

SPSY Thesis Checklist

Title _____

Name _____

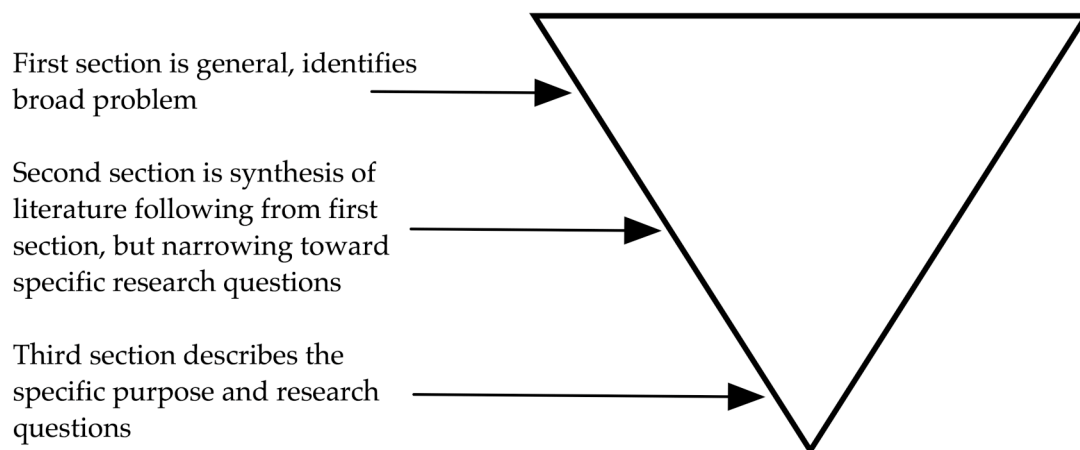
Version _____

A. Title		✓
1.	Names important variables, constructs, or theoretical issues?	
2.	Identifies the relationship between variables or constructs?	
3.	Indicates what was studied, not the results of the study?	
4.	Population mentioned when population is important?	
5.	The words "effect" and "influence", if used, are supported by design of study?	
6.	Is consistent with research hypothesis, purpose, or question?	
7.	Unnecessary words deleted (e.g., A study of , An Investigation of , etc.)?	
8.	Begins with key word(s) unique to your study (Hat Size Effects on ...) rather than generic words (The Effect of Hat Size on ... or The Relationship Between Hat Size)?	
9.	Makes sense standing alone?	
10.	Title is 10-12 words for typical manuscript, somewhat longer for theses?	
11.	Title revised after manuscript has been written?	

B. Abstract		✓
1.	Written last?	
2.	Contains key facts from each section of the thesis in same sequence?	
3.	Purposes of study presented?	
4.	Who was studied (sample, sample size, special characteristics)?	
5.	How were participants selected?	
6.	Conditions to which participants were exposed?	
7.	Type of design used?	
8.	Main findings?	
9.	Conclusions, implications, and/or implications of study?	
10.	Block format?	
11.	Numbers expressed as figures to conserve space (except beginning of sentence)?	
12.	An objective, accurate summary of the study that can stand alone?	
13.	Contains all key words that would allow other researchers to easily find your work in electronic databases?	
<p>A brief, comprehensive summary of the contents of the article including a sentence describing the: problem, participants and their relevant characteristics, method, outcomes and significance levels, and conclusions and implications reflected in the work. A good abstract is accurate (does not include information that does not appear in the body of the paper); self-contained; concise and specific (manuscript abstracts should not exceed 960 characters and spaces which is approximately 120 words; Dissertation Abstracts International allows 350 word abstracts); nonevaluative (report rather than evaluate); and coherent and readable (write in clear and vigorous prose).</p>		

C. Introduction		✓
1.	Follows 'funnel' approach: starts with the general literature and gradually narrows focus to the specific area of research and precise research question?	
2.	Starts with a description of the problem area?	
3.	What's the point? Significance of the topic - why should anyone want to read it?	
4.	Introduction and literature review integrated seamlessly?	
5.	Logical transition from paragraph to paragraph and section to section?	
6.	Topic-by-topic description of relevant research (not necessarily study by study) organized with major and minor subheadings to guide the reader (more than 2-3 pages of uninterrupted text may be indecipherable to the reader)?	
7.	Background and context for the study presented?	
8.	All variables, constructs, and concepts adequately defined and operationalized?	
9.	Trends and themes in the literature pointed out?	
10.	Gaps in the literature identified?	
11.	Conflicts in the literature identified?	
12.	Did not just describe, but synthesized and critically evaluated the literature?	
13.	Honest, balanced review of literature rather than one-sided advocacy?	
14.	Literature review establishes the need for the current study?	
15.	Research hypothesis names variables and types of relationships expected?	
16.	Work completed in the past reported in past tense or present perfect tense (APA Style Manual pages 33, 42-43)?	
<p>The body of a paper opens with an introduction that presents the specific problem under study and describes the research strategy. The Introduction should make the purpose, worth, and need for the research immediately clear. That is, it should describe what is known about the topic under investigation, why the study was necessary, what was intended to be accomplished, and why the outcomes are important. Typically, an introduction contains three sections. The first section is a broad, general treatment of the topic under consideration. The second section is a synthesis of relevant literature used to establish what is known about the topic under investigation and to establish a specific need for the research. The third section is a more highly focused amplification that clearly describes the purpose of the study.</p>		

