

## Quiz: Common knowledge vs. needs citation

In academic writing, the concept of “common knowledge” refers to information that the average educated reader would accept without needing the validation of a source.

To be considered common knowledge, a concept should be widely known, undisputed and easily verified. Common knowledge does not include interpretations, data gathered in empirical studies, or arguments, and generally cannot be attributed to a specific person or paper.

Take a look at the quiz below. Which questions do you think are common knowledge? Which need a citation?

### Quiz:

1. Independence Day in the United States is celebrated on July 4.
  - a. Common knowledge
  - b. Needs citation
2. Nairobi is the capital of Kenya.
  - a. Common knowledge
  - b. Needs citation
3. According to the CDC, "the timing, severity and length of the flu season varies from one season to another."
  - a. Common knowledge
  - b. Needs citation
4. The Great Wall of China is the world's longest wall.
  - a. Common knowledge
  - b. Needs citation
5. The monarch is the only butterfly known to make a round-trip migration, a phenomenon usually observed in birds.
  - a. Common knowledge
  - b. Needs citation
6. Approximately 46 million turkeys are eaten each Thanksgiving.
  - a. Common knowledge
  - b. Needs citation
7. Augustus was the first emperor of Rome.
  - a. Common knowledge
  - b. Needs citation
8. 97 percent or more of actively publishing climate scientists agree that climate change is real.
  - a. Common knowledge
  - b. Needs citation
9. World War I ended with the Treaty of Versailles.
  - a. Common knowledge
  - b. Needs citation
10. The human skeleton has 206 bones.
  - a. Common knowledge
  - b. Needs citation

Answer key:

1. Common knowledge
2. Common knowledge
3. Quote, needs citation
4. Common knowledge
5. Not universally known, needs citation
6. Not universally known, needs citation
7. Common knowledge
8. Uses a statistic gathered from a study, needs a citation
9. Common knowledge
10. Common knowledge