



Academic Writing Podcast 24 – Describing Results Part 1

Sample Text

A man and a woman are said to be in a **critical condition** after a fire which broke out in their home last Sunday was finally extinguished. Police examining the residence have **come to the conclusion** that the blaze was intentional, and are treating the matter as suspicious. The **research** into the case unearthed **several contentious points**, such as how the fire started and why it spread so quickly. Police officers have **taken** the testimonials of several witnesses **into account** in order to ascertain the best **course of action** for this investigation. They have made it clear that all **relevant aspects** of the case will be taken into consideration. Yesterday it seemed as though the police were considering the man's brother as a suspect, but, having heard **both sides of the argument**, they decided to drop the case against him. although the officers were reluctant to interview the couple in hospital for evidence, the **benefits** of their witness statements **outweigh the drawbacks**.

Glossary

1) **benefits outweigh the drawbacks**

the pluses related to doing something are more significant than the minuses; the condition when it is worth doing something despite some negative consequences or details

2) **to reach (to come to) a conclusion**

to arrive at a deduction about something. To make a judgment or decide after having thought about all the information connected with a situation

- Researchers at Cambridge have now **reached the conclusion** that humans use much more of our brains than was previously thought.
- It took the jury some time to **reach the conclusion** that she was guilty.

3) **points raised in the research**

specific pieces of information or findings presented as important by research or investigation.

- The group's findings create more questions than they answer; further study will be required to address the points raised in their research.
- British schools are under pressure to reform their lunch system after several points



Academic Writing Podcast 24 – Describing Results Part 1

raised by new research indicated a negative impact of school lunches on student health.

- We must consider one of the major ethical points raised by evolutionary science: the role and origin of human altruism.

4) relevant aspects

the parts or features of a situation, idea, or problem that are pertinent to the issue being examined; the parts of something that relate to a given topic

- His company gives advice to manufacturers on the aspects of their products **relevant to** health and safety.
- The purpose of this study was to describe differences in educationally **relevant aspects** of home environments for three groups of elementary students with handicaps
- The task of scientists is to consider all potentially **relevant aspects** of a situation, and show us its opportunities and dangers.

5) critical (period, condition)

1) *extremely important because a future situation will be affected by it*

2) *serious, uncertain and possibly dangerous*

- Reducing levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is **of critical importance** to the future of the environment.
- Proper citation of sources is **critical** in published research to gain credibility and avoid plagiarism issues.
- The National Science Foundation provides **critical** funding to independent researchers who might otherwise have no source of financial support.
- One of the victims of the fire remains **in a critical condition**.

6) both sides of an argument

both (opposing) points of view on a given topic

- As Congress debates the need for more extensive health care programs, protesters from **both sides of the argument** have gathered outside the Capitol Building to voice their opinions.
- New research on salmon populations has provoked controversy over its predictions that several species could die out in a few years. The issue is far from settled, with well-respected scientists on **both sides of** the debate.

7) course of action

a set of steps or decisions taken to address a problem; a plan to deal with a situation

- The engineer's design was stolen by competitors, but, lacking capital to pursue a difficult and expensive legal **course of action** against them, he was forced to abandon his product entirely.



Academic Writing Podcast 24 – Describing Results Part 1

- This assignment asks students to: define the problem, utilize the Internet to research their assignment, interpret both law and judicial decisions, and recommend a **course of action** to solve the problem.
- School counselors should take into consideration both legal and ethical requirements when deciding the best possible **course of action** in response to problem students.

8) to take account for (a range of variable)

to take account of: *to consider something as important and think about it when making plans or deciding how to act.*

to account for: *to explain how or why something has happened, or why results are the way they are.*

- Within each community, a duty should be placed on public services to **take account of** the needs of disabled people.
- The company **takes account of** environmental issues wherever possible.
- Federal research grants provide generous means of support for small organizations; however, these organizations must **account for** how they spend every dollar they receive.
- Others have cast doubt on the new survey, saying that a strong selection bias **accounts for** its surprising results.¹

¹ Voices: Emily Ferris and Kenny Bendiksen