

Writing Stylus

**A Resource for Research Writing
in MLA Format**

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Thesis Statement

DEFINITION: A thesis statement is a complete sentence that summarizes the point of view you will take in your paper. The more precise your thesis statement, the easier it will be to make your outline and, therefore, write your paper.

Some defining features of a thesis:

- for most student work, it's a **one- or two- sentence statement** that explicitly outlines the **purpose** or point of your paper. A thesis is to a paper what a topic sentence is to a paragraph
- it should **point toward the development or course of argument** the reader can expect your argument to take, but does not have to specifically include 'three supporting points' as you may have once learned
- because the rest of the paper will support or back up your thesis, a thesis is normally **placed at or near the end of the introductory paragraph**.
- **it takes a side on a topic** rather than simply announcing that the paper is about a topic (the title should have already told your reader your topic). Don't tell a reader *about* something; tell them *what about* something. Answer the questions "how?" or "why?"
- it is sufficiently **narrow and specific** that your supporting points are necessary and sufficient, not arbitrary; paper length and number of supporting points are good guides here
- it argues **one main point** and doesn't squeeze three different theses for three different papers into one sentence

most importantly, it passes **The "So What?" Test**

The "So What?" Test

Whenever you plan on writing a research paper, there is an extremely important point that you must constantly keep in the forefront of your mind--even English teachers frequently mention it as something students fail to do time and time again. What is it? The writer needs to be sure to choose a topic *worth arguing about or exploring*. This means to construct a thesis statement or research question about a problem that is still debated, controversial, up in the air.

Example:

Unlimited and general thesis:

War experiences in a novel can be very real.

Limited and specific thesis:

Because the memoirs of Civil War soldiers are similar to Fleming's experience, Stephen Crane's novel is an accurate portrayal of a soldier's emotions and actions during war.

Sample Thesis Statements:

1. The monster's neglect and lack of love he receives from his creator, as well as those with whom he comes in contact, forces him to follow a path of evil, which ultimately results in his own self destruction. (Thesis for a paper on Mary Shelley Wollstonecraft's novel *Frankenstein*)
2. Four young boys experience danger, fear, and death through their loss of innocence and rebirth into reality. (Thesis for a paper on Stephen King's novel *The Body*)
3. Because recent research confirms second-hand smoke as cancer causing, smoking should be banned not only in the work place, but in all social settings as well. (Thesis for a persuasive research paper)

Research Paper Process Work**Preparing Source Cards**

1. On a 3" x 5" index card, record each source you decide to use for your paper (see samples below)
2. Purpose of source card
 - a. They are used to document your paper.
 - b. They are used to write the Works Cited page when you have completed your paper.

Sample Source Card

Book

Indent EVERY line after the first line

1

Brown, Karen. *America's Tax Laws*. Chicago: Prentice Hall, 1987.

Guidelines:

1. Try to keep quotations short
2. Use phrases instead of full sentences
3. Remember – use only the part of the quotation that you need

Basic Rules:

1. The quotation must be copied exactly as the quoted author has written it. Source acknowledgement is given in a parenthetical citation.
2. Any alteration must be noted.

Adding or Omitting Words In Quotations

If you add a word or words in a quotation, you should put brackets around the words to indicate that they are not part of the original text.

For example:

Jan Harold Brunvand, in an essay on urban legends, states: "some individuals [who retell urban legends] make a point of learning every rumor or tale" (78).

If you omit a word or words from a quotation, you should indicate the deleted word or word by using ellipsis marks surrounded by brackets.

For example:

In an essay on urban legends, Jan Harold Brunvand notes "some individuals make a point of learning every recent rumor or tale [...] and in a short time a lively exchange of details occurs" (78).

If there are ellipsis marks in the quoted author's work, do not put brackets around them; only use brackets around ellipsis marks to distinguish them from ellipsis marks in the quoted author's work.

Taking Notes:

Once you have collected and recorded your source, you need to begin taking notes.

1. Avoid reading every source word-for-word
2. Look through the Table of Contents and Index of each book for material related to your topic
3. Skim to find the relevant parts and focus only on what pertains to your narrowed topic
4. Keep your limited topic in mind when reading
5. As you skim, look for key ideas or subtopics to develop your paper

Note Cards

1. Use 4" x 6" index cards for all your notes
2. Write on only one side
3. Write only one idea or only one quote on each card
4. Avoid excessively long quotes
5. See sample note cards below

Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of stealing and is an extremely serious offense with severe penalties. The following constitute plagiarism:

1. Failure to document with quotation marks any material copied directly from other sources
2. Failure to acknowledge paraphrased material (someone else's ideas)
3. Failure to provide a Works Cited page
4. The use of another's work as one's own
5. The use of another's ideas as one's own

Sample Note Cards

Combo: Paraphrase-Quote Only

2
Voyage – a subconscious journey
Marlow's voyage can be considered "a subconscious journey into the heart of himself" where he finds out that "all men possess a light and a dark self."
Pg. 15

Quote

3
Time – a unifying factor
"And this also has been one of the dark places of the earth."
Pg. 200

Paraphrased Only

Identifying main point or guideline	<p>1 ←</p> <p>Dimmesdale's faulty thinking</p> <p>Both his pride and his elaborate method of rationalizing his guilt rob Dimmesdale of the ability to think clearly.</p> <p>Pg. 5</p>	<p>Number from source card</p> <p>Page number from source</p>
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Paraphrase: Write it in Your Own Words

A paraphrase is...

