The Introduction

Read this Introduction and identify what the writer is trying to do at each stage.[1]

USING MICROCOMPUTERS IN TEACHING

Stage I

During the past 40 years, the United States has experienced the integration of the computer into society. Progress has been made to the point that small, inexpensive computers with expanded capabilities are available for innumerable uses. Many schools have purchased and are purchasing microcomputers for infusion into their directed learning programs.

Stage II

Most individuals seem to agree that the microcomputer will continue to hold an important role in education. Gubser (1980) and Hinton (1980) suggested phenomenal increases in the numbers of computers both in the school and the home in the near future. Schmidt (1982) identified three types of microcomputer use in classrooms: the object of a course, a support tool, and a means of providing instruction. Foster and Kleene (1982) cite four uses of microcomputers in vocational agriculture: drill and practice, tutorial, simulation and problem solving.

The findings of studies examining the use of various forms of computer-assisted instruction (CAI) have been mixed. Studies by Hickey (1968) and Honeycutt (1974) indicated superior results with CAI while studies by Ellis (1978), Caldwell (1980) and Belzer (1976) indicated little or no significant effect. Although much work has been done to date, more studies need to be conducted to ascertain the effects of microcomputer-assisted instruction in teaching various subjects in a variety of learning situations.

Stage III

Stage IV

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the effect of using microcomputer-assisted instruction as compared to a lecture-discussion technique in teaching principles and methods of cost recovery and investment credit on agricultural assets to graduate students in agricultural education. This topic was identified as being of importance to teachers in providing them the necessary background to teach lessons in farm records.

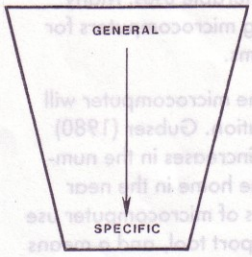
Stage V

Stage I: Setting, background
Stage II: Other research done already
Stage III: Something missing (the Gap)
Stage IV: Purpose
Stage V: Justification

[1] Weissberg, R. & Buker, S. (1990) Writing Up Research Englewood Cliffs; Prentice Hall Regents

The Introduction: 5 Stages

These are the five stages usually included in the introduction to a research article. Note the movement from general to particular.



FIRST STAGE: General statement(s) about a field of research to provide the reader with *a setting* for the problem to be reported

SECOND STAGE: More specific statements about the aspects of the problem *already studied* by other researchers

THIRD STAGE: Statement(s) that indicate *the need for more investigation*

FOURTH STAGE: Very specific statement(s) giving *the purpose/objectives* of the writer's study

FIFTH STAGE: Optional statement(s) that give a *value* or *justification* for carrying out the study

Here is a simpler way of identifying the five stages:

Stage I: What everybody knows.
Stage II: What other researchers in the field have found.
Stage III: What nobody knows.
Stage IV: What I'm going to find out.
Stage V: Why finding out is important.

* Writers do not always arrange the stages of their introductions in this exact order. Sometimes a writer interrupts one stage with another, and then returns to the earlier stage. Sometimes Stage II (usually called "The Review of Literature") is completely separate from the rest of the introduction. (In theses and dissertations, for example, it is often written as a separate chapter.) Stage V is often omitted entirely, as we saw in the preceding example. However, the general plan given here is very common and is the easiest for the beginning research writer to use.

NOT ON S's PAPER