

# APA Format Part 1: Structure

+ (bonus guidelines on thesis/topic statements)

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Merritt College Library

**Amy Stewart-Deaker**, Reference Librarian



# Taking Notes?

Get the PDF of the workshop slides!



# APA

## American Psychological Association

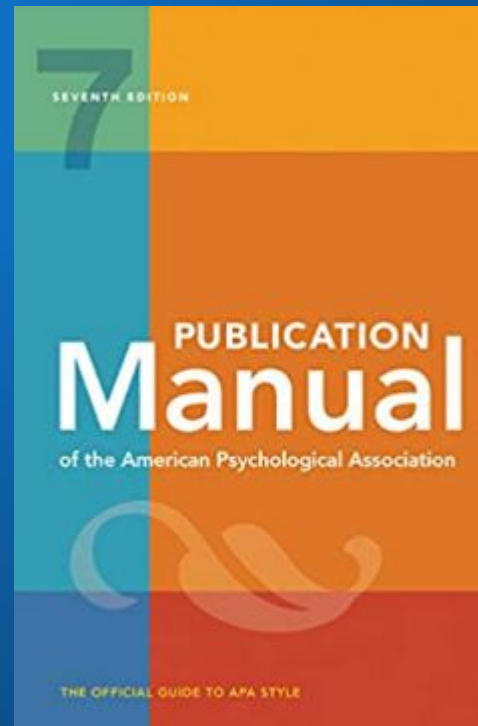
Scholarly communication guidelines used mostly within the Social Sciences  
(Psychology, Linguistics, Sociology, Economics, Education, etc.)

### Why you care:

- **FORMAT** of your paper (today!)
- How you **CITE** your sources (next time!)

### APA also offers:

- Guidelines on writing style and grammar
- Guidelines for bias-free language
- Journal article reporting standards
- Publication Process





# Basic APA Paper Format - Student Paper

Title Page  
Main Text  
References

or

Title Page  
Abstract  
Main Text  
References



# Fancy Pants APA Paper Format



Title Page  
Abstract  
Main Text  
References  
Footnotes  
Tables  
Figures  
Appendices

# General APA Guidelines

Use a font easily accessible to all users. Use same font throughout your paper.

- **Sans serif fonts:** 11-pt Calibri, 11-pt Arial
- **Serif fonts:** 12-pt Times New Roman, 11-pt Georgia

Double-space EVERYTHING (except for footnotes)

1-inch margins on all sides of the paper

Indent the first line of every paragraph (except Abstract) by 0.5 inches (tab key)

Page numbers in the upper right hand corner of each page

*(maybe...probably not)* Running Head (less than 50 characters) in upper left corner

One space after each period

Spelling should match the Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary

Use APA Heading Structures



# Title Page

Running Head (you probably don't need this)

MY PAPER TITLE

1

Page Number (upper right)

Centered, starting 3-4 spaces down from top (double-space):

- Title (**in bold**)
- Space
- Your Name
- Department and College
- Class Name
- Instructor
- Due Date

**My Paper Title: My Paper Subtitle**

Amy Stewart-Deaker

Department of English, Merritt College

ENGL 1A: Composition and Reading

Professor Smith

September 14, 2022



# Abstract

Remember: not always required on Student Papers...ask!

Page Number (upper right)

The word Abstract, centered and in bold on the top line

Do not indent abstract text

Keep your abstract to less than 250 words.

## What's in it?

A brief, single paragraph summary of your research including:

- Research question/thesis
- Key issues
- Methods
- Experiments
- Summary of conclusions

2

## Abstract

Don't act so surprised, Your Highness. You weren't on any mercy mission this time. Several transmissions were beamed to this ship by Rebel spies. I want to know what happened to the plans they sent you. In my experience, there is no such thing as luck. Don't underestimate the Force. Your eyes can deceive you. Don't trust them. I don't know what you're talking about. I am a member of the Imperial Senate on a diplomatic mission to Alderaan-- Look, I can take you as far as Anchorhead. You can get a transport there to Mos Eisley or wherever you're going. Obi-Wan is here. The Force is with him. Red Five standing by. Your eyes can deceive you. Don't trust them. You don't believe in the Force, do you? Dantooine. They're on Dantooine. I have traced the Rebel spies to her. Now she is my only link to finding their secret base. I need your help, Luke. She needs your help. I'm getting too old for this sort of thing.

