Assignments

**Assignment 1: Journal Article Critique**

**Due Date:** After you have completed Unit 4

**Credit Weight:** 5% of your final grade

**Expectation:** 625-700 words (plus title page and references), based on a template, using APA Style.

**Instructions**

You are required to complete a journal article critique based on an article in the list below. This assignment is designed to help you read a research article correctly and efficiently, and to practice using APA Style. These skills will be valuable in completing the research paper later in the course.

You are required to follow the Journal Article Critique Template provided, which includes the headings required, the questions that you must address, and formatting instructions. Your report must be in narrative (paragraph) form.

The critique must be an original work: that is, not copied from someone else, and not used in this course in a previous registration or in any other course taken at Athabasca University or elsewhere. Otherwise, this constitutes plagiarism and academic misconduct.

You will not be permitted to re-write your journal article critique, so please follow the instructions carefully. Weiten and McCann (2013) give an excellent introduction to journal articles and to APA Style in Chapter 2, pages 77-78.

**Articles**

For this assignment, you must choose one of the following articles:

If you choose one of the articles listed below, no further approval is required. If you have an outside article [i.e., not on the list] that you would like to critique, you **must** submit the article or provide the particulars to your tutor for approval first - it must be pertain to Chapter 1 content. Approval is at the tutor's discretion. If you submit an unapproved outside article critique, it will not be marked and you will receive a zero '0' on the assignment.

Benjamin, L. T. (2000). [The psychology laboratory at the turn of the 20th century](http://psyc.lms.athabascau.ca/pluginfile.php/33174/mod_book/chapter/5347/assignment_resources/Benjamin_2000.pdf). *American Psychologist, 55*(3), 318-321. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.55.3.318

Robins, R. W., Gosling, S. D., & Craik, K. H. (1999). [An empirical analysis of trends in psychology](http://drr.lib.athabascau.ca/redirect.php?id=52682). *American Psychologist, 54*(2), 117-128. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.54.2.117

Taylor, A. K., & Kowalski, P. (2012). [Students’ misconceptions in psychology: How you ask matters . . . sometimes](http://psyc.lms.athabascau.ca/pluginfile.php/33174/mod_book/chapter/5347/assignment_resources/TaylorKowalski_2012.pdf). *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 12*(3), 62-77. ERIC Number: EJ992117

Vokey, J. R., & Read, J. D. (1985). [Subliminal messages: Between the devil and the media](http://psyc.lms.athabascau.ca/pluginfile.php/33174/mod_book/chapter/5347/assignment_resources/VokeyRead_1985.pdf). *American Psychologist, 40*(11), 1231-1239. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.40.11.1231.

Zimbardo, P. G. (2004). [Does psychology make a significant difference in our lives?](http://psyc.lms.athabascau.ca/pluginfile.php/33174/mod_book/chapter/5347/assignment_resources/Zimbardo_2004.pdf) *American Psychologist, 59*(5), 339-351. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.59.5.339

**Assignment Resources**

* [Finding, Reading, & Citing Psychology Articles](http://www.muhlenberg.edu/depts/psychology/FindReadCite.htm#reading)
* [How to Read a Journal Article in Social Psychology](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/~sspencer/psych253/readart.html)
* [Journal Article Critique Template](http://psyc.lms.athabascau.ca/mod/resource/view.php?id=3816)
* [Sample Journal Article Critique](http://psyc.lms.athabascau.ca/mod/resource/view.php?id=3817)

ASSIGNMENT 1/2 JOURNAL ARTICLE CRITIQUE 1

Journal Article Critique Template

This template is adapted from Weiten & McCann. (2013). Psychology: Themes and variations (3rd Canadian Ed.) (p. 78).

FORMAT: Your paper must be double-spaced, using Times New Roman, 12-point font and one-inch margins all around. Your report should be 625-700 words, PLUS the title page and References page. Please submit your assignment in a <docx>, <doc>, or <rtf> document format. See the APA Style Tutorial to assist you with the APA formatting requirements.

Title Page (new page)

Running head: [Abbreviated title and page number]

NOTE: The running head/pager header and page numbers are embedded on each page. The page header is a shortened version of your assignment title. See the journal critique sample and the APA Style Tutorial.

Title of article

Author of article

Student's name

Student's AU ID

Course number

Assignment

Tutor

Date

Body of the Text (new pages)

NOTE: Your report must be in narrative form (not question-answer, question-answer).

I. Research Question or Problem

Ask yourself, “Is the question or problem clearly stated?” State the question or problem in your own words.

