Open Knowledge for a Sustainable Future: Research, Ethics, and Wikipedia

Week 3 — Academic Style & Evaluating Sources

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Roadmap

1. Why should we write?
2. What is your message?
3. How can you convince people?
4. What are good sources?
5. How can I make it easy for my reader?

Purpose of Writing in the Humanities and Social Sciences

- Writing is both a **tool for thinking** and a **means of communication**.
- It helps clarify ideas, interpret texts, and contribute to scholarly conversations.
- Written work demonstrates:
  - Understanding of key issues
  - Ability to argue persuasively
  - Awareness of disciplinary methods
- Writing is a process of *inquiry and reflection*, not merely reporting.
- Aim: to explore questions, not just provide answers.

Partly based on Analyzing Texts, Taking Notes (Catanzarite & Pelz, 2019, Ch. 1)

Humanities, Social Sciences, and Linguistics

- All three analyze human experience, culture, society, *and* language.
- **Humanities:**
  - Interpret texts, artworks, languages, and histories.
  - Value close reading, interpretation, argumentation.
- **Social Sciences:**
  - Study human behavior, institutions, and systems.
  - Employ observation, evidence, and models.
- **Linguistics:** (bridging H/SS; both theoretical and empirical)
  - *General:* structure and use of language
  - *Variation & change:* sociolinguistics, dialectology, historical linguistics.
  - *Mind & processing:* psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics.
  - *Data & methods:* corpora, fieldwork/elicitation, experiments, formal modeling.
  - *Technology & applications:* computational linguistics/NLP, lexicography, language documentation.
- Despite differences, all rely on:
  - Critical analysis and evidence-based reasoning
  - Clear written communication tailored to audience and genre

Writing as Inquiry

- Writing helps generate ideas and refine questions.
- Early drafts explore possibilities rather than finalize conclusions.
- Revision is discovery: each draft deepens understanding.
- Effective writers balance:
  - **Open exploration** with
  - **Focused argumentation**.
- Thinking happens through writing, not before it.

Academic Conversations

- Academic writing joins an ongoing **conversation of ideas**.
- You engage with others by:
  - Quoting and analyzing sources
  - Summarizing and synthesizing prior work
  - Acknowledging different viewpoints
- Essays must both *respond to* and *extend* these discussions.
- Citations show respect for others' intellectual labor.
- Every essay adds a new voice to the dialogue.

Developing a Question or Problem

- Essays begin with a focused, arguable question.
- Good questions are:
  - Specific but open-ended
  - Grounded in evidence
  - Worth investigating
- Avoid merely factual or yes/no questions.
- Examples:
  - Weak: “Was Shakespeare popular?”
  - Strong: “How did Shakespeare’s use of rhetoric shape his political commentary?”

Thesis and Argument

- The **thesis** presents your central claim.
- An argument:
  - States a position clearly
  - Provides reasons and evidence
  - Anticipates counterarguments
- Strong theses are *debatable*, not descriptive.
- Structure builds logically from premise to conclusion.
- Each paragraph contributes to proving the thesis.

Evidence and Interpretation

- Evidence supports reasoning; interpretation connects evidence to claims.
- Types of evidence:
  - Textual quotation and analysis (Humanities)
  - Data, case studies, and surveys (Social Sciences)
- Avoid summary; explain significance.
- Analyze patterns and implications.
- Show how evidence leads logically to your conclusions.

Audience Awareness

- Write for an informed but critical audience.
- Assume readers understand the basics but not your interpretation.
- Provide context and define specialized terms.
- Anticipate objections and address them respectfully.
- Maintain an academic tone—formal but engaging.

Voice and Style

- Academic writing has a clear, confident voice.
- Strive for:
  - Precision over ornamentation
  - Clarity over complexity
  - Variety in sentence structure
- Avoid jargon unless necessary.
- Use active verbs and concise phrasing.
- Revision improves tone and flow.
- Essays need logical progression of ideas.
  - Use outlines to maintain focus.
  - Ensure every section supports the thesis.

