

Writing in APA Style: A Sample Student Paper

Commented [LBW2]: Use a concise, descriptive title which lets the reader know about the main idea and related concepts of your paper. Use Title Case capitalization which means to capitalize as a book title is done.

Lisa Blackwell Wan

Commented [LBW3]: Use two double-spaced lines between the title and the authors' lines. If more than one author is responsible for the paper, list each one on a separate line followed by the academic affiliation.

Department of the Library, Tarleton State University

LBRY 1001: APA Writing

Commented [LBW4]: Include the course number followed by a colon, then the course name.

Dr. Eliza Bibliophile

Commented [LBW5]: List the instructor's name next.

August 1, 2020

Commented [LBW6]: The due date for the paper is shown using the month, date, and year format appropriate to the country.

Abstract

The abstract, written in the style of the American Psychological Association (APA), provides a succinct description of the paper in no more than 250 words. Most undergraduate students are not required to include an abstract, while graduate students' papers will usually need to contain an abstract. In your abstract, include descriptions of your hypothesis or thesis statement, followed by the main ideas in your paper. Be concisely descriptive when writing your abstract. From the abstract, readers will determine if they want to read this paper. Use keywords to help readers locate your paper. Since this paper is about writing in APA style, the hypothesis refers to writing using APA style from the *Publication Manual of American Psychological Association (APA Manual)*, 7th edition. Main ideas involve the main points of your paper. The main ideas of this paper are described as follows: Student writers should adhere to APA's writing standards use of effective writing within the context of scholarship. Papers will be organized using Levels of Headings. Careful attention to the use of bias-free wording will result in sensitive writing. Appropriate credit to authors' information used within your paper is given by using proper citation. Plagiarism is avoided through the use of citation and care with wording. Reference entries must be included for all authors cited within the paper. Following APA standards in writing will result in excellence in writing and papers that communicate the intent of the author.

Keywords: APA writing style, *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, bias-free writing, plagiarism, paraphrase, quotations, citation, references

Commented [LBW7]: Abstracts are not typically required for undergraduate students' papers, while graduate students are typically required to include an Abstract.

Commented [LBW8]: Place the label "Abstract" on the first line of the second page, centered, and bolded.

Commented [LBW9]: Begin the abstract using left-justification. Always use double-spacing.

Commented [LBW10]: See the *APA Manual*, p. 38.

Commented [LBW11]: Keywords describe, in single words or short phrases, the most important aspects of your paper. These words are those which researchers would use to locate your paper. List words on the next line after the end of the Abstract. Indent and italicize the word *Keywords*, followed by a colon, then list the words in lower case letters except proper nouns. Do not put a period at the end of the list. See *APA Manual*, p. 38-39, Section 2.10.

Writing in APA Style: A Sample Student Paper

A paper written in the style of the American Psychological Association (APA) is the writing style most often used for papers written in the social sciences, as well as in other areas (American Psychological Association [APA], 2020). This style ensures excellent written communication for the greatest comprehension by the reader (Bradley et al., 2020). The introduction informs the reader about the major points of research found in this paper. The major points are the main ideas of the paper developed from the outline used to prepare for writing the paper (Cherry, 2020). The outline is based on your well-defined hypothesis, i.e. the over-arching, guiding principle upon which your research was based (Chen et al., 2010). No heading is used for the introduction (APA, 2020). Writing in APA style requires attention to format, APA writing style, bias-free writing, author citation, and references which are all covered in this paper. Write your paper using the structure found in the 7th edition of the APA's *Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA Manual)*.

Structure

APA Style has evolved since 1929 as an informal guide (Bradley et al., 2020), to the first manual in 1952 (Daniel, 2001, as cited in Bradley et al., 2020), to the current 7th edition in 2020. Undergraduate and graduate students typically use APA Style as a guide in order to produce academic papers with excellence in writing and organized by Levels of Headings (APA, 2020).

Levels of Headings

APA style uses the device of Levels of Headings to create a hierarchical system of organization. Five levels of headings may be used (APA, 2020), although most undergraduate papers use only Levels 1 to 3. Using the levels of headings will allow you to logically present the concepts of your paper.

Level 1 Headings

Level 1 headings are used for the main ideas in your paper. Level 1 headings are centered, bolded, use Title Case, with wording beginning as a new paragraph (APA, 2020). Ideas contained within

Commented [LBW12]: Begin the body of the paper with the Title. Use the exact same title as the one on your title page.