- your own rendition of essential information and ideas expressed by someone else, presented in a new form.
- one legitimate way (when accompanied by accurate documentation) to borrow from a source.
- a more detailed restatement than a summary, which focuses concisely on a single main idea.

Paraphrasing is a valuable skill because...

- it is better than quoting information from an undistinguished passage.
- it helps you control the temptation to quote too much.
- the mental process required for successful paraphrasing helps you to grasp the full meaning of the original.

6 Steps to Effective Paraphrasing

1. Reread the original passage until you understand its full meaning.
2. Set the original aside, and write your paraphrase on a note card.
3. Jot down a few words below your paraphrase to remind you later how you envision using this material. At the top of the note card, write a key word or phrase to indicate the subject of your paraphrase.
4. Check your rendition with the original to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the essential information in a new form.
5. Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.
6. Record the source (including the page) on your note card so that you can credit it easily if you decide to incorporate the material into your paper.

Some examples to compare

The original passage:

Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final [research] paper. Probably only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter. Therefore, you should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes. Lester, James D. Writing Research Papers. 2nd ed. (1976): 46-47.

A legitimate paraphrase:

In research papers students often quote excessively, failing to keep quoted material down to a desirable level. Since the problem usually originates during note taking, it is essential to minimize the material recorded verbatim (Lester 46-47).

An acceptable summary:

Students should take just a few notes in direct quotation from sources to help minimize the amount of quoted material in a research paper (Lester 46-47).

A plagiarized version:

Students often use too many direct quotations when they take notes, resulting in too many of them in the final research paper. In fact, probably only about 10% of the final copy should consist of directly quoted material. Therefore, it is important to limit the amount of source material copied while taking notes.

Quotations

When you directly quote the works of others in your paper, you will format quotations differently depending on whether they are long or short quotations. The following are some basic guidelines for incorporating quotations into your paper.

Short Quotations

To indicate short quotations (fewer than four typed lines of prose or three lines of verse) in your text, enclose the quotation within double quotation marks and incorporate it into your text. Provide the author and specific page citation (in the case of verse, provide line numbers) in the text, and include a complete reference in the works-cited list. Punctuation marks such as periods, commas, and semicolons should appear after the parenthetical citation. Question marks and exclamation points should appear within the quotation marks if they are a part of the quoted passage but after the parenthetical citation if they are a part of your text.

According to Foulkes's study, dreams may express "profound aspects of personality" (184).

Is it possible that dreams may express "profound aspects of personality" (Foulkes 184)?

Long Quotations

Place quotations longer than four typed lines in a freestanding block of typewritten lines, and omit quotation marks. Start the quotation on a new line, indented one inch from the left margin, and maintain double-spacing. Your parenthetical citation should come after the closing punctuation mark. When quoting verse, maintain original line breaks.

In her poem "Sources," Adrienne Rich explores the roles of women in shaping their world:

The faithful drudging child
the child at the oak desk whose penmanship,
hard work, style will win her prizes
becomes the woman with a mission, not to win prizes
but to change the laws of history (23).

OUTLINING

Definition: A method of organizing and dividing information into logical sequence

Construction of an Outline:

Outlining is a process of dividing. You cannot divide anything into less than two parts; therefore, an outline must have two or more Roman numerals, capital letters, Arabic numbers, etc. If you have a I you must have a II; if you have an A you must have a B.

Level One = Roman Numerals – I, II, III

Level Two = Capital Letters – A, B, C

Level Three = Arabic Numbers – 1, 2, 3

Level Four = Lower case letters – a, b, c

Level Five = Arabic numbers within parentheses – (1), (2), (3)

MECHANICS:

Punctuation and Capitalization

1. Place a period after each Roman numeral, capital letter, and Arabic number except when the Arabic number is in parentheses.
2. Capitalize only the first letter of the first word in each heading.

SPACING:

1. Double space before each Roman numeral. Double space before and after the thesis, as well. Single-space the rest of the outline.
2. Indent five spaces when beginning each level.

KINDS OF OUTLINES:

TOPIC – uses phrases or dependent clauses as headings; no end punctuation

SENTENCE – uses complete sentences as headings; uses end punctuation

Examples:

Topic: Fear of cowardice

Sentence: In battle, soldiers are more preoccupied with the fear of cowardice than they are with the dread of being shot.

NOTE: Choose either a topic or sentence outline. Never mix both in one outline.

See example on next page.

Sample Final Outline

Single space
thesis

Double space
between title
and Roman
numeral I

Double space
between all
Roman
Numerals

Outline

Thesis Statement: Many foods found in the supermarket contain dangerous chemicals and are dangerous to the public's health; therefore, they should be eliminated from the human diet.

Danger in the Supermarket

I. Many foods have been stripped of their nutritional value to make them look and taste better to consumers.

- A. White flour and white sugar are stripped of nutrients in the milling and refining process.
- B. White bread is filled with air so it will feel soft and fresh when squeezed, and bleached to make it look white.

II. Many foods have dangerous chemical additives.

- A. Sodium nitrite, used to make hot dogs look fresh, is a dangerous chemical used in foods found at the supermarket.
 1. Sodium nitrate can cause cancer.
 2. Sodium nitrate can cause genetic damage.
- B. Red II, a food color used in hot dogs, processed cheeses, soft drinks, and many other items is dangerous to pregnant women and may cause fetal death.

