

WRITING Rules

Inspired by:

Strunk, W. and White, E. B. (1979). *The elements of Style*. Macmillan Publishing co., Inc. New York.

Choose a suitable outline

& hold on to it

Paragraph: UNITY

1st sentence = the ONLY topic developed

Parallel structures of co-ordinate ideas

Formerly, science was taught by the textbook method, while now the laboratory method is employed.

→ Formerly, science was taught by the textbook method; now it is taught by the laboratory method.

In spring, summer, or in winter

→ In spring, summer, or winter

Omit needless words

The question as to whether

→ whether

There is no doubt but that

→ No doubt (doubtless)

The reason why is that

→ because

He is a man who

→ he

Omit needless words

This is a subject that
→ This subject

I was unaware of the fact that
→ I was unaware that (did not know)

In their study, Jones and Smith (2001) showed
→ Jones and Smith (2001) showed

Use definite, specific, concrete language

A period of unfavorable weather set in.
→ It rained every day for a week.

Observers were submitted to a series of ecologically valid sounds.

→ Observers heard sounds such as dog bark, and traffic noise.

Use the active voice

My first visit to Boston will always be remembered by me.

→ I shall always remember my first visit to Boston.

Keep related words together

Mansfield (2003) wrote three articles about his studies conducted in Spain, which were published in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*.

→ Mansfield (2003) published three articles in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology* about his studies conducted in Spain.

Use consistent "jargon"

The independent variable is Type of crime.

Cardio-vascular accident (CVA)

Put statements in positive form

There is no consistency in the research results.

→ The results are inconsistent.

Avoid a succession of loose sentences

Memory is a complex psychological domain of study.

Tips

for writing your research proposal
and report

•Marking guide - handout **

•Rosnow & Rosenthal (1993), Appendix A **

•Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Ed (2001)
<http://www.apastyle.org/>

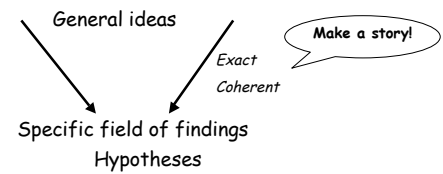
•Making Sense in Psychology and the Life Sciences, 2nd Ed, M. Northey & B. Timney,
Oxford University Press
→ based on 4th Ed APA manual

Introduction

- Begins by the full title of the report
- Elaborate theoretical information (background)
 - overview the prior work of others
 - show how your own study relates to what has come before
 - summarize only the points that are relevant to your own study (& the theory underlying your experiment)
 - state the nature of your problem & what you expect to find
 - show why your study is interesting and worth doing.

Introduction

- The funnel approach (Baker, 1981)



Methods

- **Materials**
 - Describe the materials or any experimental apparatus you used.
 - Describe all the essential components of any major pieces of equipment and how they were set up.
 - If the equipment was a standard, commercially available item, give the manufacturer's name & the model number.

in appendix: present your materials

Methods

- **Participants**
 - Identifying human subjects as *participants, respondents, children, patients, clients*, etc increases specificity. (*Subjects* is appropriate when the person cannot him- or herself provide informed consent.)
 - selection criteria (e.g., age, sex, number of participants, education, socioeconomic/marital status, etc.)
 - any info about participants that is relevant to the experiment

Methods

- **Procedure**
 - chronological description (steps, instructions) of how you carried out the experiment
 - enough detail that others can repeat the experiment; but avoid any detail that is not relevant
 - experimental controls
 - ethical considerations

In appendix: present a consent form

References

- Support every non-original statement with a reference citation
- Refer to your sources unless the info is considered to be common knowledge
- *References* section should contain every work that you have cited in the text, and none that you have not cited

From Northey & Timney (1995)

APA reference style

• Citation in the text

Surname & publication year
No first name or initials!

Birchmore (1993) studied the children of alcoholics...
In a study of children of alcoholics (Birchmore, 1993)...
In 1993, Birchmore reported...

Leventhal and Lipsitt (1964) reported that neonates did not differentiate between small frequency differences, but others have found that they will orient better to high than to low frequency sounds (Morrongiello & Clifton, 1984).

APA reference style

Pola, Wyatt and Lustgarten (1992) studied eye...

then:

Pola *et al.* (1992) found that subjects suppressed...

- The year should be included the first citation in a paragraph, but not in the subsequent citations within that paragraph (unless you mention more than one work by the same author).

APA reference style

- **Organization of citations within parentheses**

(Smith, 1969, 1973, 1980)
(Smith, 1992a, 1992b)
(Aardvark, 1994; Smith, 1992a, 1992b; Zebra, 1932)

Alphabetical order

(Cormack, Stevenson, & Schor, 1994, pp. 2601-2602)
(Schmidt, 1994, Figure 2)

Citation in the "References" section

- Arrange the references alphabetically.
- Capitalize only the first word of the title and the subtitle.
- Italicize (or underline) the titles of books/journals and the volume numbers of the journal.
- Finish the element with a period.

King, F.L., & Kimura, D. (1972). Left-ear superiority in dichotic perception of vocal nonverbal sounds. *Canadian Journal of Psychology*, 26, 111-116.

No publisher for journals

Citation in the references section

Books

Locke, J.L. (1993). *The child's path to spoken language*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Look up the APA publication for how to give the city, state or country of publication

Gleitman, H. (1995). *Psychology* (4th ed.). New York: Norton.

Citation in the references section

- **Chapters in edited books**

- Give both the chapter title & the full book reference.
- Include the volume number for any multi-volume work
- The abbreviation for an edition of a book is "ed." and for an editor "Ed."

Nelson, C.A., & Horowitz, F.D. (1987). Visual motion perception in infancy: A review and synthesis. In P. Salapatek & L. Cohen (Eds.), *Handbook of infant perception: Vol.2. From Perception to cognition*. Orlando, FL: Academic Press.