



TeachPsychScience.org

Resources for Teaching Research, Statistics, and Writing in Psychology

Title of Resource	Identifying Errors in APA Style Citations
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Brief Description:	Students are asked to identify APA citation errors in a paragraph.
Keywords:	APA Style Formatting Citations
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Additional Information:	This activity complements the <i>APA Style Citations PowerPoint Slide Deck</i> available on TeachPsychScience.org

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Instructors:

This activity complements the *APA Style Citations PowerPoint Slide Deck* available on TeachPsychScience.org, although it can still be used as a standalone activity. Students are first provided with an example of a paragraph with proper APA citations. Students are then asked to identify the APA style citation errors in the second example paragraph.

Identifying Errors in APA Style Citations

For this activity you will identify APA Style errors when citing sources within paragraphs.

Example. The following paragraph provides examples of citations that are in perfect APA style. Please notice the various details in each, but pay particular attention to areas that are common sources of mistakes such as: use of commas, use of &, use of et al., and alphabetical order of references. Finally, you should be sure that any citation that appears in the text also appears in the Reference List.

One study has shown that the length of reference periods can affect the interpretation of emotional terms such as anger (Winkielman, Knauper, & Schwarz, 1998). Participants given a one-year reference period reported stronger feelings of anger, more serious events, and less frequent events (Winkielman et al., 1998). Smith and Ellsworth (1987) also found that misleading questions lead to inaccurate information about eyewitness events. Research has shown that one way eyewitnesses are influenced by misleading questions is through experimenter knowledge (Smith & Ellsworth, 1987). A great deal of research has focused on eyewitness testimony (e.g., Porter, Spencer, & Birt, 2003; Scoboria, Kirsch, & Milling, 2002). More specifically, studies have focused on misleading questions (Loftus, 1974; Smith & Ellsworth, 1987).

Instructions: In the following paragraph, please circle any errors that you find and be prepared to explain why each is incorrect. Please use the above example and your APA Manual as a guide.

Paragraph with Incorrect Citations:

Self-reference has been shown to increase memory of trait adjectives and/or small sayings (ex. Ganellen & Carver, 1985, Belleza, 1984; Brown, Keenan & Potts, 1986). More generally, Craik & Lockhart have shown that processing through the use of the self has been shown to be effective with human memory. This has also been shown to be beneficial when imagery instructions are used (Brown, P., Keenan, J., and Potts, G., 1986). Finally, Brandan Wagar and Dov Cohen (2003) have tested whether cultural differences in conception of self-influence these effects (Wagar, & Cohen, 2003).

Identifying Errors in APA Style Citations Answer Key

APA Style Citation Problems are bolded and in red

Self-reference has been shown to increase memory of trait adjectives and/or small sayings (**ex. Ganellen & Carver, 1985, Belleza, 1984; Brown, Keenan & Potts, 1986**). More generally, Craik & Lockhart (**Year Missing**) have shown that processing through the use of the self has been shown to be effective with human memory. This has also been shown to be beneficial when imagery instructions are used (Brown, **P.**, Keenan, **J.**, and Potts, **G.**, 1986). Finally, **Brandan** Wagar and **Dov** Cohen (2003) have tested whether cultural differences in conception of self-influence these effects (**Wagar, & Cohen, 2003**).