

# WRITING INTRODUCTIONS FOR ACADEMIC PAPERS

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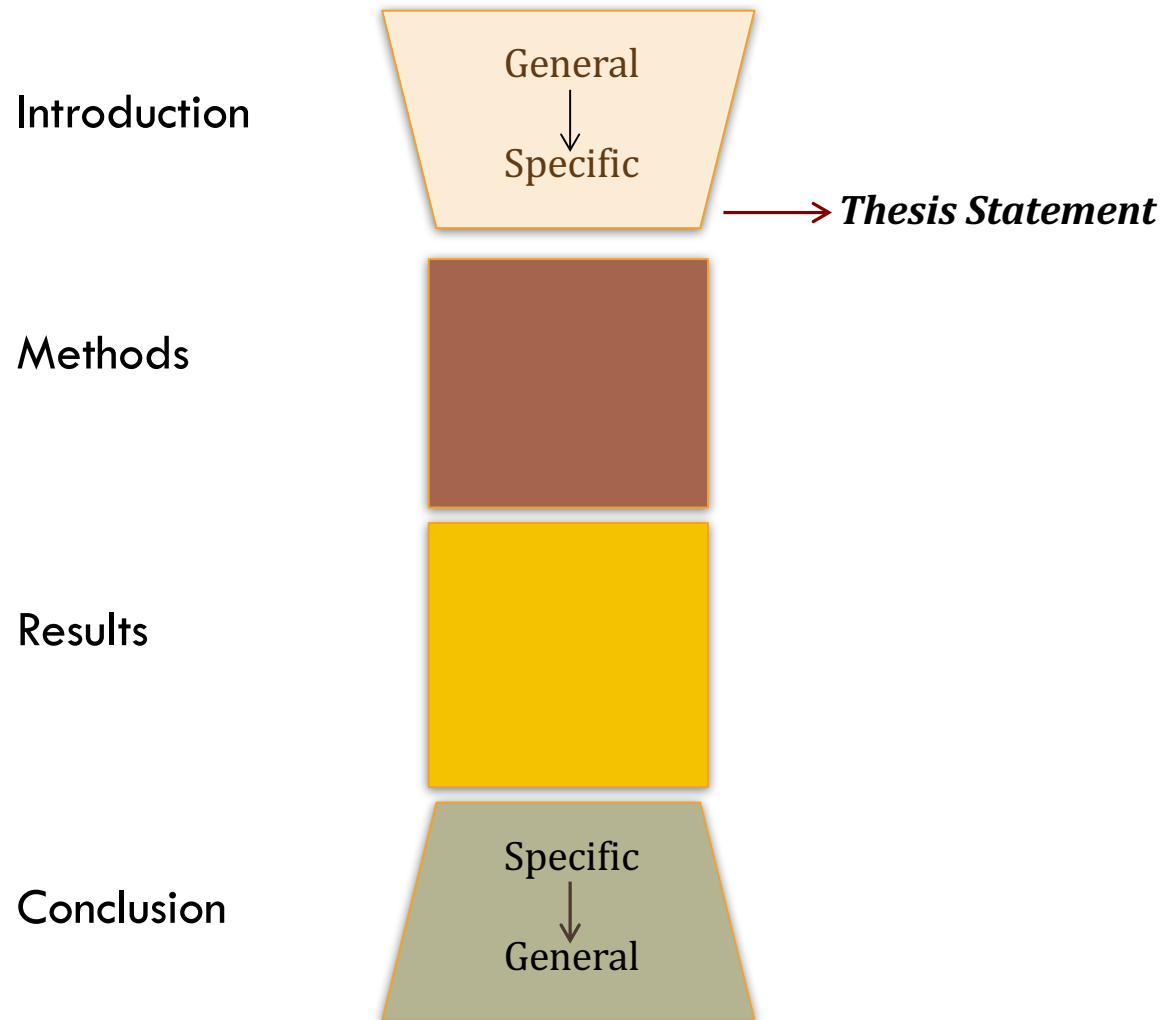
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# GOALS OF THIS WORKSHOP

Define and identify  
elements or  
rhetorical moves  
found commonly in  
introductions

Understand how  
each move functions  
in an academic  
introduction

# SHAPE OF AN ACADEMIC ESSAY



Adapted from Swales & Feak, *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*

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## INTRODUCTIONS: PER APA

According to APA, introductions for research papers should include:

- Review of relevant literature
- Purpose of the study
- Theoretical implications
- Definitions of variables
- Statement of hypotheses and their rationales

\*\*Individual assignments in the School of Communication might have different requirements. Always check with your professor and the assignment guide/prompt for what you need to include.

