

An Overview of Cave Paintings

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements of Speech & Debate

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**Commented [JE1] :**

**Header:**

You'll notice that in the header (the area above the main body of the paper) you can insert text which will stay the same throughout the paper. This is used in books for chapter titles, subtitles, etc.

For us, we are going to do as APA tells us and include the words "Running head" followed by the paper title (in ALL CAPS). On the right side, insert a page number. This is the case ONLY for the first page.

To do this, click the "Insert" tab, then click "Page Number" and just pick the "Current Position" and "Simple" option.

And that's how you get **Running Head: CAVE PAINTINGS** **Page #** (i before the Introduction, 1 after the Abstract)

Afterwards, all pages would have the following header:  
**CAVE PAINTINGS** **1.**

**Title Page:**

Follow this format:

Title of the Paper

Student Name

School

"Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements of (CLASS)

(Semester, Year)

**Abstract**

This report describes the amazing reality that prehistoric cave paintings offer contemporary humanity today. Their age, style, color composition, and other details prove that they are priceless relics from a bygone and little understood era of human history. They are worthy of protection and further research, and this paper attempts to enlighten the reader a bit more about their truly exclusive and exceptional qualities.

*Keywords:* prehistoric, cave paintings, art, artwork, conservation

**Commented [JW2]** : The Abstract is a place for you to summarize the gist of your paper / report for the reader. It can function as a quick intro that, if well written, will encourage the reader to eager continue to read.

If it is not well written, you may kill any reader's enthusiasm then and there. You don't want to do that, do you?

**Commented [JW3]** : In published works, keywords are helpful because they allow search engines to easily find writing, research, etc. that is based on key topics. You should put here the **big ideas** that your paper addresses.

**Commented [JW4]** : Ironically, the author never actually addresses the conservation / preservation efforts re: cave paintings. Certainly a topic worth addressing, wouldn't you say

### Introduction

What's at least 10,000 years old, found on all six habitable continents, and is considered a pristine work of art? If you had guessed "Cave painting," you'd be right! Cave paintings are some of the most remarkable remains of prehistoric peoples, and are often favorites of tourists and archeologists the world over. As just mentioned, they are found on all of the continents, save Antarctica. The oldest of these paintings are thought to be nearly 40,000 years old, while the youngest are only about 10,000 years old. Though these paintings are considered to be made from a limited color palette, they are still regarded as works of art. Thankfully many of these unique antiques of art have survived the ages.

### Characteristics of Cave Paintings

There are a lot of interesting details that can be discerned from ancient cave paintings.

They are truly unique and marvelous works of art, proven by the (A) various painting styles that are common among examples (B) the limited color palette that the artists utilized, and (C) age and methods of dating these ages for such artwork. Each of these points will be explained in further detail below.

### Prehistoric Painting Styles

Cave paintings were drawn in different styles that, as other arts, evolved over time. Where they are located seemed to influence the style as well. For example, in Africa<sup>1</sup> the "Apollo 11 and Wonderwerk Caves contain examples of geometric and animal representations" (Tedesco, 2007). In Australia, images have been found of animated stick figures. In France, caves have paintings that are more abstract with a variety of animals. In all of the different cave paintings, there are a few recurring themes. One such theme includes animals, which consisted of two subgroups; the predators and also the prey of the painters. Another theme included

**Commented [JE5]** : This interesting start to the paper is often called a "hook" or "starter," etc. Basically you want to get the reader interested, and so an interesting quote, or fantastic fact, etc., helps get the reader interested. If it is too dry and boring at the start, they'll just put it down and **quit reading before they even start**...don't let your paper be boring; nothing is more offensive to readers.

**Commented [JW6]** : This is what we call a **thesis statement**. You make a point, and then back it up with at least 2-3 factors that confirm your claim (in what is often called the **body** of an essay / written piece)

**Commented [JE7]** : This **title** is an **optional** thing that you can do...but I personally think it is a nice way to differentiate and break up your paper, spicing it up and making it easier to read. For our papers, you could use these subtitles for the main ideas that you addressed in the intro, and then insert them at the beginning of the paragraph where you'll discuss said topic. Make sure to change the font a bit for these, making it stand out from the rest of the paper (but not **too** much). All I did for this one was centered the text, and then changed it to "Bold," but kept the font and size the same.

Note: if you want to create a subtitle of this (or any other major section), it should be rectified to the left, **NOT** centered, but still bolded.

people, who are usually depicted as simple stick figures. The final theme includes handprints, which are considered by some to be the signatures of the artists. Another interesting thing is that many of these prehistoric paintings utilized the natural texture of the cave to help give them a 3-D look. Overall, each has a long-lost type of aura about it which can't be simply replicated with modern tools.

