

6: Writing Skills

Why Write?¹

Of all aspects of studying, writing is probably the most challenging. That is because when you write down an account of your ideas for other people to read you have to express yourself particularly carefully. You can't make the mental leaps you do when you are in conversation with others or thinking about something for yourself. To make your meaning clear, using only words on a page, you have to work out exactly what you think about the subject. You come to understand it for *yourself* in the process of explaining it to others. So writing makes you really grapple with what you are studying. In other words, it forces you into a very deep and powerful kind of *learning*. That is what makes it so demanding. When you write you are really putting ideas to use.

In some writing that you have done previously you may have 'taken in' ideas from books, articles, TV and so on. But it is only when you can *use* these ideas to say something for yourself that you have really 'learned' them. Ideas only become a properly functioning part of your thought-processes when you can call on them as you *communicate* with other people. It is very valuable to debate issues with other students in discussion groups. But an even more exacting way of using ideas in argument is to do it in writing.

A key part of using ideas effectively is to be able to write clearly, pleasantly and persuasively. In our society this is a very valuable skill. It puts you on a much better footing with other people if you can present your point of view forcefully in writing. Perhaps you started out on your studies with the idea only of learning more about Biology, Chemistry or Mathematics, but you may discover that one of the most valuable things you gain is the ability to write much more effectively. Whether you start with a rather weak writing style or a fairly well-developed one, there is always plenty of progress to be made. So writing tends to be both the most demanding and the most rewarding part of any course of study. And, because it contributes so much to what you learn, you have to put a lot of your time and energy into it.

Outcomes

By the end of this chapter you should:

- be able to explain why writing is so important;
- have an understanding of and be able to use critically the main criteria of good essay-writing;
- be aware of the basic technical and stylistic considerations involved in writing;
- be able to write appropriately any given form of writing;

¹ Adapted from OpenLearn: <http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/mod/resource/view.php?id=210753> (CC: BY-NC-SA)

- state the rationale for referencing and citation;
- quote texts from different sources in different ways in scholarly documents;
- write endnotes/footnotes and references/bibliographies from different sources using the APA and MLA formats.

What is an Essay?

The different science, arts and humanities subjects make their own particular demands on you. You may have to do various kinds of writing – projects, logs, lab reports, case-studies – or even write creatively. In this chapter, though, we are going to concentrate on the essay because that is by far the most common form of writing in higher learning.

The word ‘essay’ originally meant ‘an attempt’ or try at something, but now it usually means a short piece of writing on a specific subject. It is a *complete* piece of writing that can stand alone – it must make sense to the reader ‘in itself’. You are given an essay title or question, which sets out the issues you need to address, and a word limit of around one or two thousand words – possibly a bit shorter to begin with. You work from the title, putting together an *argument* that leads the reader towards a conclusion. Your lecturer marks your essay, making comments not only about *what* you have said but also the *way* you have structured and written the essay. These ‘criticisms’ are meant to help you develop both your grasp of the subject and your powers of expression. So an essay opens up a teaching–learning dialogue between you and your lecturer. In fact, it does still have some of the original sense of ‘trying your hand’ at something, with the idea that you can get better at it through practice.

Your lecturer will usually grade your essay too, so that you can see where you ‘stand’ in relation to whatever standards apply to your course. This means that, over time, you can see what kind of progress you are making.

Key points

Writing essays is a very important part of studying because:

- it deepens your learning of the subject you are studying;
- you learn to use ideas to argue a case;
- it enables you to enter into a dialogue with your audience like lecturer through which you can extend and refine your thinking, and your writing skills;
- it enables your lecturer or supervisor to assess your progress.

What is a Good Essay?

Criteria for Good Essay-writing

When a lecturer reads your essay, she or he will be asking the following questions:

- Have you answered the question in the title?
- Have you drawn on the relevant parts of the course for the main content of your essay?
- Do you show a good grasp of the ideas you have been studying in the course?
- Have you presented a coherent argument?
- Is the essay written in an objective, analytical way, with appropriate use of illustration and evidence?
- Is the essay clearly written and well presented?

Show a Good Grasp of the Ideas

To show your grasp of the ideas you have been studying, you have to express them for yourself, *in your own words*. Your lecturer will certainly be looking out for signs that you understand the centrally important issues. Your lecturer has to be able to see your thought-processes at work in this way in order to give you the kind of advice and support that will help develop your understanding. So what you must avoid doing is using other people's words.

Plagiarizing

When you are writing an essay you are often working with ideas and terms you are not familiar with. This makes it difficult for you to produce a clear, coherent argument and you may become anxious about whether you will 'get it right'. To be on the safe side, some students are tempted to 'lift' sections of words from textbooks and articles and put them in their essays without using quotation marks or acknowledging the source. In other words, they try to pass these words off as their own. This is known as 'plagiarism'.