# SAMPLE ARTICLE INTRODUCTION

## **Who Says We Are Bad People? The Impact of Criticism Source and Attributional Content on Responses to Group-Based Criticism**

Rabinovich, A., and Morton, T.A. (2010)  
*Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36,  
524-26.

- Sentences 1-2
- Sentences 3-13
- Sentences 14-15
- Sentence 16
- Sentence 17

How would you evaluate the flow of information? Does the organization seem familiar to you? Does it resemble the Introductions in your field in any way?

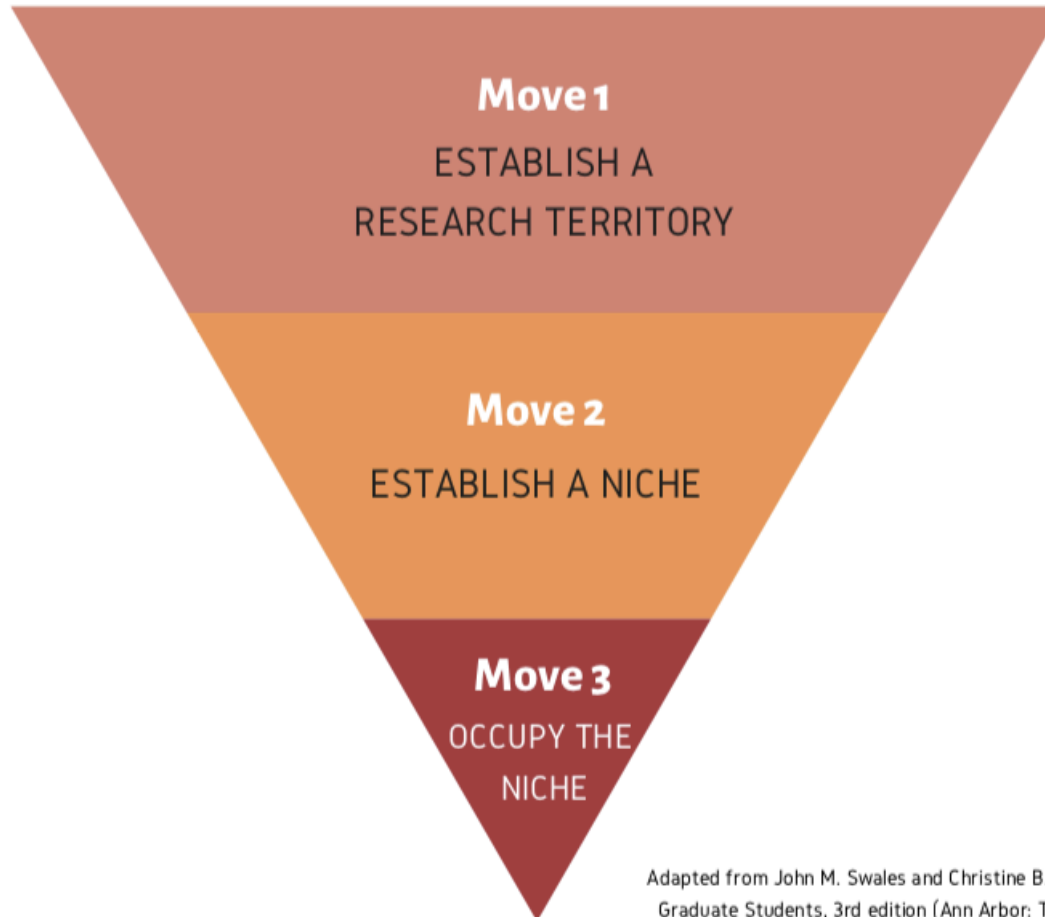
# CARS MODEL

## CREATING A RESEARCH SPACE

- Rhetorical pattern found most commonly in introductions for academic essays, particularly research papers.
- It has 3 rhetorical “moves”
  - Move 1: Establishing the research territory
  - Move 2: Establishing the niche (or gap)
  - Move 3: Occupying the niche (or gap)