Organization of Introduction



D. Method Section		✓
1.	Participants are humans. Subjects is a term reserved for animals.	
2.	Who were participants and how many of them were there in this study?	
3.	Why was this sample selected in light of the research goals?	
4.	How was this sample obtained, recruited, and selected?	
5.	What are the participant and demographic characteristics of the sample (i.e., gender, age, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status)? Male and female are reserved for animals--boy, girl, children, etc. are preferred. (See APA pages 70-76)	
6.	What if any inclusion and exclusion criteria were invoked?	
7.	Was informed consent obtained?	
8.	Independent variable(s) and levels?	
9.	Dependent variables?	
10.	What is the design (e.g., longitudinal, cross-sectional) and how does the design relate to the goals of the study?	
11.	How were participants assigned to groups or conditions?	
12.	How were the groups similar and different in how they were treated in the study?	
13.	What were the constructs of interest and how were they operationalized?	
14.	What are the relevant reliability and validity data from previous research that support the use of these measures for the present purposes?	
15.	Reliability evidence from the sample(s) under study? Do they support the use of these measures for the present purposes?	
16.	Are response sets or styles relevant to the use and interpretation of the measures?	
17.	How was the assessment conducted? By whom? In what order?	
18.	If raters were used in any facet of assessment, who were the raters, how were they trained, what was their agreement in rendering their ratings?	
19.	Where was the study conducted (setting)?	
20.	What materials, equipment, or apparatuses were used in the study?	
21.	What was the chronological sequence of events to which participants were exposed?	
22.	What intervals elapsed between different aspects of the study (e.g., assessment occasions)?	
23.	What procedural checks were completed to avert potential sources of bias in implementation of the manipulation and assessments? Results?	
24.	If there was attrition, number, reasons, and information about drop-outs (especially how they compare to participants on available variables) provided?	
25.	Other information the reader needs to know to understand how participants were treated and what conditions were provided?	
26.	Sufficient detail to allow replication?	
27.	Past tense or present perfect tense used for discussion of past events (APA Style Manual pages 33, 42-43)?	
<p>The Method section describes in detail how the study was conducted. Such a description enables the reader to evaluate the appropriateness of your methods and the reliability and the validity of your results. It also permits experienced investigators to replicate the study if they so desire. The Methods section should tell the reader what you did and how you did it in sufficient detail so that a reader could reasonably replicate your study. The Method section is usually divided into labeled subsections. These usually include Participants and Procedure. Instruments and Data Analysis might be appropriate for some papers.</p>		

E. Results Section		✓
1.	Organized around the research hypotheses stated in Introduction?	
2.	What are the scores on the measures of interest for the different groups and sample as a whole (e.g., measures of central tendency and variability)?	
3.	How do the scores compare with those of other study, normative, or standardization samples?	
4.	What computer program was used to analyze data (for complex analyses like SEM)?	
5.	What analyses were used and how specifically did these address the original hypotheses and purposes?	
6.	Were the assumptions of the data analyses met? If not, what are the implications?	
7.	Were there other statistical threats?	
8.	If multiple tests were used, what methods were used to control Type I error rates?	
9.	If more than one group was delineated, were they similar on variables that might otherwise explain the results (e.g., diagnosis, age)?	
10.	Were missing data due to incomplete measures (not filled out completely by the participants) or due to loss of participants? If so, how were these handled in the data analysis?	
11.	Are there ancillary analyses that might inform the primary analyses or exploratory analyses that might stimulate further work?	
12.	When reporting inferential statistics, included information about the obtained magnitude or value of the test statistic, the degrees of freedom, the exact probability level, and the direction of the effect?	
13.	Provided effect-size information in addition to significance levels?	
14.	Provided evidence that your study has sufficient power to detect effects of substantive interest?	
15.	Data in tables presented accurately and formatted properly (APA Style Manual pages 147-176)?	
16.	Statistical symbols, including italic and bold fonts, accurate (APA Style Manual pages 138-146)?	
17.	Single spaces between symbols and within equations as if each term were a word (e.g., $p = .045$)?	
18.	Past tense used to describe the results (anxiety decreased significantly)?	
19.	Double check data to ensure that data entry errors did not occur?	
20.	Double check data output against text and tables of thesis?	
21.	Data set provided to committee in Appendix and electronic format for verification?	
22.	IRB approval letter provided in Appendix?	
<p>The Results section summarizes the data collected and the statistical treatment used. Report the data in sufficient detail to justify the conclusions. This includes descriptive as well as inferential statistics. The main outcomes are usually presented first, with sufficient detail to justify conclusions. All relevant results – statistically significant ones as well as those that are not significant – should be addressed, including those that run counter to preconceived questions.</p>		

