

LC-1121 Communicating Sustainable Solutions

Autumn 2022



Aalto University
Language Centre

Session 4

- **Intro to Problem-Solution pattern**
- **Facts, opinions and justifications**
- **Synthesizing FISH information in teams in class**
- **Team discussion about reflection cards**

Problem-solution pattern



Aalto University
Language Centre

Which one do you prefer? Why?

Introduction 1

The purpose of this report is to introduce our group's solution to the problem we identified. We will discuss our solution from three perspectives: technical, design and financial feasibility. Also, we have included a discussion of how the solution meets the criteria given in the project outline. It is important to replace single-use plastic bottles with more environmentally alternatives.

Introduction 2

Billions of plastic water bottles are consumed around the world every year. However, although many countries run recycling programs, 80% of bottles still end up in landfills, polluting the environment. In addition to the problem of disposing of the bottles themselves, the whole process of producing plastic bottles requires a tremendous amount of natural resources.

The aim of this project was to find a more sustainable solution to plastic water bottles. This report presents two possibilities: A water bottle made from 100% recycled paper and a water bottle made from glass. Both solutions have high recycling rates and require a relatively small amount of energy for production. Thus, they are more sustainable than plastic water bottles.

What is the problem with text 1?

- **Not enough context!**
- **Fails to specify the problem and the solution** (The purpose of this report is to introduce our group's solution to the problem we identified)
- **Lacks the “why”** (It is important to replace single-use plastic bottles with more environmentally alternatives -> WHY?)
- **Moves from specific to general information**

What makes text 2 better?

Introduction 2

Situation

Billions of plastic water bottles are consumed around the world every year. However, although many countries have recycling programs, 80% of the bottles still end up in landfills, polluting the environment. In addition to the problem of disposing of the bottles themselves, the whole process of producing the plastic bottles requires a tremendous amount of natural resources.

Problem

The aim of this project was to find a more sustainable solution to plastic water bottles. This report presents two possibilities: A water bottle made from 100% recycled paper and a water bottle made from glass. Both solutions have high recycling rates and require a relatively small amount of energy for production. Thus, they are more sustainable than plastic water bottles.

Solution

Evaluation

Problem-solution pattern

- A common pattern in persuasive writing / speeches
- Used to convince the reader / listener to support a certain course of action
- Great for non-expert audiences

SITUATION: What is the current situation?

PROBLEM: What is wrong with the current situation?

SOLUTION: What is the solution to the current problem?

EVALUATION: What makes this a good solution?

GENERAL



SPECIFIC

Recommendation report

Part 1

Introduction

- Provides the current context specifying the need (situation-problem-solution-evaluation)
- Written as a group
- Length 200-250 words
- Try to write the tentative draft of this in week 5

Recommendation report

Part 2

Body

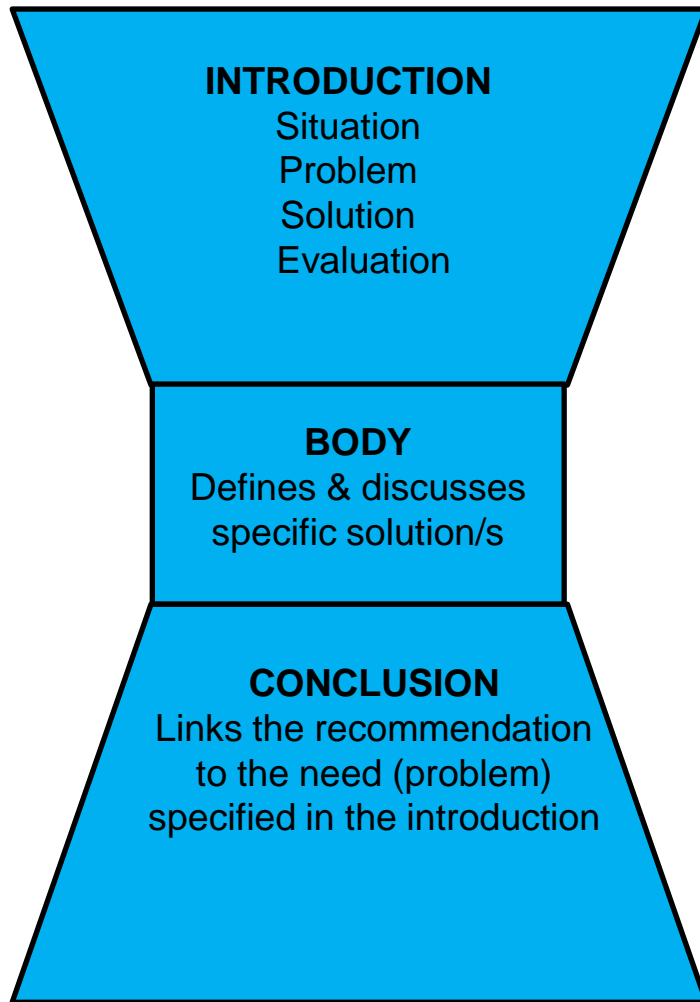
- Discusses the recommended solution in terms of technology / design or financial viability.
- Makes it clear what the recommended solution is and why it helps to solve the case
- Each group member writes an individual part of about 400 words
- To ensure that all the parts fit together, answer the questions on the planning your individual part handout in week 4
- Bring your 400-word individual part to class in week 7