# Creating A Research Space [CARS] Model

FOR ACADEMIC INTRODUCTIONS



Adapted from John M. Swales and Christine B. Feak (2012), *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*, 3rd edition (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press).

# MOVE 1: ESTABLISHING THE RESEARCH TERRITORY

## Complete Move 1:

- a. By showing that the general research area is important, central, interesting, problematic, or relevant in some way (*this is what we call CENTRALITY or FOCUS*)\*\*
- b. By introducing and reviewing items of previous research in the area (required)

\*\*Some research papers, particularly those that deal with “real world problems” might not require Move 1 a. It is always best to check published articles in credible journals in your specific field to see how introductions are crafted.



# MOVE 1: EXAMPLE

[1] Criticism is an important tool for stimulating change within groups. [2] Criticism provides objective information about the behavior of one's group, and—provided that criticism is taken on board—it has the potential to initiate reform of sub-optimal behavior and practices. [3] However, previous research has noted that criticism is often met with defensiveness and rejection, meaning that criticism is more often a “missed opportunity” for creating positive change (see Hornsey, 2005). [4] This is because criticism threatens the group's positive self-image and may undermine collective self-esteem. [5] Other research, however, suggests that threat to the public image of one's group can elicit actions intended to reform the group rather than simply defend its current practices (e.g., Iyer, Schmader, & Lickel, 2007). [6] Thus, it seems that group-directed criticism might sometimes provoke negative reactions but that at other times it might stimulate positive change. [7] From both theoretical and practical points of view, it is important to understand the factors that determine which of these two responses occurs in response to group-directed criticism.

[8] One key factor that determines responsiveness to criticism is the identity of the critic. [9] Research on the intergroup sensitivity effect shows that ingroup critics are generally received more positively than outgroup critics—even when the content of their criticism is identical (Hornsey, Oppes, & Svensson, 2002). [10] The reason behind this effect is that ingroup critics are perceived to have different motivations than outgroup critics (Hornsey & Imani, 2004). [11] Ingroup critics are attributed with constructive motives (i.e., genuine desires to improve the group), facilitating acceptance of their message. [12] Outgroup critics are instead attributed with destructive motives (i.e., attempting to demoralize the group or struggling for inter-group supremacy), leading to resistance and rejection. [13] Thus, responses to criticism are said to be driven not by what people say but by why they are perceived to be saying it.

# MOVE 1: EXAMPLE

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However, **previous research has noted that** criticism is often met with defensiveness and rejection, meaning that criticism is more often a “missed opportunity” for creating positive change (see **Hornsey, 2005**). [4] This is because criticism threatens the group's positive self-image and may undermine collect self-esteem. [5] **Other research, however, suggests that** threat to the public image of one's group can elicit actions intended to reform the group rather than simply defend its current practices (e.g., **Iyer, Schmader, & Lickel, 2007**). [6] Thus, it seems that group-directed criticism might sometimes provoke negative reactions but that at other times it might stimulate positive change. [7] From both theoretical and practical points of view, it is important to understand the factors that determine which of these two responses occurs in response to group-directed criticism.

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MOVE 2:  
ESTABLISHING  
THE NICHE (OR  
GAP)

Complete Move 2:

- By indicating a gap in the previous research or by extending previous knowledge in some way (**required**)

## MOVE 2: EXAMPLE

[14] In most situations, however, this process of attribution is likely to go in both directions; just as targets make attributions about their critics' motives, critics typically make attributions about the causes of the targets' behavior. [15] These attributions may be explicitly communicated, or they may be merely implied by the criticism. [16] Although previous research has examined the attributions that targets make about their critics, research has not yet investigated the attributions that critics make about and communicate to their targets.

