

# Writing With Style

## APA Style Made Easy

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### Chapter 2

#### How Psychologists Write

**REFERRING TO OTHER AUTHORS**

# Name and date only

- Last name and year of publication
  - Year is usually in parentheses
  - Author is often in parentheses
  - No first names
  - No titles of work
- Smith (2012) found...
- Teenagers tend to prefer ice cream to other treats (Smith, 2012).

# Primary sources

- You read it.
  - It goes in your references list
- You read about it in a secondary source
  - Only the source you read goes in your references list

Skinner (1952) trained pigeons to fly planes.

Skinner goes on your references list.

Skinner (1952, as cited in Szuchman, 2013) trained pigeons to fly planes.

Only Szuchman goes on your references list.

**SELECT VERBS CAREFULLY**

# What can research do?

- The study EMPLOYED A METHOD...
- The research DEMONSTRATED...
- Smith's work PROVIDED EVIDENCE THAT...

# What can results do?

- The findings SUGGESTED THAT ...
- The results CAN BE EXPLAINED BY THE THEORY OF ...
- The evidence DEMONSTRATED...

# What can theories do?

- The theory FOCUSES ON ...
- The theory LEADS TO THE HYPOTHESIS THAT...
- The theory HAS BEEN CHALLENGED BY someone or some kind of evidence
- The hypothesis WAS ...



# What can people do?

- The researchers HYPOTHESIZED THAT ...
- The author REPORTED ...
- Smith (2011) REPLICATED the study ...
- Smith and Jones (2013) FOUND ...

**HEDGE WHEN IT IS NOT A FACT**

# Hedge words

- Suggests
- Appears to
- Is consistent with the theory that
- May indicate that
- Supports the hypothesis (rather than proves)
- It is possible that
- It is likely that

# **LOGICAL TRANSITIONS**

# Connect your paragraphs logically

- On the one hand...on the other hand
- In contrast
- Moreover
- First, second, third
- In a related study

**AVOID THESE**

# Don't get inside another researcher's head

- Feel
- Think
- Believe

# Don't focus on *how* they wrote

- Stated
- Said
- Wrote

And don't quote — paraphrase!



# Avoid wordiness and redundancy

- The obtained data
- Participants for the study were
- The reason is because
- A total of 8 participants
- ...has been previously found
- In his study, Smith (2000) found
- Memory recall

# Informal language and slang

- No contractions
- No *kids, moms, dads, tv, hanging out*
- Appreciate *because* instead of *due to the fact that* and *since*
- Appreciate *and* instead of *while*
- Discover *although* and *whereas*

# One more time...

- Avoid quotations!!
  - long ones
  - and frequent short ones too

# Inappropriate pronouns

- Don't write *we* if you are alone in this. Single authors must write *I*.
- Don't write *you* for any reason.

**OVERSTATEMENT**

# This is not a newspaper

- No need to think in terms of exaggerated headlines
  - Enormous problems
  - Incredibly important
  - Literally tragic
  - Absolutely essential to solve this problem

**AVOID SEX BIAS IN LANGUAGE**

# He or she

- Just like that
  - Not he
  - Not she
  - Not (s)he
- He or she = grammatically singular
  - Don't mistake it for *they*



# **PREFIXES**

# They are not words

- Don't leave them hanging loose
  - *non* is not a word
  - *pre* is not a word
- Usually they attach without hyphen
  - Posttest
  - Nonsmokers
- Exceptions
  - Self: self-study, self-esteem, self-hypnosis
  - Root word is proper noun: non-Hispanic, neo-Freudian

# **PROBLEM PLURALS**

## **SINGULAR**

- Datum
- Criterion
- Phenomenon
- Stimulus
- Hypthesis

## **PLURAL**

- Data
- Criteria
- Phenomena
- Stimuli
- Hypotheses

# **LATIN ABBREVIATIONS**

- et al.
  - Freud et al. (1956) were not happy.
- i.e.
  - They were not happy about a certain important thing (i.e., your dreams).
- e.g.
  - They were happy about other things (e.g., lunch and cigars).
- And other things or people
- That is
- For example