

Academic Writing and Oral Presentation Skills



The Writing Process

1. Formulating the research topic
2. Searching for literature
3. Reading and note-making
4. Planning the structure of the essay and talk
5. Writing

1. Formulating the research topic

- Interesting to you
- Have a question
- Be specific – text, aspect of the topic (linguistics, interpretation, textual, historical, personage), period of time, place...

1. Formulating the research topic

- Interested in: *Analects* 1.2
- Research topic: “Family Reverence as the Starting Point of Humanity in the *Analects*.”
- Research question: Why is family reverence the start of cultivating humanity in the *Analects*?

2. Searching for Literature

- Research question: Why is family reverence the start of cultivating humanity in the *Analects*?
- Keywords: Chinese/English, pinyin/Wade Giles
- Databases
- Range of sources: original sources, interpretive sources, modern scholars, same tradition

2. Searching for Literature

- Research question: Why is family reverence the start of cultivating humanity in the *Analects*?
- Keywords: Chinese/English, pinyin/Wade Giles
 - 儒家思想中的“孝”、“仁”，《論語》注解
 - 孝 family reverence/ filial piety/ filiality
 - 仁 benevolence/ humanity/ true goodness / altruism / kindness/ perfect virtue/ compassion/ magnanimity/ charity
 - 論語 Analects commentaries/ interpretations
 - xiao / hsiao, ren / jen
- Databases
- Range of sources: original sources, interpretive sources, modern scholars, same tradition

2. Searching for Literature: Databases

- **Assessment Marking Criteria: Engagement with literature** 學術文獻的使用情況

- Oxford Bibliographies by Oxford University Press, see Chinese Studies page below for specific subjects:

<https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/page/chinese-studies>

- Harvard Library Research Guide for Chinese studies has open access databases:

<https://guides.library.harvard.edu/Chinese>

- Princeton University Library - East Asian Studies Resources and associated library guides list various databases and e-journals:

<https://libguides.princeton.edu/eallinks/general#s-lg-box-7455818>

- The Chinese University of Hong Kong Digital Repository

<https://repository.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/>

2. Searching for Literature: Journals

- Humanities databases such as JSTOR and Project MUSE should search all the key Chinese studies journals including:
 - *T'oung Pao*,
 - *American Journal of Chinese Studies*,
 - *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*,
 - *Journal of Asian Studies*,
 - *Tang Studies*,
 - *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*,
 - *Journal of the European Association for Chinese Studies*,
 - *Ming Qing Studies*,
 - *Late Imperial China*,
 - *Monumenta Serica*.
- These are available through the UWTSD library website

2. Searching for Literature: Bibliographies

- Secondary scholarship
- (van Norden 2002)

2. Searching for Literature: Dissertations

- British Library EThOS to search for UK dissertations

<https://ethos.bl.uk>

- The Chinese University of Hong Kong Electronic Theses & Dissertations Collection

<https://repository.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/en/collection/etd>

- Hong Kong University:

<http://hub.hku.hk/advanced-search?location=thesis>

- National Library of Australia:

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/>

- Princeton University doctoral dissertations (some full-text can be freely downloaded)

<https://dataspace.princeton.edu/handle/88435/dsp014q77fr35m>

- Taiwan National Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations:

<https://ndltd.ncl.edu.tw/>

- University of Wales Trinity Saint David Research Repository

<https://repository.uwtsd.ac.uk>

3. Reading and note-making

- How do we know whether or not the text is reliable?
 - Key scholars
 - Journals
 - Publishers
- Still must evaluate the text
- **Assessment Marking Criteria: Cognitive and intellectual skills** 認知和知識技能

3. Reading and note-making

Evaluate the following sentences – do they provide facts or opinions? (Bailey 2003: 9-10)

- Shakespeare was a great writer.
- Poor education causes 75% of crime.
- When two Englishmen meet, their first talk is of the weather.
- The *Analects* is a very important book.

3. Reading and note-making

- Select key points and make notes (Chan 1955)
- Understand the purpose or argument (Huang 2011)
- https://librarysearch.uwtsd.ac.uk/permalink/44WHELF_UWTSD/1ir6fgh/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_868765858

3. Structure of paragraphs from article

- Ren is important in Chinese thought
 - Different English translations
 - Buddhism and Daoist use
- Confucius emphasised *ren*
 - Not found in pre-Confucian literature, Ruan Yuan citation
 - Number of passages (58), number of mentions (105) in the *Analects*
 - More than other themes like family reverence
 - “Confucius seldom talked about profit and fate and ren 子罕言利，與命，與仁。” (9.1) But inconsistency in commentaries.
- Confucius transformed *ren* as the perfect virtue.
 - Different passages in the text.
- General virtue
 - Cites Cai Yuanpei and Hu Shi
- Quality applicable to all humans

3. Reading and note-making

- Paraphrasing (Bailey 2003: 21)

Ancient Egypt collapsed in about 2180 BC. Studies conducted of the mud from the River Nile showed that at this time the mountainous regions which feed the Nile suffered from a prolonged drought. This would have had a devastating effect on the ability of Egyptian society to feed itself.

- a) The sudden ending of Egyptian civilisation over 4,000 years ago was probably caused by changes in the weather in the region to the south. Without the regular river flooding there would not have been enough food.
- b) Research into deposits of the Egyptian Nile indicate that a long dry period in the mountains at the river's source may have led to a lack of water for irrigation around 2180BC, which was when the collapse of Egyptian society began.

3. Reading and note-making

- Paraphrasing (Bailey 2003: 21)

Ancient Egypt collapsed in about 2180 BC. Studies conducted of the mud from the River Nile showed that at this time the mountainous regions which feed the Nile suffered from a prolonged drought. This would have had a devastating effect on the ability of Egyptian society to feed itself.

- b) Research into deposits of the Egyptian Nile indicate that a long dry period in the mountains at the river's source may have led to a lack of water for irrigation around 2180BC, which was when the collapse of Egyptian society began.

- Techniques:

- a) Changing vocabulary: studies > research, society > civilisation, mud > deposits
- b) Changing word class: Egypt (n.) > Egyptian (adj.), mountainous regions (adj. + n.) > in the mountains (n.)
- c) Changing word order: Ancient Egypt collapsed > the collapse of Egyptian society began

3. Reading and note-making

- Evaluate the text
- Understand the purpose or argument
- Select key points and make notes
- Paraphrasing
- Summary writing
- Combining sources

4. Plan the structure of the essay or talk

- Introduction

- What is the research question? Why is it important? (Why should they be reading/listening?)
- What is your argument?
- What do the terms mean? e.g. 孝、仁 (Shun 2002: 64)

- Body: Main points 1, 2, 3.... and supporting evidence (with references)

- Conclusion

- What are my research findings?
- Any unanswered questions?

5. Elements of Writing

- From Stephen Bailey, *Academic Writing a Practical Guide for Students* (England: Nelson Thornes Ltd., 2003), 53-128.
- Cause and effect: the relationship between two situations
- CAUSE: heavy rain > EFFECT: flooding
 - Heavy rain causes flooding.
 - Heavy rain leads to flooding.
 - Heavy rain results in flooding.
 - Heavy rain produces flooding.
- EFFECT: flooding < CAUSE: heavy rain
 - Flooding is caused by heavy rain.
 - Flooding is produced by heavy rain.
 - Flooding results from heavy rain.

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References

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