Student Resources Worksheets

# Conclusion, Introduction, Title, and Abstract Worksheet

Below is a chart that helps you complete all your “summary” tasks, the Conclusion, Introduction, Title, and Abstract (which is optional for some, but recommended to all). Remember, you want to address each of these issues in the same order in both the Conclusion and the Introduction, but the Conclusion emphasizes 7–11 and the Introduction spends more time on 1–6. The Title captures argument (5), cases and method (6), and findings (7) and expresses them in an appealing way. Use the example titles (Box 9.1, p. 228) for inspiration. Then, the abstract is a short-form version of your *whole* paper—mentioning what inspired your research, question, literature, argument, methods, findings, and future research, all in about 150 words. Often a first draft of the abstract is too long, but it is always easier to cut than to write that first draft or to elaborate effectively. And remember: writing the Abstract can be a great help in zeroing in on what is really important in your paper, and, thus, that process is great for spiraling back to create a more effective (and sometimes catchy) title which can then be woven into the introduction and conclusion, as well other sections of the paper. As you work on each of these, use the student examples to help provide models of “good” ones.

Fill out this worksheet to help you finish all of these elements of the paper:

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| Question | Summary Answer |
| 1. Research Question and what attracted you to it? What is the historical or conceptual background anyone would need to understand the basics of your inquiry? |  |
| 1. Why is knowing the answer interesting to scholars? What concepts does it illuminate? What theoretical debates does it enlighten? |  |
| 1. Why is this question and answer important to policy makers and politicians? What problems might a “good” answer help them solve? |  |
| 1. What are the possible answers to your research question (schools of thought)? Summarize them very briefly, a sentence or less. |  |
| 1. Which school was most appealing to you and why? |  |
| 1. How did you decide to perform your study? Were there very significant decisions you made about how to design and conduct the research? |  |
| 1. What did you find in your analysis? |  |
| 1. Ultimately, what is your thesis—combining your initial contention with your findings? |  |
| 1. Do your findings help you think about other cases? Can it be extended? Must its application be narrowed? |  |
| 1. What would you do differently now if you had to perform this research again? |  |
| 1. What are promising new directions if you were continuing on this research trajectory? |  |