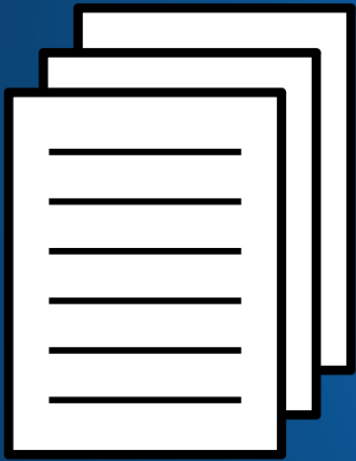




# Main Text

This is the main part of your paper and should consist of original writing and analysis.

Cite your sources (direct quotes as well as paraphrased concepts) (Workshop #2)



**First paragraph:** what is your research question or thesis? Why is this important?

**Middle paragraphs:** support your thesis, discuss your process, make your arguments

**Final paragraph:** Summarize what you did and review the importance of it. What is the answer to your research question? Did you prove your thesis statement?



# APA Heading Structure



Level	Format
1	<b>Centered, Boldface, Capitalized Words</b> Text starts a new indented paragraph.
2	<b>Flush Left, Boldface, Capitalized Words</b> Text starts a new indented paragraph.
3	<b><i>Flush Left, Boldface Italic, Capitalized</i></b> Text starts a new indented paragraph.
4	<b>Indented, Boldface, Capitalized, Ending With a Period.</b> Paragraph text continues on the same line as the level 4 heading.
5	<b><i>Indented, Boldface Italic, Capitalized, Ending With a Period.</i></b> Paragraph text continues on the same line as the level 5 heading..

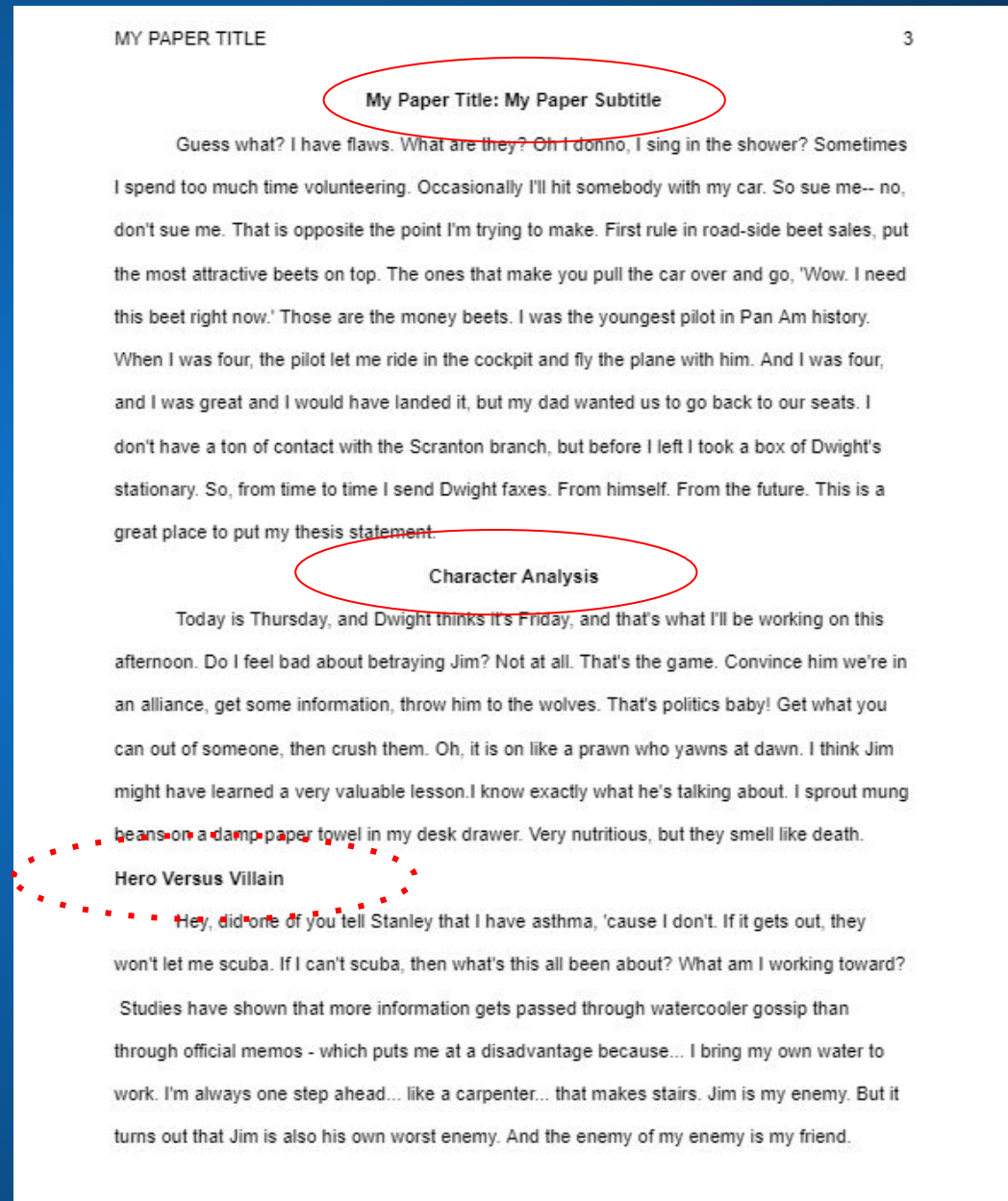
Table adapted from the Purdue OWL:

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/apa\\_headings\\_and\\_seriation.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_headings_and_seriation.html)



# Example of APA Main Text Page Structure:

Use APA Heading Levels to organize your document.



# Example of APA Main Text Page Structure:

Page Number (upper right)

Title in bold and centered at top  
(this acts as a Introduction...  
do not title a section Introduction)

Text is indented for each new  
paragraph

Double spaced

Include the research question or  
**thesis statement** in the first paragraph

Every paragraph should have a **topic sentence**

MY PAPER TITLE

3

## **My Paper Title: My Paper Subtitle**

Guess what? I have flaws. What are they? Oh I donno, I sing in the shower? Sometimes I spend too much time volunteering. Occasionally I'll hit somebody with my car. So sue me-- no, don't sue me. That is opposite the point I'm trying to make. First rule in road-side beet sales, put the most attractive beets on top. The ones that make you pull the car over and go, 'Wow. I need this beet right now.' Those are the money beets. I was the youngest pilot in Pan Am history. When I was four, the pilot let me ride in the cockpit and fly the plane with him. And I was four, and I was great and I would have landed it, but my dad wanted us to go back to our seats. I don't have a ton of contact with the Scranton branch, but before I left I took a box of Dwight's stationary. So, from time to time I send Dwight faxes. From himself. From the future. This is a great place to put my thesis statement.

### **Character Analysis**

Today is Thursday, and Dwight thinks it's Friday, and that's what I'll be working on this afternoon. Do I feel bad about betraying Jim? Not at all. That's the game. Convince him we're in an alliance, get some information, throw him to the wolves. That's politics baby! Get what you can out of someone, then crush them. Oh, it is on like a prawn who yawns at dawn. I think Jim might have learned a very valuable lesson. I know exactly what he's talking about. I sprout mung beans on a damp paper towel in my desk drawer. Very nutritious, but they smell like death.

### **Hero Versus Villain**

Hey, did one of you tell Stanley that I have asthma, 'cause I don't. If it gets out, they won't let me scuba. If I can't scuba, then what's this all been about? What am I working toward? Studies have shown that more information gets passed through watercooler gossip than through official memos - which puts me at a disadvantage because... I bring my own water to work. I'm always one step ahead... like a carpenter... that makes stairs. Jim is my enemy. But it turns out that Jim is also his own worst enemy. And the enemy of my enemy is my friend.





# Reference List



Page Number (upper right)

References written in bold and centered at top

Every citation should be mentioned in your text.

Double spaced

Alphabetized by first letter

Each citation is left justified for the first line and formatted with a “hanging indent”

Use APA citation format for all entries

## References

Eliot, T.S., & Gorey, E. (Illustrator). (1982). *Old Possum's book of practical cats*.

