Using Academic Language

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

NOTE: these rules are for certain situations only. You would NOT use this kind of language for a friendly email or a fictional story, for example.

1. **Use full words instead of contractions.**

   Instead of…   "**It's** obvious courage **can't** be…"
   "**That's** why loyalty **&** duty **don't**…"
   "**E.g.** Nag is labelled bad, wicked, evil, **etc.**"

   Say…   "**It is** obvious that courage **cannot** be…",
   "**That is** why loyalty **and** duty **do not**…"
   "**For example**, Nag is labelled bad, wicked, evil, **and so on**."

2. **Use words, not numerals for numbers.**

   Instead of…   "This is the **1st** example…"
   "Rikki crushed **16** eggs…"

   Say…   "This is the **first** example…"
   "Rikki crushed **sixteen** eggs…"

3. **Don't use slang or casual language.** Choose bigger and more formal words than you'd normally use (AS LONG AS you still know what they mean). Never use multiple exclamation points.

   Instead of…   "Teddy's **dad** then **rushed** in and **grabbed** his **blunderbuss!!!!!!**"
   "There are **lots of** reasons why **things changed**…"

   Say…   "Teddy's **father** then **hastened** in and **seized** his **rifle**."
   "There are **many** reasons why **conditions varied**…"

4. **Use sophisticated transition words.**

   Instead of…   and, but, so

   Say…   in addition, however, consequently

5. **Nominalise (turn verbs into nouns).**

   Instead of…   Rikki Tikki **was brave** and he **protected** the family…
   Darzee **failed** to sense danger which **caused**…

   Say…   Rikki Tikki's **bravery** ensured the **protection** of the family…
   Darzee's **failure** to sense danger was the **cause** of…

6. **Use the 3rd person point of view ('he, she, they'). Avoid 1st or 2nd person ('I, me, you, we, us').**

Instead of….   "**I** think **you** can see from this…"
                            "This makes **us** think…"

Say…   "From this it **can be seen**…"
                            "This makes **the reader** think…"

7. **Be objective (unbiased) and impersonal. State facts, not opinions.**

Instead of…   **I think** this point **stinks**, because…
                            In my opinion this is a **wonderful** example…

Say…   This point **may not be accurate**, because…
                            This example is **worth considering**…

8. **Avoid 'filler phrases' like the ones below. You don't need to tell the audience what you are about to say, or what you have just said. Say it once and move on.**

Avoid…   In this essay **I will**…
                            As **I have** already discussed in this essay…
                            In a moment **I am going** to discuss…
                            The next thing **I will** go on to explain is…
                            We have just analysed in this essay…

9. **Be specific. Avoid vague generalisations.**

Instead of…   We can learn **something** from this….
                            There are **many** other examples…
                            Several **things** can be seen…

Say…   **What** can be learned from this is (**x, y**)…
                            Another example is when Rikki says (**x, y**)….
                            One reason is that (**x, y**)…