Lecturers are usually very familiar with the difference between the way students write and the way experienced authors write, and soon notice when a student lurches between an 'expert' and a 'beginner' style. A particular giveaway is when most of the words are as in the original except for one or two (changed for purposes of camouflage), which stick out like sore thumbs because they are in a different style. Another is when smoothly flowing sections of writing are interspersed with short, inelegant linking phrases. It seems that most people write particularly badly when they are trying to stitch together someone else's words. Because you are not in control of 'making' the sense as you write, plagiarizing actually makes your writing worse.

This approach will not get you good marks. Indeed, when lecturers spot what is going on (which is not difficult) they will tend to assume you understand very little and mark you down. Worse, you do not develop your own writing style. If you become locked into the sterile and tedious business of parroting other people's words rather than expressing thoughts for yourself, then you are

likely to remain a beginner for a long time. And you will not learn much about the ideas in the course either.

There is only one way to learn to *use* ideas in writing and that is to practise expressing them in your own words. They may not come out very well to begin with but, like a learner in any field, you have to be prepared to make mistakes sometimes. It is through letting your weaknesses show that you learn how to do something about them, and allow others to help you learn.

Present a Coherent Argument

Presenting a coherent argument is closely linked to ‘answering the question’. The essence of an essay is that it sets out to be an argument about the issues raised in the title. Even if you have a lot of good material in it, it will not be judged ‘a good essay’ unless the material is organised so that it hangs together. This implies two things:

1. You need to sort out your points into groups so that they can be presented in a *structured* way, giving the essay a beginning, a middle, and an end.
2. You need to keep a *thread of meaning* running through your essay. Each sentence should flow on from the previous one, with adequate *signposting* to help your reader follow the moves you are making.

Presenting a coherent argument is also closely linked with ‘showing your grasp of ideas’. One of the reasons why your writing tasks are set in the essay form – the form of an argument – is because that makes you *use* the ideas you have been studying to say something. Anyone can copy material from books. The point of an essay is to make you *think*. When you present a coherent argument you are showing that you can *take hold* of the ideas and *organise* them to do some work for you. The writer must be objective, precise, logical, and concerned to back a case with evidence.

Take an Objective, Analytical Stance

An essay should be ‘objective’. What does that mean? Being objective about something means standing back from it and looking at it coolly. It means focusing your attention on the ‘object’, on what you are discussing, and not on yourself and your own (subjective) feelings about it. Your ideas should be able to survive detailed inspection by other people who are not emotionally committed to them.

An essay should argue by force of reason, not emotion. You must make deliberate efforts to develop a style of writing that is cool, dispassionate and fair to all sides. That means you yourself must be open to doubt and criticism. Your arguments should be presented in the spirit that your reader might not agree with them. And if you want to dispute a claim someone else makes, you are expected to have analysed that claim carefully, to argue your case and

provide evidence for your point of view, rather than setting out to criticise or cast doubts on your opponent's character or motives. You should be respectful to other writers. You should assume that you are writing as a member of a community of equals, all of whom are intelligent, open-minded, fair people. You should write on the assumption that your readers are also members of that community, and that they will be interested only in your reasons for thinking what you do. They will not be interested in you as a person, or in your ideas because they are your ideas.

Write Clearly

A good essay is easy to read. Grand-sounding phrases and elaborate sentences do not make an essay impressive. Clarity and economy are what count. Such ease of reading is achieved at several levels.

Technical Considerations

Handwriting

Nowadays most people use a word processing package to write essays while some people may use a typewriter. However, if you don't have access to either of these you will need to hand-write your essay. Should this be the case, the ease of reading depends on the quality of your handwriting. It is only fair to your lecturer to try to make your writing as legible as possible. This will take time and care. But when you have spent a long time putting an essay together, it is a waste if what you say is misunderstood just because your writing is misread. It is also prudent to take care. It would be an angel of a lecturer who was not a bit impatient at having to spend ages trying to make out your handwriting. If it is really dreadful you will have to get someone to tell you which letters are hardest to read and practise straightening them out, rounding them more, or whatever is required. Having said that, most lecturers have resigned themselves, in the course of duty, to becoming expert at deciphering all kinds of scrawl. They will usually do their best not to be too influenced by it. (Actually, a lot of students complain that they can't read their lecturers' or supervisors' scribbled comments on their essays or reports. Therefore, this is not a one-way street.)

Layout

When using a word processing package, it is best to use a font like Times New Roman which is sober and easy to read. Set the font size to 11 or 12 points and use double line spacing. You should also make sure that there are generous margins – the default settings are usually sufficient. If you are writing by hand, your essay is easier to read if it is set out neatly on the page. You should use lined A4 paper and leave generous margins for your lecturer to write comments. Write on one side of the paper only – this makes it much easier to cross-refer from one section of the essay to another. Make sure you leave spaces between paragraphs. This is all straightforward stuff, but the point is that you should 'stand back' from your finished essay and look at it as

an 'object' you have created. Does it look inviting to read? It is surprising how many essays have words squashed onto every square centimetre of the page. Be 'page-proud' and generous with space. Unless your essays look as if you care, why should anyone else?

Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling

As we have seen, these contribute enormously to ease of reading. The whole point of punctuation is to help the reader approach your words in the right way, and the rules of grammar are what enable the reader to construct the sense intended by the writer. Mistakes in either make the reader stop to work out what is being said. Poor spelling can also cause frequent interruptions. Meanwhile, the reader 'loses' the thread of your meaning. None of these abilities is easy to improve quickly, and all fall beyond the scope of this book. But if you think you are particularly weak in them you should seek help. Take comfort from the thought that your lecturer will usually try to 'read through' to your intended meaning, and will also try to help you improve. A common grammatical mistake is the 'dangling modifier'. Let's take a closer look at this common grammar problem:

Dangling Modifiers

When writing it is always important that you communicate your meaning clearly. A common error amongst student writers is to create **dangling modifiers**. This normally occurs when you leave out the **subject** or only infer a subject in your sentence. Inserted additional information (the **modifier**) then seems to describe the **object instead**. Consider this example²:

“Walking down Main Street (no subject), the trees were beautiful.”

Here the "walking down" participle or modifier seems to connect to "the trees" because the sentence has no subject, when on reflection it really should connect to the invisible speaker of the sentence. The speaker is the one walking down the street (and finding the trees beautiful). Strunk and White's, *The Elements of Style*, provides another kind of example, a misplaced modifier (another participle):

“ I saw the trailer peeping through the window. ”

Presumably, the speaker means he or she was peeping through the window, but the incorrect placement of "peeping through the window" makes it sound as though the trailer was peeping through the window. Because the modifier has been placed at the end of the sentence instead of at the beginning it seems to describe the object rather than the subject. Ambiguous modifiers have sometimes been used for humorous effect. A famous example of this is by Groucho Marx as Captain Jeffrey T. Spaulding in the 1930 film, *Animal Crackers*:

² Adapted from Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dangling_modifier (CC: BY_SA)

**“One morning I shot an elephant in my pyjamas.
How he got into my pyjamas I’ll never know.”**

Groucho Marx

Though under the most plausible interpretation of the first sentence, Captain Spaulding would have been wearing the pyjamas, the line plays on the grammatical possibility that the elephant was somehow within his pyjamas. So make sure that when you compose a sentence as part of a report, essay or assignment you have clearly identified a subject and an object and that the modifier or participle is located next to the correct subject or object.

Let’s see if you can do it?



Self Study Activity: Dangling Modifiers

Study the examples of dangling modifiers below and:

- 1] identify why each sentence does not work properly.
- 2] rewrite the sentence so that it is expressed correctly.

Examples:

“Having completed the essay, the radio was turned on.”

“Having been thrown in the air, the dog caught the ball.”

“While walking across the street, the bus hit her.”

“After reading the article, the newspaper is aimed at the working class.”

“The self study activity was a failure, not having studied the paragraph on ‘Dangling Modifiers’ carefully.”

“Last week I caught a cold at school.”

Language

Your language should be direct rather than fancy. Don’t strive for effect. You should always go for short and simple sentences where you can – especially when you are building up a basic essay-writing style. You can play with more elaborate words and grammatical structures later, when you have established a secure basic technique. Don’t beat about the bush; pitch straight into answering the essay question in a direct, purposeful way.

Fluency

Try to make your essays flow from one sentence to the next. As we have seen, this is partly a matter of structure and partly of signposting. It is vital to think of your essay in terms of its overall structure – to move points around, and cut and trim, in search of a clear sequence for your ideas. Then, having

worked out a structure, you have to 'talk' your reader through it, emphasizing the key turning points in the essay, summarising where you have got to, showing how each new point follows from the last, and finally bringing it all to a conclusion.

Explaining

You need to be able to think of things from your reader's point of view. The reader cannot see into your mind so you have to explain your points quite fully and carefully. You need to give examples to illustrate what you are talking about and to justify what you say. In other words, you need a sense of your 'audience' and you have to work out how to 'speak' to these readers in the right 'tone of voice'.

Also...

Finally, a few key messages to take from this unit. One is that there is no great mystery or magic about what good writing is. We can recognize it just by reading it. The difficulty is how to produce it. However, since there are different aspects of writing well, you will find it useful to return to the '[Criteria of good essay writing](#)' from time to time to consider how your writing is developing. When you are about to submit an essay or report to a lecturer, or after you get it back with comments on it, you can check through the list to see what progress you are making on each front.

Last, take away the knowledge that *you don't have to get your writing perfect before submitting it*. In fact, there isn't such a thing as 'perfect' anyway. There are many different ways of writing a good essay. A good learner in any field is prepared to make mistakes and learn from them.