Revising and Editing

- Revision refines both ideas and expression.
- Strategies:
  - Read aloud to test clarity
  - Seek peer or instructor feedback
  - Review argument flow
  - Cut redundancy
- Editing focuses on grammar, punctuation, and formatting.
- Always proofread before submission.

Integrating Sources

- Use quotation, paraphrase, and summary effectively.
- Cite sources to:
  - Credit others' ideas
  - Strengthen your credibility
  - Help readers locate materials
- Follow disciplinary citation style (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.).
- Blend sources seamlessly with your own analysis.

Academic Integrity

- Uphold honesty in research and writing.
- Avoid plagiarism by citing all borrowed ideas.
- Keep detailed notes on sources.
- Paraphrase thoughtfully; don’t just reword sentences.
- Academic trust depends on intellectual transparency.

Becoming a Scholar

- Writing transforms students into active participants in knowledge creation.
- Scholars:
  - Read critically
  - Write reflectively
  - Engage ethically with others' ideas
- Cultivate curiosity and persistence.
- Scholarship is a shared, evolving conversation.

Summary

- Writing = Thinking + Communicating
- Humanities and social sciences differ in method but share core values.
- Essays are arguments supported by evidence.
- Revision and citation are essential scholarly habits.
- Goal: join the academic conversation with clarity and integrity.

Reading for Writing

- Treat writing as a **thinking process** that begins with reading and note-taking.
- Approach every lecture, discussion, and reading as a **text** to analyze.
- Ask questions continually; **do not read passively**.
- Build habits that connect reading notes to future **essay arguments**.
- Aim to understand *how* a “verbal contraption” works, not just what it says.

Partly based on Analyzing Texts, Taking Notes (Catanzarite & Pelz, 2019, Ch. 1)

What Counts as a “Text”?

- Any statement encountered in class: readings, **lectures**, prepared discussions.
- Analyze texts **all the time**, not only when told to.
- Compare new material with prior readings, lectures, and beliefs.
- Write thoughts down—notes become the **foundation** of essays.
- Focus on both **content** and **method**: what it says and how it works.

Active Reading Mindset

- Break the text into parts to see **purpose** and **mechanism**.
- Notice use of plot, imagery, symbolism, allusion (not just in literature).
- Recognize that nonfiction also deploys **language tools** strategically.
- Read to discover **patterns**, not only to collect facts.
- Remember: analyzing others' writing prepares you to **write interpretively**.

General Questions to Drive Analysis

- What confuses you? What needs **clarification**?
- Which claims are most **central** to the text's project?
- How do structure and language **support** those claims?
- What assumptions or **premises** are in play?
- How does this text relate to other course materials and **your concerns**?

For Fiction (Mostly)

- **Narrator**: who tells the story? reliable/unreliable/biased?
- **Setting & tone**: what senses and emotions are evoked?
- **Characters**: motivations, alignments, identification cues.
- **Language/diction**: level and implications.
- **Plot/structure**: problems, challenges, archetypes.
- **Images/motifs**: repetitions, metaphors, patterns.
- **Ending**: what resolves? why end *there*?

For Nonfiction (Mostly)

- **Author**: background and qualifications.
- **Audience**: allies, opponents, or neutral readers?
- **Intention**: explanatory, polemical, celebratory—*why* written?
- **Structure**: how is the argument organized?
- **Appeals**: logic vs. emotion; what types of arguments are used?

On Arguments: Classical Roots

- Aristotle analyzed features of argument still relevant today.
- Logic is central to many, but not all, arguments.
- A **syllogism** shows how accepted premises force a conclusion.
- Recognize that not all premises are **incontrovertible**.
- Much real-world reasoning yields **probable** rather than absolute conclusions.

Deduction (Syllogism) in Brief

- Moves from accepted premises to a **necessary** conclusion.
- If premises hold, disputing the conclusion is **illogical**.
- Useful when shared facts/definitions exist.
- Limits: debates often target the **premises** themselves.
- Practice: state premises explicitly; test their **soundness**.

