Essay title

Name of author

Essay for the [name of the course unit, e.g., KTKP010 Learning and Guidance] course unit

Spring term / Autumn term 20XX

Faculty of Education and Psychology

University of Jyväskylä

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1. Introduction

University studies include a range of writing assignments, often in essay form. When talking about an essay at the university, we refer to a reflective scientific piece of writing based on critical examination of source materials and one’s own thinking. Typically, it presents the author’s own reasoned ideas and personal viewpoint on the topic. An essay starts from the concepts, ideas and arguments presented in the source literature. The author discusses and critically analyses them, then draws conclusions based on them.

The text demonstrates the author’s mastery of the theme and ability to focus on its essential content. An essay consists of an opening section that presents the background to the topic (Introduction), a discussion section on the topic and a final section concluding the discussion (Conclusion). The text sticks to the point and demonstrates the author’s critical thinking ability. An essay is neither a translation of source material nor a summary of it.

1. Main chapters of the discussion section
	1. Essay writing process

Familiarise yourself thoroughly with the learning outcomes of the course unit, the assignment and its assessment criteria, and write the essay according to the assignment specifications. Limit the content of the essay according to the assignment specifications. Read the source literature specified for the assignment. Pay attention to the key concepts in the sources and make notes on them. Make sure you have understood the source texts and how they are related to each other. You can create mind maps, for instance. Plan what you will write. The essay will take shape and become more complete during the writing process.

When you write about the key concepts and perspectives based on your sources, cite the sources so that your own voice can be distinguished from them. Use your own words to express ideas based on sources, and do not copy word for word. Always remember to include an in-text citation when you use someone else’s ideas. The Turnitin tool can help with the scientific writing process: [Turnitin supports academic writing – Digital Servicest (jyu.fi)](https://www.jyu.fi/digipalvelut/en/guides/turnitin) Also see the following instructions: <https://www.jyu.fi/en/for-students/kandi-ja-maisteriopiskelijan-ohjeet/regulations-and-directives-guiding-studies/dealing-with-academic-misconduct>

When you think the thematic groupings of your essay are ready, pay attention to the way the essay is constructed from the introduction to the discussion. Does it focus on the topic you defined? Have you defined the concepts that you use? Have you given reasons for your arguments? Is the topic discussed logically? Are all relevant themes handled sufficiently? Does the essay include irrelevant content? Check the structure of the essay, its language, and whether section headings correspond to the contents (see Section 2.2).

* 1. Adhering to the principles of academic writing

Essays should adhere to the following principles of academic writing:

* Structure: introduction, discussion, conclusion
	+ Introduction and Conclusion are used as standard headings.
	+ The chapters within the discussion section are named according to their content. Chapters in the discussion section can start directly after their headings or they can begin with a lead paragraph, which serves as an introduction to the actual body text.
* Argumentation: reasoning and evaluation of ideas, interpretations and statements
* Use of precise and appropriate concepts and their definition
* Style: concise and neutral (not emotional) academic style with adequately reasoned arguments
* In-text citations and the list of references are based on the referencing guidelines of the American Psychological Association APA (see Section 3 and References) where applicable
* Language: careful use of language puts the finishing touch on your text (use language guides, e.g., [Purdue OWL](https://owl.purdue.edu/))
* Length of the essay: depends on the topic and phrasing of questions; see the assignment guidelines or agree with your supervisor
* The use of artificial intelligence follows the principles agreed on during the course, the guidelines and policies of the University of Jyväskylä, and the guidelines of the Centre for Multilingual Academic Communications regarding the use of AI-based applications, especially during the centre’s courses. If artificial intelligence has been used, the use is reported on in the appendix (see Appendix 4).

Individual teachers may have their own, more exact guidelines for writing essays.

1. Using in-text references

The careful use of citations is one of the characteristics of academic writing, and different citation practices exist in the scientific community. In studies in educational science at the University of Jyväskylä, we recommend that you cite according to APA 7 citation style, published by the American Psychological Association ([Home - APA Citation Style, 7th Edition - Research Guides at East Carolina University Libraries (ecu.edu).](https://libguides.ecu.edu/APA7) The guide shows you how to cite references in your essays and how to prepare a list of references. In addition to the APA 7 citation guidelines, the following have been used as a basis: instructions from the journal *Psykologia* (<http://www.psykologia.fi/kirjoittajille/yleiset-ohjeet-kirjoittajille>) as well as instructions and examples from the Finnish-language *The Finnish Journal of Education* (*Kasvatus*).

