

[Sample Title: Through the Artist's Lense: A Phenomenological Study of the Lived Experience
of Expressive Writing with Former Writer's Workshop Students]

A Dissertation submitted
to the Graduate School
Valdosta State University

in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF [PROGRAM]

in [Program]

in the Department of [Department Name]
of the [Full College Name]

[Graduation Month and YEAR]

[NAME]

[Previous Degrees begin with most recent on top]
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ABSTRACT

[NOTE: The abstract should tell the reader your topic, research methods, and major findings. The abstract is double-spaced and should not exceed one page in length or approximately 250 words.]

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[NOTE: Right click and select “update field” to update the Table of Contents. You will need to manually delete “Chapter I” “Chapter II” etc. and type each manually with a colon “:” on the same line once your table is updated because the actual chapter headers in the document cannot have colons. Use the arrow keys to navigate within the table because clicking will activate the hyperlinks.]

Use Word for Desktop, not Word Online. Learn how to install the desktop version [here](#).

[NOTE: Be sure to include the signed IRB Approval or Exemption Report as an Appendix.]

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[NOTE 1: Caption tables using Word’s captioning feature to allow Word to generate a list of tables, figures, and equations automatically. Insert a table using “Insert Table of Figures” on the References ribbon. You will need to manually add a colon “:” and title after each table number once your table is updated. Number and title all tables, figures, and equations. If you have three or more tables/figures/equations, present a list showing their location after your table of contents.]

[NOTE 2: There should be a separate list for Tables, a list for Figures, and one for charts or illustrations if needed. Do not include a list if there are fewer than three tables or figures. (Hint: When using tables, present a brief summary of the contents in the text of the dissertation before the table is presented rather than repeat all statistics in the narrative. Try to limit tables and figures; if there are more than 15 of each, it is permissible to place in the appendices to avoid disrupting the flow of the narrative.) If you must include both a list of tables and a list of figures, put each on its own page using a page break.]

[NOTE 3: All graphs, diagrams and images should be titled as Figures. Tables are commonly used to reflect data from your research findings.]

[NOTE 4: Citations are required for all Figures, Tables, and Charts if the figure, table or chart was borrowed from another. If you created the figure, table, or chart, no citation is needed.]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

[Single space.] [While your thesis or dissertation must be your intellectual property, you could not have written it without the assistance of a number of individuals and institutions. The acknowledgements page provides you with the opportunity to thank those who provided that assistance. You may include as many individuals as you desire. This is also the appropriate place to list permission to quote copyrighted material.]

[NOTE: You may include an optional “DEDICATION” page after your Acknowledgements page. It will be a separate section formatted just like this one. It should be short and to the point. This statement can be one to five sentences but is usually one or two.] [Single space]

Chapter I

Introduction to the Study [Heading Level 1 – Centered, Bold]

In this section, you orient the reader to your study as you present the problem statement.

Statement of the Problem [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Purpose of the Study [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Research Questions [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Conceptual Framework [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

In this section, you provide your overall approach to engaging in this work. Consult with your dissertation chair regarding their preference in what scholar's approach and readings you should use for your Conceptual Framework. What is presented below is Saldaña's thinking on the Conceptual Framework.

Theoretical Premises [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Epistemological Premises [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Methodological Premises [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

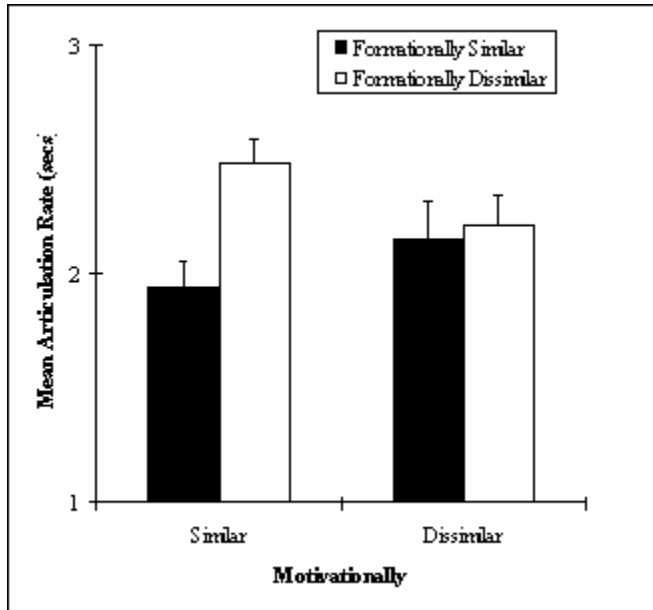
The following is a list of figures taken from the APA Style Blog. These figures are included to demonstrate formatting. Right click and insert a caption (e.g., Figure 1) to enable an automatic table of contents for figures. You will need to manually change the style of the caption to Times New Roman 12pt, bold, and black font. Use APA 7 guidelines for tables, section 7.36, unless directed otherwise by your dissertation chair.

