

Genre Review of an Academic Journal Article

APSU Writing Center Handout

A **genre review** examines the conventions, structure, and rhetorical strategies of a particular type of writing. This handout provides an overview of the IMRAD genre, explaining its structure, conventions, and rhetorical moves for academic writing.

What is an IMRAD Report?

An IMRAD Report is the standard format for scientific and social science research articles. It organizes research into Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion sections. Its purpose is to make articles easier to read and evaluate.

Abstract

The abstract is a concise summary of the entire article, typically 150–300 words, that highlights the study's purpose, methods, main findings, and implications. Although it appears at the beginning of the paper, it is best written after completing the full report. A well-written abstract provides a brief overview, including a sentence or two on the study's purpose, a sentence on methods, a few sentences summarizing main findings, and a final sentence discussing implications. The abstract is **not** the introduction and should include information on the **entire** paper.

Introduction

The introduction explains why the article's research matters. The focus is to:

- Present the problem or situation
- Review current research in the field.
- Identify a **gap or limitation**.
- Show how the study addresses that gap.

Methods

The methods section explains how the research was conducted. It is often written in **past tense**, does not include the use of “I”, and allows other researchers to replicate the study.

Results

The results present the findings of the study without interpretation. This section is also written in the **past tense** and focuses on **objective reporting** of outcomes rather than analysis.

Reporting on Results

- Refer to your table or figure and state the main trend
 - Table 3 shows that Spam Filter A correctly filtered more junk emails than Filter B
- Support the trend with data
 - Filter A correctly filtered.... The average difference is....
- (If needed) Note any additional, secondary trends and support them with data
 - In addition.... Figure 1 also shows....
- (If needed) Note any exceptions to your main trends or unexpected outcomes.
 - However, ...

Interpreting and Evaluating Findings

- (If needed) Provide an explanation
 - A feasible explanation is.... This trend can be explained by....
- (If needed) Compare to another research
 - X is consistent with X's finding... In contrast, Y found....
- (If needed) Evaluate whether the findings support or contradict a hypothesis
 - State the bottom line: what does the data mean?
 - These findings overall suggest.... These data indicate....

Discussion & Suggestions

The discussion interprets the findings by explaining their significance and connecting them to existing literature. It addresses limitations of the study and suggests directions for future research.

Preparing for Writing an IMRAD Abstract

To prepare for writing IMRAD abstracts, find several articles from journals in your discipline and use the following questions to analyze them:

- How many paragraphs do the abstracts have, and how many words do they contain?
- Which moves are present in these abstracts, and which are absent?
- Do the authors include citations? If so, in which moves and for what purposes?
- Which verb tenses are used in each move?
- Do the authors include numbers or statistics? If so, in which moves?
- How many keywords are included at the end of the abstract, and how do you think the authors decided which ones to include?

References

George Mason University Writing Center. (2020, September 21). *Abstracts in scientific research papers (IMRaD)*. <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/writing-resources/imrad/abstracts-in-scientific-research-papers-imrad>

George Mason University Writing Center. (n.d.). *Writing an IMRaD report*. <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/writing-resources/imrad/writing-an-imrad-report>