



Douglas College

Douglas College Learning Centre

CITING SOURCES USING APA STYLE

Introduction

When you write an essay or term paper in your college courses, you must show where the information that you used in the paper came from. APA is one of the most common styles used to show the sources of information used in a paper. In this style, the author's last name and the date of publication in parentheses allow the reader to find the complete information about each source by looking up the authors' last names in the bibliography (called "References" in APA style) at the end of the paper.

This handout only provides a brief introduction to APA referencing. You need to learn how to use other resources such as Library APA handouts, APA web sites (which you can find on the Library web site), and the complete APA style manual (available in the Learning Centres and in the library) to have a comprehensive understanding of how to use APA style.

Using Parentheses for Documenting Sources

You need to include only three (3) pieces of information in a sentence when you include someone else's words, ideas, or facts in a sentence that you are writing:

- a) the author's last name, or authors' last names
- b) the year of publication of the book or article
- c) the page number (if you have quoted)

Adults who are faced with changing careers half way through their working lives are often faced with the problem of "not keeping pace" with changes in technology and new ways of doing work that are becoming a part of many jobs (Jones, Zunker & Smith, 1990, p. 345).

With your tutor, discuss the following three ways to include documentation in a sentence:

- a) all together in parentheses before the information is given

Some authors (for example Jones, Zunker & Smith, 1990) suggested that mature workers who are faced with job change face problems because they have not been able to keep pace with changing technology.

- b) all together in parentheses after the information is given

Adults who are faced with changing careers half way through their working life are often faced with the problem of "not keeping pace" with changes in technology and new ways of doing work that are becoming part of many jobs (Jones, Zunker & Smith, 1990, p. 345).

- c) split up so that the date is in parentheses after the author's name, and the page number is in parentheses at the end of the information

Jones, Zunker and Smith (1990) stated that "a variety of changes in technology, occupational structure, organizational format, and management techniques" brought into greater focus the issue of "job obsolescence" (p. 345).

The best way to document is the split up way shown in the third example because it helps the reader to know where the source material begins and ends. This makes it easy for the reader to see the difference between your ideas and the sources that you use to support your point. However, for variety, you should alternate the ways in which you insert documentation.

What should be documented?

Your essay or paper needs to have evidence, or support, or proof of the points you are making. One of the main ways to give support to your points is to include the ideas or words of an expert on the topic you are writing about. Below is a list of the situations where you should acknowledge the sources of information you use. Discuss these situations with your tutor so you are clear on the differences.

A) **WHEN QUOTING:** if you quote an author's exact words

Jones, Zunker and Smith (1990) stated that "a variety of changes in technology, occupational structure, organizational format, and management techniques" raised the issue of "job obsolescence" (p. 345).

B) **WHEN PARAPHRASING:** if you use your own words, but you use another author's ideas or facts. Notice that when you do not quote, you do not need to include the page number:

Research focussed on the problem of jobs being lost to changes in the way companies organize and supervise their workforce and bring in new technology (Jones, Zunker & Smith, 1990).

C) **WHEN SUMMARIZING:** if you summarize one or more important main points in another author's writing. You should note that, when you summarize, you do not need to include the page number.

One of the main points that Jones, Zunker and Smith (1990) made was that career counsellors must have the proper skills and knowledge to help mature workers deal with the problems of losing a long held job, and preparing and looking for another one.

D) **STATISTICS OR FACTS:** if you use a fact or a statistic that is not common knowledge.

Statistics showed that most men changed occupations at least once, and that this change was reasonably frequent in mid-life (Kimmel, 1990).

Using Sources Well When You Are Writing

PRACTICE EXERCISE: With your tutor, look at the following two examples. Discuss which of the two examples below uses sources in a better way, and explain your reasons.

Example A: Adults faced with changing careers half way through their working life had to deal with the problem of "not keeping pace" with changes in the new technology and ways of doing work that were entering their fields of work (Jones, Zunker & Smith, 1990, p. 345). What was happening in the economy, or "the economics of the labour market," affected what kind of jobs people could do (Stevens, 1986, p. 7). Especially starting in the 1980's, there were no longer as many jobs in unskilled factory work and more jobs in high-technology fields and in the service industry (Kimmel, 1990).

Example B: A major trend associated with the 1980's and 1990's was that many adults who worked at the same job for years were suddenly being forced to find new kinds of work. One of the main reasons given for changes in jobs that were available was, as Stevens (1986) argued, the "economics of the labour market" (p. 7), by which she meant that in hard times, companies laid off employees in order to survive as businesses. Another reason often given was that new, more sophisticated technology was being introduced into the workplace, so that older workers were faced with the problem of "keeping pace" with new, more highly skilled ways of doing their work (Jones, Zunker & Smith, 1990, p. 345). Although it is important to recognize that these changes in the economy and in technology had devastating effects on people, it is also important to recognize that such major shifts in employment patterns and opportunities are not new, and that in many respects history was repeating itself.

Discussion of Examples:

Generally, your paper shouldn't be primarily a "patchwork" of other people's words and ideas. Most of your writing should be your own analysis of a topic. One exception is in a literature review where the purpose of the section is to summarize a body of research on the topic about which you are writing.