You may use tables as well as figures. If using tables, remember to use the same font in tables as in the rest of the paper. Do not use vertical borders. You can adjust borders by right

clicking on the table, then selecting “Borders and Shading,” or by using the borders icon in the Table ribbon.

Figure 1

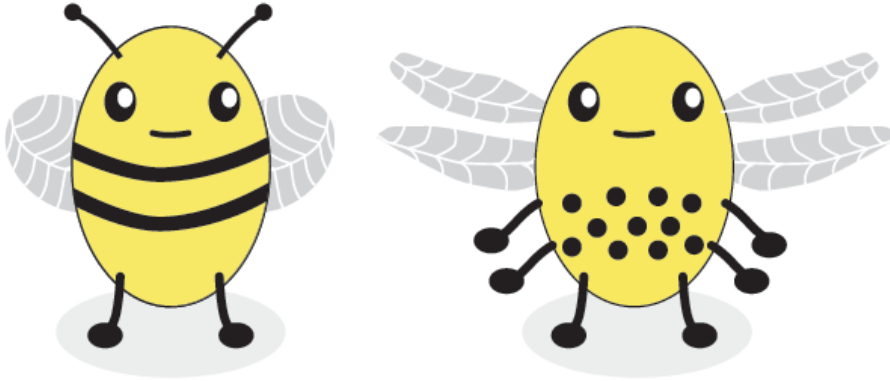
Title of Figure 1



Both tables and figures should be inserted at the end of a paragraph. The subsequent paragraph should begin one double-spaced line below the end of the table or figure. Take note of the “Note” formatting in Figure 2. Notes may be included for clarity.

Figure 2

Examples of Stimuli Used in Experiment 1

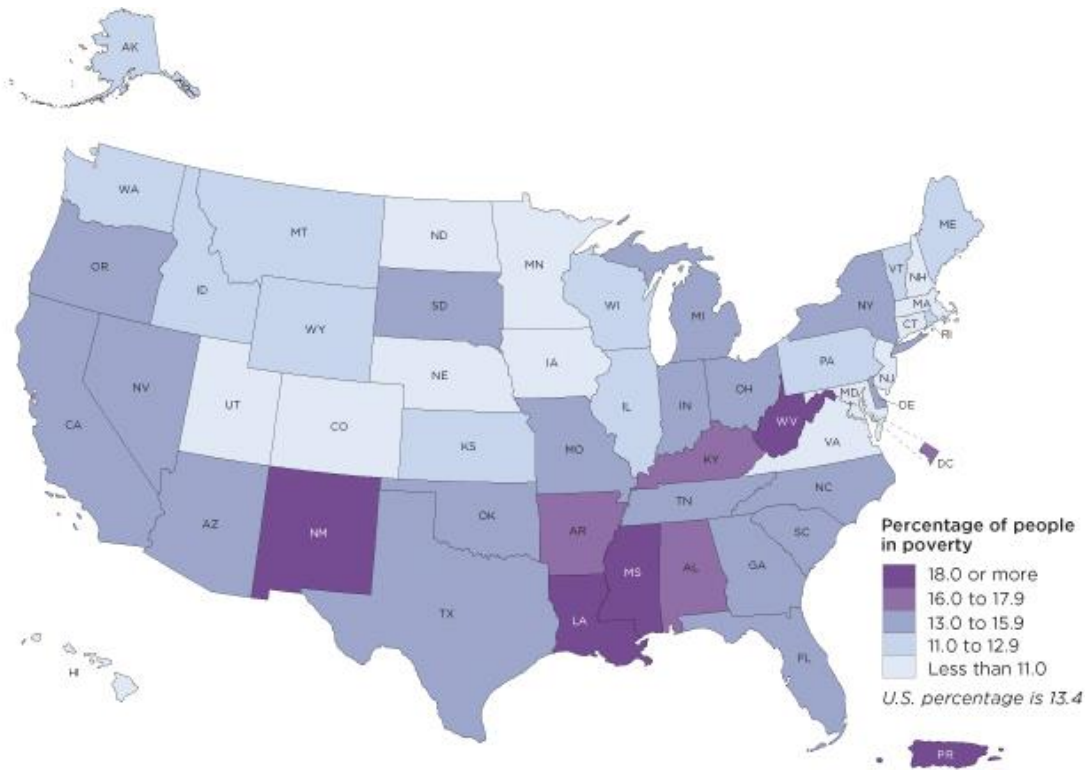


Note. Stimuli were computer-generated cartoon bees that varied on four binary dimensions, for a total of 16 unique stimuli. They had two or six legs, a striped or spotted body, single or double wings, and antennae or no antennae. The two stimuli shown here demonstrate the use of opposite values on all four binary dimensions.