Self Activity: Essay Comparison

Critically read the following two student's essays and critique them using the guidelines outlined above:

Did eighteenth century women migrate to towns mainly because of the attractions of the towns, or mainly to escape from life in the countryside?³

³ Accessed from OpenLearn, Looking at other people's essays, <http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/mod/resource/view.php?id=210753>

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Masozi's Essay

Eighteenth century society expected women to have accomplishments such as the ability to embroider, play the piano and sing. They were supposed to be fragile, delicate and innocent; they were taught at smart boarding schools or by private lecturers, social skills to fit them for the role expected of them at the time, as 'embodiments of their husbands' and fathers' status'. Life in the country during this period of history offered little scope for the indulgence of these skills owing to the scarcity of the population and the difficulty of transport, as women from the higher ranks were constrained to mix only with their own kind.

Thus the lives of these well born ladies were immensely boring. It was not considered fitting that a woman should take any part in the management of a country estate, or in the country pursuits of riding, hunting or fishing as enjoyed by the men and she was therefore reduced to spend her time reading or writing letters. However, in an urban environment, it was acceptable that women could socialize on a much wider scale and even organize and plan social events, an added dimension to their very constrained lives. Because of this, and because an urban environment offered women so much more scope, not only to display their accomplishments but also to indulge their own desire for sociability, amusement and companions', the female population of England's towns expanded dramatically.

In view of the somewhat prescribed role forced upon women in the eighteenth century by the male dominated society which formulated social mores, it was inevitable that women would be attracted to the towns where the skills that society required of them could be more widely indulged and more fully displayed. In the towns there were more people of the same rank, so that women could socialize on a wider scale, and as there was public transport they had greater mobility. They therefore fled from the country in order to escape the restrictions and consequent boredom placed upon them by the very limited pastimes that a high ranking women in the eighteenth century was permitted to indulge.

In effect, I think that the high ranking women of the eighteenth century were neither mainly attracted to the towns, or escaping from the countryside, what they were seeking to do was to fulfil the very limited role with which society had burdened them as fully as was possible."

Kondwani's Essay

Joyce Ellis presents to us a portrayal of woman living around the eighteenth century. The women

who lived a fairly comfortable style of life belonged to a class of society where the father or husband would be a land-owner, these males were orientated to country life and all it entailed so they expected their wives or daughters to fit in to a standard of life they felt gave a certain status to the country way of life. These were under-privileged women as the boredom of country life could become frustrating to them, does it not make you see a resemblance to the modern day young woman, she can combine marriage, raising children, and holding on to a career as well.

With society becoming more wealthy it was possible for the fathers and husbands to provide an even better standard of life for their wives and daughters, more servants could be provided to do the work and this left the woman more time than ever to develop the social skills of the era, but this in turn led to extreme frustration among woman of that class. The country was no place now to exercise these new skills they had been taught, for one thing females outnumbered males at that time, also few chances arose to meet and mingle with crowds of people, but most importantly the demands of propriety meant that their conduct should be impeccable at all times any error would be seen in such a limited environment so therefore woman began to long for the urban or city way of living, if even for a short period so that they could deploy the art of socializing and mingling with a greater amount of society

Towns offered woman a great variation of respectable ways in which to carry out the social skills, indeed many women have gone down in history as being great experts as organizers of social events thus enhancing their husbands standing. In a town or city, women could meet with many more of the female sex than they did in the country, they could exchange views and learn new ideas from each other, also they could meet with more of the male population as the cities had theatres concert halls, and many places where both sexes could mingle together respectably. In many ways going into urban life from the countryside was beneficial to woman of the upperclass.

This transition was not without a certain amount of jibes from the male population against the women of that time, who looked on them as being inferior in many ways, and considered those who chose to get away from boredom of the country as being improper in outlook.

Nevertheless woman, whether wealthy or poor need the stimulus of company and the need to escape from routine and boredom and so will continue to seek for the things that will be in their favour.

Activity Tasks

1. As you read, note any places where you have difficulty grasping the point, and write any other thoughts that come to you in the margins. Pencil in any alterations you think could usefully be made. (If possible, work on printed copies of the essays.)
2. When you get to the end of the essays, take a sheet of paper and write two headings: 'Strengths' and 'Weaknesses'. Note down the good things about Kondwani's essay and the weak points. Then do the same for Masozi's.
3. Try to weigh up the quality of these essays. Do you think that one of them is better than the other? (Can they be good in different ways?) Overall, do you think that they are good essays or poor ones? How much of that is to do with the quality of the ideas in them and how much to do with the way the ideas are presented?
4. Finally, can you draw any general conclusions about the qualities a good essay should have? (Look back over your answers to 2 and 3 above.)

Activity Advice / Tips: Judging Writing

This is an interesting activity and it will take you some time. You may not do the best at this stage. However, it is *worth doing*. It will be time well spent because you need to develop your ability to see what works in writing and what doesn't. It is not helpful to try to learn formal 'rules' of writing. Rather, you have to become a reasonably good judge of real pieces of writing, including your own. 'Marking' other people's work helps you understand what you should be aiming for in your own writing.



