

## APA Documentation Tip Sheet

This handout gives a brief overview of basic APA style rules. For an exhaustive list of guidelines, please see the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* in the ALPHA Center.

### SOURCES

There are two kinds of sources:

- Primary: study or data on a subject written by someone with firsthand observation
- Secondary: study or data on a subject written by someone who has analyzed firsthand data written by someone else

### WHAT TO DOCUMENT

- ✓ All information that is new knowledge to you
- ✓ All paraphrased information
- ✓ Direct quotations

Documenting too much is generally better than not documenting enough. In general, you should probably document at least once per paragraph.

### IN-TEXT DOCUMENTATION

- Cite the source in parentheses immediately following the information being documented.
- Always cite the author and the year of publication. Include a page number only when using a direct quote. When paraphrasing, page numbers are optional, but remember to be consistent. Note: when citing an author's name in APA, do not use first and middle names; instead, use first and middle initials. APA does this to reduce gender bias. Also, only use an ampersand sign (&) inside parentheses or on the References page.
- Smoothly incorporate the parenthetical reference into your text by placing it as near as possible to the material being documented.
- The period of a sentence always follows the documentation in parentheses (except for in block quotations, see below). For example: Despite social and academic change and reform, US literacy levels have progressed or regressed very little (Stedman, 1996).
- Quotation marks for direct quotations go before the citation in parentheses. For example: "It would appear from the evidence that it is time to reconsider a return to an emphasis on decoding, on vocabulary building, and on word recognition, particularly in grades K-3" (Chall, 1996, p. 130).
- Quotations which are more than forty words long are set off as block quotations:
  1. Start a new line at the beginning of your quote.
  2. Indent the left margin ½ inch for the entire quote.

3. Double space the quote.
4. Do not use quotation marks.
5. Document at the end of the quote.
6. Place the period before the citation.
7. The first sentence of your paragraph that follows the quote should begin a new line and should not be indented (try not to end a paragraph with a block quote).

For example:

Miele (1993) found the following:

The “placebo effect, “ which had been verified in previous studies, disappeared when behaviors were studied in this manner. Furthermore, the behaviors were never exhibited again, even when real drugs were administered. Earlier studies were clearly premature in attributing the results to a placebo effect. (p. 276)

## **SAMPLE IN-TEXT CITATIONS**

### **Author’s name not given in text**

Whether or not the New Testament’s texts have been reliably preserved for us through the centuries is no longer an issue (Strobel, 1973).

### **Author’s name not given in text, six or more authors**

According to the most recent reports from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the overall quality of student writing had improved slightly over the past two decades, possibly as a result of classroom teachers incorporating more process-oriented strategies than in the past (Applebee et al., 1994). [You would also use *et al.* for a work with six or more authors when the authors are referenced in the text. For three to five authors, write out all the names for the first citation, and use the first surname with *et al.* thereafter.]

### **Author’s name in text**

According to Chall (1996), the reading ability of children and adolescents is declining.

### **More than one work by the same author**

Diet is not the cause of ADHD in children (Hallowell & Ratey, 1994a). ADHD is caused by a lack of serotonin in the brain (Hallowell & Ratey, 1994b). [If you have multiple works by the same author(s) with the same publication date, separate the works by the suffixes a, b, c, and so forth after the year. The suffixes should also appear in the references list where these references are ordered alphabetically.]

### Religious works

“...whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16, Revised Standard Version). [The next time you quote a verse, you do not need to include the version unless it changes.]

### REFERENCES PAGE

- At the end of your paper, you must provide a list of works used in your paper. Make sure all entries are double-spaced.
- The word *References* should be centered one inch from the top of the page, not underlined, italicized, or bolded and in 12-point font. Double space after the word *References*.
- Include a page number on the References page. For example, if the last page of the paper was 12, then the References page should begin on page 13.
- Use a hanging indent for all entries: the first line of an entry is flush left, and all other lines in the entry are indented one half inch.
- Capitalize only the first letter of the first word in the title, the first letter of the first word immediately following a colon, and proper nouns. All other words and letters should be lower case.
- Article titles should not be put in quotation marks.
- While underlining and italicizing for books, journals, magazines, and so forth really are the same thing, APA style prefers italicizing.

### SAMPLE ENTRIES FOR REFERENCES

#### One author

Goodman, K. (1996). *On Reading: A Common-sense look at the nature of language and the science of reading*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

#### Two to six authors

Hallowell, E.M., & Ratey, J.J. (1994). *Answers to distraction*. New York, NY: Bantam.

