One concept that is often misunderstood by students in the communication discipline is the difference between in-text citations and reference citations. When working on any assignment/paper that requires outside research, students often seem to struggle with including both in-text citations and references; many times, I have students submit work where either only references are included or vice versa where only in-text citations are included. Obviously, this can become problematic if students assume that these are the same thing, as this can lead to incorrect citing and unintentional plagiarism.

Some factors that may contribute to this misunderstanding is that students are not always familiar with APA format and citing. They may come from a high school or other institution where they have used a different citation format such as MLA or Chicago. This would mean that maybe students have never used in-text citations before in their writing and assume that references are the same thing and all that is needed at the end of their work. Additionally, students may have completed other courses with other teachers where they had differing expectations when it comes to citing. Some teachers may only require students to include references, so students may not even be aware that these are two distinctly different things.

Any analogy that I like to use with students (which was adapted from the APA Style Citation Tutorial Open Textbook by The University of Alberta) is the idea that APA citing is like wearing socks. When picking out socks to wear in the morning, you want to look for a pair that go together and match. The same thing is true about your citing; you want to ensure that both your references and your in-text citations go together, and that they match. This analogy usually helps students to distinguish that references and in-text citations are two different things – they are each their own sock. In order to fully complete an assignment that has outside research, you have to ensure that you have the full pair of socks; in-text citations and references. This also usually further leads to a discussion of how in-text citations and references need to also be matching in that they must use the same author and dates to show the reader which in-text citation signals which reference. This allows students to understand that although in-text citations and references are two different things, they are connected to one another and each source.

 **VS.** 

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