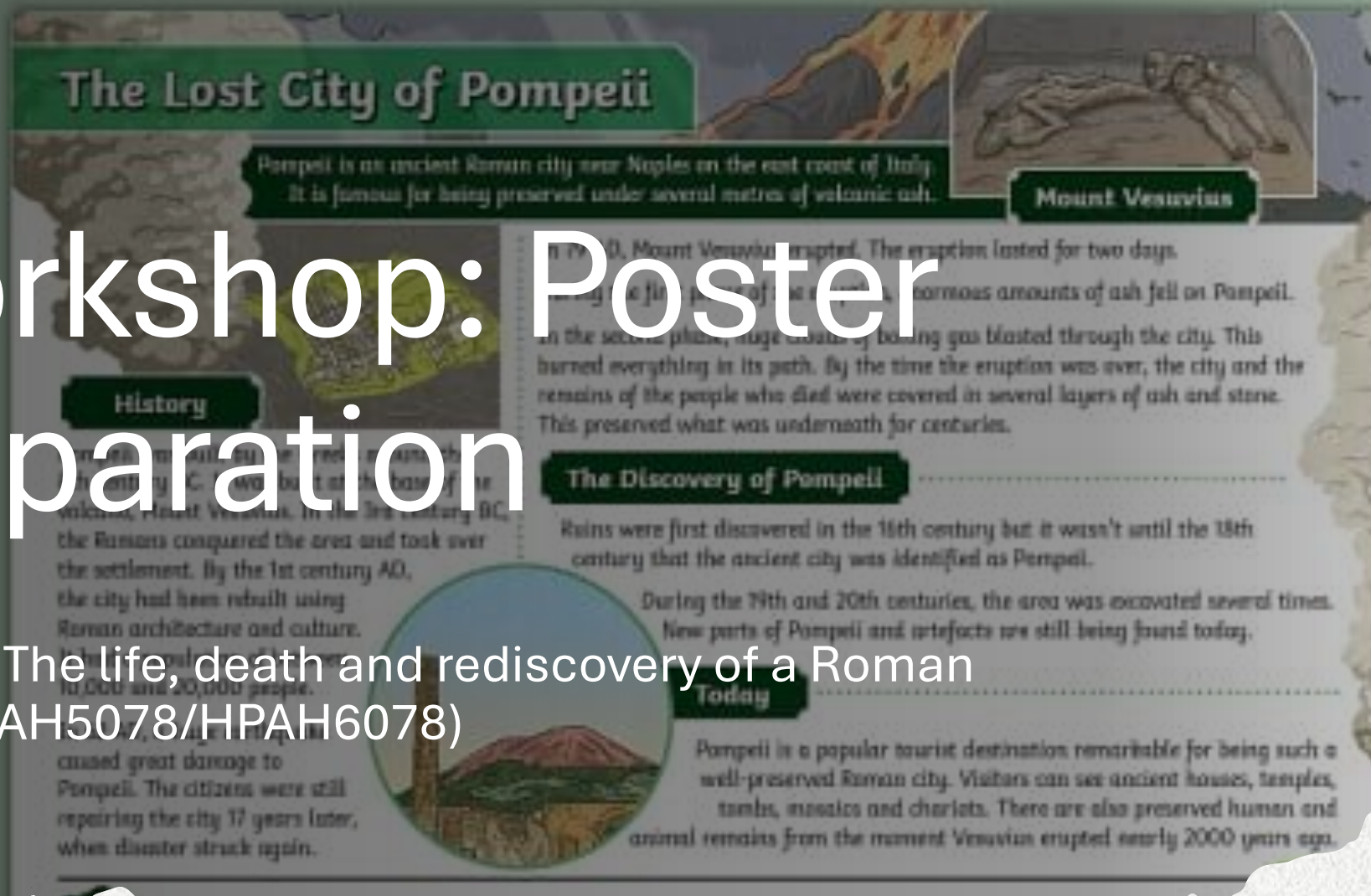


# Workshop: Poster preparation

Pompeii: The life, death and rediscovery of a Roman town (HPAH5078/HPAH6078)



## The poster presentation (element 2)

- Worth 30% at L5, 24% at L6.
- Building on element 1 – a critical overview of your chosen building site.
- 10 minutes followed by questions.
  - Timing is assessed.
- Date of presentation: 12/3/24.

