

Initial Research Process

Designed specifically for
Sac City College
By: The Writing Center

Initial steps:

- Understand your topic:
 - Know what you are supposed to write about
 - Understand the questions that you need to answer
 - Ask your professor or do additional research if you don't understand your topic fully

After you finish the initial steps:

- take your understanding of the topic and put it in an outline
 - the outline should cover the questions that you will answer with your research
 - this is different from a hypothesis because it is not what you hope to prove....it's what you hope to discover

After the outline is complete:

- Once you have an outline and you know what questions need to be answered, then it's just a matter of finding resources and resource material to answer those questions

Primary research:

- Surveys:
 - You can conduct surveys using questionnaires
- Interviews:
 - You can interview experts or employees in the field
- Observations
 - You can observe businesses, etc.

Secondary research

- SCC library databases:
 - You can search the databases online to find journal articles and other online documents
- Libraries at other Los Rios colleges
 - You can check out hard-copies of journals and books that may not be available online

Analysis

- **STAY FOCUSED!!!**
 - It's easy to get sidetracked
- Use only the research that answers your outline questions
- Analyze what you found
 - Ask yourself: How does the information I found answer the questions in my outline?

Important things to remember:

- Use your own words except when quoting
- Cite sources using APA when quoting
- Remember to include a References page
- Use an APA guide or manual
- **Carefully keep track of your sources!!**

APA Citation: References

- References should be in alphabetical order
- Titles of works will be in sentence case
- Author's name should be listed as last name first, then first initial of first name, and initial of middle name
- (Brown, M.) or (Brown, M. E.)

Sample APA Citation: Periodical

- Annotations for the citation: Last name, First and Middle initials; The ampersand (&) is used for the last author in a list of authors; Sentence case; Year published; Volume or Issue number; Page numbers referenced; Title of Journal in italics.
- Herman, I. M., Kuczaj, S. A., III, & Holder, M. D. (1993). Responses to anomalous gestural sequences by a language-trained dolphin: Evidence for processing of semantic relations and syntactic information. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 122, 184-194.

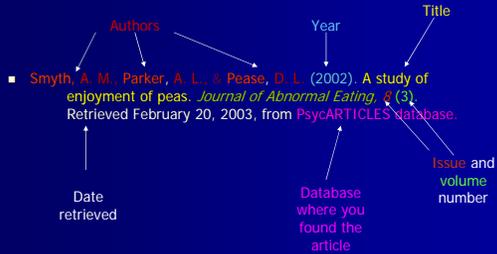
Book

- Annotations for the citation: Authors; Year published; Book title; City of publication; Publication company.
- Beck, C. A. J., & Sales, B. D. (2001). *Family mediation: Facts, myths, and future prospects*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

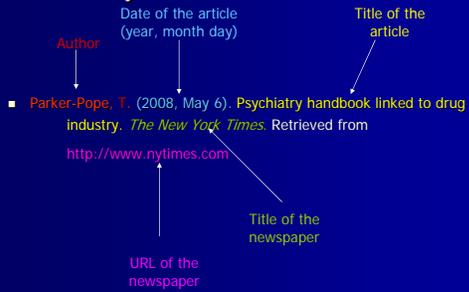
Article from an online journal (courtesy of OWL at Purdue)

- Annotations for the citation: Author's Last name, First initial; Year; Title of the article; Title of the journal; URL where the article can be found; Issue Number; Date the article was retrieved.
- Bernstein, M. (2002). 10 tips on writing the living Web. *A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites*, 109. Retrieved May 2, 2006, from <http://www.alistapart.com/articles/writeliving>

Article from a database (courtesy of OWL at Purdue)



Newspaper article found online (courtesy of OWL at Purdue)



Website (courtesy of OWL at Purdue)

- Author, A. A. & Author, B. B. (Date of publication). *Title of document*. Retrieved month day, year (only if the text may potentially change over time), from <http://Web address>
- When an Internet document is more than one Web page, provide a URL that links to the home page or entry page for the document. Also, if there isn't a date available for the document use (n.d.) for no date.

Sample references page

References

- Bruce, J., Gunnar, M. R., & Grotevant, H. D. (2000). International adoption of institutionally reared children: Research and policy. *Development and Psychopathology*, 12, 677-693.
- Buscemi, S., Nicolai, A., Strugala, R. (2005). *Basics: A rhetoric and handbook* (4th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

APA: in-text citations

- When using summarized or paraphrased information from an outside source, you must include an in-text citation.
- You can reference the author:
 - 1. indirectly (or)
 - 2. directly

APA: in-text citations

1. During the same period, the percent of children adopted from institutions has increased from approximately 20% to approximately 65% (Freivalds, 1998).
2. Freivalds (1998) stated that during the same period, the percent of children adopted from institutions has increased from approximately 20% to approximately 65%.

APA: in-text citations

Citing multiple works by *different* authors

- This pattern has also been associated with psychosocial dwarfism (Skuse, 1993; Skuse, Albanese, Stanhope, Gilmour, & Voss, 1996).
- Use a semicolon to separate the different sources

APA: in-text citation

An entire website

- When citing an entire Website, it is sufficient to give the address of the site in just the text.
- For example:
- Kidspsych is a wonderful interactive website for children (<http://www.kidspsycho.org>).

Citing an interview

- An interview is not considered recoverable data, so no reference to this is provided in the reference list. **You may, however, cite the interview within the text as a personal communication.**
- i.e.: (J. Smith, personal communication, August 15, 2001)

Remember...

- Your research process will be much easier if you **keep track of your sources** as you find them.
- **To avoid plagiarism**, you must include citations/reference information each time you include outside resources in your papers.
- Use an **APA Reference Guide** 😊
