



The really helpful academic book for students



Are you nervous about returning to study?

Are you wondering whether you have the academic skills to succeed?

Do you find it difficult to write more than a sentence or two?

Has it been a while since you did research in a library?

Are you wondering whether you'll have enough time to be successful?

If you answered 'Yes' to any of these questions and/or would like some helpful academic hints and advice to help you to succeed, **THIS** is the book for **YOU**.



Inside you'll find:

- **Tasks (with answers) to test your knowledge and academic skills,**
- **Links to excellent interactive websites to help you to learn or improve your skills,**
- **Helpful hints and advice to make your study and work times more effective,**
- **Information about where to go for help if you need it and**
- **Details of workshops that you can attend to get a head start on your studies and how to register for these.**

Welcome to Canning College – let your journey begin!



READING FOR MEANING: Identify the main point.

Task 1

- Read the following extract from Stella Cottrell's *The study skills handbook*
- In your own words, summarise the main idea of this extract in one or two sentences. (Try to keep your summary to 25 words or less.)

In Japan, the Suzuki Violin Talent Education Programme has trained many children to play the violin to virtuoso level. The programme begins with exposure to music from birth, and involves daily practice from an early age. Even less remarkable students perform to a level that hi other cultures would be considered that of a child prodigy (Gardner, 1993).

Similarly, children exposed to several languages from an early age tend to become multilingual quite naturally. People who start later in life can also develop into good violinists or linguists. The Suzuki Programme suggests the importance of the belief that *anyone* can learn to a high

standard, as well as showing the role of environment and practice in developing skills. Excellence need not be the preserve of the few.

Just as we would not, in general, expect excellent violin playing from somebody who rarely played the instrument, we would not expect outstanding intellectual performances from people whose minds are not regularly challenged by ideas and problems. University provides part of that necessary stimulation. As you go through your course, the language and thinking styles of your subject will become part of your own thinking processes and linguistic expression.

Reference

Cottrell, S. 1999. *The study skills handbook* Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Summary of main idea: Try to keep your summary to 25 words or less.

Model answer 1:

In order to learn and develop effective skills, individuals need stimulation, a supportive environment and constant practice (Cottrell 1999).

This is a PARAPHRASE (someone else's idea in your words) so you need to reference this both in-text and in the reference list at the end of your assignment. For more details go to:

<http://studentnet.canningcollege.wa.edu.au/administration/library/Default.htm>

or your Student diary.

HELPFUL HINT

If you take linear notes (in the order of the paragraphs) for this, short text, you may have made the Suzuki method the focus of the piece. For such a short passage, you should NOT take notes – rather sit back and ask yourself, “What is that about (the main idea)?” You should be able to sum up the main idea in 1 – 2 sentences.

Task 2: What is this journal article about?

The **Happiness** Effect

(Search words 'happiness' and 'learning')
How emotions and even behaviours can spread like an epidemic

The next time you get the flu, there will almost certainly be someone you can blame for your pain. There's the inconsiderate co-worker who decided to drag himself to the office and spent the day sniffing, sneezing and shivering in the cubicle next to yours. Or your child's best friend, the one who showed up for a play date with a runny nose and a short supply of tissues. Then there's the guy at the gym who spent more time sneezing than sweating on the treadmill before you used it.

You're right to pass the blame. Pathogens like the influenza virus pass like a holiday fruitcake from person to person, but you probably don't think much past the one who gave it directly to you. An infectious-disease expert, on the other hand, would not be satisfied to stop there. What about the person who passed the virus on to your colleague, the one before him and others earlier still? Contagious diseases operate like a giant infectious network, spreading like the latest YouTube clip among friends of friends online. We're social animals; we share.

So public-health experts are beginning to wonder whether certain health-related behaviours are just as contagious as microbes. If you're struggling with your weight, did you in effect catch a case of fat by **learning** poor eating and exercise habits from a friend or family member who was similarly infected by someone else? If you smoke, do you light up because you were behaviourally contaminated by smokers who convinced you of the coolness of the habit? Even more important, if such unhealthy behaviours are contagious, are healthy ones--like quitting smoking or exercising--equally so? And what if not only behaviours but also moods and mental states work the same way? Can you catch a case of happy?