## A Spinelli, University of Southern California, and Aimée Scorziello, Pompeii Archaeological Research Project: Porta Stabia

From 2005 to the present, the Pompeii Archaeological Research Project: Porta Stabia (PARP-PS), led by the University of Cincinnati, has investigated a middle-class neighborhood, comprised of insulae 1.1-10 and VIII.7.1-15, with their tabernae, hospitals, and houses, just inside the Stabian Gate and the theater district. The first investigations of these two insulae began in the late 19th century under the direction of Giuseppe Fiorelli (b. 1823-d. 1896; director of Pompeii excavations from 1860-1875) and the archaeologist August Mau (b. 1840-d. 1909; active in Pompeii from the 1860s).

During the years 1872 to 1874, insulae VIII.7.1-15 and 1.1-10 received a great deal of attention owing to their location just inside one of the main, and the oldest, city gates, the Porta Stabia. By analyzing the nineteenth century site reports, the ancient artifacts collected during the excavations of the 1870s and early 1900s, and the archaeological ruins still in situ, the goal of the current research is to re-establish the physical context of the ancient material culture wherever possible, in order to re-imagine these properties and, in combination with PARP-PS current excavations, to understand their function better. Additionally, apart from outlining the novel methodologies developed to recover this wealth of legacy data, this research presents various ways in which data can be revitalized and re-established in its original spatial context.

Beginning with an analysis of contemporary bibliographic sources, particularly the *Giornale degli Scavi di Pompei* (the handwritten, daily, and mostly unpublished reports from the first excavations of the 1870s and early 1900s), a picture emerged of the various discrepancies in the approaches to the excavation and recording of each insula. In the case of 1.1-10, an area occupied by tabernae and hospitals, the primary interest appeared to be in the wall paintings, especially those that could be compared to others discovered in tabernae elsewhere in the city. In VIII.7.1-15, however, with its houses, shops, and public dining establishments, the emphasis in recording was placed on the wide variety of household and commercial objects, as well as artifacts or features that held particular historical interest, such as the military diploma of M. Surnus Garsenus found in VIII.7.8. Each insula, in turn, had its own varied collection of contemporary sources, with VIII.7.1-15 having the greater body of scholarly articles describing various features or finds in its properties.

The next step in establishing the bureaucratic pathway and life history of each artifact since its collection was an examination of the *Libretto del rinvenimento degli oggetti antichi*, the inventory of objects that were later sent to the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. This source led to the *Notamenti* (the list of objects received by the museum with their inventory numbers), which provided the information necessary to access the ancient materials from these properties.

If the analysis of the full set of bibliographic and archaeological data raised questions about the 19th century approach to the systematic study of the ancient site, the way the finds were recorded and shipped to the Naples Museum and to the Antiquarium in Pompeii revealed the method employed in organizing this material during the first systematic excavations of Pompeii inaugurated by Fiorelli. Aside from recording and dividing the items by material and size, the finds considered to be the most interesting as well as precious (e.g., the military diploma in VIII.7.8) were shipped immediately to the Naples Museum, whereas items such as coins were collected and sent to the Museum as a group, without distinction for context or iconography. Moreover, the bronze objects found in a bad state of conservation, particularly those recovered from 1.1-10, were melted down and their material reused.

PARP-PS has combined this archival research from insulae 1.1-10 and VIII.7.1-15 with the data gathered by its current excavations to create a robust database—a useful tool for any scholar interested in the history of the first excavations around the Stabian Gate, as well as in a fully comprehensive view of insulae VIII.7.1-15 and 1.1-10.



## WRITTEN INTERACTIONS Graffiti in Pompeian domestic spaces

More than 11,000 inscriptions have been recorded from Pompeii and edited in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (CIL) 04. Around 7,000 of these, scratched into the wall plaster or written with charcoal or chalk, have been labelled as graffiti.