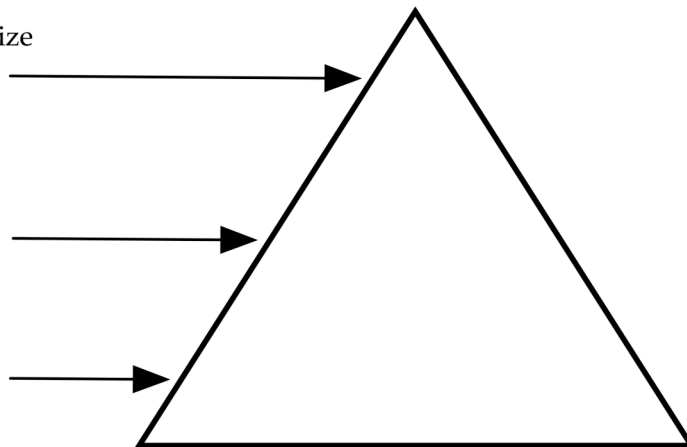
F. Discussion Section		✓
1.	Begins with an assessment of the results of your main hypotheses?	
2.	Was hypothesis supported (Explain and interpret, don't restate results)?	
3.	How do these findings add to research and how do they support, refute, or inform current theory?	
4.	What alternative interpretations can be placed on the data?	
5.	Consistencies and inconsistencies of current results with those in literature review?	
6.	What limitations or qualifiers must be placed on the study given methodology and design issues (threats to internal and external validity)?	
7.	Implications of the work (logical consequences and larger significance of the outcome)?	
8.	What specific research logically follows from the study to move the field forward?	
9.	Present tense used to discuss results and conclusions (APA Style Manual pages 33, 42-43)?	
<p>After presenting the results, you are in a position to evaluate and interpret their implications, especially with respect to your original hypotheses. You are free to examine, interpret, and qualify the results, as well as to draw inferences from them. Emphasize any theoretical consequences of the results and the validity of your conclusions. Open the discussion with a clear statement of the support or nonsupport for your original hypothesis. Similarities and differences between your results and the work of others should clarify and confirm your conclusions. You may remark on certain short-comings of the study, but do not dwell on every flaw. Avoid polemics, triviality, and weak theoretical comparisons in your discussion. Speculation is in order only if it is (a) identified as such, (b) related closely and logically to empirical data or theory, and (c) expressed concisely. Identifying the practical and theoretical implications of your study, suggesting improvements on your research, or proposing new research may be appropriate, but keep these comments brief.</p>		

Organization of Discussion

Describe results clearly. Organize around support or nonsupport for original question(s).

What do they mean? Integrate with the literature review.

Limitations or qualifiers, implications, future research.



G. References		✓
Reference Section		
1.	Double spaced, both within and between references?	
2.	Either indented or hanging indent format used (APA Style Manual page 299, 313-315)?	
3.	Listed in alphabetical order?	
4.	Journal article with more than six authors, add et al. after the sixth author's name?	
5.	Use commas for more than one author? (Ward, T. J., & Jones, S. M.)	
6.	Journal title and volume number (including commas before and after volume number) in italic?	
7.	Issue number not included unless journal repaginated with each issue?	
8.	Page numbers included for chapters of edited books?	
9.	Capitalize only first word (and first word after a colon) of book titles and journal articles?	
10.	Book title in italic?	
11.	Accurate spelling, date, title?	
12.	Follows APA Style Manual exactly (APA Style Manual pages 215-281, 313-315, 397-410)?	
13.	Complete - every Reference citation also found in text? Used 'Find' on each?	
References in Text		
14.	Use ampersand in parentheses and the word "and" in text?	
15.	Use both names for two authors?	
16.	For 3-5 authors, name them all the first time cited and use et al. thereafter (not italicized and with a period after "al")?	
17.	For 6 or more authors, cite surname of first author followed by et al. (not italicized and with a period after "al")?	
18.	Formatted "et al." properly (Jones et al., 2003) versus Jones et al. (2003)?	
19.	Article citations listed in alphabetical order within parentheses?	
20.	Article citations within parentheses separated by semicolons?	
21.	Within a paragraph, year not included in subsequent references to a study as long as the study cannot be confused with other studies cited in the thesis?	
22.	Included initials of first author when two or more primary authors have same surname?	
23.	Added suffixes (a, b, c) to works by same author with same publication date?	
24.	Reference citations in text properly formatted (APA Style Manual pages 207-214)?	
25.	Accurate spelling and date?	
26.	Complete - every text citation also found in References section? Used 'Spell Check' on each?	
27.	Exact agreement in spelling and dates between text and Reference citations?	
The reference list documents the thesis and provides the information necessary to identify and retrieve each source. It must include only the sources used in the research and preparation of the thesis. The Reference list must be in one-to-one correspondence with the authors you mentioned in the text of your paper. Authors are responsible for all information in a reference. Accurately prepared references help establish your credibility as a careful researcher. An inaccurate or incomplete reference "will stand in print as an annoyance to future investigators and a monument to the writer's carelessness."		

