Ten Steps to Writing a Research Paper
Using APA Style

   Chapter 16: Writing the Research Paper of *Paragraphs and Essays* explains how to document source material according to the style of the Modern Language Association. This documentation style is most often used for papers in the humanities. You will also take courses in other subjects that require your research papers to be documented according to another style, that of the American Psychological Association (APA), which publishes a guide entitled *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. APA style, as it's called, is used for research writing in the social sciences, including psychology, education, economics, and sociology. Like MLA style, APA style includes in-text citations of source material and a list of sources referenced in the text. However, the format and guidelines for these components differ. This brief guide will provide you with basic information about the requirements of APA style.

   In Chapter 16, you learned the ten steps involved in writing the research paper. Some of them are the same regardless of the documentation style you use. The following steps apply to the composition of any research paper:

Step 1: Select a Topic
Step 2: Find Sources
Step 4: Take Notes
Step 5: Refine Your Thesis and Outline
Step 7: Revise Your First Draft

   Using APA style, however, requires some changes to Steps 3, 6, 8, 9, and 10 so that your paper will conform to the guidelines for that style. These steps are explained in the rest of this guide.

STEP 3: LIST SOURCES

   As you conduct research on your topic and locate potentially useful sources, you will list these sources in a preliminary bibliography formatted according to APA style guidelines. The sources that you actually use in the paper—meaning those that you refer to by name or quote—become part of the References list at the end of the paper. The following examples illustrate the format used for different types of sources. For additional examples, visit the APA website at http://www.apastyle.org

Form for Printed Sources

Books

A Book by One Author

Adams, J. B. (2002). *Compensation systems*. Boston, MA: Brunswick Press.

An Anthology

Grumet, R.S. (Ed.). (1996). *Northeastern Indian lives.* Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.

Two or More Books by the Same Author

Walker, A. (1976). *Meridian*. New York, NY: Harcourt.

Walker, A. (1982). *The color purple: A novel.* New York, NY: Harcourt.

A Book by Two or Three Authors

Berelson, S., Lazarsfield, P. F., & Connell, W., Jr. (2001). *Managing your benefit program* (13th ed.). Chicago, IL: Novak-Siebold.

A Book with a Corporate Author

Abbey Petroleum Industries. (2004). *2001 annual report.* San Francisco, CA: API, Inc.

Articles

Article in a Journal

Ignatio, E. (2003). Can flexible benefits promote your company? *Personnel Quarterly, 20*, 804-816.

Article in a Weekly or Biweekly Magazine

Ivarson, A., Jr., (2000, September 29). Creating your benefit plan: A primer. *Business Month*, *75*, 19-31.

Article in a Newspaper, Author Unknown

Let employees determine their own benefits. (2003, January 12). *Manhattan Times*, p. C17.

Article or Other Written Selection in an Anthology or Textbook

Brownmiller, S. (1980). Let's put pornography back in the closet. In Lederer, L. (Ed.), *Take back the night: Women on pornography* (pp. 252-255). New York, NY: Morrow.

An Article in an Encyclopedia

Market research. (2003). In *The encyclopedia of business* (Vol. 2, pp. 436-441). Cleveland, OH: Collins.

Government Publications

National Institute of Mental Health. (2000). *Who pays the piper? Ten years of passing the buck* (DHHS Publication No. ADM 82-1195). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Published Proceedings of a Conference

Wise, M.R. (1987, May 10-13). The main event is desktop publishing. *Proceedings of the 34th Annual International Technical Communication Conference, Denver.* San Diego, CA: Univet.

A Lecture, a Speech, or an Address

Kern, D. (1997, October 2). Recent trends in occupational medicine. AMA Convention, Memorial Hospital, Pawtucket, RI.

A Personal Interview

O'Brian, D. (2003, May). Personal interview.

Films, Filmstrips, Slide Programs, Videotapes, and Television Programs

Preminger, L. (Executive Producer). (2001, August). *The WKVX-TV Evening News*. Los Angeles: Valhalla Broadcasting Co.

Form for Electronic Sources

This is the basic form for Internet and World Wide Web sources for your bibliography and References list entries:

- Author's last name, first name initial, and middle name initial
- Date of publication
- Title of article or book
- Title of the online periodical
- Volume number (issue number if available)
- "Retrieved from" followed by the full electronic address (URL)

Online Services—Library and Personal (database with full texts)

If you reference material that you obtained from an online database, either a library subscription service or a personal subscription service, format the entry like a regular print citation. Doing so will allow people to retrieve the print version of the material even if they do not have access to the database you used.

