



Idaho State  
University

# **Bridging the Gap: Scaffolding Writing and Research skills**

P r e s e n t a t i o n

Rachel Hayes

Master of Public Health

Graduate Teaching Assistant

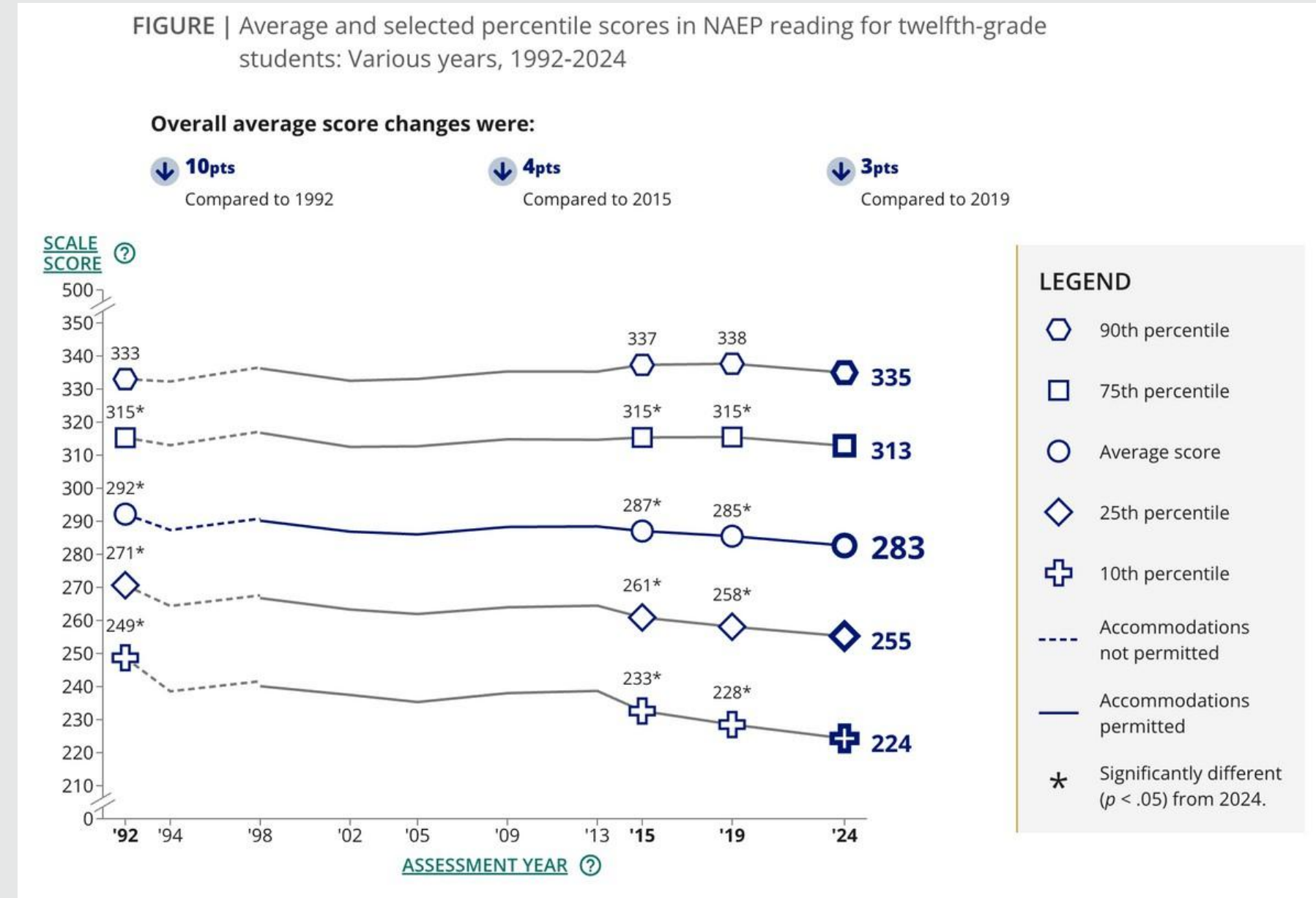
# Introduction

Research indicates that many incoming college students are **less prepared\*** than in previous years when it comes to essential academic skills including:

- critical thinking
- problem-solving
- writing
- close reading
- analysis

\*Source:

[https://allaccess.collegeboard.org/recent-trends-college-readiness-and-](https://allaccess.collegeboard.org/recent-trends-college-readiness-and-achievement-college-performance)



Graph courtesy of: <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reports/reading/2024/g12/>

# The Problem



## Problem Statement

In my 4000 level courses, I've seen significant differences in student skill levels.

- grammar sentence
- structure analysis
- research
- 



## Solution

I developed a scaffolding approach for CPH 4446: Communication Strategies in Community & Public Health.