According to good citation practices, you identify – in a clear and individualised way – the source of each piece of information, observation or interpretation. It is recommended to mention the source in the first sentence in which the content is used (Hirsjärvi et al., 2007). In this case, the reference applies to a single sentence. The citation can be subject-centred (the first example below) or author-centred (the second example below). Note the comma between the author and the year in subject-centred citations.

Opiskellessa kannattaa omaksua ajatus kirjoittamisesta kehittyvänä taitona (Vilkka, 2020, s. 24). [When studying, it’s worth adopting the idea of writing as an evolving skill (Vilkka, 2020, p. 24)]

Vilkka (2020, p. 24) notes that it is useful for students to adopt the idea of writing as an evolving skill.

In fact, only the most central ideas, concepts or results of a source are often presented in a single sentence. Potential further references to the same source in the same paragraph are expressed through, for example, semantic cohesion, so that the reader can understand the same source is still being used:

Vilkka (2020, p. 24) notes that it is useful for students to adopt the idea of writing as an evolving skill. They also emphasise writing as an academic activity.

You should not use an independent, disconnected citation at the end of a paragraph to refer to the entire paragraph. If the whole paragraph is based on one source, the reference is placed at the beginning of the paragraph, followed by an indication in each sentence that it is still the same source:

Vilkka (2020) suggests that …. Secondly, according to them …. In addition, Vilkka highlights situations where …. In these situations ….

A citation includes the author’s surname, the year of publication and a potential page number. In essays and learning assignments, page numbers are indicated if the information in question can be located on one or two pages of the work being referred to. Note the comma after the names and the letter p to indicate the page:

The majority of students had a rather fragmented understanding of the general objectives of the curriculum (Salminen & Annevirta, 2018, pp. 27–28).

 Page numbers are also indicated if the citation is a table, figure or direct quotation. However, direct quotations should only be used rarely for effect. If there is justification for a direct quotation, it is indicated by quotation marks.

Vilkka (2020, p. 90) comments on the emotions associated with writing as follows: “When writing, emotions are also stirred up by the demands of scientific writing. These include creating a dialogue between theory, research data and source literature, and adapting the central idea of the text to the conventions of the text genre.”

The page number can be left out if you refer to an entire study at a general level, for example: Salminen and Annevirta (2018) have mapped student teachers’ knowledge of the curriculum. If the source is an e-book with no page numbers, the place of a detailed piece of information in it can be specified by mentioning the chapter number or heading, for example: … (Heikkinen & Timonen, 2020, Chapter 5); (Ahvenjärvi & Kirstinä, 2013, Chapter “Lukemisen ja lukutaidon merkityksiä”).

For a source with one or two authors, list both names in every citation. When the citation is in brackets, use an ampersand (&) between the two names, for example: Based on the study (Ronai & Lammervo, 2017), we can argue …. If the two authors’ names are given as part of the sentence (i.e., not in brackets), use the word and between the names as follows: Ronai and Lammervo (2017) examine….

For a source written by three or more authors, include the name of only the first author plus et al. in every citation (Berhenke et al., 2010). Several works by the same author are cited by separating them with a comma. An author’s works published in the same year are distinguished by lower-case letters (Kokko, 2008a, 2008b). The letters a, b, c, etc., come in the order the sources are mentioned in the text.

When citing several sources, place them alphabetically and separate them with a semicolon, for example: (Kuusipalo, 2011; Lahelma, 2012). If several authors have the same surname, they are distinguished based on the initial of their first name.

If no author is mentioned for a work, give the name of the source or the organisation: …the number of schools (Statistical Yearbook of Finland 2000), (Finnish National Agency for Education 2005). If the title of the work is long, it can be abbreviated, as long as it remains identifiable, for instance: (National Core Curriculum – –, 2014).