III. The Federal Drug Administration tolerates high levels of filth in packaged and processed foods.

- A. The FDA permits 50 insect fragments or rodent hairs in 3 ½ ounces of peanut butter.
- B. In chocolate, they permit 150 insect fragments per eight-ounce sample.

Major Structure of the Essay

Introduction

Introductions are important. They arouse a reader's interest, introduce the subject, and tackle the So What? factor. In short, they're your paper's "first impression." However, you don't have to write them first. In fact, many students prefer launching right into the body of the essay before they tackle intros and conclusions. However, other students prefer writing the introduction first to help "set up" what's to follow.

Whatever your style, you'll probably put your thesis/question somewhere near the end of the paragraph and some important background information directly before. But that still leaves the very beginning. Contrary to what you may have been taught, intros don't have to begin with a "general statement." The following are examples of different ways to start that first sentence:

- Begin with a **quotation**. Just make sure you explain its relevance
- Begin with a **question**
- Begin with an acknowledgment of an **opinion opposite** to the one you plan to take
- Begin with a very **short narrative** or anecdote that has a direct bearing on your paper
- Begin with an **interesting fact**
- Begin with a definition or **explanation of a term** relevant to your paper
- Begin with irony or **paradox**
- Begin with an **analogy**. Make sure it's original but not too far-fetched

Body

The body of the paper is the meat of the paper. Let's use the analogy of a sandwich. The introduction and the conclusion are the bread slices and the body is the meat, cheese, mayo, and mustard! What would a sandwich be without the fillings?! You begin writing your body paragraphs by using the correct format called Proper Paragraph Format (see next page). You should also use effective transitions in the body paragraphs that link one idea to another in a smooth and logical way.

Transitions

1. Transitions serve as the link between paragraphs.
2. They have one purpose: to help the reader follow a main line of thought.
3. They are words and phrases that show the relationship between ideas.
4. Writers know what they mean when they add an idea or contrast an idea; the reader does not unless he is given a signal – a transition word.
5. Readers need signals between sentences and paragraphs in order to understand how everything is related.
6. The easiest way to show relationships is through the use of Standard Transition Words.

Standard Transition Words

Addition: and, also, too, as well, in addition, besides, further, furthermore, moreover, in the first place, second, next, finally, last, lastly

Comparison: similarly, in the same way, likewise, like, in like manner, just as, more than, less than

Contrast: in contrast, on the contrary, conversely, but, yet, however, on the other hand, still, although, whereas

Emphasis: in fact, indeed, of course, to be sure, for

Illustration: example, for instance, to illustrate, thus

Repetition: that is, in other words, as has been mentioned, namely

Result: thus, therefore, then, as a result, for this reason, consequently, hence, accordingly

Summary: in short, in brief, finally, in conclusion, to conclude, in sum

PROPER PARAGRAPH FORMAT

This format is most acceptable for research and formal writing but can also be applied to non-research writing. Note that while this example has two facts/quotes, you can add more if you feel your paragraph needs more. However, be sure to always introduce the quote (before the quote) with your own sentence and explain the quote (after the quote) in your own sentence. You should also always have a topic sentence at the beginning of the paragraph and a clincher at the end of the paragraph.

Proper Paragraph Format (Research Paper Writing)

Sentence 1: Topic Sentence = Explain the focus of the entire paragraph

Sentence 2: Introduce Direct Quote = Introduce readers to the situation/example

Sentence 3: Direct Quote = Take word-for-word information from the text that helps prove information stated in the thesis statement or topic sentence

Sentence 4: Explain Direct Quote = Explain why the quote proves argument/answer

Sentence 5: Introduce Indirect Quote = Introduce readers to the situation/example

Sentence 6: Indirect Quote = Take information (put in your own words/paraphrase) from the text that helps prove information stated in the thesis statement or topic sentence

Sentence 7: Explain Indirect Quote = Explain why the indirect quote proves argument/answer

Sentence 8: Clincher Sentence = "Sum up" entire paragraph – transition into next paragraph if needed

Proper Paragraph Format (Non-Research Writing)

Sentence 1: Topic Sentence = Explain the focus of the entire paragraph

Sentence 2: Introduce Fact = Introduce readers to the situation/example

Sentence 3: Fact = Information/example that helps prove information stated in the thesis statement or topic sentence

Sentence 4: Explain Fact = Explain why the fact proves argument/answer

Sentence 5: Introduce Second Fact = Introduce readers to the situation/example

Sentence 6: Second Fact = Information/example that helps prove information stated in the thesis statement or topic sentence

Sentence 7: Explain Fact = Explain why fact proves argument/answer

Sentence 8: Clincher Sentence = "Sum up" entire paragraph – transition into next paragraph if needed

Sample Body Paragraph for Research Paper:

By accepting minority students with credentials lower than the school's usual policy, the university places students in an academic setting for which they are unprepared. For instance, minorities are misplaced in many schools. "The second major consequence of proportional representation is not an overall increase in the number of blacks and other preferred minorities in American universities, but rather the misplacement of such students throughout higher education" (D'Souza). Many minorities are put in an unsuitable learning environment because colleges are trying to obtain a more diverse campus. By placing students in a learning environment too advanced, they have a higher risk of dropping out or failing. Many students admitted on affirmative action often fail their initial licensing exams or drop out of school altogether (Chavez). The rigorous learning environment in which they have been placed is too strenuous. By placing students in an academic habitat unsuitable for them, their further achievement in college is at risk.

