

Running head: SHORT MEANINGFUL PHRASE

Title of Paper

Your Name, Including Middle Initial

School

Title of Paper

Your first paragraph (or two) should be an introduction to the broad topic of your paper. Many people write the introduction after writing the rest of the paper! Information in your introduction should build up to the thesis for your paper. In your introduction, your goal is to convince readers that your topic is (a) interesting and (b) important. You may choose to begin your paper with a story, quotation, or relevant statistics about your topic. Most commonly, the final sentence of your introduction will be your thesis. Your thesis is usually a single sentence that presents the goal of your paper, including the structure of the information covered in your paper.

In general, your first paragraph will present broad background information about the topic; the first paragraph will start broadly and then end specifically with a thesis statement. The body of your paper will focus on specific information that is relevant to your thesis statement. The conclusion of your paper will refer back to the thesis statement and then be broad, like your introduction. Some overall formatting rules to keep in mind are: (a) use Times font, size 12; (b) do not use bold text; and (c) double-space the entire paper.

Information about the Body of your Paper

Content. In the body of your paper, you should present specific information that supports your thesis statement. Each paragraph in your paper should have a topic sentence that relates to your thesis statement. The information you present should be from diverse sources (e.g., journal articles, book chapters, web sites). Make sure it is clear to the reader how information is related to your thesis and the purpose of the paper. This is not a forum for your own opinions – in this section of the paper you should present

researchers' findings. To make this section of your paper effective, you should explicitly relate information from various sources to each other and to your thesis statement.

Citation of sources. You should cite references throughout the body of your paper. There are two ways to cite a source. The authors can be listed in the sentence, with the year in parentheses: "The Davis (2001) web site presents information about American Psychological Association (APA) style rules." Alternatively, the citation can be entirely in parentheses: "The web site presents information about American Psychological Association (APA) style rules (Davis, 2001)." These are the only two acceptable ways to cite sources in APA style. Never include the title of the paper or the first names or initials of the authors.

There are additional important rules when sources have more than one author. When listing multiple authors in the text, write out the word "and": "Brown and Milstead (1968) examined . . ." When listing multiple authors in parentheses, use the symbol "&" rather than the word "and": "The research findings were consistent with hypotheses (Brown & Milstead, 1968)." Another important rule applies to sources with three or more authors. The first time you cite the article, list all three authors (e.g., Green, Campbell, & Finkel, 2001); any subsequent time you cite the article, list the first author followed by the words "et al." (e.g., Green et al., 2001).

Citation rules become even more complex when it comes to citing web sites. Web sites often do not have authors or dates listed. If a web site has no author listed, use the first few words of the title in your citation: "APA style rules have changed dramatically (*APA guide*, 1999)." If the web site has no date listed, use the letters "n.d." in place of the year: "APA style rules have changed dramatically (*APA guide*, n.d.)."

Almost all the information in the body of your paper will be from outside sources. It will be necessary to include citations in every paragraph. You should be selective in the information you choose to include from each source. Avoid quoting information from an article; it is rarely necessary and is likely to disturb the flow of your paper. Also, avoid including information from a source that is not relevant to your thesis statement; it is unnecessary to completely summarize all articles that you cite. You may write only one sentence about one article, but an entire paragraph about another, more relevant article. It is possible that several sources provide similar information. If this is the case, then summarize the information and cite multiple sources at once: Research suggests there is a relationship between X and Y (Davis, 2001; Davis & Rusbult, 2001; Green et al., 2001). Note the format of this multiple-article citation: articles are in alphabetical order and are separated by semicolons.

Information about the Conclusion

In your concluding paragraph, you should briefly summarize the content of your paper, reflecting back on your thesis statement. If you presented a story or question in your introductory paragraph, you should refer back to it with new insight. In addition to summarizing, your conclusion should also present implications of your thesis for the real world. What are some future directions for research? What does your paper's conclusion imply for public policy? What real-world policy changes are called for based on the information you presented in your paper?

References

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