Self Activity: Essay Writing

- Use the notes you have made as a critique for the two essays to rewrite the essay so that it is a much better essay that meets the discussed criteria.
- Give your essay to a colleague to mark using the criteria given by stating strengths, weaknesses and suggestions about what could be done to make the essay even better

Referencing and Citation

In institutions of higher learning, like Bunda College of Agriculture, students are required to write their documents such as projects and assignments with scholarly professionalism. In this unit, you will go through different forms of referencing and citation that can help you write academic texts. You will particularly also be exposed to MLA and APA styles of referencing.

Referencing is generally all about acknowledging the sources of information used in either written or oral scholarly work or text. References are therefore, a list of texts used in an academic work. In a related term, a bibliography,

however, is a list of recommended readings on a given topic which may or may not have been used or cited in a scholarly text (document). Citation is synonymously used with referencing. As the term connotes, citation refers to locating the 'cites' or places where information has been taken from in a document. Citation could be in the form of endnotes or footnotes or embedded (included) notes as we will see later. Here at Bunda College of Agriculture, you will be expected to cite all the sources of information that you have used in your assignments or research projects. Otherwise, using people's information without acknowledging the sources is tantamount to 'academic theft' called plagiarism. Your lecturers will punish you for plagiarism and the punishment could include failure in the assignment or research project that you present to them.

Justifications for Referencing and Citation

Among the reasons why scholars, like you, are expected to make referencing and citations are that doing so helps in:

- Locating and verifying the places where information is said to have been taken from.
- Directing readers to read more on the topic under discussion in your paper or text.
- Showing a sense of belonging to the group of academic scholars that abide by the given referencing requirement.
- Standardising the way scholars write; hence it is easier to assess and compare different academic work based on the same principles.
- Protecting the intellectual property of thinkers that contribute(d) to the world through their work through the crimes that arise from plagiarism.
- Continuity of research and intellectual development because it shows what is already done by others.

Styles of Documenting Sources of Information

There are basically two popular styles of documenting sources of information that one can use in scholarly work. The first is the American Psychological Association's format, hereafter abbreviated as APA. The APA citation style refers to the rules and conventions recommended by the American Psychological Association on how to document sources of information mainly used in research papers. The second style is the Modern Language Association's format, hereafter, abbreviated as MLA. The MLA citation style refers to rules and conventions established and recommended by the Modern Language Association on how to document sources of information used in scholarly work, like research papers. The APA and MLA conventions on acknowledging sources of information are different in some way and so different institutions and lecturers prefer different styles mainly due to their expositions to them. You are, therefore, supposed to know both of them in detail so that you use the right convention for the right institutions and people you present your scholarly work to.

Quotations

In referencing, quotations refer to the way of acknowledging direct words or phrases or statements formally used by other people. Quotations appear in inverted commas when quoted word for word or paraphrased when one uses someone's ideas in his/her own words. In both cases, you need to cite the source of information. When writing an academic text, there are some times when you may have to include a footnote or an endnote to supplement what you have written in the main text. A footnote is similar to an endnote in that the content is the same. The only difference is that a footnote is placed at the bottom of the page while an endnote appears at the end of a text like a chapter. Take note that there are two types of footnotes/endnotes. The first type is called citation/reference which locates the source of information used in a text. The second type, called content footnote/endnote only add more information (notes) to the issues discussed in the text which if put in the main text might be not that necessary to the reader. In other words, footnotes and endnotes of this type are most often used as an alternative to long explanatory notes that could be distracting to readers.

The APA Style

American Psychological Association (APA) style is a widely accepted style of documentation, particularly in the social sciences. APA style specifies the names and order of headings, formatting, and organization of citations and references, and the arrangement of tables, figures, footnotes, and appendices, as well as other manuscript and documentation features. APA style uses the author-date style of parenthetical referencing, with such source citations keyed to a subsequent list of "References." Also known as the Harvard Style.⁴

Included or Embedded Citation

Reference citations in texts are done using parenthetical acknowledgement. Most often, this involves enclosing the author's surname and the date of publication within brackets, separated by a comma, generally placed immediately after the reference or at the end of the sentence in which the reference is made. However, it is also common for the authors to be the subject or object of a sentence. In such a case only the year is in parenthesis. In all cases of citation, author name(s) are always followed immediately by a year, and years are never presented without author name(s) immediately preceding it. In the case of a quotation, the page number is also included in the citation.

Full bibliographic information is then provided in a Reference section at the end of the article. APA style defines that the reference section may only include articles that are cited within the body of an article. This is the distinction between a document having a Reference section and a

⁴ Adapted from Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/APA_style (CC: BY-SA)

bibliography, which may incorporate sources which may have been read by the authors as background but not referred to or included in the body of a document.

Single author

Format should be Author's last name followed directly by a comma, then the year of publication. When one makes the reference to the author(s) directly as a part of the narrative, then only the year (and page number if needed) would remain enclosed within parentheses. The same holds for multiple authors as you can see in the following examples.

A recent study found a possible genetic cause of alcoholism (Pauling, 2005). Pauling (2005) discovered a possible genetic cause of alcoholism.