Increasingly, the answer seems to be yes. That's the intriguing conclusion from a body of work by Harvard social scientist Dr. Nicholas Christakis and his political-science colleague James Fowler at the University of California at San Diego. The pair created a sensation with their announcement earlier this month of a 20-year study showing that emotions can pass among a network of people up to three degrees of separation away, so your joy may, to a larger extent than you realise, be determined by how cheerful your friends' friends' friends are, even if some of the people in this chain are total strangers to you.

If that's so, it creates a whole new paradigm for the way people get sick and, more important, how to get them healthy. It may mean that an individual's well-being is the product not just of his behaviours and emotions but more of the way they feed into a larger social network. Think of it as health Facebook-style. "We have a collective identity as a population that transcends individual identity," says Christakis. "This super organism has an anatomy, physiology, structure and function that we are trying to understand."

In their most recent paper, published in the British Medical Journal, Christakis and Fowler explored the emotional state of nearly 5,000 people and the more than 50,000 social ties they shared. At three points during the long study, all the participants answered a standard questionnaire to determine their **happiness** level, so that the scientists could track changes in emotional state. That led to their intriguing finding of just how contagious happiness can be: if a subject's friend was happy, that subject was 15% more likely to be happy too; if that friend's friend was happy, the original subject was 10% more likely to be so. Even if the subject's friend's friend's friend--entirely unknown to the subject--was happy, the subject still got a 5.6% boost. The happiness chain also

worked in the other direction, radiating from the subject out to her friends.

The **happiness** dividend is more powerful if two people not only know each other but also are equally fond of each other.

Happiness is more infectious in mutual relationships (in which both people name the other as a friend) than in unreciprocated ones (in which only one is named).

And it's not just in sterile study settings that the contagion of **happiness** is spreading. Christakis and Fowler noticed that people who are smiling on their Facebook pages tend to cluster together, forming an online social circle like a delirious flock of cyberbirds. And while some of this joy can certainly be traced to the copycat effect--if your friends post smiling pictures, you might feel like a grouch if you don't too--Christakis and Fowler are analysing the clusters to see if something more infectious might be at work.

Sceptics raise other concerns, ones that go beyond the copycat effect. Couldn't happy people simply be exposed to similar lifestyles or social factors that explain their shared joy, such as favourable weather, low unemployment rates or a winning baseball team? If that were the case, argue the authors, then **happiness** would spread more uniformly among all the relationships; instead, it varied depending on whether the friendship was mutual or merely one-sided. As the investigators teased out these factors, they found that environment didn't have nearly the power that relationships did.

The infectiousness of **happiness** is only the latest in a series of similar phenomena Christakis and Fowler have studied. In 2007 they published a paper showing that obesity travels across webs in a similar way, with individuals having a 57% greater risk of being overweight if they have an obese friend. The same holds true for quitting smoking, with success 30% more common among friends of quitters than among friends of smokers.

In all these cases, there's a predictable topography to how people influence one another, one that can be reduced to a sort of social map. People who are central to their networks--who in effect are the hub through which most of the other relationships or information flows--may have the most influence on others and in turn are the most influenced by them. But just because you start off at the centre of your web does not guarantee that you'll stay there. In the 1970s, smokers were more likely to occupy that focal position in their network of friends and family. Look at a similar social map today, and you'll see that the smokers have drifted to the periphery.

The better this kind of mapping becomes, the more value it has. Officials at the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are exploiting the connectedness of youngsters in online social networks, for example, to improve flu-vaccination rates, not just among those under age 18 but among all the people to whom these children have ties. "Because of their social and peer networks, children have a higher likelihood of sharing information with the most people," says Jay Bernhardt of the CDC. By targeting youngsters on these sites with information about the importance of annual flu shots, health officials hope to trigger a literal and figurative viral wave of vaccination among the kids' peers, their peers' peers, and even those peers' parents and grandparents.

"We are always looking for exciting new areas of research that will help people live healthier," says Richard Suzman, director of the division of behavioural and social research at the National Institute on Aging. "Without a doubt, I see this as a very promising area." And with the health community a web like any other, expect that idea to spread further and further.

If you're feeling happy, you can thank your friends. **Happiness**, it turns out, is quite infectious and can pass among people in a network. It's most contagious when two people mutually acknowledge they are friends. But even if the friendship goes only one way, the joy gets spread.