Induction

- Starts from observations/data and infers a **generalization**.
- Conclusions are **tentative** (we never observe everything).
- Science frames even strong theories as **revisable**.
- Good induction “**follows the data**.”
- Beware overreach; match claim strength to **evidence**.

Narrative as Argument

- Stories and anecdotes can **persuade** by identification.
- History blends data, concepts, and **narrative structure**.
- Narrative can sometimes substitute for data or axioms.
- The most powerful stories **engage emotion**.
- Ask why a writer turns to story—what **work** is narrative doing?

Reason, Emotion, and Premises

- Distinguish appeals to **reason** vs. **emotion**.
- Identify the trail from premises to conclusion.
- Test premises for **assumptions**, generality, and evidence.
- Map where uncertainty lies: data, inference, or **values**.
- Use your notes to plan a balanced, **well-supported** response.

Quick Note-Taking Checklist

- Capture **central question** and main claims.
- Mark **evidence** and how it supports claims.
- Flag **key terms**, metaphors, and recurring motifs.
- Record **questions** and possible counterarguments.
- Synthesize into a **one–two sentence** takeaway for future drafting.

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Developing a Thesis — Chapter Overview

- The **thesis statement** is the backbone of any essay.
- It defines the argument and gives shape to analysis and evidence.
- A good thesis emerges from **questioning**, not from mere assertion.
- Writing itself helps **discover** the thesis.
- The thesis evolves through **drafting and revision**.

Partly based on Creating a Thesis (Catanzarite & Pelz, 2019, Ch. 3)

What Is a Thesis?

- A thesis is a claim that can be **defended with reasons and evidence**.
- It is neither a topic nor a fact, but an **interpretation**.
- Example:
  - Topic: “Women in Shakespeare.”
  - Thesis: “Shakespeare’s comedies use disguise to challenge gender norms.”
- A thesis makes a promise to the reader about the essay’s direction.

From Question to Argument

- Start with a genuine **question or problem**.
- Narrow broad curiosity into a focused inquiry.
- Ask “*How? Why? So what?*” about your topic.
- As you read and write, your tentative answer becomes a **working thesis**.
- Revise the thesis as new evidence appears.

Characteristics of a Strong Thesis

- **Debatable**: reasonable people could disagree.
- **Specific**: avoids vague generalities.
- **Focused**: manageable within the essay's length.
- **Insightful**: reveals something not obvious.
- **Connected**: aligns with evidence and analysis.
- Weak vs. Strong Thesis Statements
  - Weak: announces a topic or restates a fact.
    - "This essay will discuss social media and teenagers."
  - Strong: takes a clear, arguable stance.
    - "Social media intensifies teenage anxiety by rewarding performative identity."
  - Strong theses provoke **"How?" and "Why?"** questions.

Thesis as a Map for the Reader

- The thesis signals what evidence matters.
- Each paragraph should support or test part of the claim.
- Readers use it to navigate your logic.
- Keep it visible—state it early and restate (refined) in the conclusion.
- Avoid burying the thesis in background or description.

Refining Your Thesis

- Expect early theses to be **rough hypotheses**.
- Strengthen by:
  - Clarifying key terms.
  - Tightening scope.
  - Checking consistency with evidence.
- Ask peers to summarize your claim—does it match your intent?
- Revision turns a statement into a compelling argument.

Types of Thesis Statements

- **Analytical**: interprets and explains evidence. (e.g., “The novel critiques capitalism through its fragmented narration.”)
- **Expository**: explains a concept or process. (useful for background essays)
- **Argumentative**: takes a position and justifies it. (most common in humanities writing)
- Choose type according to essay’s purpose.

Common Pitfalls

- Thesis too **broad** or too **narrow**.
- Merely **summarizes** instead of analyzing.
- Contains **multiple, unconnected** claims.
- Uses vague verbs: “shows,” “is about,” “explores.”
- Fails to anticipate **counterarguments**.