Commented [LBW13]: Groups may be referenced within your paper. Groups are formally organized units, such as companies, governments, special task forces, etc. If desired, names of groups may be shortened by giving the full name of the group, first, followed by the shortened form within parenthesis. Only use the shortened form throughout the remainder of the paper. Groups may also author works. See next comment.

Commented [LBW14]: Citation which uses a group author's name may also be shortened at the first citation use of the group author's name. For parenthetical citation, give the full group author name followed by the shortened form within brackets. For narrative citation, give the full group author name followed by the shortened form within parenthesis. Only use this shortened group author name in citation through the remainder of the paper.

Commented [LBW15]: Elements such as the title of a book, names of psychological tests, and commonly used acronyms may be referenced within your paper in a shortened manner. Use the same construct as with groups, i.e., give the complete title, name, or words used to create the acronym, then use parenthesis to enclose the selected shortened form. Only use the shortened form throughout the remainder of the paper.

Commented [LBW16]: Example of citation which includes reference to a secondary source. See page 258, Section 8.6 in the *APA Manual*.

Commented [LBW17]: Spell out numbers when used at the beginning of sentences.

Commented [LBW18]: See page 48, Table 2.3 in the *APA Manual*.

the main idea of the Level 1 heading may be broken down into subcategories. These subcategories of ideas are presented using the Headings, Levels 2 through 5.

Level 2 Headings

Level 2 headings are used for the subcategories of ideas originating from within the Level 1 headings. Level 2 heading are left-justified, bolded, use Title Case, with wording beginning as a new paragraph (APA, 2020).

Level 3 Headings

Level 3 headings are used for the subcategories of ideas originating from within the Level 2 headings. Level 3 headings are italicized, bolded, use Title Case, with text beginning as a new paragraph (APA, 2020). Writing your paper requires the use of Levels of Heading and following APA's writing style.

Writing Style

APA-styled writing is scholarly writing which is different from writing styles such as expository, narrative, or creative. APA writing style includes a comprehensive array of concepts and requires attention to detail (APA, 2020).

Continuity, Flow, Transition, Conciseness, Clarity, and Reasonable Length Phrases

APA writing style employs continuity and transitions, while using conciseness and clarity. Phrase lengths are reasonable with good flow (APA, 2020). Using an outline to guide your writing will help ensure concepts and ideas are presented with continuity in an organized manner with easy flow (Cherry, 2020). APA (2020) requires that well-constructed transitions lead from one idea to the next prepares the reader for the next topic. Concise writing uses as few of words as necessary to convey clear and clarified meaning. Avoid wordiness by constructing meaningful phrases without superfluous wording. Complicated noun phrases should be replaced with more simplified descriptions. Authors should avoid overly long sentences and keep paragraphs to a reasonable length. When making comparisons, use parallel construction. Often, using more words to give complete descriptions of comparisons groups will

Commented [LBW19]: This is a Level 3 heading.

Commented [LBW20]: This is a Level 1 heading.

Commented [LBW21]: This is a Level 2 heading.

Commented [LBW22]: Long paraphrases should start with the author citation. Repetition of the citation should not be done unless the topic changes (APA, p. 269).

Commented [LBW23]: When more than one narrative citation is given within a paragraph, include the year with the first narrative citation. Do not include the year in additional narrative citations *within this paragraph* (APA, p. 265).

ensure parallel construction. Attention to these factors will ensure that the tone is interesting while still maintaining a scholarly style.

No Contractions, Colloquialisms, Jargon or Anthropomorphisms

APA-style writing should avoid the use of contractions, colloquialisms, and jargon (APA, 2020).

Do not use **contractions** (APA, 2020), the shortening of two words into one using an apostrophe.

Colloquialisms, which are typically used in spoken language and which use an informal pattern of speech, should not be used (APA, 2020). Jargon, the use of terminology familiar only to those in a particular field, should be minimized in order to promote the reader's understanding (APA, 2020).

Anthropomorphisms should not be used. **Anthropomorphism** is defined as, "attribut[ing] human characteristics to animals or to inanimate sources" (APA, 2020, p. 117).

Commented [LBW24]: Example of a contraction: "don't" for "do not."

Commented [LBW25]: Example of a colloquialism: using "looked up" when one actually means "researched."

