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 sidetrackeds
- 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.)
**Article from a database**
(courtesy of OWL at Purdue)

  *Journal of Abnormal Eating, 88* (3).

  Retrieved February 20, 2003, from PsycARTICLES database.

**Newspaper article found online**
(courtesy of OWL at Purdue)


**Website**
(courtesy of OWL at Purdue)

- **Author, A. & Author, 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.
References


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

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 😊