- scaffolding provides temporary support\*
- gradually reduce guidance student
- is eventually independent

\*Source:

<https://www.gcu.edu/blog/teaching-school-administration/what-scaffolding-in-education-how-applied>

# Part 1

# Writing Workshop

# Writing Workshop

## Sentence Structure

**Subject:** person, place, or thing  
performing the action of the sentence

**Predicate:** expresses action or being  
within the sentence

**Independent clause:** can stand on  
its own as a sentence

**Dependent clause:** does not express  
a complete thought

1. My partner wants to run a marathon together, but I prefer to watch them.
2. If the interview goes well, I will start working next Tuesday.
3. I went out on the bike that Randy gave me for my birthday.



For each sentence, find the: subject, predicate, independent clause, and dependent clause (if applicable).

Writing Workshop Lecture

APA Formatting

Introduction Video

Quiz



# Part 2

# Mini Assignments

# Mini Assignments

2 Page Mini Paper

Chapter 2 Assignment

Chapter 4 Discussion

## Chapter Assignment Guidelines

Answer the questions derived from your chapter reading. **Note: only answer the questions listed in the example below.** Your answers should be 1-3 sentences in your own words. Include one direct quote **per answer** (with the page number) from the textbook that backs up the rationale/importance/application of your answer.

## Chapter Discussion Guidelines

From the chapter reading, select five key points for discussion. This writing exercise is designed to help you practice writing professionally in your own words while using properly cited sources.

**For each point:**

1. Begin with a clear sentence that introduces the idea you will be discussing.
2. **In your own words**, expand on the idea using information from the textbook. You will be paraphrasing information from the source rather than using direct quotes.
3. Provide an in-text citation in proper APA 7 format to support your discussion.

# Part 3

# Research Paper #1

# Community Health Needs Assessment



Assignment Guidelines



Rubric  
Rough Draft- Extensive Feedback



Step-by-Step Outline



Example Paper

## Health Status

- Description of the health issue
  - Etiology/contributory cause – cause of the disease
  - Burden of disease (occurrence of disability and death due to a disease) – morbidity and mortality (must include national and state data)
  - Course of disease (what happens once it occurs, severity or case fatality if possible)
  - Distribution of disease (who gets the disease, where are they located, when does the disease occur)
- Determinants (cause of the causes)
  - BIG GEMS: behavior, infection, genetics, geography, environment, medical care, socioeconomic-cultural factors
- How does the health issue affect your selected target population?
  - Prevalence – the number of existing cases of a disease



# Part 4

# Research Paper #2-3

# Health Communication Campaign Part 1



Assignment Guidelines



Rubric

Rough Draft- Extensive Feedback



Step-by-Step Outline



Example Paper

Good start on your rough draft.

My notes:

- Fantastic use of in-text citations
- I edited your first page to sound more formal; apply these examples to the rest of your paper
- Excellent writing overall; your paper is engaging, informative, and communicates urgency to your audience.
- Be sure to triple-check for minor spelling, grammatical, and format errors before turning in
- Make sure you are using a formal, academic tone. That means avoiding conversational tones and phrases as well as "I" language.
- What is your proposed program? Please give some detail. What would you do to improve health outcomes for your priority population? For example: A community garden program could be implemented to improve the health of the priority population.
- Make sure that your program is evidence-based. In other words, find a program that has been proven to work and apply that program to your target population. With the community garden example, I would back up my idea by briefly describing other community garden programs that have been proven to work in similar situations. I would back this idea up with in-text citations, of course.

 Rachel Hayes

I love this description

 Rachel Hayes

source

 Rachel Hayes

can we reword this so it doesn't use as many commas?

 Rachel Hayes

source

 Rachel Hayes

love this idea

 Rachel Hayes

I love that you chose such a niche subject

 Rachel Hayes

comma

 Rachel Hayes

: rather than ;

 Rachel Hayes

comma

 Rachel Hayes

you're making a lot of claims here; is there a source to back them up?



# Health Communication Campaign Part 2



Assignment Guidelines

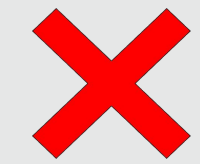


Rubric

Rough Draft- Extensive Feedback



Step-by-Step Outline



Example Paper



Excellent start! Please see my notes for more.

Overall note: In your final draft, be sure to use a more formal, academic tone.


Tips for a formal, academic tone:

- When writing in an academic tone, make statements based on facts, not personal opinions.
- Don't say that something *will* happen for sure- use words like "may," "might," or "could" instead. This shows that your ideas are based on evidence and research, not on what you personally think or hope.
- Use third-person language
- Cite every source


Rachel Hayes, Oct 29 at 5:23pm

 Rachel Hayes  
at risk for what?

 Rachel Hayes  
This is an excellent introduction!

 Rachel Hayes  
make sure that you are adding in-text citations

 Rachel Hayes  
good

 Rachel Hayes  
I LOVE this sentence! Clear, professional problem statement

 Rachel Hayes  
cite

 Rachel Hayes  
very good



# Results



Quality of student research is higher in 2025 than 2024.



I spend less time grading research papers for CPH 4446 in 2025 than in 2024.



I receive less emails with questions about formatting, writing mechanics, and

and less research questions in 2025 than in 2024.

# Questions



# Thank You

