

Integrating Source Material in APA Format

Why do we use source material in assignments

Writing assignments often include a research element, and it's important to correctly format and cite the resources. The choice to use citations in your academic work shows that you can read, understand, and synthesize ideas from source material. Using quotes or paraphrased ideas shows that students can contribute and communicate ideas that engage with a larger body of existing source material. In-text citations also show the student can find relevant research and reference it correctly and appropriately in their assignments. Citations connect outside scholarship to their main point.

How to Format In-text Citations

The American Psychological Association (APA) citation style uses the author-date method for in-text citations. There are two ways to format APA-style citations: parenthetical and narrative.

Parenthetical citations include the author's last name and date inside parentheses, separated by a comma. Example: (Morton, 1981).

Narrative citations include the author's last name as part of the sentence, followed by the publication year in parentheses. Example: As Morton (1981) claims...

Paraphrasing vs. Directly Quoting Material

While you can use paraphrased ideas/information as well as direct quotes, the APA manual recommends that students should paraphrase as more efficiently.

Note: you must include citations even for paraphrased information.

1. Paraphrase the source idea in your own words

Paraphrasing the source shows that the student understands the idea and has chosen to explain it in a different way. In this case, the citation only requires the author's last name and the publication year, but students may also include a page number if it will assist readers in locating the relevant passage.

Example 1: Throughout the fifth century AD and into the third century AD, classical ethnopharmacologist John Wilkins (2015) argues there was a clearly developing tradition of nutritional and drug sciences that remained important in the Early Modern Period and to the

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Example 2: Throughout the fifth century AD and into the third century AD, there was a clearly developing tradition of nutritional and drug sciences that remained important in the Early Modern Period and to the early discoveries in the modern sciences of botany and chemistry (Wilkins, 2015)

- x This is a standard parenthetical citation. Since the author's name and date are omitted from the paraphrased portion of the author's original idea/information, the author's last name and publication date are cited in the parentheses at the end. No page number is required for paraphrases.

2. Quote source material exactly as written

Direct quotations are a word-for-word replica of the author's information and must be contained in quotation marks. The citation for a direct quote must include the author's last name, the publication year, and the page number of the quoted material

Example 1: Morton (1981) claims humankind's first "scientific awareness" of plants was brought on by understanding their medicinal uses and by the "consequent need to recognize, to distinguish and to record the plants in question" (15).

- x In this example, the introductory phrase introduces the author's last name and publication year in parentheses before directly quoting the idea, so only the page number is required at the end.

Example 2: Humankind's first "scientific awareness" of plants was brought on by understanding their medicinal uses and by the "consequent need to recognize, to distinguish and to record the plants in question" (Morton, 1981, p. 15).

- x In this alternate example, the introductory phrase does not introduce the author's last name and publication date before directly quoting the idea, so the author's last name, publication date, and the page number are required inside the parentheses at the end.

Other Citation Considerations

Source material within the social sciences disciplines often have multiple authors

Two Authors

- x Parenthetical: (Smith & Bennett, 2012).
- x Narrative: Research by Smith and Bennett (2012) includes...

Three to Five Authors

- x Parenthetical (first time and subsequent citations) (Bryson et al., 2018).
- x Narrative (first time and subsequent citations) Bryson et al. (2018) have shown...

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Source material within the social sciences disciplines can include multiple publications from the same author from different years. This type of distinction is often written in narrative citation format to clarify the date.

Two or More Works by the Same Author in the Same Year

- x Research by Janis (2000a) revealed weak comparative data. However, a parallel study (Janis, 2000b) concluded the initial data was skewed.

Works Without a Listed Author

Use the title of the work in place of the author's last name.

- x Parenthetical: A similar study was done of students learning to format research papers ("Using Citations," 2001).
- x Narrative: In "Using Citations" (2001), a similar study was done of students learning to format research papers.

When an Organization is the Author

- x Parenthetical example (first time): Students should follow proper citation formatting to ensure readers can understand the writer's contribution to the extent of existing literature (The American Psychological Association, 2020).
- x Narrative example: The American Psychological Association (2020) suggests that students follow proper citation formatting to ensure readers can understand the writer's contribution to the extent of existing literature.