This paragraph is included to demonstrate formatting between figures. Generally, you should discuss a figure in a paragraph before inserting the figure. Explain the relevant details, as you would with a table. There is a page break following this paragraph to ensure that the caption and figure are on the same page.

Figure 3

Poverty Rate in the United States, 2017



Note. The map does not include data for Puerto Rico. Adapted from *2017 Poverty Rate in the United States*, by U.S. Census Bureau, 2017.

[NOTE: If you have three or more figures, you should include a list of figures below your Table of Contents. If you have three or more tables *and* three or more figures, include both a list of tables and then a list of figures on separate pages.]

Significance of the Study [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Assumptions, Delimitations, and Limitations [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Assumptions [Heading Level 3 – Flush Left, Bold Italic]

Delimitations [Heading Level 3 – Flush Left, Bold Italic]

Limitations [Heading Level 3 – Flush Left, Bold Italic]

Definitions [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Chapter Summary [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Outline of the Study [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Chapter II

Review of the Literature [Heading Level 1 – Centered, Bold]

In this chapter, the goal is to *synthesize* relevant literature, and to organize the literature in a logical progression for the reader. Typically, Chapter II addresses elements related to the statement of the problem and your theoretical framework(s). Consult your dissertation chair regarding what literature you should address in Chapter II. Below is heading levels 2–5; however, the extent of levels is a function of the depth and breadth of the material addressed.

Major Topic 1 [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Sub-topic 1 [Heading Level 3 – Flush Left, Bold Italic]

If you use Heading Level 4 (after Level 3) and 5 (after Level 4), follow the format below:

Heading Level 4. [Indented, Bold, Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph. Use Cntrl+Alt+Return to make a style separator and ensure that Heading 4 style is only applied to the heading so the full paragraph does not display in the Table of Contents.

Heading Level 5. [Indented, Bold Italic. Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph. See above note about style separators. This functionality is not available for Mac or Word Online, but you can copy/paste and change the headers in this document or manually update the Table of Contents when you are finished.

Heading Level 5. [Indented, Bold Italic. Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Heading Level 4. [Indented, Bold, Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line

and continues as a regular paragraph.

Sub-topic 2 [Heading Level 3 – Flush Left, Bold Italic]

Heading Level 4. [Indented, Bold, Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

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Heading Level 5. [Indented, Bold Italic. Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Major Topic 2 [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Sub-topic 1 [Heading Level 3 – Flush Left, Bold Italic]

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Heading Level 4. [Indented, Bold, Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Sub-topic 2 [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

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Heading Level 5. [Indented, Bold Italic. Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Major Topic 3 [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Sub-topic 1 [Heading Level 3 – Flush Left, Bold Italic]

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Heading Level 4. [Indented, Bold, Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Sub-topic 2 [Heading Level 3 – Flush Left, Bold Italic]

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Heading Level 5. [Indented, Bold Italic. Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Chapter Summary [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

In this section, provide an overview of what you presented in this chapter. Then, provide an overview of the next chapter.

Chapter III

Method [Heading Level 1 – Centered, Bold]

In this intro paragraph, provide a short overview of the chapter and identify the progression of the content. Depending on your Chair's direction, you may restate the purpose statement and remind the reader of the study's goal(s) as well as the research questions.

Research Design [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

In this section, explicate the design, including the approach/genre and make the case for why this design is appropriate for the purpose and research questions. Discuss with your dissertation chair to confirm their preference regarding placement of theoretical, methodological, and epistemological premises. Also discuss with your dissertation chair regarding their preference for the placement of your Reflexivity-Subjectivities statement.

Site and Participant Selection [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Data Collection [alternatively **Data Generation** or **Data Gathering**] [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Data Analysis [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Trustworthiness [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Ethical Considerations [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Chapter Summary [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

In this section, provide an overview of what you presented in this chapter. Then provide an overview of the next chapter.