Professional Site

Purdue Online Writing Lab. (2010). *The Purdue OWL Family of Sites at Purdue University.* Retrieved from http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

Personal Site

Gladwell, M. (2005, March 8). *Gladwell.Com*. Retrieved from
http://www.gladwell.com/

Web log (blog)

Young, L. (2001, June 3). Training doesn't always last. Message posted to
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/personnel/message/51

Book

Douglass, F. (2005, June 8). *My bondage and my freedom. Google Book Search*.
Retrieved from http://books.google.com

Article in a Journal Online

Demski, J. (2010, February). Tweets for teachers. *THE Journal*, 37(2). Retrieved
from http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/1105/journal_201002/#/4

Article in a Magazine Online

Lemonick, M.D. (2010, February 14). How will global warming change
ecosystems? *Time.com*. Retrieved from
http://www.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,1964085,00.html

Article in a Newspaper Online

Dao. J. (2010, February 13). Study suggests more veterans may be helped by
talking about killing. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/14/us/14killing.html

Review Online

Heilbrunn, J. (2010, February 12). Andrew Young's memoir of John Edwards
[Review of the book *The Politician*]. *The New York Times*. Retrieved
from http://www.nytimescom/2010/02/14/books/review/Heilbrunn-t.html

Government Publication Online

Bachman, R., & Saltzman, L.E. (1995, August 16). *Violence against women:
Estimates from the redesigned national crime victimization survey* (NCJ
154348). Retrieved from Bureau of Justice Statistics website:
http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov

An Article in an Encyclopedia

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. (2008). In *Encyclopedia Britannica online*. Retrieved
from http://www.britannica.com

Personal E-Mail Message

E-mails are not included in the list of references, though you parenthetically cite
them in your main text: (R. Davis, personal communication, March 4, 2009).

STEP 6: WRITE YOUR FIRST DRAFT

Regardless of the documentation style you are using for your research paper, you will need to adhere to the rules of that style to avoid plagiarism, which is discussed in Chapter 16.

Documentation: In-text Citations, APA Style

In the text of the research paper, APA style requires only a brief parenthetical source reference keyed to a complete bibliographical entry in the references list at the end of the paper. For most parenthetical citations, you will need to provide only the author's last name and the year of publication for the source. Although it is not required, you might also include the page number. Documentation for some of the most common types of sources is discussed in the following sections.

References to Articles and Single-Volume Books

Articles and single-volume books are the two most common types of works you will be referring to most often in your research paper. When citing them, either mention the author's name in the text and note the source's publication date in parentheses immediately after the citation or acknowledge both name and publication date in the parenthetical reference, separating them with a comma. If punctuation is needed, insert the mark outside the final parenthesis.

> **Author's Name Cited in Text:** Adams (2002) argues that health insurance is the most important benefit of all.

> **Author's Name Cited in Text, with page number:** According to Ivarson (2003), "There is no such creature as a 'fringe benefit' anymore" (p. 27).

> **Author's Name Cited in Parentheses:** In fact, fringe benefits are growing in importance as a part of an overall salary package (Ignatio, 2003).

References to Works of Unknown Authorship

If you borrow information or ideas from an article or book for which you cannot determine the name of the author, cite the title instead, either in the text of the paper or in parentheses.

> **Title Cited in Text**: According to an article titled "Let Employees Determine Their Own Benefits" (2003), another variation that is growing in popularity is the cafeteria-style program

Title Cited in Parentheses: Another variation that is growing in popularity is the cafeteria-style program ("Let Employees," 2003).

References to Internet Material

Treat Internet material as you would other material, using the author-date style if possible. If the author's name is not available, give the title. Use page and paragraph numbers only if they are available; usually, they are not.

References in Block Quotations

Direct quotations longer than 40 words should begin on a new line and be indented five spaces from the left margin. Maintain double-spacing and omit the quotation marks. Place the parenthetical citation outside the end punctuation.

STEP 8: PREPARE YOUR REFERENCES LIST

Using the same form as in the preliminary bibliography, prepare a References list (a list of works you have referred to or quoted and identified parenthetically in the text.

STEP 9: WRITE YOUR FINAL DRAFT

Write the final version of your research paper with care for effective writing and accurate documentation. The final draft will probably include the following parts:

1. **Title page**, including the title of the paper, the author's name, and the institutional affiliation.

2. **Abstract**, a single paragraph summarizing the key points of your paper

3. **Main Body**, the text of the paper

4. **References**, an alphabetized list of all of the sources you cite your paper

See the sample student essay at the end of this guide for examples of each part.

STEP 10: SUBMIT REQUIRED MATERIALS

Submit your research paper with any preliminary material required by your instructor. Consider using a checklist to make sure you have fulfilled all requirements. A comprehensive checklist might look like this:

Research Paper Checklist

___ Title page

___ Abstract

___ Documented essay (text)
    ___ Approximate total number of words
    ___ Approximate number of words quoted (Usually, more than 20 percent quoted
        words would be excessive.)

___ List of sources used (References list)
    ___ Number of sources used

___ Preliminary materials, such as preliminary bibliography, note cards, and rough draft,
    as required

___ Double-spaced text, one-inch margins