Conclusion

Just as there is no formula for an introduction, there is not one for a conclusion either. What form a conclusion will take entirely depends on what precedes it.

There are some rules of thumb to keep in mind though:

- Begin by restating the idea of your thesis but use other words
- NEVER introduce new material
- Don't *depend* on your conclusion to sum up the body paragraphs. Your paragraphs should flow naturally into one another and connections should be made among them. Summary can be an important function of conclusions but keep this part brief; readers know what they've just read.
- Don't simply regurgitate your introduction. Try to talk about your topic in a new way now that you've presented all that you have about it.
- Point out the importance or the implications of what you've just said on an area of societal concern. Again, this is the so what? factor stated perhaps a bit more dramatically.
- For analytical papers in particular, you could mention the *lack of conclusion* in the field. This demonstrates that you understand the complexity of the subject matter.
- Perhaps propose what you feel is a natural next step to take in light of what your argument is attempting to convince people of.
- Don't end your conclusion with a quotation or with a statement that could very well be the subject of another paper. The former deflects attention away from you as writer and thinker; the latter deflects attention from what you're saying in your paper.

Formatting your works cited list

- Begin your works cited list on a separate page from the text of the essay.
- Label the works cited list Works Cited (do not underline the words Works Cited nor put them in quotation marks) and center the words Works Cited at the top of the page.
- Double space all entries and do not skip spaces between entries.
- Organize the list alphabetically.

Sample Works Cited

Indent five spaces

Jones 11

Works Cited

Capp, Elbridge. *Reminiscences of the War of the Rebellion*.
Nashua: Telegraph Publishing, 1911.

Catton, Bruce. *This Hallowed Ground*. Garden City:
Doubleday and Co., 1956.

“Lung Cancer.” Cancer Association. 7 March 2001
<<http://www.cancerassociation.com>>.

Wiley, Bell Irven. *The Common Soldier of the Civil
War*. Gettysburg: Historical Times, 1973.

Double space entire document

1 in. margins

alphabetical order

Citations

Making reference to works of others in your text

In MLA style, referring to the works of others in your text is done in two ways. When you make reference to someone else's idea, either through paraphrasing (indirect quote) or quoting them directly, you:

- provide the author's name (or the title of the work) and the page (or paragraph) number of the work in a **parenthetical citation**
- provide full citation information for the work in your **Works Cited list**

This allows people to know which sources you used in writing your essay and then be able to look them up themselves, so that they can use them in their scholarly work. The following are some basic guidelines for referring to the works of others in your text.

Parenthetical Citations

MLA format follows the author-page method of citation. This means that the author's last name and the page number(s) from which the quotation is taken must appear in the text, and a complete reference should appear in your works cited list (see Your Works Cited Page, below). The author's name may appear either in the sentence itself or in parentheses following the quotation or paraphrase, but the page number(s) should always appear in the parentheses, not in the text of your sentence.

Here are three examples:

Wordsworth stated that Romantic poetry was marked by a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (263).

Romantic poetry is characterized by the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (Wordsworth 263).

Wordsworth extensively explored the role of emotion in the creative process (263).

If the work you are making reference to has no author, use an abbreviated version of the work's title. For non-print sources, such as films, TV series, pictures, or other media, or electronic sources, include the name that begins the entry in the Works Cited page.

An anonymous Wordsworth critic argued that his poems were too emotional ("Wordsworth Is A Loser" 100).

Sometimes more information is necessary to identify the source from which a quotation is taken. For instance, if two or more authors have the same last name, provide both authors' first initials (or even her or his full name if different authors share initials) in your citation. If you cite more than one work by a particular author, include a shortened title for the particular work from which you are quoting to distinguish it from the other works by that same person.

Two authors with the same last name:

Although some medical ethicists claim that cloning will lead to designer children (R. Miller 12), others note that the advantages for medical research outweigh this consideration (A. Miller 46).

Two works by the same author:

Lightenor has argued that computers are not useful tools for small children ("Too Soon" 38), though he has acknowledged that early exposure to computer games does lead to better small motor skill development in a child's second and third year ("Hand-Eye Development" 17).

Two or three authors

Name the authors in the signal phrase, as in the following example, or include their last names in the parenthetical reference: (Redelmeier and Tibshirani 453).

Redelmeier and Tibshirani found that "the risk of a collision when using a cellular telephone was four times higher than the risk when a cellular telephone was not being used" (453).

When three authors are named in the parentheses, separate the names with commas: (Alton, Davies, and Rice 56).

Four or more authors

Name all of the authors or include only the first author's name followed by "et al." (Latin for "and others"). Make sure that your citation matches the entry in the list of works cited.

The study was extended for two years, and only after results were reviewed by an independent panel did the researchers publish their findings (Blaine et al. 35).

Citing the Bible

In your first parenthetical citation, you want to make clear which Bible you're using (and italicize or underline the title), as each version varies in its translation, followed by book (do not italicize or underline), chapter and verse.

For example:

Ezekiel saw "what seemed to be four living creatures," each with faces of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle (*New Jerusalem Bible*, Ezek. 1.5-10).

All future references can then just cite book, chapter, and verse, since you've established which edition of the Bible you will be using.