H. Style and Format		✓
1.	Past tense to express an action or a condition that occurred at a specific time in the past?	
2.	Present perfect tense to express a past action or condition that did not occur at a specific, definite time or to describe an action beginning in the past and continuing to the present?	
3.	Present tense for conclusions and implications (in Discussion) that, based on your study and all other relevant studies, you feel will generalize?	
4.	Prefer active verbs over passive (the test was analyzed by Jones ...Jones analyzed the test)?	
5.	Agreement between subject and verb (be careful with 'data', collective nouns, etc.)?	
6.	Each pronoun refers clearly to its antecedent and agrees in number and gender?	
7.	Used language free of bias (APA Style Manual pages 61-76)?	
8.	No disability-first language (mentally retarded children ...children with mental retardation)?	
9.	Parallel form of elements in a sentence that have the same function?	
10.	Parallel verb forms joined in a series?	
11.	"While" and "since" used in temporal sense (simultaneously, after that time), not causally?	
12.	Each punctuation mark (period, comma, colon, semicolon) followed by a single space?	
13.	Comma between elements (including before conjunction) in a series of three or more items (Tom, Dick, and Harry were happy.)?	
14.	Did not join two independent clauses with a comma or a conjunctive adverb like however?	
15.	Use abbreviations appropriately (i.e. stands for "that is", e.g. means "for example")?	
16.	Italic and bold included in text (APA Style Manual pages 100-102, 111-115, 140, 306-320)?	
17.	Enumerate elements in a series within a paragraph or sentence by a letter [Three choices were (a) working, (b) playing, and (c) sleeping]. (APA Style Manual pages 115-117)?	
18.	Enumerate paragraphs in a series, such as itemized conclusions or steps in a procedure, by an Arabic numeral followed by a period but not enclosed in or followed by parentheses?	
19.	Proper quotation of sources (do not use ellipsis points at the beginning or end of a quotation unless necessary to prevent misinterpretation. (APA Style Manual pages 82-83, 117-122)?	
20.	Numbers expressed properly (APA Style Manual pages 122-130)?	
21.	Statistical text expressed properly (APA Style Manual pages 137-146)?	
22.	Tables properly formatted and presented (APA Style Manual pages 147-175)?	
23.	Figures properly formatted and presented (APA Style Manual pages 176-201)?	
24.	Only one font used for tables and text (a monospaced font like Courier 12 is a good choice for readability and alignment of decimals although Times is also acceptable)?	
25.	Used a sans serif font (Helvetica, Futura, Optima) of size 8-14 for Figures?	
26.	Entire paper double-spaced?	
27.	Proper margins?	
28.	Left-justified text, no hyphenation to break words at the ends of lines?	
29.	Paginated in Arabic numerals in the upper-right hand corner?	
30.	Page headers (first 2-3 words from title) 5 spaces to the left of the page number?	
31.	No more than 27 lines of text (not counting page header and page number) per page?	
32.	Follow writing style guidelines of APA Style Manual (pages 31-61)	
33.	Follow punctuation guidelines of APA Style Manual (pages 78-88)?	
34.	Follow spelling and capitalization guidelines of APA Style Manual (pages 89-111)?	

I. Planning and Writing		✓
1.	Outline the development of your argument before you begin writing and check fidelity to outline by listing the topic sentence of each paragraph and matching this list against your outline?	
2.	Have someone else outline your draft. Does it correspond to your a priori outline?	
3.	Orderly presentation of ideas?	
4.	Proper level of headings to organize the paper and establish the importance of each topic (APA Style Manual pages 111-115, 289-290)?	
5.	Precision and clarity of language? Say what you mean, mean what you say?	
6.	Synonyms used with care to ensure subtle differences are not unintentionally suggested?	
7.	Economy of expression? Say only what needs to be said?	
8.	Over reliance on passive voice (a computer grammar check, used judiciously, might identify)?	
9.	Define terms before using in text?	
10.	Varied sentence length to help readers maintain interest and comprehension?	
11.	Paragraphs start with the topic, typically in the first sentence? Remaining sentences clarify the idea expressed in the topic sentence?	
12.	Successive sentences in each paragraph flow (there is continuity)?	
13.	Logical transitions between paragraphs and topics(based on concepts of addition [also], cause and effect [consequently], contrast [although], method [similarly], position [beside], and time [first, while])	
14.	Paragraphs longer than one sentence but not longer than one manuscript page?	
15.	Citations for statements that represent more than common sense?	
16.	Keep the reader uppermost in mind?	
17.	Did not use the words of others without giving them credit?	
18.	Wordiness avoided (based on the fact thatbecause, the present study ...this study)?	
19.	Redundancy avoided (joint together ...join, summarize briefly ...summarize)?	
20.	Jargon (use of technical vocabulary where that vocabulary is not relevant) avoided?	
21.	Slang and conversational writing avoided (write up ...report)?	
22.	Revise and rewrite for organization and clarity?	
23.	Proofread for style, spelling, grammar, etc.?	
24.	Revise and rewrite to eliminate wordiness?	
25.	Revise and rewrite based upon a critical reading of the thesis by someone else?	
26.	Revise and rewrite while imagining yourself to be a critical reviewer?	
27.	Read thesis aloud word by word and revise.	

Signature _____

Date _____

Introduction

"The introduction is designed to convey the overall rationale and objective of the research. The task of the author is to convey in a clear and concise fashion why this particular study is needed and the current questions, void, or deficiency the study is designed to address. The section should not review the literature in a study-by-study fashion, but rather convey issues and evaluative comments that set the stage for the study that is to follow... The rationale for the specific study must be very clearly established... In general, the introduction will move from the very general to the specific. The very general refers to the opening of the introduction, which conveys the area of research, general topic, and significance of a problem" (Kazdin, 1995, p. 229).