Graffiti are informal writings and drawings which can be found on exterior and interior walls of buildings, on city gates and tombs, in houses, shops, and public buildings (cf. fig. 1). The largest selection of the Pompeian graffiti comes from interior walls (fig. 2) and is the object of my PhD project within the Munich Graduate School "Distant Worlds", presented in this poster. The aim of my research is to investigate the communicative and decorative functions of Roman graffiti. The study is based on several case-studies of Pompeian houses as well as on statistics of the distribution and contents of all graffiti edited in the CIL 04. A collection of all names which appear as graffiti aims to add information about the authors' and addressees' gender and status and to trace individuals within a house or neighbourhood.

The number of graffiti recorded per region and insula varies according to time and focus of their excavation. From some buildings no graffiti have been edited at all, whereas from some huge elite houses the entirety of inscriptions is listed in the CIL. Statistics of all Pompeian graffiti can therefore indicate trends regarding distribution and contents, but a close study of several houses is necessary to investigate in detail locations, form and visibility of graffiti in domestic spaces. Because only about 5% of the graffiti listed in the CIL still exist, my selection of houses is conditioned by conservational issues.



Fig. 1: Clusters of graffiti in Pompeii



Fig. 2: Distribution of graffiti (sample regions I-VI).



Fig. 3: Contents of graffiti (sample regions I-VI).

### Movement patterns within the house

Obviously, graffiti were meant to be seen by a broader readership. They contain names, salutations, announcements, letters, stories, erotic sentences, poems, wordplays, a numbers, dates, and prices (fig. 3); many of them either a writer and/ or a certain addressee or include stories about persons (e.g. fig. 4 + 7). The choice of the locations for the of personal messages could indicate that the intended reader often around or more probably lived in this space. Direct responses are proven by graffiti dialogues inside houses on insula façades.

Within the houses, graffiti mainly cluster in entrance rooms and peristyles, so they seem to indicate the rooms most frequented by inhabitants and visitors. Whereas atria contain practical notes like numbers, dates, and prices, peristyles feature wider range of names, messages, and announcements. Where available, the peristyle columns were particularly popular surface for scratched inscriptions. Graffiti appearing at heights of 1.4-1.6 m above floor level seem to reflect the writing of standing adults were therefore legible nearly at eye level; nonetheless, visibility also highly depends on their size and the colour of background wall painting. In four houses examined from region I, tiny texts are hidden in the cannelures of white peristyle columns and must have been hard to find if one did not know where to search and what to look for. These graffiti are contrasted by numbers and lines marking the walls of the atria. Obviously peristyles were used for more personal or almost secret messages.

### Tracing individuals

Sometimes, more individual spots were chosen for messages addressed to certain persons, as in the case of Chryseros, where the addressee of a message on the outer kitchen wall in the *del Menandro*. The writer, a certain Crescens, obviously knew Chryseros would regularly be around to read the message probably because he worked in this area of the house as a slave on the façade of the same *insula*. Secundus and Prima were each other several times, and as local VIPs, some gladiators often named in graffiti. In room 9 of the *Casa dei Quatuor* several greetings to women were written by the same person; comparison of the handwritings proves (fig. 8). The broad of individual names is supposed to trace individuals within households as well as neighbourhood relations.



Fig. 4: CIL 04, 08045: *Cursor Tyranno suo salutem!* / *Tyrannus Cursori salutem!*



Fig. 5: CIL 04, 08215: *Shijm*. Fig. 6: Human figure.



Fig. 7: CIL 04, 08098: *Allogonon fecit* / *Cara felicitas*. (Courtesy: Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Pompei, Ercolano, Stabia - DAI)

### The decorative and playful character of graffiti

Graffiti often clustered in certain spots within rooms and influenced one another. Once a wall was 'opened' by a writing or drawing, other people would add their names, thoughts or even extend already existing graffiti, as the drawing of a human figure in the *Hanghaus 2* from Ephesos shows (fig. 6): The original bust was extended to a whole human body by adding an unproportional torso, arms, and legs. Graffiti writing in general can thus be seen as a playful performance.

