



Tricky APA Questions Answered!

What if I am using a source within a source?

APA calls this a secondary source and recommends using these sparingly. Essentially, when the source quotes, summarizes, or paraphrases someone else and you want to use this already cited material, we need to do the following:

1. Cite the original author(s) and original year(s) of publication in the signal phrase.
2. Cite the secondary author in the parenthesis with the words "as cited in" with the year and page number (if using a quotation).
3. On the reference page, cite the secondary author and text.

What does that mean in plain English?

1. If you want to use this from the source you're looking at:

Women vote more often all the time. Many researchers have discovered that this is a trend because the right for women to vote is somewhat recent, historically speaking (Diaz, Jones, and Drake, 2010).

2. Here is what it will look like paraphrased in your paper:

According to Diaz, Jones, and Drake (2010) women voters tend to show up more frequently to polls than men. This is attributed to the fact that their right to vote is still historically recent (as cited in Smith, 2011).

3. The reference page entry will look like this:

Smith, Crystal. (2011, January 27). What makes women vote. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from

<http://www.nytimes.com/womenvoters>

What if the passage I want to use summarizes many authors?

Pull your hair out. . . Just kidding. The same rules apply: Cite the original authors and years of publication in the signal phrase; then cite the secondary author in parenthesis and on the reference page.

1. Original passage (note the semi-colon between the multiple original authors):

Women vote more often all the time. Many researchers have discovered that this is a trend because the right for women to vote is somewhat recent, historically speaking (Diaz, Jones, and Drake, 2010; Miller 1999).

2. Your paper:

According to Diaz, Jones, and Drake (2010) and Miller (1999) women voters tend to show up more frequently to polls than men. This is attributed to the fact that their right to vote is still historically recent (as cited in Smith, 2011).

3. The reference page:

Smith, Crystal. (2011, January 27). What makes women vote. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from

<http://www.nytimes.com/womenvoters>

For a complete explanation of APA style citation, please visit:

<http://apastyle.apa.org/>

OR

Visit the Helpful Writing Websites section under Research tools on the Writing Center's website:

<http://www.mtsac.edu/writingcenter/researchtools.html>