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# MOVE 3: OCCUPYING THE NICHE (OR GAP)

## Complete Move 3

- a. By outlining purposes or stating the nature of the present research **(required)**
- b. By listing research questions or hypothesis (*probable in some fields, but rare in others*)
- c. By announcing principal findings (*probable in some fields, but rare in others*)
- d. By stating the value of the present research (*probable in some fields, but rare in others*)
- e. By indicating the structure of the research paper (*probable in some fields, but rare in others*)

## MOVE 3: EXAMPLE

[17] With this in mind, **the primary aim of the present research** was to explore how the attributional content of criticism might further moderate responsiveness to group-directed criticism.

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**What's missing? What could the writer do to improve the use of MOVE 3?**





# CARS MODEL HANDOUT

**QUESTIONS?**

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# PRACTICE IDENTIFYING CARS (SWALES & FEAK HANDOUT)

## Move 1: Establishing the research territory

- By showing that the general research area is important, central, problematic, or relevant in some way (*this is what we call CENTRALITY or FOCUS*)\*\*
- By introducing and reviewing items of previous research in the area (required)

## Move 2: Establishing the niche (or gap) (required)

- By indicating a gap in the previous research or
- by extending previous knowledge in some way

## Move 3: Occupying the niche (or gap)

- By outlining purposes or stating the nature of the present research (**required**)
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# SAMPLE WITH CARS MODEL

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Pay attention to:

Transitions

Signal phrases

# SPECIFIC STRATEGIES FOR MOVE 1

Move 1 a (establish centrality): fixed phrases that recur

- ... has been extensively studied...
- ... there has been growing interest in ...
- Recent studies have focused on ...
- ... has become a major issue...
- ... remains a serious problem ...
- ... there has been increasing concern ...
- ... has been investigated by many researchers.
- ... has become an important aspect of ...

**Can you think of one or two sentences on your own to use?**

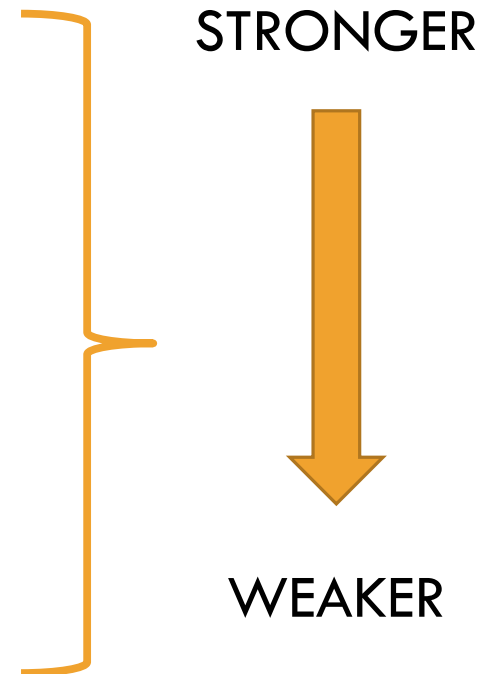
# SPECIFIC STRATEGIES FOR MOVE 2 (HANDOUT)

Move 2 establishes the motivation for the study. It can also function as a *mini-critique*.

- “*Apart from a chapter in Foster (1997), this series has been little discussed by critics or art historians. For example, these pictures were ignored by Johns in her ...*”
- “*The widespread deterioration and recent collapses of highway bridges ... have highlighted the importance of developing effective bridge inspection and maintenance strategies.*”
- “*Little is, however, known about participants’ views of university-community collaboration.*”

# OPTIONS FOR ESTABLISHING A NICHE

- A. Counter-claiming (something is wrong)
- B. Indicating a gap (something is missing)
- C. Raising a question or making an inference (something is unclear)
- D. Continuing a tradition (adding something)