Commented [LBW26]: Keywords are italicized when followed by a definition. Do not italicize the keyword thereafter (APA, 2020, p. 170, Section 6.22).

Commented [LBW27]: The "[ing]" ending was added by the paper's author to make the grammar of the sentence correct. Brackets indicate that "ing" was not part of the original wording.

Commented [LBW28]: An example anthropomorphism is, "the data states..." which may conjure up images of pieces of data actually telling about the findings.

Bias-Free Language

Bias-free language is required when writing according to the *APA Manual* (APA, 2020). Writers should use appropriate sensitivity when writing about personal characteristics. When describing research participant's age use terminology used by those persons without the use of open-ended age ranges such as "65 years and older" (APA, 2020; Streetkerk, 2020). Descriptions pertaining to disability should focus on **person-first language**, wording designed with focus on the person, rather than **identity-focused language**, wording constructed to focus on the condition or malady (APA, 2020; Bradley et al., 2020; Streetkerk, 2020). However, either construct may be used depending upon the **preference of the persons in these groups**. **Condescending terminology, slurs, euphemisms, labels, and metaphors** should not be used, even if people within these groups refer to each other in this manner (APA, 2020).

Commented [LBW29]: Example of person-first language: "person with paraplegia."

Commented [LBW30]: Example of identity-first language: "paraplegic."

Commented [LBW31]: Some groups use the disability language. For example: "The Deaf" (APA, 2020).

Gender and Sexual Orientation

In order to write with bias-free language, precision concerning gender and sexual orientation must be used. Gender refers to social assumptions derived from a cultural group. Gender should be used when referring to **social groups**. Sex is biological differences involving anatomical parts (Gill & Gill,

Commented [LBW32]: Examples of gender terms include: cisgender men..., transgender women...nonbinary. (APA, 2020, p. 138).

2012). Use sex when biological differences are most impactful. Gender identity is the feeling of being male, female, or nonbinary based on societal norms (Gill & Gill, 2012), and applies to all people (APA, 2020). Research participants' gender identity should be indicated using terminology indicated by those participants. Transgendered or gender-nonconforming persons should be described using terminology identified by those persons, with definitions for any labels used. Use pronouns identified by the represented persons. The singular "they" is to be used when identified pronouns are not known (APA, 2020). Sexual orientation is identity arising from sexual and emotional attraction to another person (Charlebois, 2016). For sexual orientation, use identity-first terminology, and define any vague terms. Avoid terminology that is inaccurate, demeaning, prejudicial, or which promotes a binary dichotomy (APA, 2020).

Commented [LBW33]: An example using "sex" is "sex assigned at birth" (APA, 2020, p. 138).

Racial and Ethnic Identity and Socioeconomic Status

Racial and ethnic identity along with socioeconomic status (SES) descriptions should use bias-free language. Race is shared physical characteristics, and ethnicity refers to those people that identify with one another due to shared cultural practices (APA, 2020). Use race and ethnicity labels appropriately for those whom you are describing. Do not use hyphenated words for these terms. Capitalize terms used for race and ethnicity. SES is identity based on level of education, income and wealth, occupational standing, and mental and physical health (Romero & Romero, 2008). Use exact descriptors to reflect SES, giving detailed description of group characteristics. Use first-person descriptors that avoid insinuation of blame or create contempt for SES (APA, 2020). Always be sensitive when reporting the intersection of gender, sexual orientation, race and ethnic identity, and socioeconomic status (APA, 2020).

Commented [LBW34]: Examples of race labels are "African American", "European American", or "Pacific Islander."

Commented [LBW35]: Examples of ethnicity labels are "Latino", "Acadians", or "Montagnard."

Commented [LBW36]: An example of an SES descriptor is "low-income participants."

Giving Appropriate Credit

Scholarly writing includes writing using the information from other authors within your paper. This information, whether in the form of quotations, paraphrases, correspondence, interviews, intranet

resources, tables, figures, graphs, or copyrighted materials, all must have appropriate citation.

Commented [LBW37]: See the *APA Manual* for all instances of required copyright and formatting of copyright citation.

