



Graduate Online Writing Studio

Glossary of Unfamiliar Writing and APA Terms

- **Abstract:** An abstract is a brief summary of the contents of the paper. In APA papers, the one-paragraph summary appears on its own separate page after the cover page but before the paper begins and is preceded by a bolded centered heading of “**Abstract.**” Abstracts usually fall between 150 and 250 words in length and are set up as a paragraph without an indentation on the first line. Abstracts provide your reader with a preview of the contents of the paper. Many of your assignments do not require you to write an abstract.

Most academic articles include an abstract which can serve you during the research process by providing a preview of the contents of lengthy articles as well as an indication of the intended audience so that you can gauge whether the article will be useful or not. See section 2.9 of the APA 7th Edition Manual (p. 38) for more information on abstracts.

- **Active Voice:** The active voice is a way of writing that emphasizes the subject performing the action in the sentence. In the active voice, the writer presents the subject of a sentence first, followed by the verb and then the object of the verb (e.g., The researcher interviewed the participants). You should typically write in the active voice rather than the passive voice which emphasizes the object affected by the action of the sentence (e.g., The participants were interviewed). See section 4.13 of the APA 7th Edition Manual (p. 118) and the Writing Studio resource on [Active vs. Passive Voice](#) for more information on active and passive voice.
- **Annotated Bibliography:** An annotated bibliography is a type of paper that consists of a list of references in which each reference is followed by an annotation paragraph that summarizes and evaluates the source. References should follow regular APA format in alphabetical order with a hanging indent, and the entire annotation paragraph should be indented ½ inch to line up with the bottom line of the hanging indent. While instructors often assign annotated bibliographies to scaffold the writing process for a larger paper or assignment, they are great tools to catalog research for future reference, especially if extended periods of time will elapse between the time you are reading a source and the time you are using the source for your paper. See section 9.51 of the APA 7th Edition Manual (p. 307) for more information on annotated bibliographies and Figure 9.3 (p. 308) for a sample annotated bibliography.
- **Audience:** The audience or reader is the person or persons you are writing your paper for. You should always consider your audience when planning, writing, and revising your assignments. Think about what your audience already knows, what they care about, what their views are, etc. so that you can write

something that is relevant and interesting to them. See the Writing Studio resource on [Considering the Reader](#) for questions you can ask yourself when considering your audience.

- **Bias:** Bias is a prejudice for or against something that is unfair or unfounded. Apparent bias can derail a paper or argument because it makes the author sound unreliable. See Chapter 5 of the APA 7th Edition Manual (starting on p. 131) for more information on bias and bias-free language.
- **Clarity:** Clarity involves presenting ideas in a precise way to make them easily understood. In academic writing, clarity is essential as it helps the reader to follow the writer's argument or line of reasoning throughout the paper and minimizes miscommunication or misunderstanding. See section 4.4 of the APA 7th Edition Manual (pp. 113-114) for more information on the importance of clarity.
- **DOI:** The acronym DOI stands for "Digital Object Identifier" and is a unique number or web address attached to an article. DOIs provide a stable and persistent link to the article's location online for convenience in locating the source. APA references should list the DOI for an article if it is available. See section 9.34 of the APA 7th Edition Manual (pp. 298-299) and section 9.35 of the APA 7th Edition Manual (p. 299-300) for more information on when and how to include DOIs in APA references pages.
- **Literature Review:** A literature review is a type of paper/article that reviews the literature or scholarly articles on a particular topic. Literature reviews provide an overview of the literature available on a topic and identify connections, themes, contradictions, inconsistencies, and gaps among the articles. See section 1.6 of the APA 7th Edition Manual (p. 8) and the Writing Studio resource on [Writing a Literature Review](#) for more information on literature reviews.
- **Paraphrasing:** Paraphrasing is the process of restating another's ideas in your words. Paraphrasing is a frequently used way to bring other people's ideas into a paper without overusing quotations. Paraphrasing can also ensure that the writer's voice is the dominant voice in the paper rather than the voice of the source authors. Paraphrased information must be cited in academic writing to provide credit for the original source's ideas. See section 8.23 of the APA 7th Edition Manual (p. 269) and the Writing Studio resource on [Effective Paraphrasing](#) for more information on paraphrasing.
- **Peer Review:** In the context of academic research, peer-reviewed journals contain articles that have undergone the peer-review process before being accepted for publication. The peer-review process ensures that articles published in scholarly journals meet the standards of the journal and demonstrate academic integrity. Peer-reviewed articles are generally considered to be more credible than sources that have not gone through the peer-review process. See section 12.7 of the APA 7th Edition Manual (pp. 378-379) for more information on the peer-review process.
- **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the act of taking someone else's ideas or words and not providing appropriate credit or citation to the original author. It is important to always provide clear and appropriate citations for any outside information integrated into your paper to avoid plagiarism. In academic settings, plagiarism has serious consequences like failing grades on papers, failing classes, or even being expelled, but it can also have consequences in professional settings as well including being fired, sued, or at the very least publicly embarrassed. See section 8.2 of the APA 7th Edition Manual (pp. 254-256) and the Writing Studio resource on [Avoiding Plagiarism](#) for more information on plagiarism.

- **References:** APA formatted papers that use research from outside sources should include references at the end of the paper. While other formatting styles might use bibliography or works cited sections, APA requires the use of a references section. Every source listed in the references section should be cited or *referenced* in the body of the paper and vice versa. See section 2.12 (pp. 39-40) and Chapter 9 (starting on p. 281) of the APA 7th Edition Manual for more information on the reference list.
- **Thesis Statement:** A thesis statement is a sentence that provides a concise statement of the overall argument or point of the paper. Thesis statements usually appear at the end of the introduction paragraph or section of a paper and let the reader know what the paper will focus on. A strong thesis statement should present the focus of a paper, and the topic sentences in the paper should have an obvious connection to the thesis statement to create unity in the paper. For more information on thesis statements, see the *Introduction* section of the Writing Studio's resource [How to Write an Intro, Body, and Conclusion](#).
- **Topic Sentence:** A topic sentence is the first sentence of a body paragraph that introduces the topic that the paragraph will focus on. Topic sentences basically function as a mini thesis for your paragraph, introducing the main idea of the paragraph clearly and concisely for the reader. Strong topic sentences help the reader to easily navigate the various paragraphs and topics in a paper. For more information on topic sentences, see the *Body Paragraph* section of the Writing Studio's resource on [How to Write an Intro, Body, and Conclusion](#).
- **URL:** The acronym URL stands for "Uniform Resource Locator" and is more commonly known as a web address. These web addresses provide an exact location for a given website (e.g., <https://www.keiseruniversity.edu/writing-studio/apa-resources/>). APA references for web articles and other web sources often include URLs. In APA references, you should always include the full URL for a source, not just the beginning information. See section 9.34 of the APA 7th Edition Manual (pp. 298-299) and section 9.35 of the APA 7th Edition Manual (p. 299-300) for more information on when and how to include URLs in APA references.