It is not recommended to use secondary sources. Using a secondary source means that you cite a source that another researcher has “discovered” earlier, without finding it and reading it yourself. If, for a compelling reason, you need to use a secondary source, it must be specified in the in-text citation as follows:

According to Honkanen (2017), Pyysalo (1921) meant that ….

Vilkka (2020, p. 39) refers to Peräkylä’s (1990) study ….

 … that this was the meaning (Pyysalo, 1921, according to Honkanen, 2017).

In these examples, Honkanen (2017) is a secondary source that the author has had access to, and Pyysalo (1921) is the original source, which has not been available. In the References, you only list the source you used, that is, the secondary source, and not the original source that you did not personally read.

All the citations used in the text must be found in the References except for original sources mentioned in connection with secondary sources, and each source mentioned in the References must appear in the in-text citations at least once. You will find instructions for creating a list of references in a separate file.

Citations are not required in, for example, general bridging sentences (often at the beginning of sections or paragraphs), after which you proceed to more detailed observations supporting a statement or hypothesis. Neither do you need to indicate the source for general assumptions, statements or speculative sentences that are specified immediately thereafter (e.g., “Parents may have some beliefs and explanations related to their child’s future school performance even before the child starts school.”). Naturally, no citations are needed in sentences in which you personally evaluate or summarise research.

1. Text styles and page numbering

All text elements are formatted using MS Word styles. Begin a new section using the Paragraph 1 (1. Tekstikappale) style. In the following paragraphs, use Body Text First Indent (Leipäteksti1). Note that the first paragraph of a section is not indented. Neither should you indent a paragraph starting after a direct quotation, table or figure, but use the Paragraph 1 (1. Tekstikappale) style in it.

Styles are applied by clicking first on the text and thereafter the relevant style in the menu bar (Figure 1). You can also highlight the text you want to format, which enables you to format several paragraphs at once. You can make all styles appear on the screen by clicking the arrow at the bottom right edge of the style menu (Figure 1).

Figure 1.

Styles in the menu bar of MS Word

Headings are also formatted using text styles. The main sections of an essay can be divided into subsections. Do not use lone subsections in your thesis: For example, subsection 2.1 always needs to be accompanied by subsection 2.2.

The page count begins on the title page and continues uninterrupted until the last text page (including the References and Appendices). Page numbers (without full stops) are marked at the top right corner of each page. However, page numbers should be visible only starting from the first page after the first main heading (usually the INTRODUCTION) in the body text. When you use this style template, page numbers automatically appear in the right way.

If your essay is longer than five pages, you should include a Contents section and subheadings. In shorter essays, you can use them if you find it necessary.

1. CONCLUSION

The essay ends with a summary, assessments and conclusions based on everything that has been presented in the essay so far. Everything presented before the wrap-up must therefore be linked and justify the analysis, results and conclusions presented.

REFERENCES

The following examples of how to compile a list of references are based on the APA ([Home - APA Citation Style, 7th Edition - Research Guides at East Carolina University Libraries (ecu.edu)](https://libguides.ecu.edu/APA7), <https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/tutorials-webinars>). The journal *Psykologia* (<http://www.psykologia.fi/kirjoittajille/yleiset-ohjeet-kirjoittajille>) provides the following instructions for creating a list of references in Finnish:

* If the title of a work consists of several words, only the first word is usually capitalised. However, use capital initials according to the conventions of the language in question (such as proper nouns, names of languages in English, nouns in German). Spell the titles of journals in the way the journals themselves do – they commonly capitalise most words.
* If the title of a work includes a main title and a subtitle, separate them with a colon, except when some other punctuation mark has been used in the work itself. The subtitle after a colon or dash in Finnish works is not capitalised, whereas in other languages it is capitalised. After a question mark, exclamation mark or full stop, the subtitle is always capitalised.
* For a range of page numbers, use an en dash (–), that is, not a hyphen (-) and not a longer em dash (—).
* Potential Finnish explanations in the reference list are translated into English, for example: Teoksessa = In.

In addition, the following points in the guidelines of the journal *Kasvatus* apply to the list of references. The authors of these instructions have added comments in curly brackets to the guidelines of the journal.