Paraphrases, Quotations, and Plagiarism

APA-styled writing uses paraphrases predominantly, quotations infrequently, and your original wording sparingly for the creation of papers (APA, 2020). Paraphrasing is using words and ideas from the authors whose articles and works you researched and conveying this information in your own words. Quotation is using the authors' word exactly as presented in their publications. Use quotation when another author's words are so meaningful as written, that paraphrasing will not convey the same meaning or have the same impact (APA, 2020).

Plagiarism occurs when paraphrasing and quotations are used without citation or when inaccuracies in content exist (APA, 2020). Citation is giving credit to the original authors using accurate and appropriate citation. Even though you are using your own words in paraphrasing, the words and ideas that inspired your phrases are the intellectual property of a different author, so citation is required. Without this citation, paraphrasing may be plagiaristic. Quotations must use the exact words with correct citations, otherwise it may be plagiarism. Quotations longer than 40 words are presented as a block quotation. According to the APA (2020), copyright permissions must be attained, "to reprint or adapt tables, figures, and images or to reprint long quotations" (p. 255). Self-plagiarism may occur if you use all or part(s) of a previously turned in paper for a different assignment or submit a previously submitted paper in a different class (APA, 2020).

Commented [LBW38]: See the *APA Manual*, p. 272 for more about block quotations.

Commented [LBW39]: Example of narrative citation with a quote within the sentence.

Citation

APA-styled papers use the author/publication date citation information in the parenthetical and narrative forms to give credit to the original authors (APA, 2020). Parenthetical citation is when parenthesis enclose the author(s)' name(s) and date of publication. Narrative citation is when author(s) and date of publication information is assimilated within the sentence. Citation for quotations must include the page number or equivalent locating information within the citation (APA, 2020). All citations

Commented [LBW40]: See *APA Manual*, p. 266, Table 8.1: Basic In-Text Citation Styles, for chart of proper number of authors included in citations.

must correspond with reference entries included in your Reference page(s) (CHOICE Media Channel, 2020).

Commented [LBW41]: Example of parenthetical citation.

The Conclusion and References

APA-styled papers end with a concluding paragraph(s) followed by the list of reference entries (APA, 2020). The concluding paragraph(s) appear at the end of the body section without the heading of “Conclusion” and includes information about findings or conclusions revealed through the research process. You may briefly include suggestions of future research related to your research.

References are a list of all the works cited within the paper. The list derives from the research you have done and may include books, articles, internet resources, etc. Personal communications and interviews are not included in the list of References if these interactions are not recoverable by others.

Commented [LBW42]: See *APA Manual*, pp. 65 and 260 for more information about personal communications.

In this case, include information about these interactions within the body of your paper using appropriate citation (APA, 2020). Preference is given to the use of primary resources (original sources), rather than secondary resources (resources found within a primary source), for information in your paper (APA, 2020). Create your References page(s) in the format and style prescribed within Chapter 8 of *APA Manual* (APA, 2020).

Writing in the style of the 7th edition of the *APA Manual* will result in a smoothly written research paper based on your hypothesis or thesis statement crediting the scholarly efforts of others and including your original thoughts (APA, 2020). Using APA’s specific format and structure keeps the basic layout of your paper uniform with all others using APA-styled writing. When used properly, APA’s scholarly writing standards will allow a writer to create understandable, thoughtful, and jargon-free papers. Careful attention to the use of bias-free language and sensitivity pertaining to gender, race, and sexuality expressed through APA’s style of writing brings inclusivity to your paper. Finally, proper paraphrasing and quotation, which includes correct and appropriate citations and references to the original authors, validates your research efforts (APA, 2020).

Commented [LBW43]: This is the conclusion paragraph. Note no label is used.

References

American Psychological Association. (2020). Disability. *APA Style*. <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/disability>

Commented [LBW44]: All references follow this pattern of information (including periods): **Who. When. What. Where.** Don't use the last period at end of DOI's or URL's.

Commented [LBW45]: This is a **website reference**. See *APA Manual*, p. 282.

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.).

Commented [LBW46]: This is a **group authored book reference**. Do not include location information for the publishers. If the author and publisher are the same (as shown here), do not include publisher information. See *APA Manual*, p. 321-324.

Bradley, L., Noble, N., & Hendricks, B. (2020). The APA Publication Manual: Changes in the seventh edition. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 28(2), 126-130. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1066480720911625>

Commented [LBW47]: This is a **scholarly journal article with multiple authors and a DOI reference**. See *APA Manual*, p. 317.