Basic Rules for Citations

- Authors' names are inverted (last name first); if a work has more than one author, invert only the first author's name, follow it with a comma, then continue listing the rest of the authors.
- If you have cited more than one work by a particular author, order them alphabetically by title, and use three hyphens in place of the author's name for every entry after the first.
- **Do not** list titles (Dr., Sir, Saint, etc.) or degrees (PhD, MA, DDS, etc.) with names. A book listing an author named "John Bigbrain, PhD" appears simply as "Bigbrain, John"; do, however, include suffixes like "Jr." or "II." Putting it all together, a work by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would be cited as "King, Martin Luther, Jr.," with the suffix following the first or middle name and a comma.
- If no author is given for a particular work, alphabetize by the title of the piece and use a shortened version of the title for parenthetical citations.
- Capitalize each word in the titles of articles, books, etc. This rule does not apply to articles, short prepositions, or conjunctions unless one is the first word of the title or subtitle.
- Underline or italicize titles of books, journals, magazines, newspapers, and films.
- Use quotation marks around the titles of articles in journals, magazines, and newspapers. Also use quotation marks for the titles of short stories, book chapters, poems, and songs.
- List page numbers efficiently, when needed. If you refer to a journal article that appeared on pages 225 through 250, list the page numbers on your Works Cited page as 225-50.

- If you're citing an article or a publication that was originally issued in print form but that you retrieved from an online database, you should provide enough information so that the reader can locate the article either in its original print form or retrieve it from the online database (if they have access).

Basic Forms for Sources in Print

Books

Author(s). Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.

Book with one author

Henley, Patricia. The Hummingbird House. Denver: MacMurray, 1999.

Two books by the same author

(After the first listing of the author's name, use three hyphens and a period for the author's name. List books alphabetically.)

Palmer, William J. Dickens and New Historicism. New York: St. Martin's, 1997.

---. The Films of the Eighties: A Social History. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1993.

Book with more than one author

Gillespie, Paula, and Neal Lerner. The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring. Boston: Allyn, 2000.

If there are more than three authors, you may list only the first author followed by the phrase et al. (the abbreviation for the Latin phrase "and others") in place of the other authors' names, or you may list all the authors in the order in which their names appear on the title page.

Book with a corporate author

American Allergy Association. Allergies in Children. New York: Random House, 1998.

Book or article with no author named

Encyclopedia of Indiana. New York: Somerset, 1993.

"Cigarette Sales Fall 30% as California Tax Rises." New York Times 14 Sept. 1999: A17.

An Edition of a Book

There are two types of editions in book publishing: a book that has been published more than once in different editions and a book that is prepared by someone other than the author (typically an editor).

A Subsequent Edition

Cite the book as you normally would, but add the number of the edition after the title.

Crowley, Sharon. Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students. 3rd ed. New York: Random House, 2004.

A Work Prepared by an Editor

Cite the book as you normally would, but add the editor after the title.

Bronte, Charlotte. Jane Eyre. Ed. Margaret Smith. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998.

Anthology or collection

Peterson, Nancy J., ed. Toni Morrison: Critical and Theoretical Approaches. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1997.

A Work in an Anthology, Reference, or Collection (Such as an essay in a textbook, collection, anthology; a poem or short story in a book, or a chapter of a book).**Essay in a Collection:**

Lastname, First name. "Title of Essay." Title of Collection. Ed. Editor's Name(s). Place of Publication:

Publisher, Year. Pages.

Harris, Muriel. "Talk to Me: Engaging Reluctant Writers." A Tutor's Guide: Helping Writers One to One.

Ed. Ben Rafoth. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000. 24-34.

Poem or Short Story:

Burns, Robert. "Red, Red Rose." 100 Best-Loved Poems. Ed. Philip Smith. New York:

Dover, 1995. 26.

Article in Reference Book:

For entries in encyclopedias, dictionaries, and other reference works, cite the piece as you would any other work in a collection but do not include the publisher information. Also, if the reference book is organized alphabetically, as most are, don't list the volume or the page number of the article or item.

"Ideology." The American Heritage Dictionary. 3rd ed. 1997.

Article in a Magazine

Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Periodical Day Month Year: pages.

Poniewozik, James. "TV Makes a Too-Close Call." Time 20 Nov. 2000: 70-71.

Article in a Newspaper

Cite a newspaper article as you would a magazine article, but note the different pagination in a newspaper.

Brubaker, Bill. "New Health Center Targets County's Uninsured Patients." Washington Post 24 May 2007: LZ01.

If the newspaper is local, include the city name in brackets after the title of the newspaper.

Behre, Robert. "Presidential hopefuls get final crack at core of S.C. Democrats." Post and Courier

[Charleston, SC] 29 Apr. 2007: A11.

An Article in a Scholarly Journal

Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Journal Volume. Issue (Year): pages.

Bagchi, Alaknanda. "Conflicting Nationalisms: The Voice of the Subaltern in Mahasweta Devi's *Bashai*

Tudu." Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature 15.1 (1996): 41-50.

An Editorial & Letter to the Editor

Cite as you would any article in a periodical, but include the designators "Editorial" or "Letter" to identify the type of work it is.

"Of Mines and Men." Editorial. Wall Street Journal east. ed. 24 Oct 2003: A14.

The Bible (specific editions)

The New Jerusalem Bible. Susan Jones, gen. ed. New York: Doubleday, 1985.