Two authors

Authors should be presented in order that they appear in the published article. If they are cited within closed parentheses, use the ampersand (&) between them. If not enclosed in parentheses then use expanded "and".

A recent study found a possible genetic cause of alcoholism (Pauling & Liu, 2005). Pauling and Liu (2005) discovered a possible genetic cause of alcoholism.

Three to five authors

With three to five authors, the first reference to an article includes all authors. Subsequent citations in the same document may refer to the article by the principal author only plus "et al." However, all authors must be present in the references section.

A recent study found a possible genetic cause of alcoholism (Pauling, Liu, & Guo, 2005). Pauling, Liu, and Guo (2005) conducted a study that discovered a possible genetic cause of alcoholism. Pauling et al. (2005) discovered a possible genetic cause of alcoholism. A recent study found a possible genetic cause of alcoholism (Pauling et al., 2005).

Six authors or more

The correct format is (First Author et al., Year). In the reference section, all six authors' names should be included.

Pauling et al. (2005) discovered a possible genetic cause of alcoholism.

Multiple publications, same author

If an author has multiple publications that you wish to cite, you use a comma to separate the years of publication in chronological order (oldest to most recent). If the publications occur in the same year, the Publication Manual recommends using suffixes a, b, c, etc. (note that corresponding letters should

be used in the reference list, and these references should be ordered alphabetically by title).

Recent studies have found a possible genetic cause of alcoholism (Pauling, 2004, 2005a, 2005b).

Pauling (2004, 2005a, 2005b) has conducted studies that have discovered a possible genetic cause of alcoholism

Multiple publications, different authors

Follow the rules for one author above, and use a semicolon to separate articles. Citation should first be in alphabetical order of the author, then chronological.

Recent studies found a possible genetic cause of alcoholism (Alford, 1995; Pauling, 2004, 2005; Sirkis, 2003)

Direct quotes

The same rules as above apply here, the format being (Author, Year, Page Number).

When asked why his behavior had changed so dramatically, Max simply said, "I think it's the reinforcement" (Pauling, 2004, p. 69).

Reference List

The APA style guide prescribes that the *Reference* section, bibliographies and other lists of names should be accumulated by surname first, and mandates inclusion of surname prefixes. For example, "Martin de Rijke" should be sorted as "De Rijke, M." and "Saif Al Falasi" should be sorted as "Al-Falasi, S." (The preference for Arabic names now is to hyphenate the prefix so that it remains with the surname.)

Print sources

A] Book by one author

Sheril, R. D. (1956). *The terrifying future: Contemplating color television*. San Diego: Halstead.

B] Book by two authors or more

Smith, J., & Peter, Q. (1992). *Hairball: An intensive peek behind the surface of an enigma*. Hamilton, ON: McMaster University Press.

C] Article in an edited book

McDonalds, A. (1993). Practical methods for the apprehension and sustained containment of supernatural entities. In G. L. Yeager (Ed.),

Paranormal and occult studies: Case studies in application (pp. 42–64). London: OtherWorld Books.

D] Article in a journal paginated separately

Crackton, P. (1987). The Loonie: God's long-awaited gift to colourful pocket change? *Canadian Change*, 64 (7), 34–37.

E] Article in a journal with continuous pagination

Rottweiler, F. T., & Beauchemin, J. L. (1987). Detroit and Narnia: Two foes on the brink of destruction. *Canadian/American Studies Journal*, 54, 66-146.

F] Article in a weekly magazine

Henry, W. A., III. (1990, April 9). Making the grade in today's schools. *Time*, 135, 28–31.

G] Article in a newspaper

Wrong, M. (2005, August 17). "Never Gonna Give You Up" says Mayor. *Toronto Sol*, p. 4.

I] Government document

Revenue Canada. (2001). *Advanced gouging: Manual for employees* (MP 65–347/1124). Ottawa: Minister of Immigration and Revenue.

Electronic sources

For electronic references, websites, and online articles, APA Style asserts some basic rules, including to direct readers specifically to the source material using URLs which work, include the access date and include all other relevant APA style details for the source Internet article based on a print source (With exact formatting of original)

Marlowe, P., Spade, S., & Chan, C. (2001). Detective work and the benefits of colour versus black and white [Electronic version]. *Journal of Pointless Research*, 11, 123–124.

A] Internet article based on a print source (Formatting differs from original)

Marlowe, P., Spade, S., & Chan, C. (2001). Detective work and the benefits of colour versus black and white. *Journal of Pointless Research*, 11, 123–124. Retrieved October 25, 2007, from http://www.pointlessjournal.com/colour_vs_black_and_white.html

B] Article in an Internet-only journal

Blofeld, E. S. (1994, March 1). Expressing oneself through Persian cats and modern architecture. *Felines & Felons*, 4, Article 0046g. Retrieved October 3, 1999, from <http://journals.f+f.org/spectre/vblofeld-0046g.html>

C] Article in an Internet-only newsletter

Paradise, S., Moriarty, D., Marx, C., Lee, O. B., Hassel, E., Bradford, J., et al. (1957, July). Portrayals of fictional characters in reality-based popular writing: Project update. *Off the Beaten Path*, 7 (3). Retrieved October 3, 1999, from <http://www.newsletter.offthebeatenpath.news/otr/complaints.html>

D] Stand-alone Internet document, no author identified, no date

What I did today. (n.d.). Retrieved August 21, 2002, from <http://www.cc.mystory.life/blog/didtoday.html> [Fictional entry.]