ASSIGNMENT 1/2 JOURNAL ARTICLE CRITIQUE 2

II. Introduction

The introduction of a research article presents an overview of the problem studied in the research. Ask yourself, “Is there a review of the literature related to the problem or question?” “How many references are cited?” Review and summarize the research (e.g., theories and previous research) in your own words. Cite all sources.

III. Methodology

The methods section of a research article should be detailed enough to permit another researcher to attempt to replicate the study. Ask yourself, “Does the researcher explain the methods used in the study?” “Who or what was the population studied?” “How were they selected?” “What did the participants do for the study?” “What instruments were used to gather data?” Paraphrase the methodology in your own words and cite from the article using APA Style.

NOTE: Paraphrasing involves restating another writer's text, explanation, argument, or narrative in your own words. Paraphrased material may be similar in length to the original text, but is substantially different in wording and sentence structure. A paraphrase is considered an indirect quote, so it does not require quotation marks. However, it must be attributed/cited to the original source. For purposes of this assignment, include page numbers, or, where applicable, paragraph citations.

IV. Results

The results section of a research article reports the raw data and statistical analysis obtained in the study. Ask yourself, “Are the results clearly stated and understandable?” “Did the results answer the question or clarify the hypothesis?” “Are there tables or graphs?” Paraphrase the results in your own words and cite from the article using APA Style.

V. Discussion/Conclusions

The discussion section of a research article includes the conclusions drawn by the author(s). Ask yourself, “Are the results discussed?” “Are there suggestions for practical implications?” “Are there recommendations for further research?” Write your answers to these questions in your own words and cite from the article using APA Style.

VI. References

The reference section of a research article lists the bibliographic references for any studies cited. Ask yourself, “Were the references selected related to the author's research?” “Were the references cited within the body of the text?” “Were the references from the same source or were there a variety of sources?” “Were the references current or out-dated?”

ASSIGNMENT 1/2 JOURNAL ARTICLE CRITIQUE 3

VII. Personal Reaction

The personal reaction section is included here to enable you to critically analyze the knowledge you gained about the topic researched, about methodology, about APA Style, and about the meaningfulness of the research. Ask yourself, “Was it well written and organized?” “What did I learn from reading the article?” “What further questions did it generate?” "What are some of the limitations of the article?" State your reactions in your own words.

NOTE: You may use Roman numerals (as above) or Arabic number (as in the sample critique). Your headings should be identical to those in this template.

Reference(s) (heading is centred on a new page)

Name(s) of the author(s) (i.e., last name and initials). Copyright/publishing date. Title of article. Journal name, volume number, issue number (as applicable), page numbers, and doi. (If the doi is not available, please provide the URL).

Example of a Journal Article Critique

NOTE: This critique example is double-spaced, using Times New Roman 12-point font, one-inch margins all around, embedded header, references, citations, paraphrasing, etc. This is required APA formatting.

You are strongly advised to read Using paired reading to enhance the fluency skills of less-skilled readers by Sandra L. Nes so that you can follow it in context with what is written below.

Your critique and research paper must not include any information (direct quote or paraphrase) from the Abstract – all information must be obtained from the body of the paper.

Running head: PAIRED READING TO ENHANCE FLUENCY SKILLS 1

Article: Using Paired Reading to Enhance the Fluency Skills of Less-Skilled Readers

By Sandra L. Nes

Alan Basca (student)

AU ID 7654321

PSYC 290

Journal Article Critique 1

Bill Simpson (tutor)

November 7, 2013

PAIRED READING TO ENHANCE FLUENCY SKILLS 2

Using Paired Reading to Enhance the Fluency Skills of Less-Skilled Readers

1. Research Question or Problem

The problem is clearly stated. The purpose of the study was to determine or re-affirm

those skills necessary for reading and learning and to determine the optimum strategy or strategies for advancing these skills (Nes, 2003, pp. 179-1801).

2. Introduction

The introduction indicates the importance of fluency in reading and in school success.

Seven sources are cited in the introduction. The ability to effortlessly recognize and

understand a sequence of words seems to be a precursor to understand what you are reading and reading enjoyment (Nathan & Stanovich2, 1991, as cited in Nes, 20033, p. 180). Reading

fluency rates improve with age. Sixth- and seventh-grade students should be reading at least “150 words per minute” to demonstrate fluency (Guszak, 1985, as cited in Nes4, p. 180)

3. Methodology

The three boys and one girl in the study were students from Grades 4, 5, and 6 who were

reading at least one year below grade level and were reading below the minimum fluency rate for that grade level (Nes, 20035, p. 181). The researcher met with each student

individually for “30 to 40 minutes” each day for the intervention sessions (Nes, p. 181). Nes