A Multivolume Work

When citing only one volume of a multivolume work, include the volume number after the work's title, or after the work's editor or translator.

Quintilian. Institutio Oratoria. Trans. H. E. Butler. Vol. 2. Cambridge: Loeb-Harvard UP, 1980.

When citing more than one volume of a multivolume work, cite the total number of volumes in the work.

Quintilian. Institutio Oratoria. Trans. H. E. Butler. 4 vols. Cambridge: Loeb-Harvard UP, 1980.

If the volume you are using has its own title, cite the book without referring to the other volumes as if it were an independent publication.

Churchill, Winston. S. The Age of Revolution. New York: Dodd, 1957.

Electronic Sources

Here are some common features you should try and find before citing electronic sources in MLA style. Always include as much information as is available/applicable:

- Author and/or editor names
- Name of the database, or title of project, book, article, page
- Any version numbers available
- Date of version, revision, or posting (It is necessary to list your date of access because web postings are often updated, and information available at one date may no longer be available later. Try to find the day, month, and year; however, a copyright date is acceptable too).
- Publisher information
- Date you accessed the material
- Electronic address, printed between carets ([<, >]). Be sure to include the complete address, if possible.

➤ **A note on long URLs:** URLs that won't fit on one line of your Works Cited list should be broken at slashes, when possible. Some Web sites have unusually long URLs that would be virtually impossible to retype; others use frames, so the URL appears the same for each page. To address this problem, either refer to a site's search URL, or provide the path to the resource from an entry page with an easier URL. Begin the path with the word Path followed by a colon, followed by the name of each link, separated by a semicolon.

For example, the Amazon.com URL for customer privacy and security information is:
<<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/browse/-/551434/104-0801289-6225502>>.

Below is an example of the adjusted URL citation:

Amazon.com. "Privacy and Security." 22 May 2006 <<http://www.amazon.com/>>. Path: Help; Privacy & Security.

➤ **A note on author information:** If no author is given for a web page or electronic source, start with and alphabetize by the title of the piece and use a shortened version of the title for parenthetical citations.

- **A note on updated/revised date:** It is necessary to list your date of access because web postings are often updated, and information available at one date may no longer be available later.

An entire web site (with author):

Author(s). Name of Page. Date of Posting/Revision. Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site. Date of Access <electronic address>.

Felluga, Dino. Undergraduate Guide to Literary Theory. 17 Dec. 1999. Purdue University. 15 Nov. 2000 <<http://omni.cc.purdue.edu%7Efelluga/theory2.html>>.

An entire web site (without author):

Name of Page. Date of Posting/Revision. Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site. Date of Access <electronic address>.

Purdue Online Writing Lab. 2003. Purdue University. 10 Feb. 2003 <<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>>.

A Page/Article on a Web Site

For an individual page on a Web site, list the author if known. Make sure the URL points to the exact page you are referring to, or the entry or home page for a collection of pages you're referring to:

Author(s). "Article Title." Name of web site. Date of posting/revision. Name of institution/organization affiliated with site. Date of access <electronic address>.

Poland, Dave. "The Hot Button." Roughcut. 26 Oct. 1998. Turner Network Television. 28 Oct. 1998 <<http://www.roughcut.com>>.

An Article in a Web Magazine

Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Online Publication. Date of Publication. Date of Access <electronic address>.

Bernstein, Mark. "10 Tips on Writing The Living Web." A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites. No. 149 (16 Aug. 2002). 4 May 2006 <<http://alistapart.com/articles/writeliving>>.

An Article in an Online Scholarly Journal

Online scholarly journals are treated different from online magazines. First, you must include volume and issue information, when available. Also, some electronic journals and magazines provide paragraph or page numbers; again, include them if available.

Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Journal Volume. Issue (Year): Pages/Paragraphs. Date of Access
<electronic address>.

Wheelis, Mark. "Investigating Disease Outbreaks Under a Protocol to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention." Emerging Infectious Diseases 6.6 (2000): 33 pars. 5 Dec. 2000
<<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/eid/vol6no6/wheelis.htm>>.

An Article from an Electronic Subscription Service

When citing material accessed via an electronic subscription service (e.g., a database or online collection your library subscribes to), cite the relevant publication information as you would for a periodical (author, article title, periodical title, and volume, date, and page number information) followed by the name of the database or subscription collection, the name of the library through which you accessed the content, including the library's city and state, plus date of access. If a URL is available for the home page of the service, include it. **Do not** include a URL to the article itself, because it is not openly accessible. For example:

Author(s). "Title of Article." Original Source of Article Volume (Date of original source): Page numbers.
Name of Database Used. Name of the Service. Name of the Library Used, City, State Abbreviation.
Date of Access <URL of service's homepage>.

Frick, Robert. "Investing in Medical Miracles." Kiplinger's Personal Finance 44 (Feb. 1999): 80-87.
SIRS Researcher. ProQuest Information and Learning. Sturgis Brown High School Library,
Sturgis, SD. 25 Feb. 2008 <<http://www.proquestk12.com>>.

An Online Image, Graphic, or Media

Artist if available. "Description or title of image." Date of image. Online image. Title of larger site. Date
of download. <electronic address>.

Smith, Greg. "Rhesus Monkeys in the Zoo." No date. Online image. Monkey Picture Gallery. 3 May
2003. <<http://monkeys.online.org/rhesus.jpg>>.