"A surprisingly common flaw in literature review manuscripts, especially those that are rejected for publication, is inadequate coverage of the cited literature...One common form of inadequacy involves citing a study's conclusion without describing the method and specific results...A literature review loses considerable value, however, if it fails to tell the reader the nature of the evidence it presents. 'X causes Y (Reference)' does not convey enough information, especially for readers who may be skeptical of the author's conclusions or who want to think for themselves. In contrast, 'in a sample of A, method B produced result C (Reference), thereby supporting the view that X causes Y' is much more useful. It allows the reader to evaluate whether the conclusion fits the evidence and to understand something about the generality and methodological strength of that evidence...To put this another way: If a particular study contributes something of importance to a literature review, the review should summarize the gist of the method and results sections of that article. This does not have to be lengthy, and in fact a skilled literature reviewer can often present the relevant aspects of a study's method and results in a sentence or two. But the evidence has to be presented at the operational level, not just at the abstract level of theoretical conclusions" (Baumeister & Leary, 1997, p. 317).

"All reviews, regardless of their primary goal, should provide an overarching conceptualization, perspective, or point-of-view – what Sternberg (1991) called a take-home message – and not be content to merely recount previous ideas and research. The broader imperative is that authors of literature reviews must explain how the various studies fit together. A literature review that simply describes a series of studies on some topic has not accomplished enough to warrant publication...A literature review is primarily an integrative endeavor, and integration is best accomplished if the reader is frequently told how the individual studies fit the broad theories and patterns...To be sure, the literature reviewer should first ensure that he or she has covered the research accurately and thoroughly. But literature reviewers should also ask themselves whether they have presented each study in a way that makes its relation to the integrative themes clear and explicit" (Baumeister & Leary, 1997, 317).

"In the social and behavioral sciences, all conclusions are limited by the weaknesses and flaws of the evidence, and so it is essential for the literature reviewer to point out and assess those flaws and weaknesses...Providing a critique of the evidence is an integral, even a central part of the job of reviewing literature...Ultimately, the reader of the literature review does not need to know every flaw in every study...Rather, the reader needs to know how strong or how weak the overall evidence for each main point is. Group or section critiques accomplish this better than criticizing each individual study...Hence the most useful form of critique is normally the following: After describing the methods and results of a group of studies relevant to some point, the author should indicate briefly the major flaws in the methods and what alternative explanations they raise. Next, the consistency of the findings should be considered. Then the author should assess the quantity and especially the methodological diversity of the evidence, keeping in mind that consistency across large quantities of methodologically diverse evidence is the best available substitute for having the proverbial direct pipeline to the truth. Finally, the author should provide a summary as to how strong the evidence is" (Baumeister & Leary, 1997, pp. 317-318).

"Although literature reviews are less subject than empirical investigations to capitalizing on chance, they are probably more susceptible to the danger of confirmation bias...Selectivity in a literature review can take several forms. At worst, the author may be operating as an 'intuitive lawyer' rather than in a scientist mode, in the sense of trying to make a case for one particular position or conclusion. This could lead him or her to cover only material that fits that view and ignores the rest. The reader is therefore left unaware of material that would weaken or contradict the argument. Such an approach is at best unfortunate and sloppy, at worst intellectually dishonest. A less bad but still unfortunate pattern is that

of selective critique. In this pattern, the author covers all the relevant evidence, but supportive and contrary to his or her view, but then applies more rigorous methodological standards to the contrary evidence than to the supportive evidence. Such thought patterns are common sources of bias in everyday thinking and literature reviewers are undoubtedly subject to them" (Baumeister & Leary, 1997, p. 319).

Discussion

"The Discussion section contains two types of material. The first can be called *inevitable*. It is inevitable that the results will be evaluated in terms of the research questions and/or hypotheses generated in the introduction. Each statistical analysis was done in an effort to answer one of these questions or test one of these hypotheses. The results of these analyses have been reported in the Results section. In the Discussion section, you must, inevitably, indicate which analyses lead to what answers, or which analyses support or do not support which hypotheses. When hypotheses are supported, you will then, inevitably refer to the theory or theories that generated those hypotheses. When hypotheses are not supported, you will inevitably admit it, and look back to the method for enlightenment. It should be clear that the inevitable part could be written by anyone who really understood the introduction and results.

The second type of material found in the Discussion section is *creative*, and the creative part can only be written by you. This type of creativity is the type that characterizes the creative researcher, not the poet. You need to mentally step back from your findings and think about what else *might* be interesting about them. If hypotheses are supported, are there other explanations that a creative thinker might come up with besides the happy thought that your hypotheses are simply perfect? In the case of hypotheses that were not supported, what possible explanations exist? Would it be reasonable to make a minor adjustment in a hypothesis in the light of a given result, or are there confounds in the method? Here we are not talking about technical problems that result from undergraduate foul-ups, but rather real methodological issues that might interfere with the results of the most sophisticated laboratory crew. If your results are entirely unexpected (perhaps significant but in the wrong direction) you can bring in literature you have not mentioned in the introduction to place then unexpected findings in a new context. Most of the literature you refer to in the inevitable part of the discussion should have been mentioned in the introduction, but there are exceptions in this creative part" (Szuchman, 1999, p. 70).

