# THREE COMMON GENRES OF ACADEMIC PAPERS

**Academic writing** has a fixed structure which is different from fiction. Its readers navigate in specific ways, which a writer should understand. Each genre is suitable for a different kind of contribution, and brings a somewhat different way of writing your argument. Some other genres: the infographic, the tech report, the powerpoint presentation, the news item.

They are similar in that they contain: (1) THAT we work on something, (2) WHAT we found that's new, (3) HOW that finding plays out elsewhere, and (4) WHY we do all this.

## AN EMPIRICAL PAPER

With an **empirical report** or **empirical paper,** the author has done something, and found something which he reports. *Don't forget to relate it to the work of others.*

### A better world with digital flowers
#### Jack Jones, Delft University of Technology

**ABSTRACT**
To improve life for people, many things have been tried. A new idea is that giving them hi-tech flowers can make them more happy. We tried and found a small, but promising, effect.

**INTRODUCTION**
People are often unhappy. Many things have been tried, especially in improving conditions, but not much regarding giving them technology that does not bring a function.

**REVIEW**
Ways of making people happy have been giving them money, food, health, peace.

**NEW IDEA**
Send them digital flowers, which speak their name. We expect this makes them terribly happy.

**METHOD**
We made flowers, gave them to 12 randomly selected Dutch people on TU Delft campus, asked them to rate their happiness

**RESULTS**
Average happiness was 5.3 for those who got flowers, a control group rated 4.0. Variance is 0.5

**DISCUSSION**
The increase is significant, suggesting it works. But it was less large than expected. Testing on campus and only Dutch participants is an important limitation.

**CONCLUSION**
Talking flowers may be a hopeful direction. But more research is needed before we can apply it to global sales.

**REFERENCES**
Jones (1970) *What flowers can do.* (…)
Perry (2004) *Creating digital flowers with nanotechnology.* (…)

## A (LITERATURE) REVIEW PAPER

With a **review paper,** the author has collected what others have said about a specific topic. The author's new contribution is to critically compare what those works say about that topic. *Don't forget to tell where you looked.*

### A better world with digital flowers
#### Jack Jones, Delft University of Technology

**ABSTRACT**
Gifts improve the human condition. Recent theories have started to address this. This paper reviews recent literature, and discusses the relation between happiness and hi-tech gifts in particular.

**INTRODUCTION**
People are often unhappy. Several authors tried to explain why this is and propose remedies. This paper reviews approaches for gift-giving and happiness.

**NEW IDEA**
I reviewed the areas of consumer behavior, psychology, and design, for papers with 'gift' or 'giving' in the title.

**METHOD**
Much was found in the Journal of Consumer Happiness and Design & Emotion conferences. Many cite the X theory. Little is said about the role of technology.

**RESULTS**
Authors X and Y present theories of happiness, but say little about gifts. Z's theory of gifts focuses mostly on monetary value. W reports an experiment about evaluating gifts from parents.

**DISCUSSION**
Most authors agree that human interaction and appreciation is important for happiness and that gifts can play a part. Some address perishables such as flowers, but nobody discusses technology.

The field of gift-giving is gaining in attention, but much is yet unknown. Especially the technological aspect is missing. In my opinion it can be improved in the following way.

**CONCLUSION**
The growing attention for happiness brings some theoretical frameworks for the design of 'gift experiences'. I envisage that developing approaches tuned to digital gifts can open up new markets.

**REFERENCES**
X & Y(1995) *Happiness factors.* (…)
Z(2014) *On the price of gifts.* (…)
W(1995) *What parents give their children.*

## A POSITION PAPER (OR ESSAY)

With a **position paper** or **essay,** the author starts from his own observation, experience, or idea, and develops a 'theory' from that. *Don't forget to place this in the relevant field, and relate your findings to what is known.*

### A better world with digital flowers
#### Jack Jones, Delft University of Technology

**ABSTRACT**
To improve life for people, many things have been tried, e.g., gifts. In this paper I explore how chains of giving and giving back contribute to happiness.

**INTRODUCTION**
People are often unhappy. Many things have been tried, especially in improving conditions.

**NEW IDEA**
In my own experience, gifts have always made me happy, and as a designer, I have found that designing 'gifts' rather than 'functional items' brings a new perspective.

When a gift is received, it often brings a spark of joy. We see that in Xmas gifts, in welcome presents, and more. Especially the way it is given and the first moments of use bring smiles to people's eyes.

When I gave gifts, I observed that people kept them around, and brought them back later. It usually led to people giving gifts in return. The giving seemed more important than the gift, unless it was expensive.

**REVIEW**
The literature about gifts pays little attention to the return-giving. Jones (1970) addresses one-off giving of a gift, and Perry (2004) pays attention to digital gifts. Their findings can be applied to a single occurrence, but don't explain the longer chain of giving and giving back.

Giving more attention to longer chains of giving opens up perspectives for new ways to set up 'gift services'.

**CONCLUSION**
There is a lot of gift-giving in the world. In this paper I argued that we can design better gifts if we look at longer chains of giving and giving something back. This can lead to a new range of products as 'serial gifts'.

**REFERENCES**
Jones (1970) *What flowers can do.* (…)
Perry (2004) *Creating digital flowers with nanotechnology.* (…)

Beware of competing genres (see other side)