Writing Across Disciplines

- **Humanities:** build an argument through interpretation.
  → *Thesis-driven essay*: claim, evidence, counterargument.
- **Social Sciences:** explain social phenomena systematically.
  → *IMRaD structure: Introduction → Methods → Results → Discussion*.
- **Linguistics:** mix of humanities and science.
  → *Intro → Background → Data/Methods → Analysis → Discussion → Conclusion.*
- **Computer Science:** emphasize reproducibility and innovation.
  → *Intro → Related Work → Method → Data → Experiments/Results → Analysis → Conclusion.*
- **Hybrids:** combine approaches (e.g., literature review + case study; policy analysis + recommendations).

Purpose and Tone Across Disciplines

Humanities	Persuasive, interpretive, argument-driven. Focus on ideas and textual evidence.
Social Sciences	Empirical, objective tone. Focus on testing hypotheses, describing data.
Linguistics	Analytical, combining theory and data. Balances conceptual framing with empirical evidence.
Computer Science	Technical, concise, performance-oriented. Emphasis on algorithms, models, evaluation metrics.

How Arguments Are Built

- **Humanities:** logic of persuasion → evidence supports an interpretation.
- **Social Sciences:** logic of proof → evidence tests a hypothesis.
- **Linguistics:** logic of demonstration → evidence shows a pattern or contrast.
- **Computer Science:** logic of replication → results must be reproducible.
- **All:** aim for clarity, coherence, and a sense of contribution.

Encyclopedic Writing: Wikipedia Style

- **Purpose:** inform, not argue — summarize accepted knowledge.
- **Tone:** neutral, verifiable, non-original.
- **Structure:** topic-based, not narrative.
  Overview → *Subtopics* → *References*.
  Lead → *Body* → *Appendices* Wikipedia:Manual of Style/Layout
- **Comparison:**
  - Unlike research writing, no new data or interpretation.
  - Like the introduction of an academic paper, it provides context and key sources.
  - Ideal for background reading, not for advancing claims.

Summary & Takeaway

- A strong thesis:
  - Arises from inquiry.
  - Makes a specific, arguable claim.
  - Guides structure and evidence.
- Expect to revise it multiple times.
- Use feedback and reflection to sharpen the argument.
- Every paragraph should earn its place by advancing the thesis.
- Writing = continual **refinement of thought**.
- Different tasks have different goals
  - You must asjust your writing style to fit the goal
  - Different disciplines have different styles

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From Topic to Argument

- Move from gathering ideas to **building a case**.
- Prefer **logical** appeals; use emotion sparingly and purposefully.
- Choose modes of reasoning suited to your materials.
- Keep conclusions **tentative yet confident**—acknowledge limits.
- Let structure make your thinking **followable** for readers.

Partly based on Ordering Evidence, Building an Argument (Catanzarite & Pelz, 2019, Ch. 4)

Deduction and Induction in Practice

- **Deduction**: from accepted premises to a specific conclusion.

⇒ In real essays, premises are rarely beyond dispute—state them clearly.

- **Induction**: from specific data to generalization; always provisional.

⇒ Match claim strength to evidence quality and scope.

- Use both modes as needed; **hybrid** arguments are common.

Architecture, Not Ornament

Prose is architecture, not interior decoration, and the Baroque is over.
Ernest Hemingway (1932) *Death in the afternoon*

- Build on a **solid foundation**: thesis and linked reasons.
- **Form follows function**: structure should serve clarity.
- Mechanical scaffolding may be invisible, but must exist.
- Avoid random piles of points; design for **coherence**.

Finding Building Blocks

- Gather: **facts, quotations, data, prior interpretations**.
- Note how each item **functions** (example, counterexample, definition).
- Separate **summary** from **analysis** in notes.
- Track source details for citation and revisiting.
- Prune items that don't advance the **central claim**.

Outline: Before or After Drafting

- Two approaches
  - A sketch a **pre-outline** of controlling ideas (topic sentences).
  - B **draft first**, then reverse-outline to reveal logic.
- Either way, ensure the essay is **going somewhere**, not circling.
- Expect to **add/subtract/rearrange**—everything is tentative mid-process.
- Use outlines to test **progression** and **balance**.