"Most discussion sections begin with an integrative summary of the results. This should not reiterate your statistics; you should not state F and p values, nor should you reiterate technical details of the analyses. Instead, describe your results clearly, using as little statistical jargon as possible. A statement such as 'Students who were told to expect a later memory test were more vigilant and showed better recall than those who were not' is better than 'There was a significant main effect for condition on the vigilance and recall variables.' Use the 'layperson test': how would you describe your results to educated people in a way that they would understand?

One good way to organize your summary of the results is around whether they did or did not support each of the hypotheses or research questions. This summary can lead logically into a discussion of the various reasons why you found what you did (or did not) find. Discuss hypotheses in the order that you originally listed them in the subsection on research questions and hypotheses of your literature review, briefly restating each hypothesis so that the reader will not have to turn back to the earlier section. This should mirror the order in which your results section unfolded, as well.

Summarizing the results is only one part of their interpretation. What do they mean? What do your results tell you about the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables? Were there relationships? did they apply to several or only selected dependent variables? Were there confounds or mediators that accounted for the findings? ... Do not, therefore, write your discussion as though your study was the only one in the field! As you summarize and describe your results, consider how they do and do not fit with the literature you reviewed earlier" (Cone & Foster, 1993, pp. 237-238).

Writing Process

"The primary criteria for good scientific writing are accuracy and clarity....The first step toward clarity is to write simply and directly....The second step toward clarity is to organize the manuscript so that it tells a coherent story....a coherent emerges only from a coherent conceptual structuring of the topic itself. For most reviews, this requires a guiding theory, a set of competing models, or a point of view about the phenomenon under discussion" (Bem, 1995, p. 173).

"Every well-structured paragraph in an integrated paper contains a topic sentence and one or more additional statements elaborating on the theme. As in the case of each paragraph, the report as a whole should be integrated, with the writing flowing or 'gliding' from paragraph to paragraph in an organized, goal-oriented manner. The author knows where he or she is going and communicates this goal to the reader. Abrupt transitions from topic to topic – within or between paragraphs – are avoided, as are misspellings, grammatical errors, and other irregular, nonstandard constructions" (Aiken, 1994, p. 858).

"Before sending a paper for review, have a trusted colleague read and critique it or put the paper away for at least 1 week and then reread and edit the manuscript yourself. Remember, good writing is hard work. Reconcile yourself to this at the onset. Only the rare individual writes without much need for rewriting" (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1993).

"Rewriting is difficult for several reasons. First, it is difficult to edit your own writing. You will not notice ambiguities and explanatory gaps because you know what you meant to say; you understand the omitted steps. One strategy for overcoming this difficulty is to lay your manuscript aside for awhile and then return to it later when it has become less familiar. Sometimes it helps to read it aloud. But there is no substitute for practicing the art of taking the role of the nonspecialist reader, for learning to role-play grandma. As you read, ask yourself, 'Have I been told yet what this concept means? Has the logic of this step been demonstrated? Would I know at this point what the dependent variables of this study were?'...But because this is not easy, you should probably give a copy of a fairly polished manuscript to a friend or colleague for a critical reading. If you get critiques from several colleagues, you will have simulated the journal's review process....If your colleagues find something unclear, do not argue with them. They are right: By definition, the writing is unclear. Their suggestions for correcting the unclarity may be wrongheaded; but as unclarity detectors, readers are never wrong. Also resist the temptation simply to clarify their confusion verbally. Your colleagues don't want to offend you or appear stupid, so they simply mumble 'oh yes, of course, of course' and apologize for not having read carefully enough. As a consequence, you are pacified, and your next readers, Bulletin's reviewers, will stumble over the same problem. They will not apologize; they will reject. Rewriting is difficult for a second reason: It requires a high degree of compulsiveness and attention to detail. The probability of writing a sentence perfectly the first time is vanishingly small, and good writers rewrite nearly every sentence of a manuscript in the course of polishing successive drafts" (Bem, 1995, p. 176).

"Just as important as the four S's for presenting oral reports ('stand up, speak up, shut up, and sit down') are the double-three R's of written reports ('reread, reread, reread' and 'rewrite, rewrite, rewrite'). Despite persistent efforts to expunge all errors, some may still manage to sneak through. Unfortunately, people who misspell tend to misspeak and miscalculate as well. Because authors often 'fill in' or overlook their own mistakes, it is a good idea not only to read one's paper aloud but to read it aloud to someone else and to have someone else read it silently or aloud to himself or herself. It is probably wise to ask an acquaintance rather than a close friend or family member to perform this task. People who are close to the author are often reluctant to reveal what they observe or think about a composition because they are concerned about hurting the author's feelings" (Aiken, 1994, p. 858).

"Expository writing involves sequencing ideas logically from the opening statement in the introduction of a manuscript to the conclusion. This implies that the parts of a manuscript follow one another in an orderly sequence. Also, the paragraphs are unified. Every sentence of a paragraph presents information directly related to the paragraph topic. Words throughout the manuscript provide for continuity and transition, express thoughts concisely, and convey meanings precisely" (Klausmeier, 2001, p. 15).