Happy individual	Increase in chance of becoming happy
Siblings living within a mile	+14%
Co-resident spouse	+8%
Next-door neighbour	+34%
INDIRECT	
Friend of friend	+10%
Friend of friend of friend	+5.6%
DIRECT	
Friend living within a mile	+25%

Model answer Task 2

Happiness can be as easily caught as disease causing germs. Social science researchers, led by doctors Nicholas Christakis and James Fowler, deduced that emotions can be transferred by three degrees of separation.

Q: How did I check that I understood what the article was saying?

A: I read the abstract! (See below)



Title: The Happiness Effect.

Author: Park, Alice

Source:

Time South Pacific (Australia/New Zealand edition); 22/12/2008 Issue 50, p35-36, 2p

Abstract:

The article discusses the research being conducted by public health experts on whether happiness can be as contagious as disease-causing germs. A social science team led by doctors Nicholas Christakis and James Fowler concluded from their study that emotions can be transferred by three degrees of separation. Their "British Medical Journal" report utilized questionnaires to monitor the emotional state of 5,000 people.

HELPFUL HINTS

If you are a slow reader and/or have trouble working out the main idea/s of text, base your research on on-line resources (journal data bases).

Just like when you use Google, Yahoo etc, the key search words you enter are bolded so you can scan the article to see where and how often these key words appear. You can then read more closely at these places to see whether or not this article will be useful.

Even better, all journal articles have abstracts (*summaries*). Read this to judge whether or not the article is relevant to your research. You cannot quote from the abstract but it's a great way of getting the main idea/s. If you can't understand the abstract, give the article a miss and find one that you can.

RELEVANT LIBRARY INFORMATION

Details of all workshops on how to use the data bases and refine your research are available at:

<http://studentnet.canningcollege.wa.edu.au/administration/library/Default.htm>

You are strongly advised to attend all the Library workshops you can. The standard of your research skills will directly affect the quality of your work (and your marks!).



Are you still having some trouble working out what the main points are? Why not do the interactive exercises, at the site below, to improve your comprehension of text?

http://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lsu/content/1_StudySkills/study_tuts/reading_LL/index.html

SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS (the building blocks of writing)

Task 3: Simple sentences

Tick which of the following are simple sentences:

- a) Prices are low this year.
- b) Every year at this time.
- c) The importance of education.
- d) Canning College is in Bentley, WA.
- e) What are you going to study?
- f) The importance of organisation.

Task 3 Answers

a), d) and e) are sentences. The rest are sentence fragments.

Task 4

What is wrong with the following?

- a) I am going to study at Canning College, I will study Physics and Chemistry.
- b) You may need to carry a notebook to make quick notes some people find this useful.

Task 4 answer: Both of these are run-on sentences, that is both should be 2 sentences not one.

There are many types of sentences including compound and complex ones. Information about these and exercises (with answers) are available at:

http://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lsu/content/4_WritingSkills/writing_tuts/sentences_LL/index.html

PARAGRAPHS

Whether you are asked for a single paragraph, an extended answer or an essay, being able to create well structured paragraphs is essential for all.



Paragraph structure:

- A well written paragraph presents one idea.
- This idea or main point is then developed or expanded within the paragraph.
- A paragraph is made up of several sentences.
- Some of these sentences have different functions.

Stepping out. [Handout].1998. Education Department of Western Australia.

The **topic sentence** explains what the paragraph is about.

Developing sentences expand and clarify the idea expressed in the topic sentence.

Supporting sentences support the idea through examples, facts, figures, reasoned arguments, quotes

The **concluding/linking sentence** “wraps up” the idea of the paragraph and signals the idea of the next paragraph.

Task 5: Analyse this paragraph.

- 1 **Underline the topic sentence.**
- 2 **Is there development of the main idea? Which sentence is this?**
- 3 **Circle the first words of any supporting sentences.**
- 4 **What function do these words serve?**
- 5 **What term is used for them?**
- 6 **Look at the concluding sentence. How does it differ from a ‘linking sentence’?**

Today we are looking at the components of a well written paragraph. It is important to know these as paragraphs are the ‘building blocks’ of essays. Firstly they should be **cohesive**. Everything in the paragraph must relate to the main idea or topic. Secondly the paragraph should be **coherent**, that is, easily understood with its ideas in logical order. As well **correctness** is a feature of well written paragraphs. Obviously correct syntax, expression and spelling are needed. Finally **completeness** must be considered. A paragraph should be about one main idea and make complete sense by itself. If you follow these rules, you should have mastered these ‘building blocks’ of writing.

