



PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

# The Writing Center Presents:

## Academic Language



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# What is Academic Language?

- Academic Language is the language used in text books, tests, essays and publications.
- Academic Language is the language expected of all students in essays to give their papers a professional tone.
- A paper without academic language or a professional tone can easily have its grade diminished.

# What Academic Language is NOT

- Academic language is not simply using big words to sound more intelligent.
  - Using a thesaurus to enhance your vocabulary can backfire, especially if you use certain words improperly.
- It does not appeal to emotion over the logical appeal of your argument.
- It does not contain personal reference or bias.

# Tone

- The tone of your essay should be professional and intelligent.
- To avoid a casual tone, stay away from using slang terminology.
- An extremely biased view point with use of heavily opinionated statements may detract from your argument.

# “Professional Distance”

- Professional Distance is the practice of keeping your essay detached and in third person. You should not address yourself or your reader directly.
- This detachment helps maintain a logical standpoint and helps avoid an emotional appeal to the reader.
- Avoid using personal pronouns such as: “I,” “you,” “we,” and the like.
  - In certain assignments such as personal statements, it is ok to use personal pronouns.

# Things to Avoid

Avoid using contractions:

- Don't, Can't, they'll, et al.

Avoid abbreviations:

Certain abbreviations like U.S.A and mph are acceptable.

- Etc, Monthly Abbreviations, w/o, min, ASAP, et al.

Symbols:

- @ & % \$

“Net Language”

- OMG, LOL

# Colloquialism/Slang

Colloquial language comes off as unprofessional and may not be understood by most readers.

Idiomatic expressions like “Cool” or “Hit-or-miss” or “red herring” should also be avoided.

Two-word verbs like “looking into” or “take off” should also be avoided.

Verbs with broad meanings like “get” should be avoided.

# Helping Your Paper Flow

- You must help your reader understand your paper by being specific.
  - Define key terms.
  - Define the purpose of your work/paper.
  - Link your ideas/paragraphs together when transitioning.
  - Have evidence that backs up every point you make

# Ending Your Paper

Every paper needs to end as strongly as it began. A weak ending can completely derail a great essay.

An ending must:

- Reiterate your thesis.
- Logically tie all your argument points together.
- End on a note to stimulate the reader about your topic.

# The Writing Center Contact Info

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