* References are listed in alphabetical order based on family name. If the family name includes a lower-case prefix (e.g., de, van, von), alphabetisation is based on the upper-case initial of the family name (e.g., van Dijk based on D). Several works by the same author are listed according to their year of publication so that the earliest work comes first.
* Do not refer only to a journal title if you have used information from its separate articles by named authors. For newspaper articles, in addition to the author information, you mention the section in the paper and the page number (Helsingin Sanomat, A3, 8).
* For electronic sources, it is important to include, in addition to general information, the exact internet address and the date on which the text was read, as the content of the page may change. The internet address and date need not be included for sources that do not change, such as e-books and PDF publications.
* All sources are listed in the same References: no separate lists are used for legal, archival or unpublished sources. An exception are lists of written materials used as research data (so-called primary sources) in, for example, textbook research.
* Sources that are cited in the text must be presented in full in the References. However, personal communication (e.g., interviews, announcements, email messages, phone discussions) and notes are only marked in in-text citations, not in the References. The original source of a secondary source is not included in the References either.
* If a source has been accepted for publication but has not been published yet, instead of the year of publication, mark it as *(in press)* in the References.

**Examples of journal articles.** The titles of journals are always written in full, and the initial letters of their major words are capitalised. Mark the DOI (Digital Object Identifier) of the source in the References, when available, in compliance with the example below.

Heikkinen, H., Huttunen, R., Niglas, K., & Tynjälä, P. (2005). Kartta kasvatustieteen maastosta [A Map of the Terrain of Educational Sciences]. Kasvatus, 36, 340–354.

Nuthall, G. (1999a). Learning how to learn: The evolution of students’ minds through the social processes and culture of the classroom. International Journal of Educational Research, 31, 141–256.

Nuthall, G. (1999b). The way students learn: Acquiring knowledge from an integrated science and social studies unit. Elementary School Journal, 99, 303–341. https://doi.org/10.1086/461928

Pearson, M., & Brew, A. (2002). Research training and supervision development. Studies in Higher Education, 27, 135–150. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070220119986>

**Examples of articles in compilations (edited works).** For the names of editors, the initials of the first names come before the family name. According to APA, the page numbers of an article are marked in brackets after the title of the work (like in the examples below).

Bretherton, I. (1984). Representing the social world in symbolic play: Reality and fantasy. In I. Bretherton (Ed.), *Symbolic play: The development of social understanding* (pp. 3–41). Academic Press.

Diamond, R. M. (2005). The institutional change agency: The expanding role of academic support centers. In S. Chadwick-Blossey & D. R. Robertson (Eds.), *To improve the academy* (Vol. 23, pp. 24–37). Anker Publishing.

Kuusinen, J., & Korkiakangas, M. (1991). Oppiminen [Learning]. In J. Kuusinen (ed.), *Kasvatuspsykologia* (pp. 21–64). WSOY.

Leu, D. J., Kinzer, C. K., Coiro, J. L., & Cammack, D. W. (2004). Toward a theory of new literacies emerging from the Internet and other information and communication technologies. In R. B. Ruddell & N. Unrau (Eds.), *Theoretical models and process of reading* (5th edition, pp. 1570–1613). International Reading Association.

**Examples of books**

Argyle, M. (1991). *Cooperation: The basis of sociability*. Routledge.

Barkley, R.A. (1997). *Defiant children: A clinician’s manual for assessment and parent training (*2nd edition). Guilford Press.

Canetti, E. (1994). *Der Ohrenzeuge: Fünfzig Charaktere* (M. Lång & J. Tammi, Trans.) Pikku-idis. (Original work published in 1974).

Green, L. W., & Kreuter, M. W. (2001). *Health promotion planning: An educational and ecological approach* (3rd edition). McGraw-Hill.

Heikkinen, H., Moilanen, P., & Räihä, P. (Eds.) (1999). *Opettajuutta rakentamassa [Building teacher identity].* University of Jyväskylä, Department of Teacher Education. Opetuksen perusteita ja käytäntöjä 34. [The principles and practices of teaching 34.] edited work – when you have referred to this publication as a whole in the text, not to one of its individual articles.