The first example (A) on the previous page has three sources patched together with no evidence that the student has done any work other than patching together other people's ideas. Rather than using sources as evidence to make his/her point, the student depends on the sources to say everything.

In the second example (B), the student adds outside sources in order to provide evidence for a point that she/he is developing her/himself. One way to avoid falling into the trap of patching together what other authors say is to use the following rule of thumb:

- try to use other authors' ideas no more than two or three times per paragraph. The rest of the paragraph should be your own explanation, analysis, or point. The topic sentence of the paragraph (usually the first sentence) should always be your own idea.

For more help on this, see Learning Centre handouts

- WR6.21 Introducing Quotations
- WR6.22 Building a Paragraph Around a Quotation

Pay Attention “TO THE DETAILS” of Documenting Correctly

Quote only the words or parts of an author's sentence that you want to emphasize. So, rather than quoting several lines as in the following example:

According to Kimmel (1990), "In general, women earn less than men; this is termed an earnings gap" (p. 286).

it is better to quote only the important words that you wish to emphasize, as in the following example:

According to Kimmel (1990), the fact that men tend to make more than women is referred to as an "earnings gap" (p. 286).

PUNCTUATION OF SHORT QUOTATIONS: notice that in all of the quotations used above, the period at the end of the sentence comes **after** the parenthesis.

Block Quotations

Occasionally, it is necessary to use long quotations. If a quotation is longer than **forty (40)** words, then you need to insert it differently, and punctuate it differently, than for shorter quotations. These longer quotations are called "Block Quotations." As in the following example, a block quotation is set off from your writing by indenting it 0.5" from the left margin, not by using quotation marks around it:

Kimmel (1990) described some of the effects of employment on working mothers:

Research on the effects of employment on morale indicates that employment can provide either a psychological boost or a stress. Most studies do indicate a higher level of satisfaction among employed mothers, but stress can result when the demands of the dual role are excessive. (p. 291)

Whether work gives a "boost" or more "stress" depends to an extent on the kind of work.

Notice that for block quotations, the period at the end of the sentence comes "before" the parentheses.

Match the grammar, style and mechanics of the source to the requirements of your sentence

When you integrate quotations into your writing, you need to pay attention to punctuation and grammar. You need to be careful to insert quotations and paraphrases smoothly into your writing so that the grammar matches.

The following is a very poor example of inserting a quotation:

According to Kimmel (1990), employed mothers "can provide either a psychological boost or a stress. Most studies do indicate a higher level of satisfaction among employed mothers" (p. 291).

To make a quotation match the grammar of the sentence into which you are inserting it, you can:

- 1) paraphrase most of the sentence

According to Kimmel (1990), employment can give working mothers either a "psychological boost or a stress" (p. 291).

- 2) use square brackets (to add any changes to the original)

According to Kimmel (1990), "Employment [for mothers] can provide either a psychological boost or a stress" (p. 291).

- 3) use ellipsis, which means three periods with a space between each period (to leave out parts of the quotation that are not needed)

According to Kimmel (1990), "Research . . . indicates that employment can provide either a psychological boost or a stress. Most studies do indicate a higher level of satisfaction among employed mothers" (p. 291).

What do you do if you want to use information or a quotation that another author also used, but you don't have the original source?

Use the words "cited in" in parentheses to show in which secondary source you found the quotation or information. For example, if an author whom you are using is named Kimmel, and you find information about a study by Kohen in a chapter or article by Kimmel, then your reference to these authors should appear like this:

In a five-year study, Kohen (1975) found that one out of four middle-aged men changed jobs near retirement (as cited in Kimmel, 1990).

Note: Only the source you've read should appear in the reference list.

Multiple Authors

If there is more than one author, usually include all of the authors' last names unless the list includes six or more authors. Look at the examples on the next page. If there are two authors, always give both authors' last names. However, if there are three to five authors, give all of the last names only for the first time that you mention a source, but after the first mention, just give the first author's last name plus the abbreviation "et al." (which means "and others" in Latin). For six or more authors, provide the first author's last name followed by "et al."

First Mention of a Multiple-Author (3-5 authors) Source:

Smith, Barnes, Kohen, and Sekon (1985) suggest that ...

Second Mention of a Multiple-Author (3-5 authors) Source:

Smith et al. (1985) provide examples of ...

Creating the Reference List at the End of the Paper

This handout does not provide detailed help for creating a reference list because you need to learn to use the APA manual or handouts that provide the detailed examples and guidelines for how to format different kinds of references. These resources are available from many sites online and in libraries, psychology labs, and in learning and writing centres at any college or university.

However, here are a few quick pointers. In APA style, the bibliography is called "References." Do not place the references at the bottom of your final page of text; they must appear on a separate page. As you create the list of references, put the entries in alphabetical order by author's last name. Follow all sequencing of words, underlining, spacing, and punctuation precisely as the manuals demonstrate. This means that you should be meticulous about indentation, spaces, commas, colons, quotation marks, periods, and underlining. Double-space everything in the references, both between lines in each entry, and between entries in your list of references.

The following page provides the list of references for sources used in this handout.

References

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- Tollefson, J. (1991). *Planning language, planning inequality*. London: Longman.