Resources

- Aiken, L. R. (1994). Some observations and recommendations concerning research methodology in the behavioral sciences. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 54, 848-860.
- Algozzine, B., Spooner, F., & Karvonen, M. (2002). *How to prepare a research article in APA style*. Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.
- American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
- Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1997). Writing narrative literature reviews. *Review of General Psychology*, 1, 311-320.
- Bem, D. J. (1995). Writing a review article for Psychological Bulletin. *Psychological Bulletin*, 118, 172-177.
- Cone, J. D., & Foster, S. L. (1993). *Dissertations and theses from start to finish: Psychology and related fields*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Eisenberg, N., Thompson, M. S., Augir, S., & Stanley, E. H. (2002). "Getting in" revisited: An analysis of manuscript characteristics, reviewers' ratings, and acceptance of manuscripts in *Psychological Bulletin*. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128, 997-1004.
- Fuchs, L. S., & Fuchs, D. (1993). Writing research reports for publication: Recommendations for new authors. *Remedial and Special Education*, 14, 39-46.
- Henson, K. T. (1995). *The art of writing for publication*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Huck, S. W. (2000). *Reading statistics and research* (3rd Ed.). NY: Longman.
- Jensen, B. E., Martin, K. A., Mann, B. L., & Fogarty, T. (2004). Easing your pain: A method for evaluating research writing from students. *Measurement in Physical Education and Exercise Science*, 8, 43-52.
- Kazdin, A. E. (1995). Preparing and evaluating research reports. *Psychological Assessment*, 7, 228-237.
- Klausmeier, H. J. (2001). *Research writing in education and psychology-from planning to publication: A practical handbook*. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.
- Maher, B. A. (1978). A reader's, writer's, and reviewer's guide to assessing research reports in clinical psychology. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 46, 835-838.
- Maxwell, S. E., & Cole, D. A. (1995). Tips for writing (and reading) methodological articles. *Psychological Bulletin*, 118, 193-198.
- Nicol, A. A. M., & Pexman, P. M. (1999). *Presenting your findings: A practical guide for creating tables*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Patten, M. L. (1997). *Understanding research methods: An overview of the essentials*. Los Angeles: Pyrczak Publishing.
- Pyrczak, F., & Bruce, R. R. (1992). *Writing empirical research reports: A basic guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences*. Los Angeles: Pyrczak Publishing.
- Szuchman, L. T. (1999). *Writing with style: APA style made easy*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

On-line Updates of APA Style Manual available at <http://www.apastyle.org>

On-line Writing Lab available at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Note. Checklist items and descriptions extracted from a variety of original sources and compiled for this checklist.

J.	Additionally, it might be profitable to do a final review of your manuscript using the following “most common corrections” in student writing that were compiled by Jensen, Martin, Mann, and Fogarty (2004) in their Figure 1.
1.	Use 12 pt; preferred typefaces are Times New Roman and Courier New (Sec 5.02).
2.	Margins 1 in. on top, bottom, left, and right of every page (Sec. 5.04).
3.	Set for double spacing (Sec. 5.03).
4.	Turn right justification off. Right hand side should not be even like the left. If it is even, like in magazine and newspaper articles, it is right justified and you do not want it right justified (Sec.5.04).
5.	Indent five spaces for paragraphs and long quotes (Sec. 5.08).
6.	One space after all types of punctuation (Sec. 5.11).
7.	Header is the first two to three words of title (Sec. 5.06).
8.	Header and page number are on same line (Sec. 5.06).
9.	Page number is five spaces to the right of the Header (Sec. 5.06).
10.	Running head on APA title page is on the first line of the title page after the Header and Page number (Sec. 1.06 and 5.15; example on p. 306).
11.	Running head words are all in CAPS (Sec. 5.15).
12.	Words used in running head are a short description of topic (Sec. 5.15).
13.	Title on APA title page is on upper half of the title page (Sec. 5.15; example on p. 306).
14.	On title page and on first page of introduction, title should be typed in pyramid style (Sec. 1.06; example on pp. 306-307).
15.	References that are in the text should also be in the Reference list (Sec. 4.01).
16.	The order of the authors in a reference must be exact (Sec. 4.04).
17.	Use “and” when writing in the text for multiple authors as in Smith and Jones (1988; Sec. 3.95).
18.	Use “&” for References or when citation is used in the text in parentheses (Smith & Jones, 1988; Sec. 3.95).
19.	Multiple studies cited inside parentheses are in alphabetical order according to the first author (APA p. 172, Sec. 3.99).
20.	Multiple authors inside parentheses are separated by semicolons as in (Doss, 1992; Jones, 1982; Smith, 1987; Sec. 3.99). Do not use back-to-back parenthetical statements; separate with semi-colon (BDI-II; Beck, 1996; Sec. 3.07).
21.	Three or more authors in text or parentheses are separated by commas (Sec. 3.95) as in Smith, Jones, and Tukey (1982).
22.	Include the year of publication in a citation in text as in Leonard (2000); within a paragraph, do not include the year in subsequent references to a study as long as the study cannot be confused with other studies cited in the manuscript (Sec 3.94).
23.	Use et al. correctly. Use et al. on first occurrence with six or more authors, use et al. after first time with three or more authors, never use it for two authors (Sec. 3.95).
24.	Short or long direct quotations should have a lead-in at the beginning with some of your words and may, for example, include in these words, the name of the author(s) and the year (Sec. 3.34).
25.	Short quotation does have “. . .” marks (Sec. 3.34).
26.	Lead-in and quotation are punctuated properly as if they were one sentence that flows together (Sec. 3.34 & 3.39).
27.	Short quotation has page number (Sec. 3.34) as in “the quotation” (p. 14) or paragraph number (Sec. 3.39) for “electronic sources” (2000, ¶ 4).
28.	Plural for page number must be given for quotations that are taken from more than one page (Sec. 3.28); what is needed is (pp. 13-14).
29.	Long quotation is 40 words or more in length (Sec. 3.34).
30.	Long quotation does not have “. . .” marks (Sec. 3.36).

