

Annotating a Journal Article

Journal articles are **different** than conventional articles from newspapers, magazines, and online. They often can be very challenging to read.

Journal articles follow **different rules** based on the subject or discipline they address. Those written for the humanities use **MLA** and **CMS** style and are structured like an essay, while other journal articles follow **APA** guidelines for organization, writing, and citation.

Characteristics of Journal Articles:

1. Published quarterly in print journals or online
2. Paid or free
3. Peer-reviewed
4. Strict guidelines for organization, writing, & citations
5. Research- and evidence-based
6. Written for specialists

MLA or CMS Style

- Organized like an essay, with or without headings, and have the following sections:
 - Introduction
 - Body
 - Conclusion
 - Bibliography or Works Cited
 - Appendices (if necessary)
- Use MLA or CMS citation style for layout, citation, & documentation
- Value eloquences and good prose
- Make and support arguments
- Cite primary and secondary sources
- Use in English, History, Modern Languages, and Philosophy studies

APA Style

- Complex organization with defined subheadings
- Use APA style for layout, citation, and documentation
- Value precise language and use of specialized terminology
- Propose and test hypotheses
- Cite relevant research and describe the results of an experiment
- Use in Education, Medicine, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences studies

Common Structure for an APA-Style Journal Article:

- Title & Author(s)
- Abstract: Summarize the article
- Key Words
- Introduction
 - Describe the topic
 - Identify the problem
 - Provide a literature review
 - Define the theoretical approach
 - State the hypothesis
- Method
 - Describe the model used
 - Describe what was done
- Results
 - Share data (often with tables and figures)
 - Describe results
- Discussion (and/or Conclusion)
 - Interpret the results
 - Draw conclusions
 - Identify limitations
 - Share ideas for future areas of study
- References
- Appendices (if necessary)
- Table and/or figures (if necessary, may also be included in the body of the article)



Two Types of APA-Style Journal Articles:

1. Literature Review:
 - Summarize a body of research on a specific topic
2. Experimental Report:
 - Convey the results of an experiment

Other things you should do as you read and annotate text:

- Paraphrase important information
- Write down thoughts and questions
- Write down key terms
- List and lookup new vocabulary terms
- Identify other articles to read