PUBLIC WEBSITES – WRITING TIPS

We recommend using plain language and consistent style when writing for online audiences.

The goal is to create relevant, interesting, and engaging content for your readers.

Important concepts to consider are:

- › Attributions
- › Citations
- › Style
- › Tone
- › Spelling/Grammar

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ATTRIBUTIONS, CITATIONS, AND REFERENCES – WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

These all protect you when you use different copyrighted works.

ATTRIBUTIONS

Attributions are simplified captions acknowledging the creator, the source, and the copyright license. Attributions are on the same page as the resource.

Any open or restricted copyrighted work can have an attribution, but we usually use this style for images, graphics, figures, and charts that are in the open copyrighted realm.

EXAMPLE 1

Old Woman's Smile by Huyen Nguyen is used under the Unsplash license.
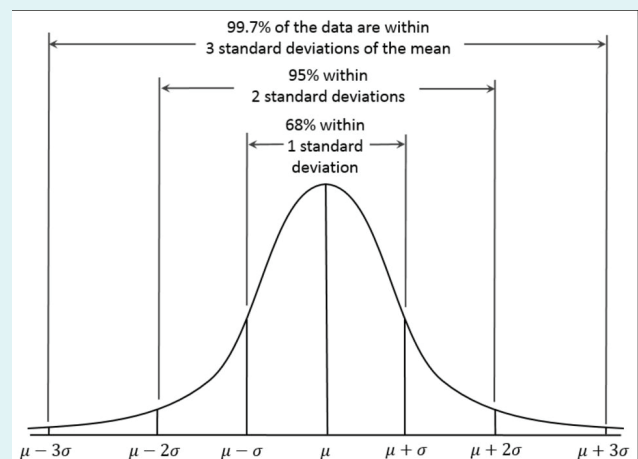
EXAMPLE 2

Figure 2.10. Standard deviation within normal distribution.

IMAGE ATTRIBUTIONS
(This list may be at the end of a section on the same page, often before or after a References list.)

Figure 2.10. *Empirical Rule* by Dan Kernler is used under a CC BY-SA 4.0 license.

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CITATIONS

Citations tell your audience that the work you are borrowing came from another source. There are multiple citation styles (APA, MLA, Chicago etc.), and citation in blocks of text is called an in-text citation. An in-text citation tells us there is a full reference citation in the References list. **References** are detailed citations at the end of your work.

EXAMPLE

Personality Traits – The Big 5 and More
(Harris, n.d.)

Grouchy With a Chance of Stomping
(ObserveChange.org, 2017)

REFERENCES

Harris, M. (n.d.). *Personality traits – The Big 5 and more* [Video]. Vimeo. https://vimeo.com/user4722143

ObserveChange.org. (2017, May 15). *Grouchy with a chance of stomping* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GnaFMjaJtlY&feature=emb_title

STYLE

Use the same style of headings, sub-headings, bulleted lists, captions, and body text formats while writing.

The *BCcampus Website Style Guide (n.d.)* and *American Psychological Association's Style and Grammar Guidelines* (2022) are excellent resources to explore style and formatting choices for online environments.

TONE

Tone is how you come across to your audience. Are you planning to sound friendly and approachable? Academic? Consider your audience and purpose and adjust your tone accordingly.

› Avoid slang and unnecessary jargon. Using plain language helps convey your message.

SPELLING/ GRAMMAR

› Use Canadian spelling.
› Grammar and punctuation are important for ensuring a clear message.

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