How are you currently feeling?

A

(Ioachim, 2013)

B

(Becker, 2014)

C

(J, 2018)

D

(Nowicki, 2015)

Use the annotation tool to circle one of the letters above, or type a letter into the chat

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Identifying and Applying Discipline-Specific Writing Conventions

September 24, 2023

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Download slides:

https://www.kausharmahetaji.com/uploads/disciplinespecificwritingiskills2023.pdf

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This workshop will cover the following learning objectives:

1 Examine strategies for identifying discipline-specific writing conventions

2 Compare writing conventions in the natural and applied sciences, social sciences, and humanities

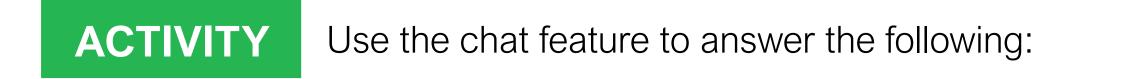**3** Identify writing expectations shared by disciplines

4 Select a technical piece of writing, reformulating the text for an argumentative essay

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Agenda

01 Understanding Significance

02 Comparing Disciplines

03 Identifying Shared Practices

04 Recognizing Differences

05 Applying Differences

06 Finding More Support

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ACTIVITY Use the chat feature to answer the following:

What discipline(s) are you in?

Understanding Significance

Comparing Disciplines

Identifying Shared Practices

Recognizing Differences

Applying Differences

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ACTIVITY Use the chat feature to answer the following:

In what broader field(s) can you find the discipline(s)?
Example: Humanities, social sciences, applied sciences

Understanding Significance

Comparing Disciplines

Identifying Shared Practices

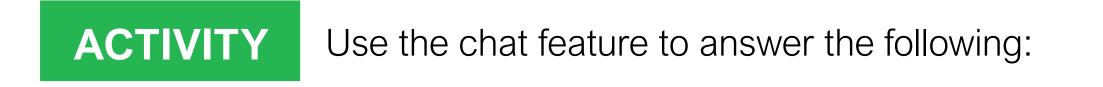Recognizing Differences

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Disciplines are not neatly divided into set categories—they can have overlapping expectations which can also evolve over time

"Disciplines are artificial constructs; they are not naturally occurring intellectual divisions that might refer to divisions of the mind. They are socially constructed perspectives constituting a particular slice of reality and as such they can always be transformed, relocated or destroyed."

Bryan S. Turner (2006, 184–85)

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Being in a discipline means being part of a 'discourse community' or 'community of practice'

Discourse communities…

- Have shared interests
- Have shared methods of communication
- Provide members with feedback
- Have shared rules and guidelines
- Use specialized vocabularies

(Swales 1988, 212–13)

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ACTIVITY   Use the chat feature to answer the following:

**How do you know which discipline
or 'community of practice' you are in?**

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Even with multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary work, disciplines have implicitly and explicitly defined their boundaries and norms

The validity of your submission's contribution must be adequately supported by appropriate arguments, analyses, evaluations, or data as best fit the contribution type. Otherwise readers will find it hard to judge whether they can confidently take up your ideas, and thus gain the benefits you are claiming to offer. Reviewers are therefore asked to **assess the validity of the results you are presenting**.

[Instructions for Computer–Human Interaction (CHI) Conference 2024](#)

- Reviewers are also asked to provide qualitative information on what they liked about, and what they believe could improve, the submission.
- Reviewers are asked to provide a ranking of their own familiarity with the topic under review on a scale of 1-10.

[Instructions for Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR) 2023 Conference](#)

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Writing within disciplinary communities is common—and in most cases—expected

- Disciplines use writing in ways that align with how they gain knowledge and create understanding (example: lived experiences and first-person accounts)

- When writing deviates from the norms and rules of the discipline, it may not be given the same level of authority and credibility

- Following discipline-specific writing conventions can help build existing disciplinary knowledge

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Disciplines approach writing differently

Structure
- Sentences
- Paragraphs

Language
- Word Choice
- Framing

Format
- Citation Style
- Document Format

Audience

Tone
- Writing Style

Objective(s)
- Scope
- Positionality
- Gaps Addressed

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In breakout rooms determine 'norms' in the social sciences. Remember these disciplinary boundaries are fluid

Humanities	Social Sciences	STEM
• Emphasis on gathering knowledge from immersion in existing literature • Publications range in objective • Publications vary in length and have varying styles • Writing is not always direct	**?**	• Emphasis on process and method • Publications describe experiments • Structure typically set (usually introduction, background, methods, discussion, and findings) • Publications tend to be short and direct • Writing is direct

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All disciplines tend to engage in what is called 'academic writing'

Though there are different genres of academic writing and different disciplinary 'genres,' academic writing across disciplines tends to…

- Interpret material, information, or data
- Use more formal language (exceptions exist)
- Address a knowledge gap
- Make references to current work

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Various resources exist to determine differences across disciplines

Subject-Specific Databases
- [Subjects A–Z](#) (University of Toronto)
- [Library Website for Discipline](#) (University of Toronto)
- [Research Guides](#) (University of Toronto)

Discipline-Specific Journals and Conferences
- [Scimago: Scientific Journal Rankings](#)
- [Journal Search](#) (University of Toronto)
- Journal Submission Guidelines
- Conference Submission Guidelines

Professional Associations

Seminal Work or Landmark Studies

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BREAK TIME

ACTIVITY **Use genre analysis to evaluate either article below for discipline-specific writing conventions:**

Macey, Joseph, and Juho Hamari. 2022. "Gamblification: A Definition." *New Media & Society*, March, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448221083903.

Suh, Bongwon, Ed H. Chi, Aniket Kittur, and Bryan A. Pendleton. 2008. "Lifting the Veil: Improving Accountability and Social Transparency in Wikipedia with Wikidashboard." In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 1037–40. CHI '08. New York, NY, USA: Association for Computing Machinery. https://doi.org/10.1145/1357054.1357214.

Use the questions in this [Questions for Genre Analysis](#) guide from Vicki R. Kennell (2020) from the OWL Purdue Lab to determine discipline-specific writing conventions

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ACTIVITY **Continue working in your breakout groups**

Rewrite a section of your chosen article from the perspective of a different discipline, or **explain** how you would change the perspective of the piece to align with a different discipline

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Additional Resources

- [Composition and Critical Thinking I—Genre Analysis](#) (Baker College)
- [Writing is Discipline Specific](#) (Purdue University)
- [Discipline-Specific Writing: Theory into Practice](#) (Routledge 2017)
- [Disciplinary Writing Guides](#) (Harvard University)
- [Writing in the Disciplines/Writing for Specific Purposes](#) (Amhert College)

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Additional Support

Writing Support

Writing Tutors at the Learning Hub (Book appointment through Quercus)

- Receive feedback on ongoing assignments and writing projects
- Develop writing skills

[Graduate Centre for Academic Communication (GCAC)](#)

- Sign up for writing workshops (asynchronous and synchronous)
- Book an appointment

Reference Support—University of Toronto Libraries

[Ask Chat](#)

- Speak to a librarian
- Immediate support via instant messenger

Drop-in Hours (Check Quercus)

- Speak to a librarian
- Immediate support over virtual platform

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Thank you!
Questions?

https://forms.office.com/r/zrgVbrSxvN

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Swales, John. 1988. "Discourse Communities, Genres and English as an International Language." *World Englishes* 7 (2): 211–20. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.1988.tb00232.x.

Turner, Bryan S. 2006. "Discipline." *Theory, Culture & Society* 23 (2–3): 183–86. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276406062698.

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