

The Easy Referencing Assistant

If it looks simple, then it probably is. (Standen, 2009)

Here is the Jeff Standen referencing assistant. It's intended to show you how to use the Harvard Referencing System, which is more or less universally used throughout psychology and the social sciences. Also known as the *author-date method*, the author's surname and date in brackets are included in your script. The full references are then listed at the end of your assignment, article, coursework project or whatever.

Here is an excerpt from a text book that we use in class:

Research into neonate perception

Colour vision The receptors in the retina of the eye that provide colour vision are called cones. Bornstein et al. (1992) found that the cones required for perceiving red and green are clearly present in the retinas of one-month-old babies, and may have been present from birth.

Adams (1989) claims that four-day-old infants are able to distinguish red from green and that babies as young as three days prefer coloured stimuli to black-and-white stimuli. Infants as young as four months appear to show the same colour preferences as adults, as they prefer to look at blue and red rather than yellow. (Banks & Salapatek, 1983)

Visual acuity Until about 40 years ago, medical textbooks stated that the perceptual abilities of newborn infants were very poorly developed. It is now clear that this simply isn't true. *Visual acuity* is the ability to see the details of stimuli in sharp focus. In adults, the usual standard for measuring visual acuity is '20/20 vision'. A person with 20/20 vision can identify an object 20 feet away that the average person can also identify at 20 feet. A person with 20/100 vision would need to be within 20 feet of an object that the average person would be able to identify at 100 feet. At birth, an infant's visual acuity is somewhere between 20/200 and 20/800. In other words, the visual world is not very clear to the neonate. Visual acuity does improve quite quickly, and by the age of one year, most infants' visual acuity is 20/20. (Haith, 1990).

Bee (2000) suggests that the poor visual acuity of newborns is not necessarily a negative thing. In the early part of life, the infant only needs to be able to see close-up objects like breasts, bottles, cot toys, and parents' faces.

Another book reference, this time simple and straightforward.

Haith, M.M. (1990). *Rules that babies look by*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

In the textbook excerpt above, there are two more references, one book and one journal. Find them in the references section on the next page and see if you can identify them as book or journal references.

This is an example of a reference in the text. Notice how it flows with the literary style. The author, followed by the date of publication in brackets. Turn to the references section in the text book, and you will find this:

Bornstein, M.H., Tamis-LeMonda, C.S., Tal, J., Ludermann, P., Toda, S., Rahn, C. W., Pecheux, M., Azuma, H. & Vardi, D. (1992). Maternal responsiveness to infants in three societies: The United States, France and Japan. *Child Development*, 63, 808-21.

This is in fact a journal reference. It acknowledges published research by Bornstein (who was probably the leader of the project) and the other people might have been his assistants, students or similar. (*et al.* means 'and the others'). The year is that of publication. Next is the title, which always starts with a capital letter. The name of the journal follows, in italics. The number is the volume number of the journal. Usually, one volume annually. The page numbers refer to the location of the article in that volume. But, what is in the text book from which you take the reference (usually!) is *exactly* correct, so don't change it to make it look pretty, or neat, or personalised. Just put it exactly as shown!

This one is a book reference. Notice also that it is in a slightly different style. Here, the previous sentence/statement is acknowledged. Turn to the reference section and find this:

Banks, M.S. & Salapatek, P. (1983). Infant visual perception. In P.H. Mussen (Ed.), *Handbook of child development*, (4th ed.). New York: Wiley.

Basically it means that Banks and Salapatek wrote a section entitled "Infant Visual Perception" in a book edited by P.H. Mussen entitled "Handbook of child development (4th Edition)" and published in New York by Wiley.

At the end of your assignment there must be a reference section. It will consist of two headings: a Bibliography and References.

The Bibliography will contain references to textbooks you have used as background reading. The Reference Section will contain the references of work that you are citing. (I guess it's possible, even probable, that you have taken the majority of your references from the books cited in the bibliography. OK.)

So, for this guide so far, if I were to be referencing it, the end page would look a bit like this:

Bibliography

Haralambos, M. & Rice, D (2002). *Psychology in focus A2 Level*. Ormskirk: Causeway Press Limited

References

Adams, R.J. (1989). Obstetrical medication and the human newborn: The influence of alphaprodine hydrochloride on visual behavior. *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology*, 31, 650-656

Banks, M.S. & Salapatek, P. (1983). Infant visual perception. In P.H. Mussen (Ed.), *Handbook of child development*, (4th ed.). New York: Wiley.

Bornstein, M.H., Tamis-LeMonda, C.S., Tal, J., Ludermann, P., Toda, S., Rahn, C.W., Pecheux, M., Azuma, H. & Vardi, D. (1992). Maternal responsiveness to infants in three societies: The United States, France and Japan. *Child Development*, 63, 808-21.

Bee, H. (2000). *The developing child* (9th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Haith, M.M. (1990). *Rules that babies look by*. Hillsdale, N.J: Erlbaum.

You might also want to actually quote a verbatim extract from a book or piece of research. Do it this way:

According to Eysenck (1958):

“Mankind has always been interested in dreams, and many attempts have been made to interpret the meaning of them. The reasons for this interest are not difficult to find. Dreams are odd and striking phenomena, similar to waking thought in some ways, but quite dissimilar in others.” (p.142)

Then carry on with your writing. In your reference section, of course:

Eysenck, H.J. (1958) *Sense and Nonsense in Psychology*, Harmondsworth: Penguin

The Internet - just when you thought it was getting easy!

Web references are a particular nuisance. My advice for now is to give the URL of the page you view and the date referenced.

But talking about the web, I recommend this site:

http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/learning/g_apaguide.shtml (accessed 27 October 2009)

This is the library page of the University of Waikato, New Zealand. I've seen a few sites, but this one really is useful. While being complete and - uh complex, it is yet easy to understand. If you're in any real doubt, try this site.