ANSWERS

Today we are looking at the components of a well written paragraph.(1) **It is important to know these as paragraphs are the ‘building blocks’ of essays.**(2) **Firstly** (3) they should be **cohesive**. Everything in the paragraph must relate to the main idea or topic. **Secondly** (3) the paragraph should be **coherent**, that is, easily understood with its ideas in logical order. **As well** (3) **correctness** is a feature of well written paragraphs. Obviously correct syntax, expression and spelling are needed. **Finally** (4) **completeness** must be considered. A paragraph should be about one main idea and make complete sense by itself. If you follow these rules, you should have mastered these ‘building blocks’ of writing.

- 4 **They help readers to navigate and understand your writing**
- 5 **connectors/signposts/transition words**
- 6 **A concluding sentence ‘rounds off’ the paragraph and returns to the topic.**
A linking sentence rounds off the paragraph AND alerts the reader to what is coming in the next paragraph.

NEED MORE PRACTICE AND INFORMATION ABOUT WRITING?

There is an excellent, interactive tutorial on paragraphs at:

http://www.dlswb.rmit.edu.au/lsu/content/4_WritingSkills/07paragraphs.htm

HELPFUL ACADEMIC SKILLS WORKSHOPS YOU CAN ATTEND TO BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE

(Book for ONE academic session and, if possible, one Library session as well.)

Please bring paper (to make notes), a pen, your questions and any food or drink that you need. The Canteen will NOT be open.

Workshop number	Type	Date	Time	Location
1	Academic skills	Saturday, 23 January	9.30 – 11.30am	Canning College Conference Room
2A	Academic skills	Friday, 29 January	9.30 – 11.30am	Canning College Conference Room
2B	Library tour	Friday, 29 January	11.45am – 12.15pm	Canning College Library
3	Academic skills	Wednesday, 3 February	6.30 – 8.30pm	Canning College Conference Room
4 (part 1) *	Library workshop (On-line resources) (followed by morning tea before ↓)	Saturday, 6 February	9.30 – 10.00am	Canning College Library
4 (part 2) *	Academic skills	Saturday, 6 February	10.15am – 12.15pm	Canning College Conference Room
5	Academic skills	Monday, 8 February	12.30 – 2.30pm	Canning College Conference Room
6	Academic skills	Wednesday, 10 February	6.30 – 8.30pm	Canning College Conference Room
7 (part 1) *	Library workshop (On-line resources) (followed by morning tea before ↓)	Saturday, 13 February	9.30 – 10.00am	Canning College Library
7 (part 2) *	Academic skills	Saturday, 13 February	10.15am – 12.15pm	Canning College Conference Room
8	Academic skills	Wednesday, 17 February	7.00 – 9.00pm	Canning College Conference Room

* If you enrol for and attend both parts 1 and 2 of either of these sessions, you will be provided with morning tea.

How do I register for any of these sessions? (See next page.)

How do I register for any of these sessions?

(Remember to record all the details of session/s chosen so you don't forget.)

All sessions will run. Sending off your registration means you ARE enrolled. You will not be contacted to confirm. Please come along to the session you have chosen. See you there!

Option 1:

ONLINE

Go to the Canning College home page at: <http://www.canningcollege.wa.edu.au/>

- Click on the right hand button titled 'Student workshops and support'
- Click on the link 'Workshop program and registration'
- Fill in the required details and click to submit.
- Print a copy for your records.

OR

Option 2:

BY POST

Fill in the registration form below and mail it to:

Workshop Program
Erica Daymond
Canning College
PO Box 1148
Bentley Delivery Centre
BENTLEY WA 6983

----- (Tear off here.)

