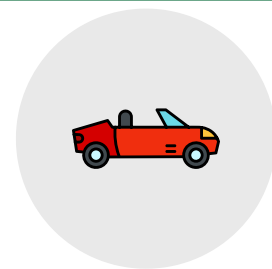


CARS Method - A Heuristic for Research

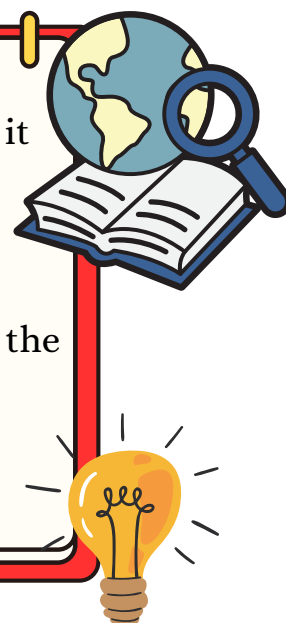
The C.A.R.S. Method is a **heuristic** (mental shortcut or thinking machine) created by John Swales (1990) for writing **research**. C.A.R.S. stands for “creating a research space” and helps writers think about what **moves** should be made in an academic research introduction. This handout explains the C.A.R.S. Method and gives an example of its usage.



Why is This Method Useful?

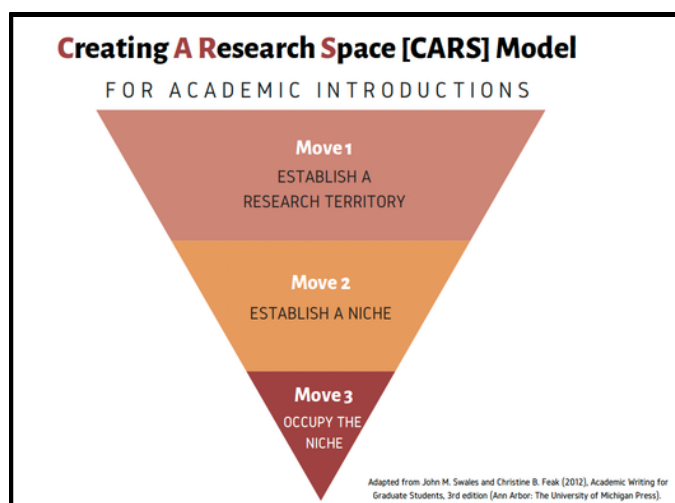
Creating A Research Space

- The C.A.R.S. Method is useful because it shows readers **how to begin** the **academic research process**.
- The method shows writers how the **introduction lays the groundwork** for the rest of the paper.
- Writers can determine how their **research is universally important**.



C.A.R.S. Moves

The C.A.R.S. Method involves a series of “moves,” or writerly choices, that create an organizational flow in their introduction.



Move One: Establish a Research Territory

1. Claim the importance or relevance of their topic
2. Describe the current state of research (What has happened before the research your paper discusses? What has been said and by whom?)

Move Two: Establish a Niche (Position)

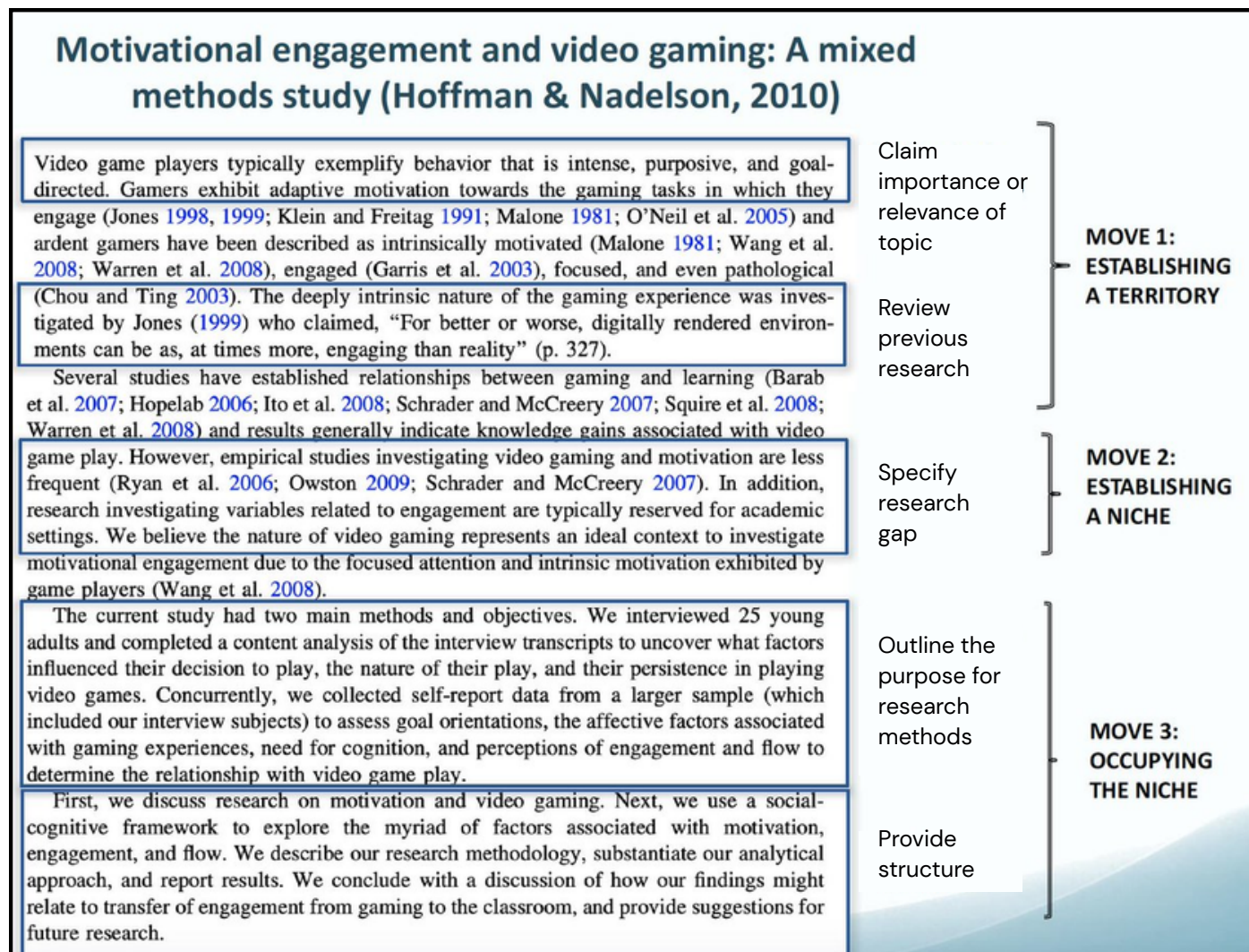
1. Specify the research gap (what has previous research missed). Or provide a question, counter-claim, or continue current research.

Move Three: Occupy the Niche

1. Explain your research
2. Outline purpose
3. Provide a sentence about structure (Ex: I will argue x through y).

CARS Method - A Heuristic for Research (continued)

Example



Tips

Swales indicates that Move Two is identified through specific terminology to demonstrate how current research departs from what has already been done. Some examples are below:



Contrast	Verbs	Adjectives
• Nevertheless • Notwithstanding • Whereas • However	• Challenge • Deter • Neglect • Question	• Inadequate • Questionable • Unreliable • Unsatisfactory