- I [FCB] normally write an outline and collect notes as I go along, then write prose at the end. I write a rough introduction first, but revise it at the end, as I almost always change many details, …

The Working Model (Intro–Body–Conclusion)

- **Introduction**: hook interest; give only necessary context; state thesis.
- **Body**: organize supporting ideas into coherent paragraphs.
- **Transitions**: create **meaningful** links, avoid monotony.
- **Support**: back each assertion with **textual or data** evidence.
- **Conclusion**: reconnect claims; answer “*so what?*”; mirror the intro.

Paragraphs as Structural Beams

- Each paragraph advances **one** controlling idea.
- Start with a **topic sentence** tied to the thesis.
- Develop with **evidence + analysis**, not lists of facts.
- End by **linking forward** to the next step in the argument.
- Trim digressions; keep the **load-bearing** path visible.

Sequencing and Emphasis

- Order points to create **momentum** (e.g., simple → complex).
- Front-load definitions; defer **nuances** until foundations are set.
- Place your strongest section where it has **maximum impact**.
- Use headings and transitions to signal **hierarchy** and shifts.
- Revisit sequence after drafting; **reshuffle** if clarity improves.

Audience and Explicitness

- Define key terms; avoid assuming shared premises.
- Make **premises** and **purposes** explicit.
- Explain why evidence is **relevant**, not just that it exists.
- Balance brevity with the reader's need for **orientation**.
- Prefer **readability** over flourish: clarity persuades.

What you should aim for

- **Logical sequence**; momentum without stalls.
- **Smooth transitions**; visible through-line from thesis to conclusion.
- Claims **properly supported**; no orphan generalizations.
  - Reliable sources clearly and correctly cited
- Overall emphasis aligns with the essay's **central question**.

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Evaluating Sources — Why It Matters

- Academic writing depends on **credible evidence**.
- Poor sources weaken even the best reasoning.
- Evaluating sources ensures:
  - Accuracy and reliability
  - Awareness of bias and limits
  - Relevance to your argument
- Evaluation is a **critical thinking skill**, not a checklist exercise.

Adapted from Evaluating Sources (WAC Clearinghouse, Colorado State University).

Purpose and Audience

- Ask: Why was this text created? For whom?
- Purposes may include:
  - Informing or teaching
  - Persuading or advocating
  - Selling or entertaining
- Identify intended audience: scholars, professionals, or the general public.
- Match the source's aim with your own research goal.

Author and Authority

- Who is the author, and what makes them credible?
- Check:
  - Education and institutional affiliation
  - Prior publications and expertise
  - Reputation in the field
- Anonymous or uncredentialed authors demand extra scrutiny.
- Authority may also stem from collective or institutional authorship.

Publisher and Venue

- Who publishes or hosts the source?
- University presses and peer-reviewed journals usually signal quality control.
- For websites, assess the domain and hosting organization.
- Recognize potential **institutional bias** in think tanks, corporations, or advocacy groups.
- Prefer sources with transparent editorial oversight.

Currency and Timeliness

- Consider when the source was written or updated.
- In fast-moving fields, information may age quickly.
- For historical or theoretical work, older sources may remain foundational.
- Look for revision dates, update logs, or newer editions.
- Always relate publication date to your topic's context.
- Has the paper been **retracted**?
  - Search in the official Retraction Watch Database
  - Run a search by title, DOI, author, or journal.
  - This is the most comprehensive, independent global database of retracted papers.
  - It also notes the reason for retraction (e.g., plagiarism, data falsification, honest error).

Evidence and Support

- Reliable sources **show their work**.
- Ask:
  - What kinds of evidence are used? (data, quotations, examples)
  - Are sources cited and traceable?
  - Is reasoning logical and transparent?
- Unsupported claims or missing citations signal weakness.
- Cross-check evidence against other reputable works.
  - Multiple sources are more reliable

Bias and Objectivity

- No source is completely neutral.
- Look for:
  - Loaded language or emotional tone
  - Selective omission of evidence
  - Conflicts of interest or funding ties
- Identify perspective; judge how it shapes interpretation.
- Acknowledge bias rather than ignoring it.

