

The background of the slide is a photograph of a wooden desk. On the desk, there are several books stacked. A pair of black-rimmed glasses is resting on one of the books. A red pen is also visible, lying on the books. The image is slightly blurred, creating a soft, academic atmosphere.

Academic Language

For Essays

Why Use Academic Language?

Academic language is the right kind of language to use in an essay. It is formal and professional and makes your essay sound impressive and polished – as though you know what you're talking about!

NOTE: this type of language is NOT for all situations!

- Essay ✓
- Research paper ✓
- Email to friend ✗
- Short story ✗



Use full words, not contractions



Wrong: “**It’s** obvious culture **can’t** be…”

Right: “**It is** obvious that culture **cannot** be…”

Wrong: “**That’s** why loyalty & duty **don’t**…”

Right: “**That is** why loyalty and duty **do not**…”

Wrong: “**E.g.** Chi is seen as powerful, mysterious **etc.**”

Right: “**For example**, Chi is seen as powerful, mysterious, **and so on**.”

Use words, not numerals (under 100)

Wrong: “This is the **1st** example…”

Right: “This is the **first** example…”

Wrong: “Mulan has **2** siblings…”

Right: “Mulan has **two** siblings…”

Right: “There were around **200** soldiers…”





No slang or casual words

Wherever possible choose bigger and more formal words than you'd normally use, (as long as you still know what they mean). Don't use multiple exclamation points.

Wrong: "Mulan's **dad rushed** in and **grabbed** his **knife!!!**"

Right: "Mulan's **father hastened** in and **seized** his **sword**."

Wrong: "There are **lots** of reasons why **things changed**..."

Right: "There are **many** reasons why **conditions varied**..."

Use sophisticated transition words



Wrong: and, but, so

Right: in addition, however, consequently

Nominalise (turn verbs into nouns)

Wrong: Mulan **was** brave and she **protected** the family.

Right: Mulan's **bravery** ensured the **protection** of the family.

Wrong: Mushu **failed** to sense danger and this **caused**...

Right: Mushu's **failure** to sense danger was the **cause** of...



Use 3rd person POV

Use the third person point of view (e.g. 'he, she, they').

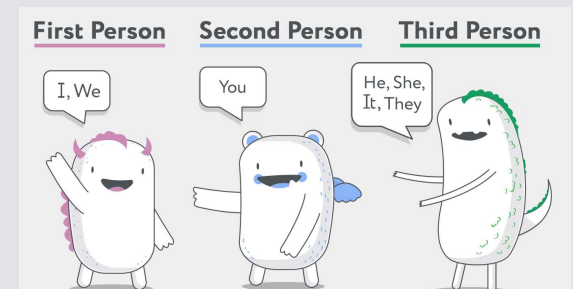
Avoid the first or second person (e.g. 'I, me, you, we, us').

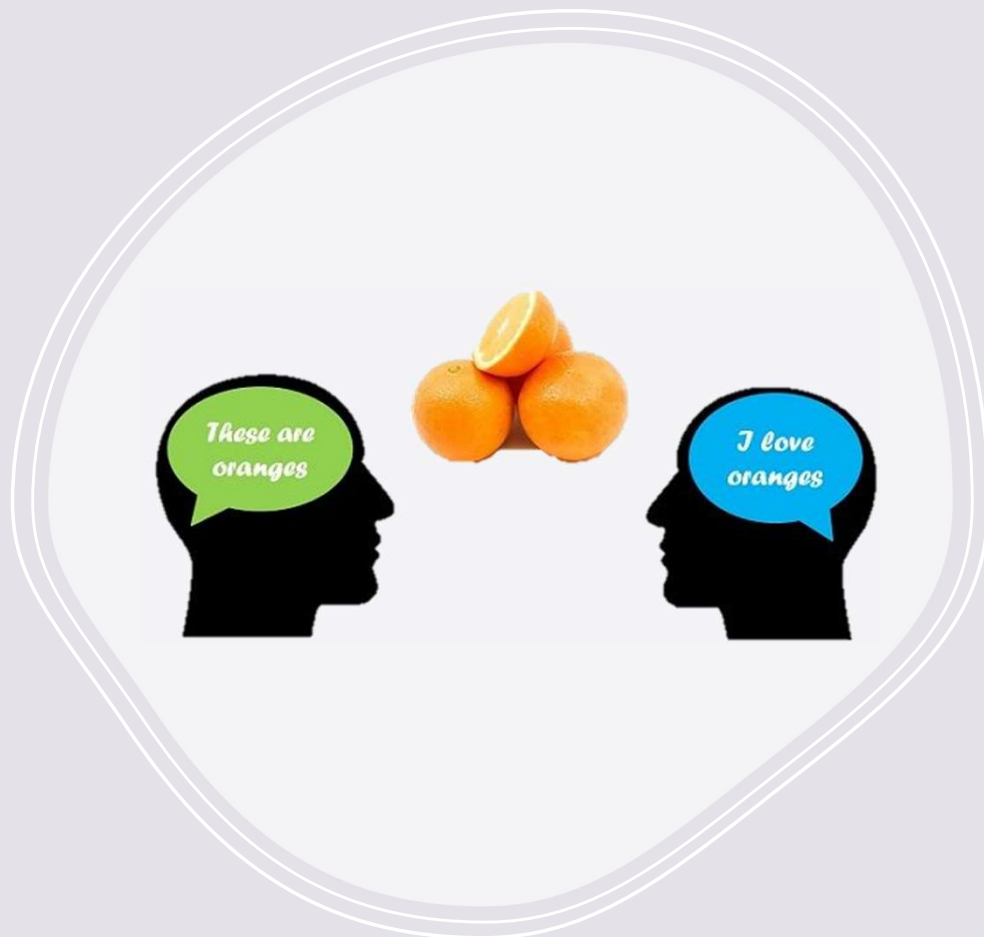
Wrong: I think you can see from this...

Right: From this it can be seen...

Wrong: This makes us think...

Right: This makes the viewer/the audience think...





Be unbiased and impersonal

Try and be objective. State facts, not opinions.

Wrong: I think this point stinks, because...

Right: This point may not be accurate, because...

Wrong: In my opinion this is the only good example...

Right: This example is worth considering...

Be specific

Avoid vague generalisations - give an actual example.

Wrong: We can learn **something** from this.

Right: **What** can be learned from this is **(x, y)**.

Wrong: There are **many** other examples...

Right: Another example is **(x, y)**.





Terminology

Use **film, adaption, version, audience, viewer** etc. Put the title of the film in italics and the date it was released in brackets.

Wrong:

In the **old one**, the father...

In the **new movie**, she is...

Right:

In ***Mulan* (1998)**, the father...

In the **2020 adaption** of the legend of *Mulan*...

In the cartoon **version of the film**, the characters...