Recommendation report

Part 3

Conclusion

- (Re)states the recommendation
- Explicitly links the solution back to the original problem or need
- Summarizes the main argument(s) to justify the recommendation
- Written as a group
- Length 50-100 words
- Work on this in class in week 7



GENERAL



SPECIFIC



GENERAL

Facts, Opinions and Justifications

- Strong vs. weak justifications
- Giving support for your justifications
- Fact vs. opinion

Facts vs. opinions

What distinguishes a fact from an opinion?

A fact

- is something that is true about a topic
- can be tested or proven by objective data

An opinion

- expresses an attitude towards something - judgment, view, claim or conclusion

In groups of three

- **Think of some facts and opinions about sustainability/climate change/ biodiversity**
- **Present them to the class**

Facts or opinions?

- Let's have a look at the following poster for a while.
- What does it appear to do? Is it effective? (sarcasm or irony?)
- Is the message clear, and who is it from?
- Is this fact or is this opinion?
- Where might this be used?

**LAST YEAR, HANDGUNS KILLED
48 PEOPLE IN JAPAN.
8 IN GREAT BRITAIN.
34 IN SWITZERLAND.
52 IN CANADA.
58 IN ISRAEL.
21 IN SWEDEN.
42 IN WEST GERMANY.
10,728 IN THE UNITED STATES.**

GOD BLESS AMERICA.



The pen is mightier than the gun.
Werns Handgun Control, Inc. - Name
810 18th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006
Or call (202) 638-4723

STOP HANDGUNS BEFORE THEY STOP YOU.

Facts or opinions? Discuss in small groups!

- The overall quality of life has decreased in the last 10 years.
- Governments must invest more in the environment to combat the loss of biodiversity
- Aalto university is the greenest university in Finland.
- Professor Morag MacRae (2020) argues that, due to the worsening environmental impact of carbon emissions, the use of fossil fuels should be banned by 2030.
- The research team has discovered a new method for this complicated chemical analysis.
- Prolonged use of this product might cause stomach problems for some people.

In pairs, consider strong vs. weak justifications for opinions

Smoking should be banned in public places because

1) *it is bad.*

2) *it gives people bad breath and makes their teeth yellow.*

3) *secondhand smoke is harmful to nonsmokers.*

Which of these justifications is the strongest / weakest and WHY?

A strong justification has the following qualities

- It logically supports the opinion**
- It is specific and states the idea clearly**
- It is convincing to a majority of people**

(LeBeau, Harrington, Lubetsky 2000)

Justifying your opinions

Justification consists of evidence

Four kinds of evidence:

- Example
- Common Sense
- Statistics
- Expert opinion (Research-based evidence)

(LeBeau, Harrington, Lubetsky 2000)

Justifying your opinions

Smoking should be banned in public places

Example:

When I go to the restaurant or bar and there are people smoking near me, I feel that I am breathing their smoke. This makes me a smoker, even though I don't want to be!

Justifying your opinions

Smoking should be banned in public places

Common sense:

It's obvious that secondhand smoke is unhealthy for nonsmokers.

Justifying your opinions

Smoking should be banned in public places

Statistics:

Each year, secondhand smoke causes about 250,000 respiratory infections in infants and children, resulting in about 15,000 annual hospitalizations [3].

Justifying your opinions

Smoking should be banned in public places.