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Grunge. (2019, June 13). *The untold truth of Grumpy Cat* [Video]. YouTube.

[https://youtu.be/4\\_JHnZ7LUsw](https://youtu.be/4_JHnZ7LUsw)

Jensen, H. A., Meilby, H., Nielsen, S. S., & Sandøe, P. (2022). Movement patterns of roaming companion cats in Denmark - A study based on GPS tracking. *Animals*

(2076-2615), 12(14), 1748. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani12141748>

Picasso, P. (1939). Cat catching a bird. Musée Picasso, Paris, France.

Richman, V. (2021). Cats. In K. H. Nemeh & J. L. Longe (Eds.), *The Gale Encyclopedia of Science* (6th ed., Vol. 2, pp. 844-847). Gale EBooks.

<https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX8124400485/GVRL?u=merrittcoll&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=e7b40443>

# Reference List

What is this?



5

## References

Eliot, T.S., & Gorey, E. (Illustrator). (1982). *Old Possum's book of practical cats*.

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<https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX8124400485/GVRL?u=merrittcoll&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=e7b40443>



# DOI: Digital Object Identifier

Arch Iran Med. April 2020;23(4):281-282

doi 10.34172/aim.2020.12 <http://www.aimjournal.ir>

ARCHIVES OF  
**IRANIAN  
MEDICINE**


Opinion


**The COVID-19 Emergency Response Should Include a Mental Health Component**

Shervin Assari, MD, MPH<sup>1</sup>; Parham Habibzadeh, MD<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Charles R Drew University of Medicine and Science, Los Angeles, CA, USA  
<sup>2</sup>Persian BayanGene Research and Training Center, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran

With an exponential increase in the number long-term consequences.<sup>7</sup>

Open Access 



10.34172/aim.2020.12 *(they always start with a 10)*

★ <https://doi.org/...> <http://dx.doi.org/...> DOI:...

For this document in the Reference List:

<https://doi.org/10.34172/aim.2020.12>

<https://www.crossref.org/>

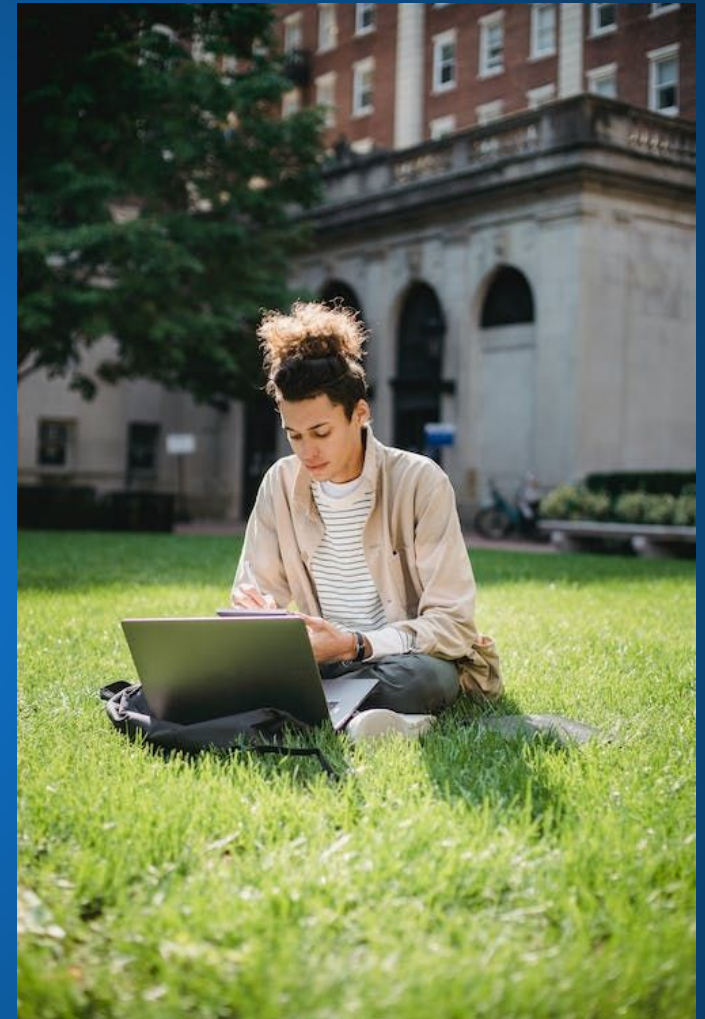


# Are You Ready to Start Writing?

What are you writing about?