# WHICH MOVE 2 STRATEGY IS EACH STATEMENT USING?

1. These findings suggest that the number of co-authors might affect the self-citation rate.
2. However, in all three cases, the methodologies used for analyzing self-citations are flawed.
3. One discipline that has been neglected in self-citation studies is history.
4. Studies so far lead to a question that has yet no clear answer: Do self-citations pay?
5. There is obviously value in extending these studies to cover more disciplines.
6. That said, little is known about how many times individual authors cite their earlier publications

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# SPECIFIC STRATEGIES FOR MOVE 3

Move 3A is **obligatory (outline the purpose or state the nature of the present research)**. There are 2 main variants:

- **PURPOSIVE (P)**: The author or authors indicate their main purpose or purposes
  - “The *aim* of the present paper is *to give...*”
- **DESCRIPTIVE (D)**: The author or authors describe the main feature of their research
  - “This paper *reports on the results obtained...*”

## Use page 7 of the handout to practice identifying the CARS model. What move 2 strategy is the writer using?

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# THE CARS MODEL IS SCALABLE!

You can use the CARS Model as a guideline in writing introductions in different contexts.

- Length and position of each “move” can vary depending on audience/reader knowledge & expectations, paper length requirements, and other factors.
- BUT strong introductions will typically **give the background, give a reasonable, unique argument about the topic, and why the research/topic/argument matters** (Move 1a, Move 2, and Move 3a and 3d).

# CARS MODEL AT WORK

## Online (news) article or blog:

- Journalistic style of “inverted pyramid”
  - Main point & significance (5Ws and H) (**similar to Move 3**)
  - Important, relevant details (**Move 1a and 1b**)
  - Background info (**Move 2**)

## Business Plan

- Executive Summary or Introductions
  - Identify organization (**Move 1a**)
  - Objectives and/or Need (**Move 3a; Move 2**)
  - Focus (**Move 3c**)
  - Preview of topics covered (**Move 3e**)

# CARS MODEL AT WORK

## Press Release\*:

- Journalistic style of “inverted pyramid”
  - Main point & significance (5Ws and H) (**similar to Move 3**)
  - Important, relevant details (**Move 1a and 1b**)
  - Background info (**Move 2**)

## Presentations

- Introductory slide/speech
  - Identify subject and brief context (**Move 1a and 1b**)
  - Why is this relevant to audience today? (**Move 2; Move 3c, 3d**)
  - Preview or brief outline of presentation (**Move 3e**)

# REFERENCES & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Swales and Feak. (2012). *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan.

Labaree, R.V. (2018). "Organizing Your Social Sciences Research Paper." USC Library Writing Guide.

<http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide>

# INTRODUCTION JUMBLE

[K] America's population is growing older. [D] According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, it is anticipated that if this trend in growth continues, by the year 2030 there will be approximately 70 million Americans aged 65 and over. [G] The growing size of America's population of seniors has drawn attention to their economic and social well-being. [B] Several studies have examined issues related to the present and future provision and quality of community-based services for the elderly (Kelly, Knox, & Gekoski, 1998; Buys & Rushworth, 1997; Damron-Rodriguez, Wallace, & Kington, 1994; Krout, 1994; Kuehne, 1992; Benjamin, 1988; Soldo & Agree, 1988; and Mahoney, 1978).

[F] Furthermore, governments, foundations, non-profit organizations, and other stakeholders continue to work on how to provide cost-effective community-based services to members of the society including the elderly. [I] One approach has been an emphasis on community collaborations to address the planning and delivery of such services. [C] Funding agencies (e.g., US Department of Housing and Urban Development HUD) have encouraged university-community collaborations. [H] An example is HUD's Community Outreach Partnerships Centers initiative, which involves university faculty, staff, students, and community residents and agencies/groups as partners in the development and implementation of research /community programs. [J] Little is, however, known about participants' views of university-community collaborations.

[A] Human service agency workers are major participants of university-community collaborations; hence, the purpose of this study was to investigate their views of community-based services to the elderly in northwest Ohio. [E] In particular, the study sought to provide an avenue for them to communicate their understanding of university-community agency collaborations, and identify how their agencies can work collaboratively with a university.

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