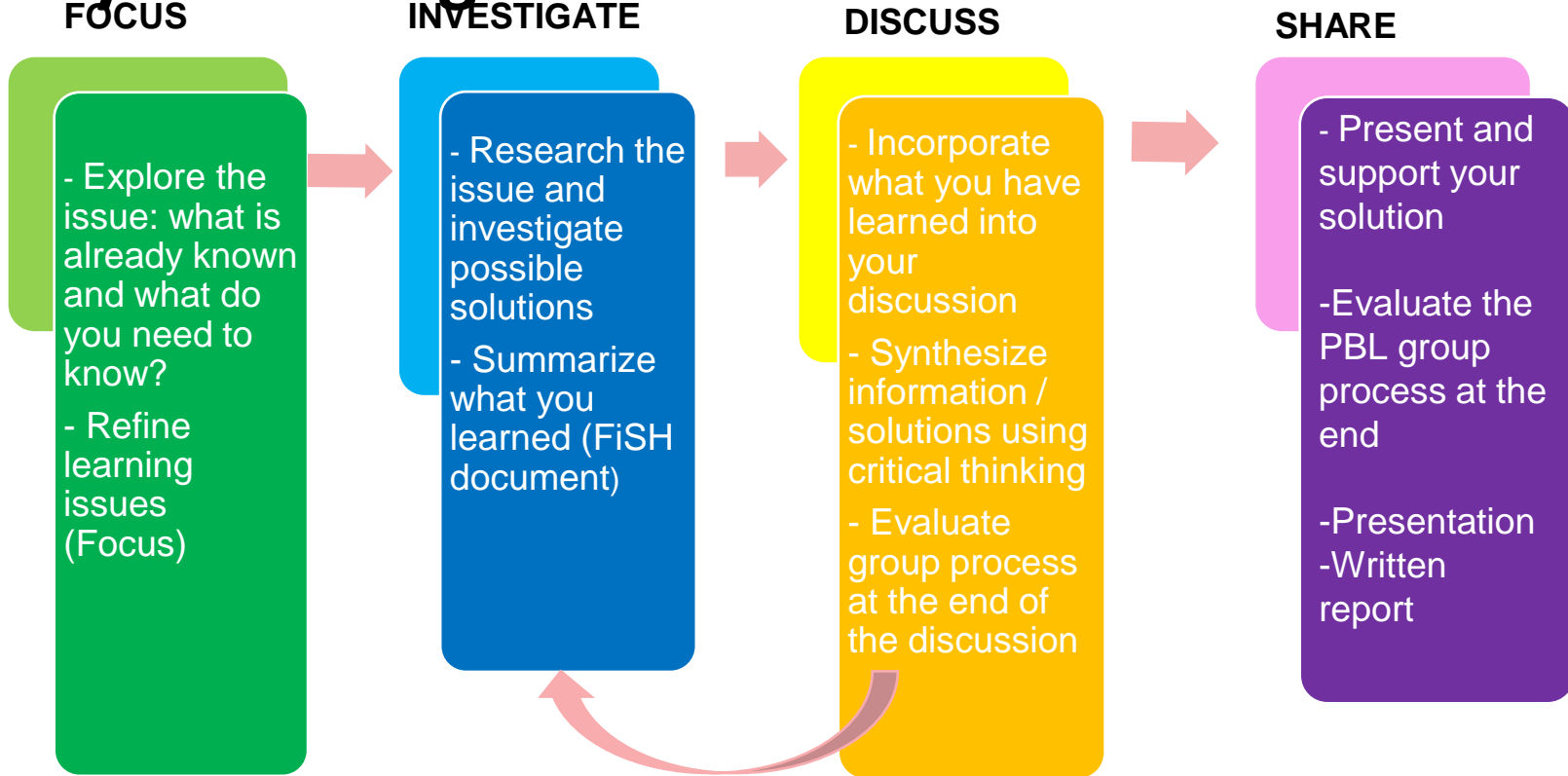
Expert opinion:

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, secondhand smoke is particularly harmful to young children and adults with respiratory conditions [1].

Which type of support do you think is most convincing in your presentation/ report?

- Example
- Common Sense
- Statistics
- Expert Opinion

Synthesizing FISH information in teams in class



Synthesizing Fish information

40 min

**Incorporate what you have learned into your discussion:
Synthesize information / solutions using critical thinking**

- 1. How can you combine each member's findings into a holistic whole in your presentation and report?
 - Think about the different levels of information (background, specific, niche), style, the presence of a strong common thread linking the parts
- 2. Is the information you have found fact or opinions based on facts? What information do you need to support the opinions you will present?
- 3. What are the four stages of the problem-solution pattern that you will include in the introduction to your report?
 - What is the background? What is the problem? What is/are the solution(s)? How effective do you think the solution(s) will be?

Evaluate your group's progress: the reflection cards (15 min)

As homework, you reflected on

- a) your own role, strengths & weaknesses, moments of success, setbacks and challenges
- b) the answers of at least one of your team members

Based on your reflections & the work in class today, briefly discuss with your team

- a) how you are doing as a team
- b) how you can better support each other in this project

For further ideas, see *Checklist for unlocking the potential of a team (Session 4)*!

Cite your sources!

When using information and ideas produced by others in academic writing:

- **Choose a referencing style (Harvard/ APA, MLA, IEEE, etc.) and follow the guidelines for formatting citations** (see: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html)
- **Include a citation in the text and an entry in the reference list/ footnotes**
- **To avoid plagiarism, clearly distinguish between your ideas and those of others**

Homework:

- **Complete the referencing video and quiz**
- **Investigate and contribute to FISH (2%)**
- **Start to write the introduction section of your recommendation report**
- **Fill in the 'planning your individual part' handout**

Next week

No on-campus session.

- **Complete the online module on text genres, paragraph structures and readability**