Hirsjärvi, S., Remes, P., & Sajavaara, P. (2007). *Tutki ja kirjoita* (13th partly renewed edition). Tammi.

Lang, D. (2020). *Parenting and family diversity issues*. Iowa State University Digital Press. <https://dx.doi.org/10.31274/isudp.8>

Metsämuuronen, J. (2009). *Tutkimuksen tekemisen perusteet ihmistieteissä: tutkijalaitos* (4th edition, 1st printing). Gummerus.

Rose, J., & Perski, A. (2010). *Duktighetsfällan: En överlevnadshandbok för prestationsprinsessor* (V. Metsälä, Trans.) Minerva Kustannus. (Original work published in 2008).

Examples of reports, presentations and materials

Inkinen, M. (2012). *CORE-menetelmä ja sen käyttö opintopsykologityössä Helsingin yliopistolla* [The CORE method and its use in study psychologist’s work at the University of Helsinki]. [Oral presentation]. Psychotherapy Research Days in February 2012, Jyväskylä.

Lepola, J., Salonen, P., & Mattinen, A. (2007). *CBeMo: lapsen käyttäytymisen arviointi aikuisen ohjaamissa askartelu- ja toimintatilanteissa päiväkodissa* [Child behaviour and motivation rating scale in adult-guided crafts and activity situations in a day-care centre]. Unpublished manuscript. Centre for Learning Research. University of Turku.

Linnakangas, R., Lehtoranta, P., Järvikoski, A., & Suikkanen, A. (2010). *Perhekuntoutus puntarissa*. *Kelan psykiatrisen perhekuntoutuksen kehittämishankkeen arviointi* [Focus on family rehabilitation. Evaluation of the Finnish Social Insurance Institution’s development programme for psychiatric family rehabilitation] (Studies in Social Security and Health 109). The Social Insurance Institution of Finland, Research unit.

Finnish National Agency for Education. (2014). *National Core Curriculum for Basic Education.* Regulations and guidelines 96. Finnish National Agency for Education. A publication with no personal author – the organisation name is cited in the text.

Finnish National Agency for Education. (2018). *National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care.* Regulations and guidelines 3a. A publication with no personal author – the organisation name is cited in the text.

 *National Core Curriculum for Basic Education.* (2014). Regulations and guidelines 96. Finnish National Agency for Education. a publication with no personal author – the name of the publication is cited in the text.

Statistics Finland. (2012a). *Finland in Figures. Labour Market. Population by activity.* http://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk\_tyoelama.html

Statistics Finland. (2012b). *Finland in Figures. Population by age at the end of 2012.* http://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk\_vaesto.html

*National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care.* (2018). Regulations and guidelines 3a. Finnish National Agency for Education. a publication with no personal author – the name of the publication is cited in the text.

Examples of master’s theses and doctoral dissertations

Hänninen, M. (2016). *APO-ohjaajien kokemuksia dialogisuudesta ohjauksessa* [Master’s thesis, University of Jyväskylä]. https://jyx.jyu.fi/dspace/handle/123456789/50287

Niemi, K. (2016). *Moral beings and becomings: Children’s moral practices in classroom peer interaction* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Jyväskylä]. https://jyx.jyu.fi/dspace/handle/123456789/48975

**Examples of internet-based articles or articles in a journal published only online**

Burleson, J. L. (2012). Show choir. *Oxford Music Online.* http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/A2219487

Eerola, T. (2000, July). The rise and fall of the experimental style of the Beatles. *Soundscapes, 3*. http://www.icce.rug.nl/~soundscapes/VOLUME03/Rise\_and\_fall0.shtml

**Examples of other sources**

Bishop, D. (2012, 26 August). How to bury your academic writing. *BishopBlog*. http://deevybee.blogspot.fi/2012/08/how-to-bury-your-academic-writing.html

Saksala, V. (2019, 1 October). Essee tekstilajina [Essay as a text type]. Lecture on the course XYHK1000 Academic Literacy. University of Jyväskylä: Centre for Multilingual Academic Communication. lecture – if it is a recording, cite it as “lecture recording” instead of “lecture” -> Lecture recording from the course XYHK100 Academic Literacy.