#### More than six authors

Applebee, A.N., Langer, J.A., Mullis, I.V.S., Latham, A.S., Gentile, C.A., Samson, L.A., et al. (1994). *NAEP 1992 Writing Report Card*. Washington, D.C: Educational Testing Service.

**Journal articles**

Lynch, D.A., George, D. & Cooper, M.M. (1997). Moments of argument: Agonistic inquiry and confrontational cooperation. *College Composition and Communication*, 48(1), 61-85.

**Work with editor**

Marshall, J.D. (1984). Process and product: Case studies of writing in two content areas. In A.N. Applebee (Ed.) *Contexts for learning to write: Studies of secondary school instruction* (pp. 149-168). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

**Work with more than one volume**

Gurman, A. (1982). Family therapy outcome research: Knowns and unknowns. In A.S. Gurman & D.P. Knishker (Eds.), *Research in cognitive development: Logical cognition in children* (Vol. 1, pp. 243-275). New York, NY: Springer.

**CITING ELECTRONIC SOURCES**

- With electronic sources, some of the data which should be included on the References page is frequently missing. As a general rule, include as much data as you can find on your source, but do not be alarmed if you cannot find everything.
- Because of the fluctuation within electronic media, it is important to carefully determine the credibility of electronic sources. Most articles that appear in journals or books have been reviewed and juried by several experts, enhancing their **credibility**. This is not always the case with electronic sources. Web sites ending in .edu (educational institution), .gov (government agency), and .org (non-profit organization) are more consistently credible than web sites ending in .com or .net.
- Note: do not put a period after a URL in an APA References page entry even if it ends the entry.
- For more information on citing databases in APA, see the worksheet entitled “Citing Aggregator Databases in APA.”

## **SAMPLE ENTRIES FOR ELECTRONIC SOURCES**

### **CD-ROM and portable databases**

Meyer, A.S. & Bock, K. (1992). The tip of the tongue phenomenon: Blocking or partial activation? [CD-ROM]. *Memory & Cognition*, 20, 715-726. Article from:  
SilverPlatter File: PschyLIT Item: 80-16351

### **Internet article based on print source**

VandenBos, G., Knappy, S., & Doe, J. (2001). Role of reference elements in the selection of resources by psychology undergraduates [Electronic version]. *Journal of Bibliographic Research*, 5, 117-123.

### **Article in Internet-only journal**

Fredrickson, B.L. (2000, March 7). Cultivating positive emotions to optimize health and well-being. *Prevention & Treatment*, 3. Retrieved November 20, 2000, from  
<http://journals.apa.org/prevention/volume3/pre0030001a.html>

### **Web site**

Allen, D.C. (2000). Education in East Africa. Retrieved June 24, 2002 from  
<http://www.educationaroundtheworld.org>

Sample APA References Page:

References

- Begley, S. (1998, January 19). Aping language. *Newsweek*, 131, 56-58.
- Booth, W. (1990, October 29). Monkeying with language: Is chimp using words or merely aping handlers? *The Washington Post*, p. A3.
- Eckholm, E. (1985, June 25). Kanzi the chimp: A life in science. *The New York Times*, pp. C1, C3.
- Fouts, R. (1997). *Next of kin: What chimpanzees have taught me about who we are*. New York: William Morrow.
- Gibbons, A. (1991). Déjà vu all over again: Chimp-language wars. *Science*, 251, 1561-1562.
- Greenfield, P. M., & Savage-Rumbaugh, E. S. (1990). Grammatical combination in *Pan paniscus*: Process of learning and invention in the evolution and development of language. In S. T. Paker & K. R. Gibson (Eds.), *"Language" and intelligence in monkeys and apes: Comparative developmental perspectives* (pp. 540-578). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Sullivan, C., & Yeager, C. P. (1989). Communicative context and linguistic competence: The effect of social setting on a chimpanzee's conversational skill. In R. A. Garner, B. T. Gardner, & T. E. Van Cantfort (Eds.), *Teaching sign language to chimpanzees* (pp. 269-279). Albany: SUNY Press.
- Terrace, H. S., Petitto, L. A., Sanders, R. J., & Bever, T. G. (1979). Can an ape create a sentence? [Electronic version]. *Science*, 206, 891-902. Retrieved June 7, 2002, from <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~lpetitto/Science1979.pdf>