Balance and Completeness

- Does the source present multiple viewpoints fairly?
- Recognize one-sided or partial presentations.
  - If they cite themselves too much ($> 25\%$) it is a bad sign
  - If they only cite their colleaugues it is a bad sign
- Check whether evidence contradicting the claim is addressed.
- Balanced sources strengthen your own credibility when cited.
- Even biased sources can be useful if analyzed critically.

Relevance to Your Project

- Determine how the source connects to your research question.
- Directly relevant sources:
  - Support or challenge your thesis
  - Provide key evidence or theory
- Peripheral sources may supply context or background.
- Avoid citing tangential material to inflate your bibliography.

Primary vs. Secondary Sources

- **Primary:** original materials (texts, data, interviews, artifacts).
- **Secondary:** analysis, interpretation, commentary.
- **Tertiary:** index or textual consolidation of primary and secondary sources
- Choose according to purpose:
  - Primary for direct evidence
  - Secondary for framing and critique
  - Tertiary for an overview
- Distinguish between firsthand and filtered perspectives.

Scholarly vs. Popular Sources

- **Scholarly:** peer-reviewed, technical, detailed references.
- **Popular:** general readership, journalistic style.
- Use scholarly works for evidence, popular for public context.
- Be cautious: some “grey literature” mixes the two.
- Evaluate tone, citations, and rigor to tell them apart.

The Role of Peer Review

- Peer review adds accountability and expert evaluation.
- Check journal websites or for peer-review status.
  - Scopus Sources:
    Includes review policy, coverage, and metrics.
  - Web of Science Master Journal List:
    Only indexed if peer-reviewed.
  - Ulrichsweb Global Serials Directory:
    look for *Refereed: Yes*
- Conference papers, reports, and blogs may lack external review.
- Non-reviewed sources can still inform background reading—use carefully.
- Note review processes in your evaluation notes.
  - **Single-blind**: reviewer knows author
  - **Double-blind**: neither reviewer nor author knows the other's identity
  - How many reviewers?

Synthesizing Multiple Sources

- Evaluation continues through comparison.
- Ask:
  - How do sources agree or conflict?
  - Which are most authoritative or current?
- Synthesis reveals gaps and consensus in the field.
- Use evaluation to decide which sources to highlight or challenge.

Checklist for Evaluating a Source

- Purpose and audience clearly stated?
- Author's credentials and affiliations verifiable?
- Publisher or host credible and transparent?
- Evidence traceable and balanced?
- Date current enough for the topic?
- Bias recognized and context considered?
- Source relevant to your own argument?

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Make the Information Accessible

- 🔍 **Identify the source clearly:** include author, year, title, publisher, and version or edition.
- 📍 **Pinpoint the exact location:** add chapter, section, or page number — especially for long works.
- 🌐 **Help readers find it quickly:** provide a persistent link (URL, DOI) or unique identifier (ISBN, dataset ID).
- 🧭 **Be consistent:** use one citation style throughout (APA, Chicago, etc.).

Avoid Formatting or Mechanics Errors — Why It Matters

- Formal citation styles encode a **“secret code”** —tiny details convey location and source type.
- Using the community’s preferred style is a **“secret handshake”**: it signals you know the insider code.
- Attention to detail builds **credibility** with readers who value intellectual property and accuracy.
- Even in an era of easy keyword search, conventions still help readers **find and verify** sources quickly.
- Goal: demonstrate care and competence, not just avoid penalties.
  - You should use software to help

The Code Behind Citation Styles (Context)

- Historically, information was hard to locate; styles evolved as **compressed wayfinding**.
- Visual cues (e.g., *italics*/underlining vs. “quotation marks”) signal **container vs. part**.
  - *Italic/underlined* titles: items bound into a book (containers).
  - “Quoted/plain” titles: items inside a bound work (parts).
- On screens, everything can look equal—but print-era cues still carry **meaning**.
- You may help evolve conventions later; for now, **learn and apply** the code.

