

GUIDELINES FOR TERM PAPER

YOUR NEW BEST FRIEND: REFERENCE LIBRARIAN

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<http://libguides.sjsu.edu/psychology>

Website for help with format of References:

<http://apastyle.apa.org/> click on APA style tips

1. Length – 5 pages (title page (1 page), body (3 pages), references (1 page), double-spaced, 1 inch margins). It is not better to make it longer, points will be deducted for going over the page limit.
2. Topic - Select an issue that has made an impact on your own life. Use this personal issue only for the selection process. The purpose is so you won't be bored by your topic (hopefully) and you might gain some insight into a personal issue.
3. Task - Critique relevant literature and theory for your subject area. Try to narrow the topic down as much as possible so you can focus carefully on a particular issue.
4. Organization Try to say what you are attempting to do in this paper as soon as possible. You might start by stating for example, "This paper will explore the impact of divorce on children." Then go on to do what you promise to do in the first paragraph. You should address suggestions for future research, e.g. what are the holes within your interest area which have not been focused on by others yet? For example...

"There is a growing literature on the impact of divorce on children. While researchers have explored the differential impact on children depending upon their ages (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980), few studies have examined cultural differences in the impact. Cultural differences might be expected to have an impact in the following ways....etc.

HERE IS WHERE YOU USE YOUR IMAGINATION, THEORY AND CREATIVITY. How do you think cultural differences would create differences in responses of divorcing families? Of fathers? Of mothers? How would these differences play themselves out in the lives of the children? How do cultural values shape how we feel about divorce? How does this shape long-term responses of the children? Your own experience may guide you to ask the right questions, questions others haven't thought of asking.

5. Pitfalls to avoid – too broad a topic, digressions that lead to nowhere, poor editing of sentences. WRITING WELL IS A SKILL THAT WILL HELP YOU THROUGHOUT YOUR LIVES.
6. References –**PEER REVIEWED SCHOLARY JOURNALS ONLY. NO WEB REFERENCES.** Number depends on topic, perhaps 6 to 8, written in American Psychological Association style (follow textbook as examples).

In body of paper, sentence would read...Ex. Other staggeringly brilliant researchers have reported similar findings (Freud, 1925; Fanos, 2008).

IF YOU ARE QUOTING DIRECTLY, then reference would be:

(Fanos, 2008, p. 56)

REFERENCES PAGE at end would list alphabetically (NO numbering) as in reference list at the end of your textbook.

Fanos, J.H. (2008). A behavioral study of students in a psychology class at San Jose State University. *Journal of Bizarre Psychology*, 62:356-363.