### Limited Color Palette

The cavemen that made the paintings had to be resourceful with their colors. The complex chemicals that we use to make paints today were not available, and so they were forced to be more creative, and often made their own colors and paint from materials found in the natural landscape. This gave them a limited color palette: red, orange, yellow, black, and (used sparingly) white. The reds, oranges, and yellows were created using ochres, or paints created using any number of various natural earths containing ferric oxide, silica, and alumina, and even still today used as yellow or red pigments ("Definition", n.d.). Black colors and white colors were created in numerous ways, from things like charcoal, burnt bone, and calcite. The cave painters also used some unorthodox (by today's standards) techniques. One of these involved, in the words of Hammond, "placing the palm, or possibly the back, of the hand against the cave wall, taking a mouthful of powdered pigment — usually red ochre — and blowing it." He continues, "Sometimes a finger appears to be missing... [but] bending the finger back while spraying the hand with the pigment powder would give the same effect" (2009). If nothing else, these cavemen were creative.

### Dating the Art

These paintings are unthinkable old, and therefore very delicate. Yet just how old are they? Most paintings are very difficult to date; and today many archeologists still dispute their

**Commented [JE8] :** Here is a place that I could have placed a citation, from some archaeologist who wrote an article or something similar on this.

**Commented [JE9] :** Using the brackets is **very** helpful when citing sources in MLA format. It is kind of like a **Get-Out-Of-Jail-Free Card** because it allows you to change the quote to make better sense as you'd like it to. You can use it to change tenses, or explain what they were referring to.

For example:

If the original quote read:  
 "Sometimes a finger appears to be missing... **yet specialists who have examined the art have noted that** bending the finger back while spraying the hand with the pigment powder would give the same effect,"  
 but I wanted to cut the bolded stuff because frankly it doesn't interest me, isn't applicable, etc., then I can use the brackets and **whammo!** it magically is shorter and more to the point I want it to make.

Now let's see what it looks like:

"Sometimes a finger appears to be missing... [but] bending the finger back while spraying the hand with the pigment powder would give the same effect"

It helped shorten it, and to make sense out of it I inserted [but] with those helpful brackets. However, keep in mind that too many words in the brackets means you are putting words in the author's mouth, and that will decrease your credibility, so avoid using the bracket too much.

**Commented [JE10] :**  
**The Always-useful "..."**

Notice how there is a series of three dots right before my brackets? These are used when you want to cut out snippets of a conversation, and get to the point. Most people will get bored with a quote longer than a line or two, and so to keep their short attention spans from wandering off to LaLa Land, you can use the ... to indicate that you cut some of the text to make it more brief.

Trust me, people will appreciate shorter quotes. The ones that resemble the **very long** Oregon Trail should be avoided like the plague.

ages. However, there are a plethora of ages that get thrown around. For example, there is Australian rock art that dates back 28,000 years (McGuirk, 2012), and there exists European art of the same age (Hammond, 2009), and even some African art that supposedly dates back to 100,000 B.C. (Tedesco, 2007; “Apollo 11”, 2000). Between all of the dates, the archeologists seem to agree on one thing: These works of art are old; undoubtedly, unquestionably old. Concrete numbers don’t exist, but most are around 10,000 to 40,000 years old. This predates all recorded history by at least 6000 years, and possibly many more. The cave paintings that exist today are survivors, from an age long lost, due to lack of writing.

### Conclusion

Cave paintings are wondrous works of art that have survived the ages. They boast a unique, independent style that has been lost over time. The artists were quite resourceful in their use of colors, and the combination of these things (and the exceptional age of these paintings) has led to memorable, meaningful, and remarkable paintings for all of us to enjoy.

**Commented [JE11]** : APA Formatting requires that you have the . or , after the (Name) in-text citation, not before.

Correct: ...the only evidence given (Jibb, 2014). The next thing...

Incorrect: ...only evidence. (Jibb, 2014) The next thing...

**Commented [JW12]** : If multiple sources are used for a statement, cite them all, separating them with a semicolon:  
EX: (Johnson, 2013; Zelphius, 2014)

**Commented [JE13]** : If you decide to use the subtitles, also title the Conclusion to maintain continuity.

**Commented [JE14]** : **Note on Narrative:** Remember that in an academic-type paper like a **research paper**, it is often discouraged to use the first person. Personally I think this is may be a bit silly, but APA thinks otherwise. Therefore, while you might include “I” or “you” in the hook/intro, it’s generally a better idea to forgo using the first-person narrative/voice/tone, and instead better to use a third-person voice.

So for example, instead of saying “**I think that this type of art is so interesting!**” You might try “**Many experts are intrigued by this type of art...**”

**Commented [JW15]** : Another thing the author could have addressed was **conservation** of these priceless art pieces. How are we today working to make sure such work is **not** being spoiled by recklessness / vandalism?

**References**

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**Commented [JE16]** : For these **Works Cited** pages, it can be hard work putting them together. Often a Citation Maker/Machine will make your life much easier. [citationmachine.net](http://citationmachine.net), or [citethisforme.com](http://citethisforme.com) for example will help you to do both in-text and full citations (at the end, here) pretty well.

**Commented [JE17]** : These full citations should ALWAYS have their own page, at the end of the essay/report, with the top saying, (centered) **Works Cited** or **References**, just like you see here.