

How to write an abstract for your honors thesis

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What is an abstract?

An abstract is a short summary of your work designed to give even non-expert readers a concise and complete understanding of your research and findings.

Why must you include an abstract?

An abstract provides potential readers with a sense of the basic contents of your thesis. The abstract serves as a hook to draw readers to look at the whole work. Readers want to know if they should invest the time to read further.

What should the abstract include?

- A statement of the purpose of your thesis
- An explanation of your research methods
- The findings or results observed
- The conclusions and/or recommendations drawn from your research

Need Examples from your own discipline?

1. Go to lib.utah.edu (sign-in for off campus access if necessary)
2. Go to "Research Databases"
3. Go to "D" and "Dissertations and Theses Full Text"
4. Go to "Advanced Search" and select "Master's theses"
5. Search on a topic in your discipline. Review the citation/abstract

OR

1. Go to a database with articles in your field
2. Find some articles
3. Review the citation/abstract

Get feedback on your draft

Consider giving it to a friend or classmate who does not know your field. Ask them to summarize your work after reading the abstract. If they can accurately describe your project, you are probably on the right track.