## Thesis statement:

- Analyze, explain or argue something
- Make a statement and then prove it





# What's a Research Question?

- An open-ended question that you want to find the answer to



- A research question might be a way to start the research process and may lead to a thesis statement

# Which is the Thesis Statement?

**#1:** Do therapy dogs help with student test-taking anxiety?

**#2:** Interaction with emotional support or therapy dogs greatly reduces student test-taking anxiety.



# Developing the Thesis Support



**Thesis:** Interaction with emotional support or therapy dogs greatly reduces student test-taking anxiety.

## Things I might want to bring up in my essay:

- What kind of interaction?
- How is the student stress/anxiety measured?
- How do we know if it is reduced?
- Details about the students (age, education, etc.)
- Your experiment or summarizing other's research?

# But What About Topic Sentences?

The thesis is the point of the whole essay

Topic sentences generally summarize/focus individual paragraphs

- often the first sentences



## My Paper Title: My Paper Subtitle

Guess what? I have flaws. What are they? Oh I donno. I sing in the shower? Sometimes I spend too much time volunteering. Occasionally I'll hit somebody with my car. So sue me-- no, don't sue me. That is opposite the point I'm trying to make. First rule in road-side beet sales, put the most attractive beets on top. The ones that make you pull the car over and go, 'Wow. I need this beet right now.' Those are the money beets. I was the youngest pilot in Pan Am history. When I was four, the pilot let me ride in the cockpit and fly the plane with him. And I was four, and I was great and I would have landed it, but my dad wanted us to go back to our seats. I don't have a ton of contact with the Scranton branch, but before I left I took a box of Dwight's stationary. So, from time to time I send Dwight faxes. From himself. From the future. This is a great place to put my thesis statement.

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# Developing Topic Sentences



## Thesis:

Interaction with emotional support or therapy dogs greatly reduces student test-taking anxiety.

## Topic Sentences:

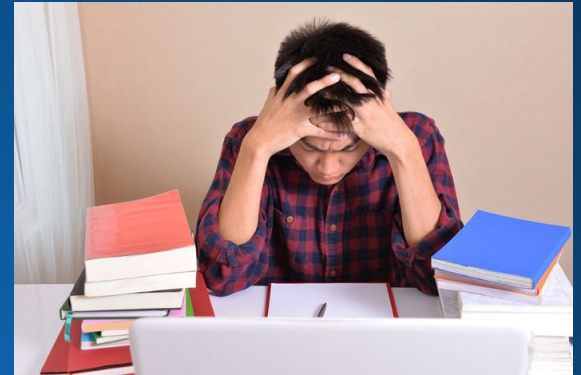
The participants in this study consisted of students from five San Francisco community colleges.

Student stress levels were determined by verbal anxiety level polls before and after interaction with the dogs.

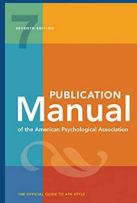
# Never Fear! Help is Available!

## Merritt College Library Research Guide on APA style

<https://merritt.libguides.com/APAstyle>



## APA Publication Manual (7th ed.)



- <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/paper-format>
- Merritt College Library - Ready Reference (BF76.7 .P83 2020)

## APA Literacy Tutorials (for example, the Purdue OWL)

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/)

For APA and other research questions:

**Contact your Merritt College Librarians!**

<https://www.merritt.edu/library/>



# Want to Learn More?

**LIS 85 Introduction to Information Resources- *enroll this week!***

2 units, started 9/6, asynchronous online - ALSO Spring 2023

Acceptable for credit: CSU, UC

Zero cost textbook

Introduction to the basic concepts and tools used in information research: Emphasis on how to develop a research topic and find, locate, evaluate, and use information; search strategies for print and online resources including reference books, catalogs, indexes, specialized databases, and the Internet.

Instructor: Adoria Williams  
arwilliams@peralta.edu

