

Citations & Avoiding Plagiarism

When you are writing the introduction/literature review of your paper, you will need to refer to (cite) information you obtained from journal articles, your textbook, websites, and magazines. Let's say your research project involves the relationship between sleep and SAT scores in adolescents. You will need to discuss both what psychologists know about sleep in teenagers and what they know about SAT performance before you develop your hypothesis. You do this by reading journal articles and your textbook.

After you finish the introduction, you must make sure that all of your citations match up to the references on your reference page, and vice versa.

Read the Following Carefully

- Every group will need AT LEAST two articles per individual in the group, and one must be from a professional journal (i.e., if there are four people in your group, you need at least four journal articles). Plus, every group will most likely cite our textbook.
- The other articles or information may be obtained from websites and magazines, but they are not, in themselves, sufficient. Journal articles are always the best.
- To avoid plagiarizing (kidnapping) another person's thoughts, ideas, or writing, you must use CITATIONS in the body of your text. You must give credit where credit is due. Let's say that you read in an article that the average teenager gets only 5-6 hours of sleep per night. If you report that information in your paper, you need to indicate where you obtained it. For example:

Roberts and Monson (2009) found that the average teenager only gets about five to six hours of sleep per night.

OR

Researchers have found (Roberts & Monson, 2009) that the average teenager only gets about five to six hours of sleep per night.

OR

Researchers have found that the average teenager only gets about five to six hours of sleep per night (Roberts & Monson, 2009).

- If you are citing a **SECODARY** source (i.e., something you did not read in its original form, but found in another article), you still must cite it, but a bit differently. For example:

Other researchers (Stringham, 2002, as cited in Roberts & Monson, 2009) found that by the time children reach age 16, they are getting approximately 1.85 fewer hours of sleep than when they were age 12.

You would then include the Roberts & Monson article on your reference page, but not the Stringham article.

However, if something is “common knowledge”, you don’t need to provide a citation. (Example: Teenagers typically don’t get enough sleep.)

- If you use a direct quote from an article (or other source), you need to cite it in the same way described above, but you must also place the statement in **quotation marks** AND provide the **page number** on which you found the information. Example:

As individuals move from childhood to adolescence, their sleeping patterns begin to change. These changes may result from a number of factors including “expanding social opportunities, altered parent-child relationships, involvement in part-time jobs, and access to drugs and alcohol” (Carskadon, 1990, p. 2).

OR

According to Carskadon (1990) these changes may result from a number of factors including “expanding social opportunities, altered parent-child relationships, involvement in part-time jobs, and access to drugs and alcohol” (p. 2).

- Paraphrasing by simply changing a few words is NOT OK! Example:

These changes may result from a number of things like more social prospects, differences in parent-child relationships, after school jobs, availability of drugs and alcohol, etc.

- To avoid plagiarism, you need to put the author’s ideas into your own words AND your own paragraph/sentence structure.
- Even if you paraphrase appropriately, you still need to provide a citation. For example:

Researchers have found that many factors can contribute to changes in sleep patterns. Common factors include pressure from after-school jobs, an increase in peer influences, and a decrease in parental influences (Carskadon, 1990).

Remember guys: If you use your own words, and it doesn’t sound great, that is OK. Everyone will do a revision of the first draft anyway, and I will help you with phrasing and wording.

If you plagiarize (even a little), I CAN’T HELP YOU!