

UNIT 6: RESEARCH TOPICS IN MY FIELD

LESSON 3: Abstracts – Science

Lesson aims:

- Understand what an academic abstract is
- Read and understand general information found in an abstract
- Understand the reasons for writing an academic abstract
- Explain one's reasons for reading or not reading an abstract

Lead-in

1. Discuss with your partner. Do you ever read these types of texts?

emails	research papers	news articles	abstracts	novels
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- Which of these types of text is the most academic?
- Which of these types of text is most fun to read?
- Which of these types of text is probably the shortest?

Listening

1. Listen to a Q & A session on abstracts. Mark the YES or NO column according to what you hear.

	YES	NO
a) An abstract is a short summary. It's an overview of your research.		
b) The abstract lets a reader know if the paper will be interesting for them.		
c) An abstract gives all the information that a paper has.		
d) Abstracts are located online on certain websites.		
e) The abstract is the first thing you write.		

2. Listen again and read the transcript at the same time. After you read and listen, underline five words that you think are the most important concepts about abstracts. Write those five words here:

- 1 2
- 3 4
- 5

TRANSCRIPT

Q: What is an academic abstract?

A: It's an overview. An abstract is a short summary of your completed research. It describes your work without a lot of detail. Abstracts explain your work briefly and clearly.

Q: Why do people read academic abstracts?

A: An abstract gives readers the gist or essence of a paper or article quickly. The reader can read the full paper or not. An abstract helps readers remember key points from the paper.

Q: When do you write an academic abstract?

A: The abstract is the last thing you write. You should only write it after your research is complete, so that you can write a correct summary of your research paper.

Q: Where can I find academic abstracts to read?

A: You can find academic abstracts online at various websites. Google Scholar is a good place to find academic abstracts.

3. *Compare your words with a partner. Tell your partner why you chose these words.*

Reading

1. *Read **the title and the first line** of the following abstract. Which phrase best expresses the first sentence of the abstract?*
 - a) Antibiotic therapy is more effective than amoxicillin in treating acute bacterial sinusitis.
 - b) Amoxicillin isn't effective in treating acute bacterial sinusitis.
 - c) There isn't any agreement about how to treat acute bacterial sinusitis.

Effectiveness of Amoxicillin/Clavulanate Potassium in the Treatment of Acute Bacterial Sinusitis in Children

Ellen R. Wald, David Nash, and Jens Eickhoff

The role of antibiotic therapy in managing acute bacterial sinusitis (ABS) in children is controversial. The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of high-dose amoxicillin/potassium clavulanate in the treatment of children diagnosed with ABS. This was a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study. Children 1 to 10 years of age [1] Patients were stratified according to age (<6 or ≥6 years) and clinical severity and randomly assigned to receive either amoxicillin (90 mg/kg) with potassium clavulanate (6.4 mg/kg) or placebo. A symptom survey was performed on days 0, 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, 20, and 30. Patients were examined on day 14. Children's conditions were rated as cured, improved, or failed according to scoring rules. Two thousand one hundred thirty-five children with respiratory complaints were screened for enrollment; 139 (6.5%) had ABS. Fifty-eight patients were enrolled, and 56 were randomly assigned. The mean age was 6630 months. [2], and 6 (11%) presented with nonpersistent symptoms. In 24 (43%) children, the illness was classified as mild, whereas in the remaining 32 (57%) children it was severe. Of the 28 children who received the antibiotic, 14 (50%) were cured, 4 (14%) were improved, 4(14%) experienced treatment failure, and 6 (21%) withdrew. Of the 28 children who received placebo, 4 (14%) were cured, 5 (18%) improved, and 19 (68%) experienced treatment failure. Children receiving the antibiotic were more likely to be cured (50% vs 14%) and less likely to have treatment failure (14% vs 68%) than children receiving the placebo. [3] Amoxicillin/potassium clavulanate results in significantly more cures and fewer failures than placebo, according to parental report of time to resolution.

Source: writing.wisc.edu

2. Read the abstract. **Does the abstract answer these questions? Mark the YES or NO box.**

	YES	NO
a) How old were the participants of this study?		
b) When did they check on the presence of symptoms?		
c) Why did they organize study participants by age?		
d) Where did they produce the amoxicillin/potassium clavulanate?		
e) What were the results of placebo recipients?		

3. Place **three** of these phrases into the appropriate gaps in the abstract. Write the number of the space next to the letter phrase.

	Number
a) ABS is more prevalent than placebo treatment	
b) Fifty (89%) patients presented with persistent symptoms	
c) However, this mean age is uncommon with persistent symptoms	
d) ABS is a common complication of viral upper respiratory infections	
e) with a clinical presentation compatible with ABS were eligible for participation	

Final Lesson Task

1. Consider the abstract from this lesson. Answer the following questions about the abstract with complete sentences.

- a) What is the focus of this research project? Does the abstract describe it briefly?

- b) Why do the researchers want to focus on this topic?

- c) Would you be interested in reading this paper? Why or why not? Please explain.

- d) Does the abstract relate to your studies? How much?

Exit Ticket

Can you do these things?

My Top 5 Words from this lesson:

	I know what an abstract is.	1	
	I can read and understand general ideas in an abstract.	2	
	I know the reasons for writing an academic abstract.	3	
	I can explain my reasons for reading or not reading an abstract.	4	
		5	

Homework: Self-study

[90 minutes per week]

1. **Extra practice** (online): Video Resources on Undergraduate Research from Michigan State University: <https://urca.msu.edu/video>