E] Document available on university program or department website (note that APA spells website Web site)

Rogers, B. (2078). *Faster-than-light travel: What we've learned in the first twenty years*. Retrieved August 24, 2079, from *Mars University, Institute for Martian Studies* Web site, <http://www.eg.spacecentraltoday.mars/university/dept.html> [Fictional entry.]

F] Electronic copy of a journal article, three to five authors, retrieved from database

Costanza, G., Seinfeld, J., Benes, E., Kramer, C., & Peterman, J. (1993). Minutiæ and insignificant observations from the nineteen-nineties. *Journal about Nothing*, 52, 475–649. Retrieved October 31, 1999, from *NoTHINGJournals* database. [Fictional entry.]

G] E-mail or other personal communication (cite in text only)

(A. Monterey, personal communication, September 28, 2001)

H] Book on CD

Nix, G. (2002). *Lirael, Daughter of the Clayr* [CD]. New York: Random House/Listening Library.

I] Book on tape

Nix, G. (2002). *Lirael, Daughter of the Clayr* [Cassette Recording No. 1999-1999-1999]. New York: Random House/Listening Library.

J] Movie

Gilby, A. (Producer), & Schlesinger, J. (Director). (1995). *Cold comfort farm* [Motion picture]. Universal City, CA: MCA Universal Home Video.

The MLA Style

According to the MLA book catalogue description, since first being published in 1985, the MLA Style Manual has been "the standard guide for graduate students, scholars, and professional writers." MLA style "has been widely adopted by schools, academic departments, and instructors for over half a century"; the MLA's "guidelines are also used by over 1,100 scholarly and literary journals, newsletters, and magazines and by many university and commercial presses," and they are "followed throughout North America and in Brazil, China, India, Japan, Taiwan, and other countries around the world" ("What Is MLA Style?")⁵.

Purpose

The MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing, 3rd ed. (2008), by the Modern Language Association of America (based on the work of Joseph Gibaldi with co-author Walter S. Achtert for The MLA Style Manual [1985], revised in the 2nd ed. in 1998), is addressed primarily to academic scholars, professors, graduate students, and other advanced-level writers of scholarly books and articles in humanities disciplines such as English and other modern languages and literatures. Many journals and presses in these disciplines require that manuscripts be submitted following MLA style.

MLA style provides a bibliography of "Works Cited" listing works cited in one's text and notes (either footnotes and/or endnotes), which is placed after the main body of a term paper, article, or book.

Selected bibliography or works consulted

In addition to "Works Cited", MLA style also provides other possible options for bibliographies such as more-selective lists headed "Selected Bibliography" or "Works Consulted."

Content notes

In composing "content notes" (formatted as either [footnotes or endnotes](#)), one is directed to "avoid lengthy discussions that divert the reader's attention from the primary text" and advised: "In general, comments that you cannot fit into

⁵ Adapted from Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_MLA_Style_Manual (CC: BY-SA)

the text should be omitted unless they provide essential justification or clarification of what you have written" (259). "You may use a note, for example, to give full publication facts for an original source for which you cite an indirect source" (259). MLA style "content notes" use the same method of "Parenthetical Documentation and the List of Works Cited," with sources keyed to the list of "Works Cited", discussed in Section 7: "Documentation: Citing Sources in the Text" (240–60).

Formats for Bibliographies in MLA

Book

Author's name [last name, first name, middle initial or middle name (as given)]. Title. Place of publication: publisher, date. Print. Supplementary information (if any). Example

Hodgkinson, Tom. How to Be Idle. New York: Harper, 2005. Print.

Article in a periodical (magazine or journal, as well as newspapers)

Author's name [last name, first name, middle initial or middle name (as given)]. "Article title." Title of periodical Volume number ("for a scholarly journal"). [period]issue number ("if available, for a scholarly journal") Date of publication within parentheses ("for a scholarly journal, the year; for other periodicals, the day, month, and year, as available"): Pages ("inclusive"). Print.

Brophy, Mike. "Driving Force." Hockey News 21 Mar. 2006: 16-19. Print.

Kane, Robert. "Turing Machines and Mental Reports." Australasian Jour. of Philosophy 44.3 (1966): 334-52. Print.

If the journal uses only issue numbers, cite the issue number alone.

If citing a "locally-published newspaper" whose city of publication is not in its title, the city is put in square brackets (but not italicized) after the title of the newspaper (178–79).