Chapter IV

Findings [Heading Level 1 – Centered, Bold]

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of your study. The ways in which the findings are presented is a function of the qualitative paradigm approach/genre used. Consult with your dissertation chair regarding their preference in the heading types and organization.

Below are listed the headings for formatting.

Level 2 Heading [Flush Left, Bold]

Level 3 Heading [Flush Left, Bold Italic]

Heading Level 4. [Indented, Bold, Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Heading Level 5. [Indented, Bold Italic. Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

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Level 3 Heading [Flush Left, Bold Italic]

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Level 2 Heading [Flush Left, Bold]

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Level 3 Heading [Flush Left, Bold Italic]

Heading Level 4. [Indented, Bold, Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Heading Level 5. [Indented, Bold Italic. Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Heading Level 5. [Indented, Bold Italic. Ending with a Period.] Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Chapter Summary [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

In this section, provide an overview of the findings presented in the chapter. Also provide an introduction for the following chapter.

Chapter V

Discussion [Heading Level 1 – Centered, Bold]

In this section, introduce the chapter and provide an overview of your study and what you will be presenting in this chapter.

Themes [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

[Consult your dissertation chair regarding preferred and appropriate heading titles.]

Implications [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Recommendations for Future Research [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

Chapter Summary and Conclusion [Heading Level 2 – Flush Left, Bold]

References

Writing tips for the Reference section:

- ✓ Ensure this section is formatted correctly per APA 7th Edition manual.
- ✓ Cross-reference in-text citations against Reference entries to ensure every citation has a Reference entry. Then, cross-reference Reference entries with citations to ensure every Reference entry has a citation. Note that personal communication, which requires a citation, does not require a References entry.
- ✓ If you have multiple entries from an author, enter these in the References section with the oldest publication date (or n.d.) first, and then work in chronological order.
- ✓ If you have multiple entries with an author and then an author + co-author (e.g., Brockett, R. G. and Brockett, R. G., & Hiemstra, R.), enter the solo authorship first. The rule is *nothing before something*.

Appendix A:

Title of Appendix

[NOTE: Supplemental material should be placed in appendices. You need a separate appendix for each type of material presented. Some style manuals allow you to place tables, figures, and other graphical representations in an appendix, rather than dispersed throughout your text. Each appendix should have a cover page that identifies it. Reference the cover sheet page number in the Table of Contents. Center the title on the page. A copy of your IRB or IACUC approval or exemption (if applicable) must be included as an appendix. Be sure to mention the IRB or IACUC in your “Methodology” chapter. Every Appendix must be cited in-text.]

Dissertation Writing Tips

Research is an act of persuasion, according to Saldaña (2022). As such, your scholarly responsibility is not only to explicate *what* you are doing, but also *why* and *how* you are engaging in the work. You must build your case and make it accessible in its understanding to the reader who may be unfamiliar with the context, site, population, and theoretical framework(s).

Dissertation Formatting Tips:

1. Use 1" left and right margins *unless* you plan to have your dissertation bound. In that case, you will need to have a 1.5" left margin and 1" right margin.
2. The first page of each chapter has a 2" top margin—other pages have a 1" top.
3. The bottom margin is 1".
4. Page numbering is top right. No running head in this document.
5. Set your paragraph settings to double spacing with no extra space between paragraphs.
6. Spacing after a period ending a sentence is one space only.
7. When centering chapter titles (Chapter I, Chapter II, etc.) at the 2" mark, be sure to use the "center" button on the toolbar rather than the tab key.
8. Tables and/or Figures: Only include a list of tables or list of figures if you have three or more each.
9. Figures: Place titles *underneath* the figure. Notes are double spaced; Tables: place titles *above* the table, with one blank line separating the table and the title. Figures and tables can be in color or black/white.
10. For the Table of Contents, use leaders and page numbers (do not include "p.").
11. When using = < > + symbols, place one space before and one space after each. For example, n=45 should read as n = 45; p<.05 should be p < .05.

12. Include a copy of your IRB approval or exemption as an appendix (mention it in the Methodology chapter and include it in the Table of Contents).
13. When discussing percentages, use either the symbol (%) or the word (percentage). Be consistent with use—don't interchange!
14. Watch out for that pesky quotation mark—be sure all are the same font and style to open quote and end quote.
15. Avoid hanging headers by ensuring every heading, regardless of the level, has text following it.
16. At the bottom of a page, if a heading does not have at least two lines of text after it, move the section to the next page.
17. Use appropriate headings as guideposts particularly in lengthier sections to help the reader stay anchored.