J. Figure 1 (continued)	
31.	Learn and use the APA abbreviations (Sec. 3.20-3.29).
32.	A paragraph should have a topic sentence, the “meat” of the paragraph, and a summarizing sentence (pp. 32-36, Sec. 2.01).
33.	In general, avoid having a paragraph that goes beyond three fourths of a page – too long (Sec. 2.03).
34.	Be sure to craft sentences that are in fact sentences (Sec 2.05).
35.	Avoid sentences that start with “it,” “this,” “there,” “but,” “and” or start with a number (Sec.2.04).
36.	Write in past tense when reporting what a researcher proposed, discovered, found, concluded, etc. (Sec. 2.02).
37.	Avoid making factual statements without proper documentation (Sec. 3.39).
38.	Include appropriate transition words or phrases between sections (Sec. 2.01).
39.	Words such as ‘however’ and ‘therefore’ are linking words used to connect two thoughts; neither should be used at the beginning of a sentence. For example: Future researchers, therefore, should include men and women as participants (Sec. 2.01).
40.	Watch pronouns (Sec. 2.04, 2.08, 2.10): The participant...she or he...The participants ...their...
41.	Use of ellipses: three to indicate something in a quote was left out; four to indicate something in a quote was left out and that is the end of a sentence (Sec. 3.38). Spaces go in between “so that it looks like . . . this . . .” (p. 1).
42.	Know when to use numbers expressed as figures or words (Sec. 3.42-3.43).
43.	Italicized symbols are used (e.g., <i>N</i> or <i>M</i>) for any statistical abbreviations (Sec. 3.19, 3.58).
44.	Have spaces around = or < or > signs as in ($p < .05$). e.g.: Participants ($N = 24$) were tested ... (Sec. 3.59).
45.	Use <i>N</i> for total sample size and <i>n</i> for subgroup size as in the participants ($N = 60$) were randomly assigned to either the experimental ($n = 30$) or control group ($n = 30$; Sec. 3.58).
46.	Use of a colon. Need a good introduction usually talking about a list that is coming up or the <i>following</i> are important aspects of test development: (a) reliability, (b) validity, and (c) objectivity. Notice one space follows a colon and that commas separate the things in the list (Sec.3.04).
47.	Things that follow a colon, things that are in a list, or subsection headings (like all paragraph sideheads under one sidehead title) must be parallel grammatically (Sec. 3.04).
48.	Use of a semicolon. The semicolon is used to join two sentences as in the following example: The researchers reported a significant difference between males and females; however, the large sample size may have been an influencing factor (Sec. 3.03).
49.	Use lowercase letters inside parentheses as in (a) to identify elements in a series (list). Use Arabic numbers with no parenthesis as in 1. when identifying elements in a series (list) which are separated into paragraphs (Sec. 3.33).
50.	Use 1980s and not 1980’s (Sec. 3.49).
51.	Use the words “since” and “because” appropriately (Sec. 2.10).
52.	If you add to a quote, put your additions in brackets “so it would look [like] this” (Sec. 3.08).
53.	When talking about subscale scores on a test, scale, or questionnaire, use capital letters for the subscale n and keep the name consistent: Financial, Time Constraints, and Leadership Qualities (Sec. 3.18).
54.	Data is a plural word so it should be data were, these data were, etc. (Sec. 3.10).
55.	Avoid personification (anthropomorphism; Sec. 2.04): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Results of the study indicated - - > Jones (1998) indicated b. Research has shown - - > Jones (1988) found c. Various research studies showed - - > Jones (1992), DeVries et al. (1987), and Johnston (1993) concluded <u>or</u> various researchers (DeVries et al., 1987; Johnson, 1993; Jones, 1992) concluded d. The findings indicated - - > Smith (1994) indicated e. Table 1 presents - - > Table 1 includes the descriptive statistics for . . .
56.	Certain verbs are not appropriate when writing in scientific style: believed, felt, looked at, goes on to say, etc. (Sec. 2.06): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Jensen (1974) believed - - > indicated proposed, mentioned found, emphasized, revealed, etc. b. Martin (1975) felt - - > discussed, hypothesized, concluded, presented, argued, contested, etc.