

10 Tips for Writing Assignment 1

1. As each question is marked equally, your word count for each of the 5 questions should be approximately the same length. You can go 10% above or below the assignment word count. This is measured from your heading through to the beginning of your reference list. (It does not include your reference list.) Ensure you do not write an assignment outside of these parameters, as it will result in an automatic fail grade.

2. Your writing should be relatively error-free in terms of grammar and spelling. You need to check that each of your paragraphs focus on a new area of discussion. Sentences should be of varying length. Avoid long sentences unless you punctuate them very well. Too often, in an attempt to make their writing appear more 'academic', students construct sentences that are of a very confusing length. Don't do this. Keep it simple and, most importantly, readable. Spelling should be manually checked (don't rely on auto-correct) and punctuation needs to be spot on. The most common punctuation errors I come across are the following:

- An apostrophe where there does not need to be one. (e.g. in plural such as *paper's*).
- An apostrophe of possession in the wrong place (e.g. Judys' strategies, instead of Judy's strategies)

3. The final question in each case study is referring to the commentary of a particular person. In the case of Lyn, for example, the commentary is from John Bladen, a principal. For that final question you must ensure your discussion focuses on that commentary section. State what you agree with (in the commentary), what you disagree with (in the commentary) and give reasons why. Try to cover the commentary broadly, rather than just one or two comments.

4. In this assignment you can feel free to use 'I'. Some of the questions directly ask you about your own thoughts (e.g. which strategies would you adopt?). Some questions actually ask you more than one question also – so many sure your respond to each part.

5. Your reference list should have a title 'References' on a brand new page. Follow the APA 6th document guidelines I have given you on FLO. The second and third lines of each reference on this list should be indented. The list needs to be alphabetical.

6. Each question is an opportunity for you to support your statements/answers by providing in-text citations. These should be citations for the other readings in this topic. You can also go outside of the set readings for citing, if you wish, but I would recommend that you use the readings I have provided you with. If you have an answer that has no links to research (e.g. no citations) then it is going to be much weaker than one that does (and therefore be marked down). You need to show me that your responses are informed by research, and not your perspective or preference alone.

7. If you use quotations then ensure that you show the page number that the quote is sourced from. You don't need page numbers if paraphrasing. If you are paraphrasing secondary sources then I would recommend you follow the example given on page 3 of the APA document on FLO. If your sentence ends with an in-text citation, then ensure there is a full stop after the closing bracket. This marks the end of the sentence (not the bracket).

8. It is appropriate to have a very brief introduction and a very brief conclusion. These only need to be a short paragraph each as you don't want to eat into your available word count.

9. Use sub-headings or numbers to show clearly which question you are responding to.

10. Choose the case study that you think you will best respond to. Check the 5 questions from the beginning. Ensure you have a good understanding of what's being asked and are confident that you can respond to each well, making links with the broader research within this topic.