

publishable. The strategy to follow is to find out as much as possible about the evaluation standards of whomever will be reviewing your work. Ideally, with your scientific writing assignments, an instructor may be able to provide a grading rubric before you submit your written work. This rubric will give you an idea of your instructor's expectations and what the point values are for particular parts of an assignment. Figure 4.1 is a sample rubric I use when grading an introduction section for my undergraduate, upper division research methods course.

FIGURE 4.1. Sample Rubric for Grading an Introduction Section (continues)

**PSYC 321 Research Methods
Spring 2019**

Rubric Details for Introduction Section Assignment

Completion of Assignment (25 points)

- Introduce the reader to the issue in the first paragraph. Convince the reader that this is an important issue. Perhaps it impacts a large number of people, or it is an essential component of daily life. Try to impress upon the reader the importance of the issue. Using some general statistics (with citations) here.
- Review the available literature on the topic. If there are studies related specifically to your topic, review them here. If there are no specific studies, then broaden your review of the literature to include related areas. Show that you have done your scholarly homework. You are providing a context for your study. There should be multiple studies cited in this section of your introduction. Start this subsection broad and end narrow.
- Within this context, identify a problem or area where the knowledge is incomplete. This turns into your statement of the problem to be addressed by this research. You have reviewed the literature, but there is a gap in the literature—an unresolved problem or issue. The goal of your study is to fill that gap by conducting your study. Provide a clear statement of purpose for the current study. In fact, conclude this subsection with a sentence that starts with **"The purpose of my study is to...."**
- Then, give a brief overview of the methodology that will be used to address the knowledge gap. Just a snapshot of the participants, materials, and basic procedure used in the study. This is a preview – "coming attractions."
- Conclude your Introduction section with specific hypotheses to be tested or expected outcomes. What do you expect to happen? Develop your working hypotheses based on your expectations and your review of the literature. The more specific you are here, the easier it will be to write survey questions, and the easier it will be to select the appropriate statistical analyses later. Your hypotheses might examine differences between certain groups, associations or relationships between variables, etc. Start each hypothesis sentence with **"I hypothesize that...."**

Clarity of Presentation, Including Mechanics and Grammar (40 points)

- Spelling, grammar, punctuation, noun-verb agreement all correctly followed; obvious mistakes avoided (paper was proofread).
- Avoid direct quotations, but if used, a maximum of three; a scholarly paper is not a string of direct quotations.
- Use of verb tense and noun and pronoun number should be correct and consistent.
- Use of personal pronouns is non-sexist.
- When discussing individuals with disabilities, put the person first (i.e., "a student with anorexia" is preferred over "an anorexic student.")
- Transitions between sections should be smooth, and you should avoid awkward sentence constructions.
- Write in complete sentences. Each paragraph focuses on a single topic.
- Avoid being colloquial (informal) in your writing. Be formal, and do not write like you are having a conversation.
- No contractions (e.g., didn't, can't, wouldn't, shouldn't).

FIGURE 4.1. Sample Rubric for Grading an Introduction Section (continued)

▪ No abbreviations unless APA-approved. ▪ <u>Avoid passive voice.</u> ▪ <u>Do not use "we" or "us"</u> – this is a single author paper from the first person perspective. ▪ Avoid overzealous claims, such as correlations data being interpreted as causal, or using the word "prove." ▪ <u>No anthropomorphizing/avoid the pathetic fallacy error: avoid "data indicate," "research found."</u> ▪ <u>Be specific and precise – avoid using the word "thing."</u>					
Proper Use of APA Style and Formatting (35 points)					
<table><tr><th>APA Writing Style</th><th>Microsoft Word Formatting</th></tr><tr><td> • Evidence is cited using a paraphrase of the author's ideas (with proper citation), or direct quote (with proper citation and page or paragraph number). • Acronyms are defined prior to the first use of the acronym. • Claims made by the author are supported with evidence (citations); give credit where credit is due to avoid plagiarism. • There are specific rules for the display of numbers/numerals in APA style; be sure to follow those rules and note the exceptions to the rules. • Use "and" and "&" properly with in-text citations. • Use et al. for reference citations following APA rules. • Punctuation should be placed inside quotation marks (either single or double quotation marks). • Repeat the title of paper at the top of the Introduction section on page 3. </td><td> • One-inch margin on all four sides of the page. • Entire paper is double-spaced, with no extra spaces between paragraphs or manuscript sections. • Page number inside the top 1-inch margin. • No right justification of text (should be ragged right margin). • Use same font throughout; select from APA-approved list • If a block quote is used (40 words or more), it is properly indented. • If headings/subheadings are used, they must be properly formatted. • If a list is included, use proper APA rules for seriation. </td></tr></table>	APA Writing Style	Microsoft Word Formatting	• Evidence is cited using a paraphrase of the author's ideas (with proper citation), or direct quote (with proper citation and page or paragraph number). • Acronyms are defined prior to the first use of the acronym. • Claims made by the author are supported with evidence (citations); give credit where credit is due to avoid plagiarism. • There are specific rules for the display of numbers/numerals in APA style; be sure to follow those rules and note the exceptions to the rules. • Use "and" and "&" properly with in-text citations. • Use et al. for reference citations following APA rules. • Punctuation should be placed inside quotation marks (either single or double quotation marks). • Repeat the title of paper at the top of the Introduction section on page 3.	• One-inch margin on all four sides of the page. • Entire paper is double-spaced, with no extra spaces between paragraphs or manuscript sections. • Page number inside the top 1-inch margin. • No right justification of text (should be ragged right margin). • Use same font throughout; select from APA-approved list • If a block quote is used (40 words or more), it is properly indented. • If headings/subheadings are used, they must be properly formatted. • If a list is included, use proper APA rules for seriation.	
APA Writing Style	Microsoft Word Formatting				
• Evidence is cited using a paraphrase of the author's ideas (with proper citation), or direct quote (with proper citation and page or paragraph number). • Acronyms are defined prior to the first use of the acronym. • Claims made by the author are supported with evidence (citations); give credit where credit is due to avoid plagiarism. • There are specific rules for the display of numbers/numerals in APA style; be sure to follow those rules and note the exceptions to the rules. • Use "and" and "&" properly with in-text citations. • Use et al. for reference citations following APA rules. • Punctuation should be placed inside quotation marks (either single or double quotation marks). • Repeat the title of paper at the top of the Introduction section on page 3.	• One-inch margin on all four sides of the page. • Entire paper is double-spaced, with no extra spaces between paragraphs or manuscript sections. • Page number inside the top 1-inch margin. • No right justification of text (should be ragged right margin). • Use same font throughout; select from APA-approved list • If a block quote is used (40 words or more), it is properly indented. • If headings/subheadings are used, they must be properly formatted. • If a list is included, use proper APA rules for seriation.				

TELLING AND RETELLING YOUR STORY: DRAFTING, EDITING, REVISING, AND PROOFREADING

As you begin drafting your paper, you should also be working on your reference list at the same time. If you are using the notecard method or some form of it, you are already doing that work. The *Publication Manual* is very specific in its rules, but the overriding principle for a reference citation is to provide the reader with enough bibliographic information to find the reference. It should act as a guide to where you extracted the information. The four fundamental parts of a reference citation include the authorship, the date published, the title of the work, and how the work can be located (APA, 2020). A complete reference citation is important because it allows any reader to retrace the “intellectual journey” that brought you to your conclusions.

Writing the Rough Draft

If you have been following my advice from previous chapters, writing your first rough draft will not be so daunting. You have a research question or thesis statement, and you have done a review of the literature and gathered your research articles. You have read everything carefully while recording your