E-mail or Other Personal Communication

This same format may be used for personal interviews or personal letters. These do not have titles, and the description should be appropriate.

Author. "Title of the message (if any)." E-mail to person's name. Date of the message.

A Listserv or E-mail Discussion List Posting

Author. "Title of Posting." Online posting. Date when material was posted. Name of listserv. Date of access <electronic address for retrieval>.

Note: If the listserv does not have an open archive, or an archive that is open to subscribers only (e.g., a password-protected list archive), give the URL for the membership or subscription page of the listserv.

Online Posting

Karper, Erin. "Welcome!" Online posting. 23 Oct. 2000. Professional Writing Bulletin Board. 12 Nov. 2000 <<http://linnell.english.purdue.edu/ubb/Forum2/HTML/000001.html>>.

Weblog Postings

MLA does not yet have any official rules for citing blog entries or comments. But as the technology becomes more widely used for academic discussions, you may find yourself referencing blogs more often. If you are drawing on a blog as a source, make sure you consider the credibility of the weblog site and/or the author of the posting or comment. Also, check with your instructor or editor to see what their stance is on incorporating evidence from blog entries.

Citing Personal Weblog Entries

List the author of the blog (even if there is only a screen name available), provide the name of the particular entry you are referring to, identify that it is a weblog entry and then follow the basic formatting for a website as listed above.

Last Name, First. "Title of Entry." Weblog Entry. Title of Weblog. Date Posted. Date Accessed (URL).

NOTE: Give the exact date of the posted entry so your readers can look it up by date in the archive. If possible, include the archive address for the posted entry as the URL in your citation as you would for an online forum. If the site doesn't have a public archive, follow the suggestion under "Listserv" citation above.

Hawhee, Debra. "Hail, Speech!" Weblog entry. Blogos. 30 April 2007. 23 May 2007

<http://dhawhee.blogos.com/d_hawhee/2007/04/index.html>.

Citing Entries on Organizational or Corporate Weblogs/Blogs

List as you would for a personal blog, but include the corporation or organization that sponsors the weblog.

Bosworth, Adam. "Putting Health into the Patient's Hands." Weblog entry. The Official

Google Blog. 23 May 2007. Google, Inc. 27 May 2007

<http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2007_05_01_googleblog_archive.html>.

Citing Comments Posted to a Weblog

Follow the same basic format for blog entries, but identify that the posting is a comment and not an original blog entry by the organization or weblog author. Also refer to the screen name that appears as the author of the comment, even if that author is anonymous.

Screen Name. "Comment Title." Weblog comment. Date Comment Posted. "Title of Blog Entry." Author of Blog Entry. Title of Weblog. Date Accessed (URL).

Anonymous. "The American Jew and the Diversity Debate." Weblog comment. 21 May 2007. "Imagining Jewishness." Monica Osborne. Jewcy. 23 May 2007

<http://www.jewcy.com/daily_shvitz/imagining_jewishness#comment>.

NOTE: Some weblog sites don't require titles for comments, so you should just list the first few words of the comment itself to provide enough identifying information for the comment.

E!. "Perhaps ironically ..." Weblog comment. 30 April 2007. "Hail, Speech!" Debra Hawhee. Blogos.

30 April 2007 <http://dhawhee.blogspot.com/d_hawhee/2007/04/hail_speech.html#comments>.

Other Types of Sources

Government Publication

United States Dept. of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health. Washington: GPO, 2000.

Pamphlet

Office of the Dean of Students. Resources for Success: Learning Disabilities and Attention Deficit Disorders. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University, 2000.

Interview that you conducted (This includes a personal/face-to-face interview, written interview, phone interview, or email interview).

Purdue, Pete. Personal Interview. 1 Dec. 2000.

Television or radio program

"The Blessing Way." The X-Files. Fox. WXIA, Atlanta. 19 Jul. 1998.

Sound Recordings

Sound recordings list album title, label and year of release. You only need to indicate the medium if you are **not** referring to a compact disc (CD).

Entire Albums (Includes spoken word albums)

List by name of group or artist (individual artists are listed last name first). Album title underlined or in italics, followed by label and year.

Foo Fighters. In Your Honor. RCA, 2005.

Waits, Tom. Blue Valentine. 1978. Elektra/Wea, 1990.

Individual Songs

Place the names of individual songs in quotation marks and the album in italics or underlined.

Nirvana. "Smells Like Teen Spirit." Nevermind. Geffen, 1991.

Movies

List films by their title, and include the name of the director, the film studio or distributor and its release year. If other information, like names of performers, is relevant to how the film is referred to in your paper, include that as well. Include format names; "Videocassette" for VHS or Betamax, DVD for Digital Video Disc. Also list original release year after director, performers, etc.

Ed Wood. Dir. Tim Burton. Perf. Johnny Depp, Martin Landau, Sarah Jessica Parker,

Patricia Arquette. 1994. DVD. Touchstone, 2004.

Broadcast Television or Radio Program

Put the name of the episode in quotation marks, and the name of the series or single program underlined or in italics. Include the network, followed by the station, city, and date of broadcast.

"The Blessing Way." The X-Files. Fox. WXIA, Atlanta. 19 Jul. 1998.

Recorded Television Shows

Include information about original broadcast, plus medium of recording. When the title of the collection of recordings is different than the original series (e.g., the show Friends is in DVD release under the title Friends: The Complete Sixth Season), list the title that would help researchers locate the recording.