Internet Resource

Name of author of webpage (last name, first name, middle initial or middle name [as given]). "Article Title." Title of Webpage [publication]. Sponsoring Agency, date of publication (or date page was last modified). Web. Date accessed.

CNN and Reuters. "Boston Columnist Resigns Amid New Plagiarism Charges." Cable News Network. Turner Broadcasting System, Inc., 19 Aug. 1998. Web. 6 Mar. 2009.

CD ROM

Name of author (last name, first name, middle initial or middle name [as given]). "Article title of printed source." Periodical title of printed source, or title of printed analogue Date: inclusive pages. Title of database. CD-ROM. Name of vendor or computer service. Electronic-publication data or data for access.

Reed, William. "Whites and the Entertainment Industry." Tennessee Tribune 25 Dec. 1996: 28. Ethnic News Watch. CD-ROM. Data Technologies, Feb. 1997.

Personal Interview

Name of person interviewed (last name, first name, middle initial or middle name [as given]). Personal interview. Date interviewed.

Pei, I. M. Personal interview. 22 July 1993.



Chapter Assessment Task

This chapter has discussed several ways you could reference your sources. See if you can perform these tasks:

1. Study the information below taken from a book, *Using Moodle*, and reference this book using both APA and MLA techniques.

Using Moodle, 2nd Edition, Second Edition by Jason Cole and Helen Foster	
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Published by O'Reilly Media, Inc., 1005 Gravenstein Highway North, Sebastopol, CA 95472	
O'Reilly books may be purchased for educational, business, or sales promotional use. Online editions are also available for most titles (http://safari.oreilly.com). For more information, contact our corporate/institutional sales department: (800) 998-9938 or corporate@oreilly.com .	
Editor: Isabel Kunkel	Indexer: Joe Wizda
Production Editor: Sarah Schneider	Cover Designer: Karen Montgomery
Proofreader: Sada Preisch	Interior Designer: David Futato
	Illustrator: Robert Romano
Printing History:	
July 2005:	First Edition.
November 2007:	Second Edition.

2. Study the information below from a book called *An Introduction to Classroom Observation* and reference it in both APA and MLA Styles

First published 1994 by
Routledge
Second edition published 1999
by Routledge
11 New Fetter Lane, London
EC4P 4EE

This edition published in the
Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2002.

Simultaneously published in the
USA and Canada
by Routledge
29 West 35th Street, New York,
NY 10001

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storage or retrieval system,
without permission in writing
from the publishers.

*British Library Cataloguing in
Publication Data*

A catalogue record for this book
is available from the British
Library

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in
Publication Data*

Wragg, E. C. (Edward Conrad)
An introduction to classroom
observation / E. C. Wragg. —
2nd ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical
references (p.) and index.

1. Observation (Educational
method) 2. Teachers—
Training of.

I. Title.

LB1731.6.W73 1999

370'.71—dc21 98-36040

CIP

ISBN 0-415-19440-7 (Print Edition)

ISBN 0-203-01895-8 Master e-book ISBN

ISBN 0-203-20040-3 (Glassbook Format)

3. Provide an APA reference for an online open access journal article called, *A Pictorial Technique for Mass Screening of Sorghum Germplasm for Anthracnose (Colletotrichum sublineolum) Resistance* by Louis K. Prom, Ramasamy Perumal, John Erpelding, Thomas Isakeit, Noe Montes-Garcia, Clint W. Magill. Available at <http://www.bentham.org/open/toasj/openaccess2.htm>



Additional Enrichment Resources

The following web resources are recommended and will offer enrichment on writing skills:

Resource	Location
How-to-Study.com , <i>Writing Techniques</i>	http://www.how-to-study.com/study-skills/en/language-arts/18/writing-techniques/
How-to-Study.com , <i>A Word Identification Strategy</i>	http://www.how-to-study.com/study-skills/en/language-arts/16/a-word-identification-strategy/
VUMA! Portal , <i>How to Improve your Writing Skills</i>	http://www.vuma.ac.za/drupal/?q=content/how-improve-your-writing-skills-0
VUMA! Portal , <i>Basics of Good Writing</i>	http://www.vuma.ac.za/drupal/?q=content/basics-good-writing
VUMA! Portal , <i>Five Ways to Improve Your Writing Style</i>	http://www.vuma.ac.za/drupal/?q=content/five-ways-improve-your-writing-style



Glossary

Below is a list of words and abbreviations used in the chapter.

Term	Definition
APA	American Psychological Association. Style for acknowledging sources of information formally used in a text.
Bibliography	This is a list of recommended readings which may have been used and cited in an academic work or not. It is written in alphabetical order of authors' surnames.
Citation	This refers to ways of acknowledging or showing the location of information used in an academic text.
Endnote	The source of the information in the text, or additional information about the text placed at the end of a document.
Footnote	The source of the information in the text, or additional information about the text, placed at the bottom (foot) of the page.
MLA	Morden Language Association. Style for acknowledging sources of information formally used in a text.
References	A list of texts used and cited in an academic work in alphabetical order of authors' surnames