- Questions your report should address
 - What was the research problem?
 - Why is this problem important?
 - How does the project fit into the context of other research?
 - How did you investigate the research problem?
 - What are your findings?
 - What do these findings tell you?
 - What do you conclude?

Writing a Research Report:
Getting Started

- **Writing is an iterative process.**
 - Therefore you do not have to start at the beginning!
- **Whatever you do....**

Just start writing!
Writing a Research Report:
Getting Started

- **Additional Tips**
 - The value of reflective free writing
 - Discovering new insights while writing
 - Don't seek perfection
 - Be prepared to junk whole sections

Writing a Research Report:
Getting Started

- **Steps in writing**
 - Free writing
 - Develop an overall argument (Try writing a thesis statement or abstract.)
 - Develop an outline
 - Write
 - Revise, Revise, Revise, Revise
 - Go back and rewrite introduction if necessary

Writing a Research Report:
Getting Started

- **Developing an argument**
 - Link theory with research to justify your conclusions
 - Argument should link sections of your report into a coherent story.

Writing a Research Report:
General Format

- **Front matter**
 - Title Page
 - Acknowledgements page
 - Abstract
 - Table of Contents
 - List of Tables
 - List of Figures

Writing a Research Report: General Format

- **Body of the report**
 - Introduction
 - Literature review
 - Methodology
 - Results
 - Discussion
 - Conclusions

Writing a Research Report: General Format

- **End matter**
 - Appendices
 - Endnotes
 - Reference list
 - Save time and develop your reference list as you write!

Writing a Research Report: Sections of the Report

- **Title**
 - Keep it short
 - Use a subtitle if necessary
 - Interesting or amusing titles are better

Writing a Research Report: Sections of the Report

- **Abstract**
 - A 200-300 word non-technical summary of your research project.
 - Questions to answer:
 - What is the research problem and why is it important?
 - What did you do and why?
 - What did you find?
 - What do your findings mean?

Writing a Research Report: Sections of the Report

- **Introduction**
 - Address the topic in the first sentence
 - Introduce the topic by means of an example to illustrate theoretical points
 - Outline your general argument and your paper

Writing a Research Report: Sections of the Report

- **Literature Review**
 - A discussion of findings from other researchers
 - Critical appraisal of other's theories
 - You should compare and assess other's results.
 - Provides external context for your project
 - Justifies your project

Writing a Research Report: Sections of the Report

- **Methodology**
 - Details method and procedures
 - Discusses the reasons for choosing your methods and procedures

Writing a Research Report: Sections of the Report

- **Contents of a methodology section**
 - Rationale for methodological approach
 - Hypotheses
 - Description of study area
 - Demographic details of study population
 - How the population was selected
 - Description of types of data and sources
 - Description of methods and procedures for obtaining data
 - Description of methods and procedures of data analysis

Writing a Research Report: Sections of the Report

- **Results**
 - Details the main findings
 - Provides a summary explanation of results
 - Accept or reject hypotheses if you have any

Writing a Research Report: Sections of the Report

- **Discussion**
 - Develop a logical argument about what your results mean.
 - Your results provide evidence to illustrate and support your argument.
 - Identify potential errors--What might invalidate your results? How might you improve research design?

Writing a Research Report: Sections of the Report

- **Conclusion**

- A restatement of the research problem
- A summary statement of main findings and their significance.
- Shortcomings of the research
- Agenda for future research

Writing a Research Report: Presentation

- **Presentation of the text**
 - Wordprocessed
 - Double spaced
 - Times Roman or other serif font for easy reading of body text
 - The particular style you use isn't important as long as you...
 - use consistent section headings

Writing a Research Report: Presentation

An Example Section Heading Scheme

Introduction

This is the introduction. Isn't it great? I think it is. Blah blah blah
Do to do de do. Text text this is wonderful text. Blah blah blah
Blah blah blah

Cyber-regional Geography

This paragraph is all about cyber-regional geography. Isn't it a great paragraph. Do Dah, de de. alskf alsk goi ask oig l fhla the the look at this
It great in terms of a paragraph

The Gary Cyber-region This is a third level heading. Doesn't it look great?
Don't you think it looks wonderful

Writing a Research Report: Presentation

- **Tables, Diagrams, Photos, and Maps**
 - Use when relevant and refer to them in the text.
 - Redraw diagrams rather than copying them directly.
 - Place at appropriate points in the text.
 - Select the most appropriate device.
 - List in contents at beginning of the report.

Presenting Your Research

- **Why do you have to do a research presentation in this class?**
 - Experience for graduate school
 - Experience for a future job

Presenting Your Research Approaches

- **Reading your presentation**
 - Can be done well by skilled presenters
 - Usually isn't done well

- Needs to be written the way that you would talk
- 7 pages double spaced = 15 minutes
- **Speaking extemporaneously**
 - Doesn't work if you are nervous and can't think of what to say
 - Generates more audience interest

Presenting Your Research

The Format of an Oral Presentation

- Describes essential aspects of the research
 - Explain the research problem and its importance
 - Explain the research setting (a map is usually necessary!)
 - Explain what you did and why
 - Explain the results
 - Conclude
- You may only be able to present a small portion of your research
- Sometimes you only have time to provide one or two illustrations of your findings
- In professional meetings lasts 15 minutes with 5 minutes for questions/discussion
- Don't be afraid to allow time for discussion!

Presenting Your Research

General Tips

- **Dress nice (note the guys above with ties!)**
Unless you are a radical Marxist then a tie might be too much, but a casual sport coat, jeans, and tennis shoes are appropriate.
 - If in Hawaii nice shorts and an Aloha shirt might work--but make sure your belly button doesn't show.
 - Dress to match the occasion.

Presenting Your Research

General Tips

- **Speak slowly and clearly**
- **Don't fidget**
- **Don't stand still like a statue**
- **Use a podium to hold your notes**
- **Set a stop watch to gauge time**

Presenting Your Research

Designing Presentation Graphics

- Graphics should be visible from far away
- Serif fonts are easier to read than Sans-Serif Fonts
- Make sure your text contrasts with your background
- Make sure your maps and illustrations are of professional quality
- Do not expect people to read stuff off the screen--read it for them
- Do not show large tables of data. Provide a hand out or create a summary table with relevant results highlighted.

Presenting Your Research

Designing Presentation Graphics

- **Do not use too many slides (unlike this presentation)**

- Keep information on slides to a minimum
- If you want your audience to listen to you insert a blank slide
- Use large print
- More than four lines of text are hard to read on a screen (see previous slide)

**Presenting Your Research
Designing Presentation Graphics**

- Don't use yucky backgrounds
- Make sure text contrasts with background
- Tacky clip art stinks
- *Use an easy to read and consistent font.*

Don't make spelling mistakes

**Presenting Your Research
Designing Presentation Graphics**

- Maps are nice

**Presenting Your Research
Designing Presentation Graphics**

- In a presentation you can use photos that might not have made it into your written report.

**Presenting Your Research
Designing Presentation Graphics**

- Use the Master Slide in Power Point to get a consistent style

The End

- End with a blank slide so that the Power point screen isn't the last thing people see
- Don't start packing up, you've got questions to answer
- Most people are afraid of questions, but you know you've done a good presentation if you get good questions!

The End