Charlebois, J. (2016). Sexual orientation. In C. L. Shehan (Ed.), *Wiley-Blackwell encyclopedias in social science: The Wiley Blackwell encyclopedia of family studies*. Wiley. Credo Reference. <https://tinyurl.com/yaaotug9>

Commented [LBW48]: Note that the format of all Reference entries that are longer than one line requires a hanging-indent for the second line and all other lines.

Chen, J., Kingston, N., Tiemann, G. & Gu, F. (2010). Hypothesis. In N. J. Salkind (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of research design*. Sage Publications. Credo Reference. <https://tinyurl.com/yaxhouey>

Cherry, K. (2020, April 11). *How to write an outline in APA format*. [Verywellmind.com](https://www.verywellmind.com/apa-outline-format-4685910). <https://www.verywellmind.com/apa-outline-format-4685910>

Commented [LBW49]: This is a **website as the source for a webpage reference**. See *APA Manual*, p. 351.

CHOICE Media Channel. (2020, Feb. 14). *Creating References Using Seventh Edition APA Style* [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/gmZifLX_qs8

Commented [LBW50]: This is a **YouTube reference**. See *APA Manual*, pp. 274 and 344.

Gill, F., & Gill. (2012). Gender identity. In H. K. Anheier, & M. Juergensmeyer (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of global studies*. Sage Publications. Credo Reference. <https://tinyurl.com/y7r7by38>

Commented [LBW51]: This is an **entry in an edited reference work, with multiple authors reference**. See *APA Manual*, p. 328.

Romero, L., & Romero, L. (2008). Socioeconomic status. In F. T. Leong, *Encyclopedia of counseling*. Sage Publications. Credo Reference. <https://tinyurl.com/y8b3c9ab>

Commented [LBW52]: This is a **shortened URL**. See *APA Manual*, p. 300, Section 9.36 for more about DOI and URL Shorteners.

Streetkerk, R. (2020, March 20). APA Manual 7th edition: The most notable changes. [Scribbr.com](https://www.scribbr.com/apa-style/apa-seventh-edition-changes/). <https://www.scribbr.com/apa-style/apa-seventh-edition-changes/>

Commented [LBW53]: This is a **webpage with individual author reference**. See *APA Manual*, p. 351.

Appendix

Student Papers Format and Tips

Formatting of an APA paper (for all computers except Mac's):

Use this guide to set up your student paper. Check the *APA Manual* for professional paper format.

1. Use one of the approved fonts and points throughout your paper. These include: Calibri-11; Arial-11, Lucida-10, Sans Unicode-10, Times New Roman-12, Georgia-11, or Computer Modern.
2. Use 1-inch margins for all borders of your paper. To ensure that the bottom margin remains at 1-inch, when setting up your paper, find the "Paragraph" dialog box in the ribbon and click on the "Paragraph Settings" button in the right-hand corner. Click on the "Line and Page Breaks" tab. Uncheck the box in front of "Widow/Orphan control." Press "Ok."
3. Use double spacing throughout the entire paper. Adjust your settings to remove extra spacing after each paragraph by finding the "Paragraph" dialog box in the ribbon, and clicking on the Line and Spacing icon. Select 2.0, then click box in front of "Remove Space after Paragraph." Press "Ok."

Tips:

1. To save yourself time, create your own APA Template. Undergraduates will create a 3-page template: Title, Body, References. Graduate's template will be 4-pages: Title, Abstract, Body, References. Follow formatting guides above. Mock-up for each template page with filler words and appropriate bolded fonts and spacing. Save as "APA Template."
2. Use DOI's for appropriate Reference entries. If no DOI is given, use CrossRef's "Free DOI Lookup". Go to <https://www.crossref.org/guestquery>. Fill in the form. Note: not all boxes must be filled. Click on "search." If response is "No DOI found" check for spelling errors and mistakes, then resubmit. If response is still void, then use appropriate URL instead.

Commented [LBW54]: An APA paper may have an appendix when pertinent information should be included that would otherwise distract from the body of the paper if included there. More than one appendix may be added to a paper. In this case, the label of appendices includes a letter. Example: Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C, etc.

Commented [LBW55]: Each appendix must have a title, except in the case of a table or a figure. See the *APA Manual*, pp. 41-42.

Commented [LBW56]: See the *APA Manual*, p. 44, Section 2.19.