

## 39 Sentences Toward Your First Draft of A Scientific Article

Complete these 39 sentence stems and you'll have a good first draft of your scientific article.

(These were written with epidemiological research in mind. Some adaptation is needed for other types of research.)

I try to teach scientific article writing the way I taught little kids to bat or pitch a baseball, back when I was coaching my son's teams: Do it the same way every time. Don't improvise until you have demonstrated mastery of the same way every time.

### Introduction

1. In this study, the main aim is...
2. In this research, the most important issues are...
3. The most prominent prior contributors to research of this type are...

### Materials and Methods

4. In this study, the research design is...
5. The study population was designated to include...
6. The sampling approach involved ...
7. The resulting sample consists of ...
8. Some of the designated participants did not consent to participate; others had missing or invalid responses to key study variables. For this reason, the effective sample size for the present investigation and the proportion of designated participants with useable data are ..., respectively.
9. The study protocol was reviewed and approved by the cognizant institutional review board for protection of human subjects in research.
10. The key response variable in this study is...
11. It was measured via ...
12. The suspected causal determinant or covariate of central interest is...
13. It was measured via ...
14. The guiding conceptual model was one in which ....
15. The plan for data analysis was organized in relation to standard "explore, analyze, explore" cycles, in which the first exploratory steps involve Tukey-style box-and-whisker plots and other exploratory data analyses to shed light on the underlying distributions of each response variable and covariate of interest.

16. In the initial analysis step, the task was to estimate ... , for which our statistical approach was ...
17. In subsequent analysis steps, the statistical approach involved ...
18. Our final exploratory analysis steps involved ....
19. . In this work, we stress precision of the study estimates with a focus on 95% confidence intervals; p-values are presented as an aid to interpretation.

## Results

20. Table 1 offers a description of the study sample. For example, ...
21. The main estimates of the study are presented in Table 2. For example, ...
22. As shown in Table 2, the overall crude estimate (statistically unadjusted) ...
23. Other results presented in Table 2 depict ...
24. Exploratory analyses to probe subgroup variation in the estimates disclosed ...
25. The final set of exploratory analyses (e.g., regression diagnostics, sensitivity analyses) disclosed ....

## Discussion

26. The main findings of this study may be summarized succinctly. First, ...
27. Before detailed discussion of these results, several of the more important study limitations merit attention. Of central concern is....
28. Limitations with respect to the research design are ...
29. With respect to the population under study,....
30. With respect to the sampling approach, study sample, and sample size, ....
31. With respect to participation rates (and sample attrition), ...
32. With respect to assessment of the key response variables, ....
33. With respect to assessment of the key covariates of interest...
34. With respect to the conceptual model,....
35. With respect to the data analysis plan, ....
36. Notwithstanding limitations such as these, [ Alternate version: "Despite limitations such as these, ..."], the study findings are of interest because..
37. The results from this study may have important implications as we seek to account for ...
38. In future research that builds from findings such as these, it may be possible to....

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*Good writing!*

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