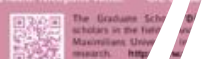
Often, graffiti copied other graffiti (fig. 5) or imitated nearby wall paintings or sculptures. In the *Casa dei Cervi* in Herculaneum, sculpted stags provoked a huge number of graffiti drawings showing stags made by different persons. Three figural drawings of Eros from the peristyle of the *Casa del Sacerdos Amandus* were influenced by a painted Eros. These graffiti were centrally placed in the main panels of the walls, so we have to assume that wall paintings were not the 'sacred' form of decoration that modern viewers like to regard them as.

### Framing interactions.

Approaches to coexistence in the houses of Roman Pompeii



Fig. 8: CIL 04, 08218a.d: *Nicopolis vallis*. CIL 04, 08218b.c



# What goes in a poster

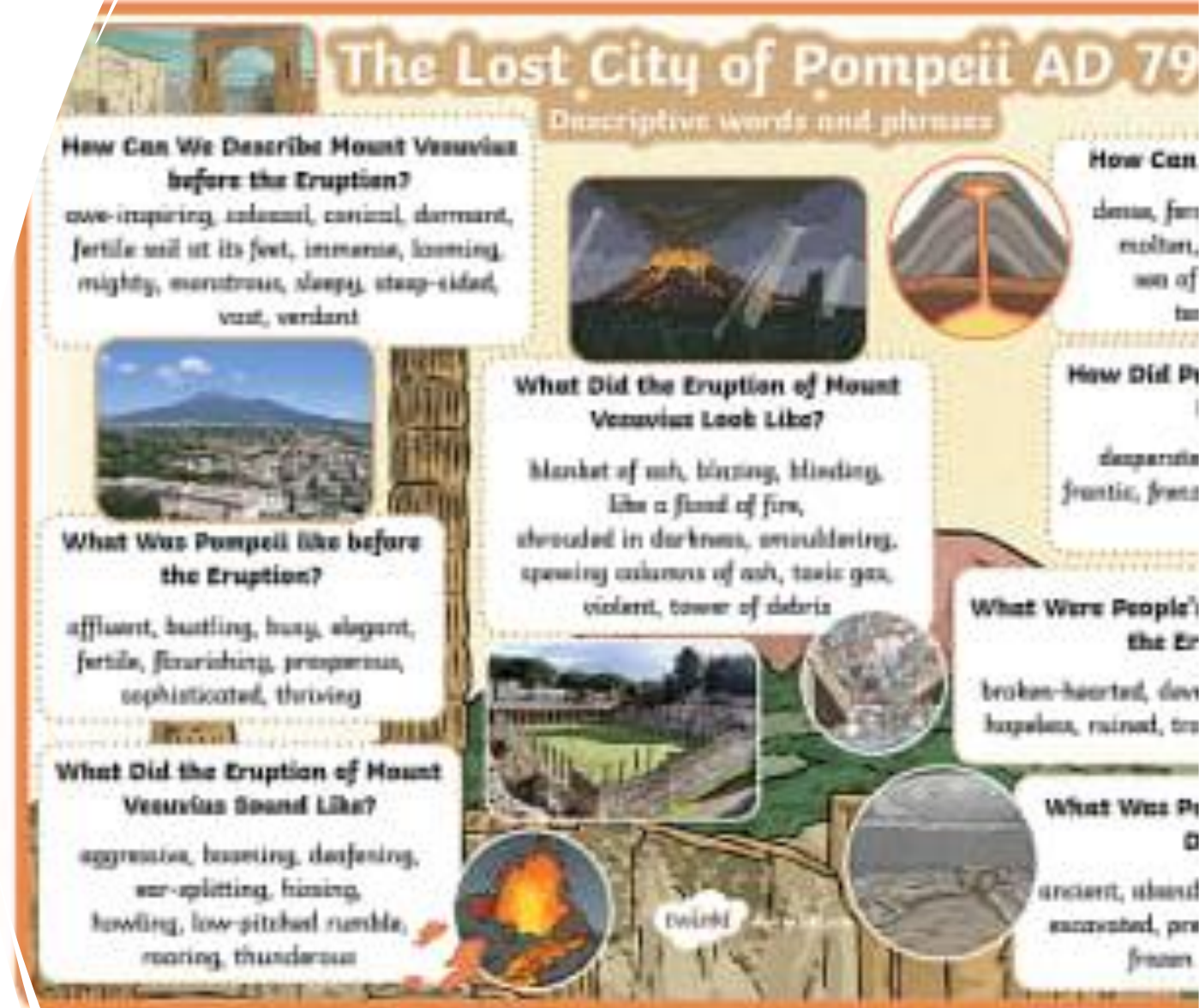
- Think of it as a short story.
- Describing a few major points.
- Have a good balance between text and graphics.
- Give it graphics and a title that will grab the reader's interest.