Virtanen, M. (2022). Tieteellinen ajattelu [Scientific thinking]. Lectures and lecture slides. University of the University of Jyväskylä Faculty of Education and Psychology.

Yle News [@yleuutiset] (2021, 25 August). Elia Ahola, 23, istui koulun penkillä viimeksi peruskoulussa, nyt hän aloitti yliopisto-opinnot – "Valtava työ palkittiin" [The last time Elia Ahola sat in the classroom was at comprehensive school; now he started university studies – “All the hard work was rewarded”.] [Tweet] https://twitter.com/yleuutiset/status/1430554572716654593

Other writing guidelines can be found, for example, in Hirsjärvi S., Remes, P. & Sajavaara, P. (2007 or later). *Tutki ja kirjoita*. Tammi and Vilkka, H. (2020). *Akateemisen lukemisen ja kirjoittamisen opas* [A guide to academic reading and writing]. PS-kustannus

Appendices

Appendix 1 Some tips for punctuation

En dash –: Ctrl + the minus key on the numeric keypad.

Examples:

Child welfare – progress and improvements (article heading)

in October/November (compare Finnish: loka-marraskuussa)

5–6-year-old children (number ranges)

The audience consisted of only 10 to 15 people.

You can contact us in one of the following ways (these would typically be bullet points, i.e. when the uses of the en dash are discussed in English, lists are not typically mentioned):

– submit the completed form

– send us email

– call us.

**Hyphen**

Finno-Ugric, non-European

teacher-student relationship, letter-sound correspondence

Note that English hyphenation differs from Finnish, e.g., NLP-teoria -> NLP theory

There is no space before the **percent sign** in English (e.g., 17% of the interviewees), unlike in Finnish.

A space is added on both sides of the **equals sign** (1 km = 1.000 m).

For more information on grammar and style, see current recommendations at, for example, <https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html>.

Appendix 2 Adding page numbers

1. After the table of contents, add a section break (Layout > Breaks > Section Breaks + Next Page / Asettelu > Vaihdot > Osanvaihdot + Seuraava sivu)
2. Go to the first page of the Introduction and double click the header (the top of the page). Deselect “Link to Previous” (Linkitä edelliseen) and add page numbering to the top right corner of the page.
3. Select “Different First Page” (Erilainen ensimmäinen sivu).

**Appendix 3 Layout for essays without using the template**

***Line spacing:*** 1.5

***Font:***

Book Antiqua , Times New Roman, Arial

***Font sizes:***

**Title page:**

Title of the essay 16 (centre alignment)

Name of the author 14 (centre alignment)

Other text 12 (align right)

**Headings (bolding):**

**ABSTRACT, CONTENTS, REFERENCES** and **APPENDICES** (CAPITAL LETTERS) 14

**HEADINGS OF MAIN SECTIONS** (CAPITAL LETTERS) 16

Text 12

Figures and Tables 10.5

***Margins:***

Top and bottom 2.5 cm, left and right 3 cm.

***Direct quotations:***

Excerpts longer than four lines are separated from the rest of the text by a blank line. Indention of 1 cm and line spacing 1 is used in them. Shorter direct quotations are separated from the rest of the text with “quotation marks”, and they are not italicised.

Appendix 4. Reporting the use of artificial intelligence (instructions)

In this appendix, please specify which tools have been used, how they were used, for what purpose, and in which part of the thesis. You can apply the University’s guidelines: <https://www.jyu.fi/en/for-students/instructions-for-bachelors-and-masters-students/academic-study-skills/reporting-the-use-of-generative-ai-tools-in-learning-tasks>.

Please note that the use of artificial intelligence must be in line with the University of Jyväskylä’s current guidelines and policies on [using AI-based applications in studies](https://www.jyu.fi/en/for-students/instructions-for-bachelors-and-masters-students/regulations-and-directives-guiding-studies/using-ai-based-applications-in-studies-jyus-instructions-and-guidelines)  and follow the [principles of research ethics](https://www.jyu.fi/en/for-students/instructions-for-bachelors-and-masters-students/information-seeking-and-research-data-management/library-tutorial/research-ethics). As the author of the thesis, you are responsible for familiarising yourself with these guidelines.