

Writing tips

by Andy Ross (PLB143-S05) with modification by Paul Gepts

- **Avoid passive sentences**
 - Concise writing
- **Avoid repetitive sentences**
 - Concise writing
- **Creativity**
 - Makes your paper more interesting, less sterile
 - Sets your paper apart from others
 - Pulls the reader into the topic
- **Flow**
 - Transition sentences
- **Clarity**
 - Have an objective friend read your paper, especially if they don't know the subject matter

Simplification, directness, ...

The mere sound of the word thrips **can** strike terror deep into the heart of most people who like to garden.

Thrips can be the most devastating crop pest for farmers around the country and are believed to be one of the biggest pest problems in fruit crops. They are particularly fearful of this pest insect because it can have a rapid ability to cause an incredible amount of damage within only a few days.

However, the order of insects **known as** Thysanoptera, or thrips, **is believed to** contain more than 5000 species of which very few **are known to** cause damage to agricultural crops.

Thysanoptera **can** exhibit an incredible amount of diversity with their feeding habits, morphology, behavior, movement, and reproduction methods.

The name Thysanoptera **is known to** come from the Ancient Greek thysan- for fringe and -ptera for wing (Cranshaw 2004).

Thysanoptera **can** range **anywhere** in size from .5mm to 15mm and **are thought to** exist throughout the world.

Thysanoptera **are considered unusual among most insect** because they have a life history that is **somewhere in between** hemi- and holometabolous, **they have** haplodiploid sex control method, and intricate behavior patterns (Mound 2003).

Thysanoptera have very complex morphological features that **tend to** give the order a unique standing in the insect kingdom and **can** cause a great deal of debate between the ordinal and familial phylogenetic relationships.

The mere sound of the word thrips strikes terror deep into the heart of most people who garden.

Farmers are particularly fearful of this pest insect due to the incredible amount of damage that thrips cause within only a few days.

However, the order Thysanoptera, or thrips, contains more than 5000 species of which very few cause damage to agricultural crops.

This order exhibits an incredible amount of diversity in feeding habits, morphology, behavior, movement, and reproduction methods.

The name Thysanoptera comes from the Ancient Greek thysan- for fringe and -ptera for wing (Cranshaw 2004).

These insects range in size from .5mm to 15mm and exist throughout the world.

Unusual among insects, thrips have a life history intermediate between hemi- and holometabolous, a haplodiploid sex control method, and intricate behavior patterns (Mound 2003).

Complex morphological features among the Thysanoptera give the order exclusivity in the insect kingdom and cause a great deal of debate between the ordinal and familial phylogenetic relationships.

Very Concise Paragraph

Thysanoptera, or thrips range in size from .5mm to 15mm and exist throughout the world. Unusual among insects, thrips have a life history intermediate between hemi- and holometabolous, a haplodiploid sex control method, and intricate behavior patterns (Mound 2003). Complex morphological features among the Thysanoptera give the order exclusivity in the insect kingdom and cause a great deal of debate between the ordinal and familial phylogenetic relationships.

How to find passive sentences

- **Spellcheck entire paper**
- **Highlight individual paragraphs or sentences and run spellcheck again**
- **Look for two verbs (side by side) acting on a single noun**

Counts	
Words	227
Characters	1166
Paragraphs	2
Sentences	9
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	4.5
Words per Sentence	25.2
Characters per Word	5.0
Readability	
Passive Sentences	33%
Flesch Reading Ease	26.1
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	12.0

Reference lists

1. **Title** the top of the page as reference list, references, or works cited.
 - a. Larger type and sometimes bold face but whatever looks best to you is fine.
2. All sources sorted **alphabetically** according to the last name of the first author on each source.
3. Leave **one blank line** between each source, so reader can identify individual sources.
4. **No headings or separations** (aside from the customary one line between each source) between different source types.
 - a. No need to classify or group sources as book, journal, or website. The type of source will be obvious due to the style of referencing used.
5. For **book** sources:
 - a. Last name, first and middle initial of each author; date book published in parenthesis; title of book (italicized); period; edition number; comma; publisher and publisher's address (city, state, country).
6. For **journal** sources (primary literature):
 - a. Last name, first and middle initial of each author; date journal published in parenthesis; title of article; period; title of journal (italicized); volume number of journal (boldfaced); colon; page numbers in journal.
7. For **websites**:
 - a. Last name, first and middle initial of each site author/manager/updater (if none, then host name as in your "within text" citing); most recent update to site in parenthesis; host full name; period; title of home page; period; title of specific page; period; web address; date you viewed the site.

Examples

- **Books:**
 - Cranshaw, W. (2004) *Garden Insects of North America: the ultimate guide to backyard bugs.*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, U.S.A.
 - Gullan, P.J. and Cranston, P.S. (2005) *The Insects. An Outline of Entomology.* 3rd ed., Blackwell Publishing Ltd, Malden, Oxford, Carlton, England.
- **Journal Articles:**
 - Chapman, T.W. *et al* (2002) The evolution of soldier reproduction in social thrips. *Behavioral Ecology* **13**: 519-525.
 - Hoddle, M.S. *et al* (2004) Thysanoptera Recorded From California, U.S.A.: A Checklist. *Florida Entomologist* **87**: 317- 323.
 - Mound, L.A. and Morris, D.C. (2004) Thysanoptera Phylogeny – the Morphological Background. *Acta Phytopathologica et Entomologica Hungarica* **39**: 101-113.
 - Schwartz, J. (1994) Low-Level Lead Exposure and Children's IQ: A Meta-analysis and Search for a Threshold. *Environmental Research* **65**: 42-55.
- **Websites:**
 - Campbell, L.R. *et al*. The Complete Tospovirus Resource Page. <http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/tospovirus/> Viewed April 10, 2005.
 - CSIRO Australia (2005) CSIRO Entomology; Ecowatch: Thysanoptera, thrips. <http://www.ento.csiro.au/Ecowatch/Insects/Invertebrates/thysanoptera.htm> Viewed April 8, 2005.
 - EPA (2006) United States Environmental Protection Agency, Lead in Paint Dust and Soil <http://www.epa.gov/lead/> Viewed January 25, 2006
 - If no author mentioned, use Anonymous. If no date mentioned, use (n.d.): (not dated)