# Poster design

## All posters should have two main elements

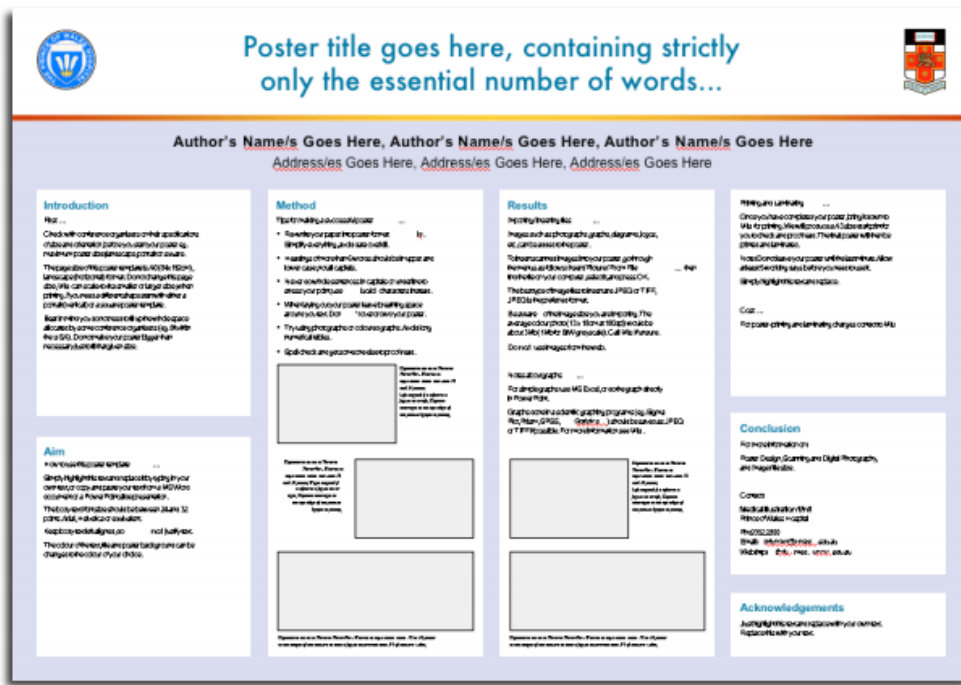
1. Simple and clear data or graphic or design images/displays
  - Make it easy for people to see.
2. Small supporting blocks of text
  - Consider stating the: Who, what, where, when, why?
  - Brief clear and concise descriptions. Don't make people stand in front of your poster reading for too long.