1 Where the article has page numbers, the citation reads as a page number, e.g., (p. 5). Where the article has no page numbers, as you might find in some online articles, then the citation reads as a paragraph number, e.g., (para. 9) (APA 6th ed.). 2 In Nes' paper, Nathan & Stanovich is an original primary source and is both cited and referenced. However, in this critique example, Nes is our original primary source and Nathan & Stanovich is an interpreted primary source and, therefore, Nathan & Stanovich is cited but not referenced. Only original primary sources are both cited and referenced. 3 The author publishing date is only provided the 1st time within a given paragraph and again the 1st time within any new paragraph. (See APA 6th ed.) 4 If the author’s name appears as part of the narrative (i.e., in the body of the text), then the year follows in parentheses the first time, and it is not necessary to include the year again when the author’s name is repeated in the narrative of the same paragraph and cannot be confused with any other citations in the same paragraph.. 5 The author publishing date is cited here as it is the 1st time in a new paragraph (see comments above). See APA 6th ed.

PAIRED READING TO ENHANCE FLUENCY SKILLS 3

collected data regarding reading rate and accuracy and included 3 phases: baseline,

intervention, and maintenance (p. 183). The author read a passage to each student as s/he

followed along. The student, in turn, read the same passage to the author while she noted

errors. Data was gathered each day in the areas of fluency rates and accuracy (p. 183).

4. Results

The results tied back directly to the purpose of the study. Data was presented to show that

fluency, accuracy, and comprehension improved for each student (Nes, 2003, pp. 184

185). Graphs were present to illustrate the growth during the 11-week period (Nes, pp. 189

192).

5. Discussion/Conclusions

Nes (2003) concluded that the paired reading model had a positive impact on the four

participants. According to Vygotsky (1978), it was important to “scaffold” students “within

their zone of proximal development” (as cited in Nes, p. 185). The assistance of a skilled

adult or peer was instrumental in helping students move the ZPD to a higher level (Nes, p.

185). The author referenced the value of goal setting and attainment (Stipek, 1993; Bandura,

1986, as cited in Nes, p. 186).

The process of recording data and graphing the data seemed to be highly motivational. It

showed students that they were making progress, which resulted in greater self-worth (Ames,

1990; Clark, 1995, as cited in Nes, 2003, p. 186). Nes recommended further research (p.

187). Questions also arise about the use of paraprofessionals rather than an experienced

teacher (Wasik & Slavin, 1993, as cited in Nes, p. 187).

PAIRED READING TO ENHANCE FLUENCY SKILLS 4

6. List of References

The format used in listing references was consistent, and all references given were cited

in the article. The author cited a variety of sources, although she mostly used mostly recent

sources due to the recent emergence of the topic.

7. Personal Reaction

I found this to be an interesting study. I have had numerous opportunities to listen to

children read who demonstrated a lack of fluency. I concur with the author that a standard

level of fluency does improve student comprehension and reading enjoyment. The paired

reading model was unfamiliar to me and, therefore, I was excited to learn about this new

teaching strategy. The study confirms the importance of modelling and practice at a level just

above the student's “zone of proximal development,” i.e., the difference between being able

to work it through without assistance vs. doing it with help (Vygotsky, 1978, as cited in Nes,

2003, p. 185).

However, a limitation is that the paired reading only occurred in the classroom. What

happens at home after school and on weekends to reinforce these reading skills, especially

for those families where English is not a first language or where English-speaking skills are

weak? This also applies to summer or other extended times when the students are not in class

and where the reading skills might be lost or diminished. Further research might include

providing summer reading programs [voluntary vs. mandatory].

With respect to the classroom, I wonder if trained paraprofessionals could be just as

effective. What is the most cost-effective time frame needed to bring about success? What

are the long-term effects of such a program? What could classroom teachers do to improve

reading fluency?

PAIRED READING TO ENHANCE FLUENCY SKILLS 5

Reference

Nes, S. L. (2003). Using paired reading to enhance the fluency skills of less-skilled readers. Reading Improvement, 40(4), 179-192. Retrieved6 from http://0

ehis.ebscohost.com.aupac.lib.athabascau.ca/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&sid=e730bb

d6-da68-4984-beb2-1446c6d72bca%40sessionmgr114&hid=101

NOTE: The second and succeeding lines of the reference are indented (shown here). In most cases, APA does not require that the journal issue number be included. However, including the issue number is a good model for students to follow, as it is becoming more standard practice, and makes it easier for another person to locate the article. Be sure to include all issue numbers for the references for your article critiques and research paper assignments. You must also include the 'doi' or, if not available, the URL. See the APA tutorial for more information.

6 Must include the ‘doi’ or URL retrieval information if the ‘doi’ is not applicable. See APA tutorial.