Pick the Right Style & Identify Source Type

- Confirm the community preference: **MLA**, **APA**, **Chicago A/B** (new variants appear!).
- Determine what you're citing:
  - Book vs. journal article vs. whole website vs. a single post/section.
  - Each type has **slightly different** required elements and order.
- Differences usually make sense: books have titles/pages; tweets usually do not.
- Match the pattern to the **actual source features**.
- Avoid adding **unnecessary information**.

Punctuation Around Quotations & In-Text Citations

- Quotation punctuation follows **normal grammatical conventions**.
- In-text citations:
  - **MLA**: *no punctuation inside* the parentheses; sentence punctuation *after* the citation.
  - Other styles: may include **commas/abbreviations** inside the parentheses.
- End-of-text entries (Works Cited/References) use style-specific patterns of **commas, colons, periods, italics, quotation marks**.
- Treat these patterns as part of the **code**, not decoration.

Order of Information (Field-Sensitive Choices)

- Major difference: placement of **publication year**.
  - **MLA**: year tends to appear **near the end**.
  - **APA/others**: year appears **earlier**.
- Rationale: recency matters more in fast-moving fields (e.g., AI) than in some literary analyses.
- Ensure elements are in the **correct sequence** for the style.
- Do not pad entries with **irrelevant** details.

Capitalization & Abbreviation Patterns

- Some styles favor **full capitalization** and spelled-out names/titles for formality.
- Others prefer **fewer capitalized words** and more **abbreviations** to speed reading.
- Apply title case vs. sentence case **as the style dictates**.
- Check consistent use of **standard abbreviations** (ed., trans., vol., no.).
- Consistency across entries is as important as correctness.

Consistency is Non-Negotiable

- Pick a style and **stay with it**—don't mix conventions.
- If you sometimes include the year and sometimes don't, readers may suspect **incomplete acknowledgment**.
- For unusual sources (e.g., a deleted TikTok under a pseudonym), imitate the **closest established pattern**.
- Prioritize reader orientation: can they **find** what you cited?
- Keep a short **personal checklist** to enforce uniformity.

Page Arrangement: Lists That Readers Can Scan

- Many end-of-text lists are **alphabetical** (by first element of the entry).
- Others are **chronological** or **numerical**—follow the assignment or venue.
- Use a **hanging indent** so lines after the first are indented—improves scanability.
- Maintain even spacing and **consistent** punctuation patterns across entries.
- Check that every in-text citation has a **matching** list entry (and vice versa).

Tools Help—But You're Still Responsible

- Bibliography managers and library export tools can **misformat** elements.
  - E.g. Nurril Hirfana binte Mohamed Noor, Suerya binte Sapuan and Francis Bond (2011) cite as Nurril Hirfana, Suerya and Bond (2011)
- You must still **proofread** citations against the style rules.
- Learn enough of the code to **spot errors** quickly.
- Online forms may omit fields or guess wrong—**verify** and fill gaps.
- Working in a "**generation gap**" means tools + human judgment are both needed.

Grace, Growth, and Credibility

- No one is born knowing citation mechanics; even strong writers make mistakes.
- The most important thing is that people can find the information.
- Errors **do not** imply bad faith—but accuracy **does** build trust.
- In communities that value intellectual property, detail work grants **power and credibility**.
- Over time, you join the discourse community that **evolves** conventions.
- For now: learn the handshake, apply it carefully, and **help readers**.

Citing Works Not in English

- Scholarly writing often involves **sources in other languages**.
- Goals:
  - Give credit to the original author.
  - Help readers identify the work (even if they don't read the language).
  - Follow your citation style's rules for **non-English titles**.
- APA and most citation systems recommend:
  - Keeping the original title in the source language.
  - Optionally providing an **English translation in brackets**.
- Transliterate non-Latin scripts if possible; retain diacritics accurately.