CANNING COLLEGE WORKSHOP REGISTRATION FORM

Full name: _____

Course of study at Canning College: _____

Email address: _____

Contact phone number: _____

Workshop number(s) chosen (please circle)

1 2 3 4 (part 1) 4 (part 2) 5 6 7 (part 1) 7 (part 2) 8

RESEARCH

Being able to effectively research is really important. You don't want to be like Calvin! See below for all details of library workshops that you can attend in Term 1.



Want great marks for your assignments? We know how to help! Learn how to make the most of the wealth of resources available to you at our 'state of the art' library by attending our

Information Literacy Workshops

DATE	TIME	DURATION	TOPIC	LOCATION	LINK
Feb 9,10,11,12	12.40pm	30 mins	Online catalogue	LLC – Lab1	PowerPoint
Feb 8,10,11	3.15pm	30 mins	Online catalogue	LLC – Lab1	Activity
Feb 9	5.30pm	30 mins	Online catalogue	LLC – Lab1	
Feb 16,17,18,19	12.40pm	30 mins	Online catalogue	LLC – Lab1	PowerPoint
	12.40pm	30 mins	Worldbook Online & Clickview	LLC – Lab2	PowerPoint
Feb 15,17,18	3.15pm	30 mins	Online catalogue	LLC – Lab1	Activity
	3.15pm	30 mins	Worldbook Online & Clickview	LLC – Lab2	Activity
Feb 16	5.30pm	30 mins	Online catalogue	LLC – Lab1	Activity
	5.30pm	30 mins	Worldbook Online & Clickview	LLC – Lab2	
Feb 23,24,25,26	12.40pm	30 mins	Online catalogue	LLC – Lab1	PowerPoint
	12.40pm	30 mins	Worldbook Online & Clickview	LLC – Lab2	Activity
Feb 22,24,25	3.15pm	30 mins	Online catalogue	LLC – Lab1	
	3.15pm	30 mins	Worldbook Online & Clickview	LLC – Lab2	
Feb 23	5.30pm	30 mins	Online catalogue	LLC – Lab1	

	5.30pm	30 mins	Worldbook Online & Clickview	LLC – Lab2	
Mar 2,3,4,5	12.40pm	30 mins	ANZRC (Online journal database)	LLC – Lab1	
Mar 2,3,4	3.15pm	30 mins	ANZRC	LLC – Lab1	
Mar 2	5.30pm	30 mins	ANZRC	LLC – Lab1	
Mar 9,10,11,12	12.40pm	30 mins	ANZRC	LLC – Lab1	
	12.40pm	30 mins	Internet	LLC – Lab2	
Mar 8,10,11	3.15pm	30 mins	ANZRC	LLC – Lab1	
	3.15pm	30 mins	Internet	LLC – Lab2	
Mar 9	5.30pm	30 mins	ANZRC	LLC – Lab1	
	5.30pm	30 mins	Internet	LLC – Lab2	
Mar 16,17,18,19	12.40pm	30 mins	WA newspaper online & Points of View	LLC – Lab1	
Mar 15,17,18	3.15pm	30 mins	WA newspaper online & Points of View	LLC – Lab1	
Mar 16	5.30pm	30 mins	WA newspaper online & Points of View	LLC – Lab1	
Mar 23,24,25,26	12.40pm	30 mins	In-text and end-text referencing	LLC – Lab1	
Mar 22,24,25	3.15pm	30 mins	In-text and end-text referencing	LLC – Lab1	
Mar 23	5.30pm	30 mins	In-text and end-text referencing	LLC – Lab1	

Once you are enrolled at Canning College and have a student log-in account, you can REGISTER for these workshops via the link:

<http://studentnet.canningcollege.wa.edu.au/administration/library/Default.htm>



SUPPORT FOR YOU IN TERM 1, 2010

Finally, what do you do if you've prepared as best you can and find that you're struggling during the first weeks of your course?

1. Talk to the teacher (or teachers) concerned about your worries.
2. Go to the Learning Centre for help.
3. Talk to an advisor if you need to change your course or subjects.
4. Attend workshops – if you missed any of these.
5. Contact Erica Daymond and tell her what academic problems you are having.

Erica's email address is:

edaymond@canningcollege.wa.edu.au

All art and emoticons in this booklet are from:
Microsoft Clip Art (nd). <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/clipart/results.aspx?qu=>
(accessed November 18, 2009).