"The One Where Chandler Can't Cry." Friends: The Complete Sixth Season. Writ. Andrew Reich and Ted Cohen. Dir. Kevin Bright. NBC. 10 Feb. 2000. DVD. Warner Brothers, 2004.

A Lecture or Speech

Include speaker name, title of the speech (if any) in quotes, details about the meeting or event where the speech was given, including its location and date of delivery. In lieu of a title, label the speech according to its type, e.g., Guest Lecture, Keynote Address, State of the Union Address.

Stein, Bob. Keynote Address. Computers and Writing Conference. Union Club Hotel, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN. 23 May 2003.

A Painting, Sculpture, or Photograph

Include the artist's name, the year the work was created, and the institution (e.g., a gallery or museum) that houses it, followed by the city where it is located.

Goya, Francisco. The Family of Charles IV. 1800. Museo del Prado, Madrid.

If you're referring to a photographic reproduction, include the information as above, but also include the bibliographic information for the source in which the photograph appears, including a page or other reference number (plate, figure, etc.). For example:

Goya, Francisco. The Family of Charles IV. 1800. Museo del Prado, Madrid. Gardener's Art Through the Ages. 10th ed. By Richard G. Tansey and Fred S. Kleiner. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace. 939.

Basic Paper Format

The following are some basic guidelines for formatting a paper in MLA style.

General Guidelines

- Type your paper and print it out on standard-sized paper (8.5 X 11 inches).
- Double-space your entire paper.
- Use only 12 size font.
- Use only Times New Roman or Arial typeface.

- Set the margins of your document to 1 inch on all sides.
- Create a header that numbers all pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. (How to: Under View > Header and Footer > Align Right on main toolbar, type your last name, then two spaces > the number symbol on the toolbar > Close).

Formatting the first page of your paper

- Do not make a title page for your paper unless specifically requested.
- Provide a double-spaced entry in the top left corner of the first page that lists your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date.
- Center your title on the line below the header with your name, and begin your paper immediately below the title.

The following is a sample first page of an essay in MLA style; your first page should closely resemble this:

Purdue 1
Pete Purdue
Mrs. Williams
English 9
12 April 2008
Building a Dream: Reasons to Expand Ross-Aide Stadium
During the 2000 football season, the Purdue Boilermakers won the Big Ten Conference Title, earned their first trip to the Rose Bowl in thirty-four years, and play consistently to sold-out crowds. Looking ahead. . .

Helpful Hints for Locating Information Online

- Use keywords or phrases instead of sentences
- Use * truncation when there are alternate words endings to broaden your search.
Example: farm* for: farmer, farming, farmland, etc...
- Use quotations marks around words to find multiple words appearing next to one another in a specified order. Example: "animal rights"
- Use wildcards to substitute a symbol for one letter of a word. This is useful if the word is spelled in different ways, but still has the same meaning.
Examples: wom!n = woman, women colo?r = color, colour]
- Use (parentheses) to combine concepts. The search engine will search what is grouped inside the parentheses first. Example: ("rap music" OR "hip hop") AND censorship
- Use Boolean Operators (AND OR NOT) to adjust your search to your needs.

Boolean Operator	What It Does	EXAMPLE
AND	<i>limits</i> search	psychology AND children (limits information to the combination of the keywords)
OR	<i>broadens</i> search	tornado OR cyclone (finds information on both tornados and cyclones)
NOT	<i>limits</i> search	cats NOT kittens (eliminates info. on kittens and gives only info. on cats)

Is the Online Source Reliable? Evaluate It!

Look for these main factors on a website to tell if the source is reliable:

- Author or sponsoring agency (usually at top or bottom of page)
- Copyright date or date last revised (usually at bottom of page)
- Type of URL/domain:
 - .gov (from the government)
 - .edu (from an educational institution)
 - .org (from an organization)
 - .com (generic, informational)
 - .net (generic, informational)

Use caution when seeking information on .com, .net, and .org sites. Some .org sites are organizations but may not have reliable, credible information. Always look for an author or sponsoring agency as well as a copyright date at either the top or the bottom of the page.

Advanced Evaluation of Online Sources

To further evaluate a site, check these four areas:

1. Header 2. Body 3. Footer 4. Navigation

and look for: Authority, Currency, Coverage, Objectivity, and Accuracy

AUTHORITY

Check the footer...

- for name of the web page author/creator
- for his/her credentials/qualification and title
- for organizational affiliation

CURRENCY

Check the footer...

- for when the website was created
- for when last edited

Check the body...

- for news items
- for indications that the site is actively maintained
- for acknowledgements/responses to visitors

COVERAGE

Check the header...

- for a clear title
- for clear and focused web site description

Check the body...

for headings and keywords

Check the navigation...

- for clear headings to illustrate an outline of the content
- for clear navigation

OBJECTIVITY

Check the body...

- for statement of purpose
- to determine the type of web site and potential audience
- for outside links to information
- for affiliations

Check the header/footer...

- for type of URL/domain (is it a .gov .com .edu site?)
- to determine organizational source of website and how this reflects on content type

ACCURACY

Check the body...

- for accuracy of spelling, grammar, and usage
- for facts
- for consistency
- for other credible citations

NOTES:

Citation information for this educational publication:

The Purdue OWL. 26 Aug. 2008. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue University.

23 April 2008 <<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>>.