**Important: you may find that there is a countervailing tensions between clarity and brevity vs. depth of analysis.**

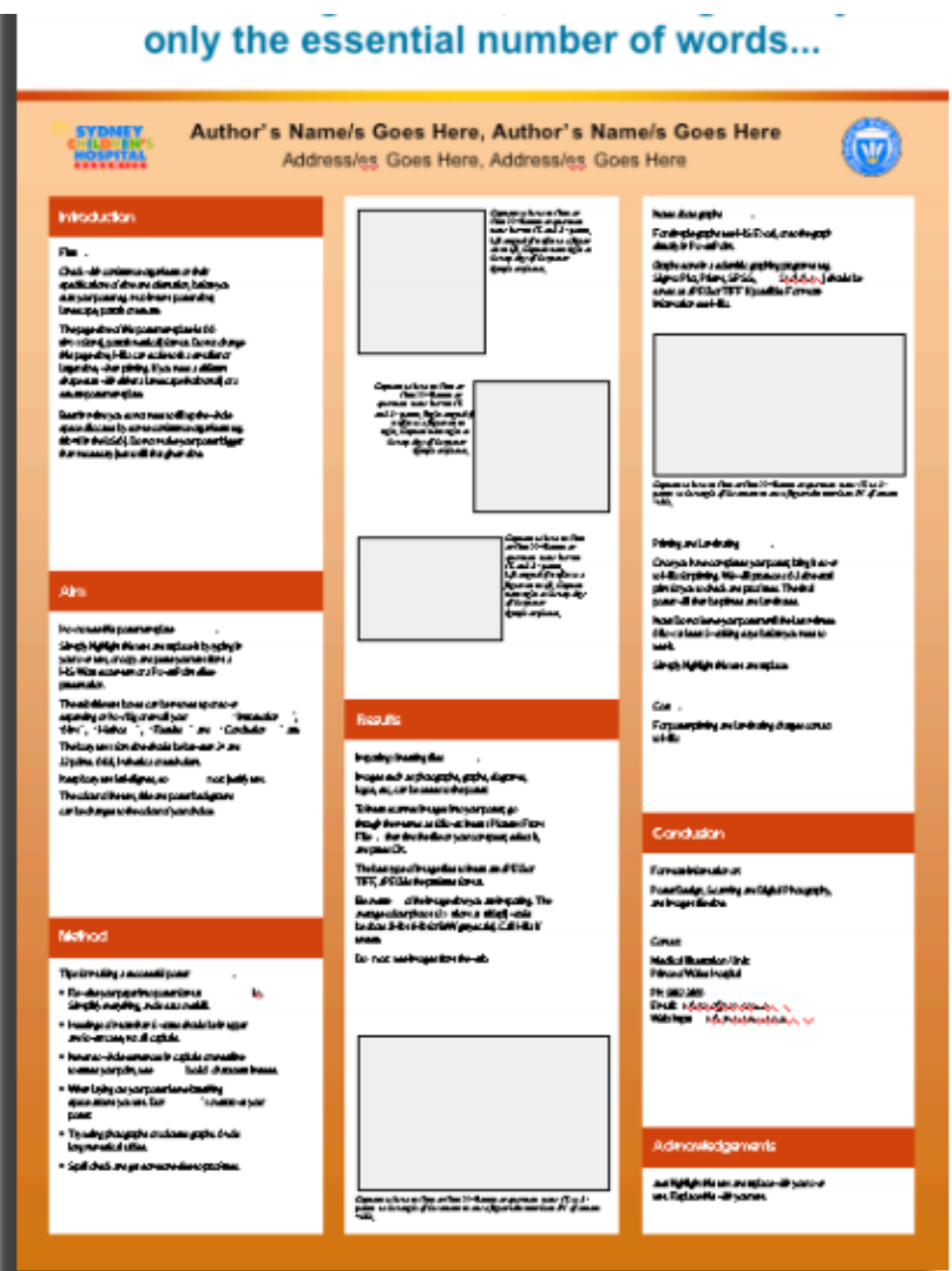


Your poster orientation can be either portrait or landscape.

Poster design options



- Depending on your area of study, choose a poster design tool you feel you would be most comfortable using.
  - There are many poster design tools, here are some examples:
  - PowerPoint.
  - MS Publisher.
  - Illustrator.
  - Google Slides.



# Styles of presentation

## Educationally focused

**Didactic:** convey knowledge of a topic  
**Broader** in focus (but **not** exhaustive).  
May present contrasting scholarly  
**interpretations** (as part of overview).  
May be more **empirical**

## Research focused

**Argumentative:** presenting a more specific  
argument or position.  
**Narrower** in focus (assumed basic knowledge).  
Arguing for or against specific **interpretations**.  
Adopting a specific **methodology** (or a few)

**Both styles of presentation should draw upon relevant ancient evidence and scholarship.**