General Principles (APA / biblatex)

- Use the author's name in the script of publication (APA allows Latin transliteration).
- Give publication data exactly as printed (year, publisher, location).
- If the reader is unlikely to understand the title:
  - Add a translation in square brackets: *Válka s Mloky [War with the Newts]*.
- Don't invent English titles — translate accurately but informally.
- If the work has an official English edition, you may cite that instead or alongside.

Example: Czech Source (Čapek, 1936)

```
@book{capek1936,
  author    = {Čapek, Karel},
  year      = {1936},
  title     = {Válka s Mloky [War with the Newts]},
  location  = {Praha},
  publisher = {Fr. Borový}
}
```

Text citation examples:

- Čapek (1936) satirizes industrial modernity through the figure of the salamander.
- The allegory of human exploitation appears early in the narrative (Čapek, 1936).

References entry (APA style):

Čapek, K. (1936). Válka s Mloky [War with the Newts]. Praha: Fr. Borový.

Example: Japanese Source (芥川龍之介, 1918)

```
@book{akutagawa1918,
  author    = {芥川龍之介},
  year      = {1918},
  title     = {蜘蛛の糸 [Kumo no ito / The Spider's Thread]},
  publisher = {新潮社},
  location  = {東京}
}
```

Text citation examples:

- 芥川龍之介 (1918) retells a Buddhist parable of redemption and failure.
- Compassion and egoism intertwine in “蜘蛛の糸” (芥川龍之介, 1918).

References entry (APA style):

芥川龍之介 *(1918).* 蜘蛛の糸 *[Kumo no ito / The Spider’s Thread].* 東京*:* 新潮社.

When to Translate or Transliterate

- If the audience reads the language → keep original title only.
- If not → add translation in brackets after the original title.
- Transliteration (romaji, pinyin, etc.) helps with alphabetization and search.
- Example (Japanese romanization):
  Akutagawa, Ryūnosuke. (1918). Kumo no ito [The Spider's Thread].
- Always apply one consistent pattern for all non-English items.

Checklist for Citing Non-English Sources

- Verify:
  - Accurate author spelling and diacritics.
  - Year, publisher, and city of publication.
  - Correct script and optional translation.
- Decide: original vs. translated title (or both).
- Keep consistency across all non-English entries.

Key Takeaways

- Cite foreign-language works with the same rigor as English sources.
- Use original titles + bracketed translations where helpful.
- Unicode and modern **biblatex** make multilingual citation smooth.
- Careful formatting demonstrates both linguistic and scholarly competence.
- Respect each language's orthography while following APA consistency.

Acknowledgements

- The first sections were based on A Short Handbook for Writing Essays in the Humanities and Social Sciences (Catanzarite & Pelz, 2019)
- I also consulted Reid (2024) and Krause (2007)
- OpenAI (2025) was used to format the references, and generate a first draft of the slides with a prompt like

  Please make me some slides, based on Chapter 1:
  https://mlpp.pressbooks.pub/writinghandbook/chapter/chapter-1/
  Make them in LaTeX, using luatex and biber, please make around 15 slides with at least 5 bullet points, use sub-lists where appropriate.

References I

芥川龍之介. (1918). 蜘蛛の糸 *[Kumo no ito / The Spider's Thread]* [Short story first published in *Shinchō* (April 1918).]. 新潮社.

Čapek, K. (1936). *Válka s Mloky [War with the Newts]* [Satirical science-fiction novel critiquing colonialism and modernity.]. Fr. Borový.

Catanzarite, C. L. M., & Pelz, W. A. (2019). *A short handbook for writing essays in the humanities and social sciences* [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0]. Minnesota Libraries Publishing Project. https://mlpp.pressbooks.pub/writinghandbook/

Krause, S. D. (2007). *The process of research writing*. https://www.stevendkrause.com/tprw/

OpenAI. (2025). *Chatgpt (mar 14, 2025 version)* (Large language model). Retrieved October 14, 2025, from https://chat.openai.com/

Reid, E. S. (2024). *Rethinking your writing: Rhetoric for reflective writers* [Website: https://esreid.com/rethink/]. The WAC Clearinghouse; University Press of Colorado. https://doi.org/10.37514/PRA-B.2024.2265