

West Liberty-Salem School

Writer's Guide

A Student/Teacher Handbook
for Writing and Formatting Papers

Contains a condensed version of the
Modern Language Association's guide
for formatting research papers.

7th Edition

Introduction

Unless otherwise noted by the instructor, every formal paper written for any class should be completed in the format that will follow. Papers that are not typed should still follow the instructions for familiarity.

The handbook contains three sections. The first section concerns manuscript form. Follow the guidelines for producing the proper format. Also included is a list of examples of works cited. Most sources that you encounter will be included in the list; however, if you have a source in which an example is not given, your English instructor will be able to assist. The second section contains a list of mechanics rules with examples. This is intended to assist the writer if any questions arise concerning punctuation. The last section is a list of the steps in the writing process. Even though the steps are listed in sequence, good writers will use all steps of the process throughout the writing experience.

This handbook consists of three sections:

- I. Manuscript Form
- II. Mechanics
- III. The Writing Process

I. Manuscript Form

General Format

1. Typing: Use a 10 to 12 point size using only the fonts *Times* or *Times New Roman* and consistent double-spacing throughout the paper. Specific requirements include:

- One inch margins on all sides
- Tabs/Indents at five spaces
- Block quotes indented at 10 spaces (flush with right margin with no quotation marks); A block quote is any quoted material over 4 lines of text in your paper. It must be set off through indentation.
- White paper sized at 8.5 x 11
- All text left justified except title (centered)

2. Title Page: Do not use a formal title page or plastic folder. The first page of the manuscript includes the following:

- Line 1: Writer's name (one inch from top/flush with left margin)
- Line 3: Instructor's name
- Line 5: Course title
- Line 7: Date (Military style : 12 December 2001)
- Line 9: Title (centered with no underlining, quotes, fancy type, bold, etc.)
- Line 11: Text begins

3. Page Numbering: All page numbers will be placed a half-inch from the top margin and flush with the right margin. The writer's last name will precede the page number on all pages including page one and the works cited page. Use no punctuation or symbols.

4. Tables and Illustrations: Place illustrative material as close as possible to the part of the text that it illustrates. A table is usually labeled "Table," given an Arabic number, and captioned; in addition, an illustration is given the title "Figure." Type both label and caption flush left on separate lines above the table and capitalize them as you would a title (do not use all capital letters) Give the source of the table and any notes immediately below the table.

5. Works Cited: This list refers only to sources actually cited in the text. All sources reviewed but not cited should not be included, unless the instructor requests a list of "works consulted."

- Title "Works Cited" one inch from the top and centered (without quotation marks).
- Double space between title and first entry while using consistent double spacing in and between each entry.
- Alphabetical arrangement based on the first word of the entry (except a, an, the).
- The first line of each entry begins flush with left margin. The second and subsequent lines of the same entry are indented one tab.
- **Works Consulted:** This list refers to all sources consulted during the research process regardless of their use in the final paper. Use the same format as above with title "Works Consulted"
- Capitalize all words of the title except articles (a, an, the) and prepositions

Works Cited Examples:

A Book by One Author

Brooks, John. *Telephone: The First Hundred Years*. New York:
Harper, 1976. Print.

Two or More Works by the Same Author

Lanham, Richard A. *Literacy and the Survival of Humanism*.
New Haven: Yale UP, 1983. Print.

---. *Style: An Anti-Textbook*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1974. Print

A Book by Two or Three Authors

Ashby, Eric, and Mary Anderson. *The Rise of the Student Estate in
Britain*. Cambridge: Prentice-Hall, 1970. Print.

A Book by Four or More Authors

Sheridan, Marion C., et.al. *The Motion Picture and the Teaching
of English*. New York: Appleton, 1965. Print.

A Book by a Corporate Author or Organization

American Telephone and Telegraph. *Annual Report, 2007*. New York: American Telephone and Telegraph, 2007. Print.

A Book with an Editor

Kuhn, Thomas, ed. *The Essential Tension*. New York: Harper, 1977. Print.

An Anthology or Compilation

Hayward, John, ed. *The Faber Book of English Verse*. London: Faber, 1958. Print.

A Work in an Anthology

Tyler, Anne. "Still Just Writing." *The Writer on Her Work*. Ed. Janet Sternburg. New York: Norton, 1980. 3-16. Print.

A Multivolume Work

Blotner, Joseph. *Faulker: A Biography*. 2 vols. New York: Random, 1974. Print.

A Book in a Series (Use book editor, not series editor)

Wekesser, Carol, ed. *American Foreign Policy*. Opposing Viewpoints Ser. St. Paul: Greenhaven, 1987. Print.

Cross Reference (one article used out of book above; it should be alphabetized)

Bienen, Henry S. "US Intervention is Dangerous." Wekesser 59-61. Print.

Article with no Author in a Reference Book (encyclopedias, dictionaries, etc.)

"DNA." *Encyclopedia Americana*. 4th ed. 2007. Print.

Article with an Author in a Reference Book

Smith, Richard. "Color and Light." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. 7th ed. 2005.
Print.

Magazine or Newspaper Article with an Author

King, John. "10 Amazing Years: 1947-1957." *U. S. News and World Report*
27 Dec. 1957: 30-38. Print.

Magazine or Newspaper Article with no Author

"Local Man Prosecuted for Burglary." *Urbana Daily Citizen* [Urbana, OH]
2 May 2007: 3A. Print.

for small and local newspapers include the city name and state in brackets after the title. For large national newspapers (i.e. New York Times, Washington Post) this is not necessary.

An Editorial or Letter to the Editor

"From Good News to Bad." Editorial. *Washington Post* 16 July
1984: 2A. Print.

Sambora, Richard. Letter. *Springfield News-Sun*. [Springfield, OH] 5 Sept
2009: A12. Print.

Government Publications

United States. Dept. of Energy. *Office of Clean Coal: Strategic Plan*.
Washington: GPO, Sept. 2006. PDF file.

Personal Interview

Cole, Richard. Personal interview. 3 Feb. 2009.

Patterson, Pam. Telephone interview. 15 Nov. 2010.

Bible

The New International Version of The Holy Bible. Grand Rapids: Zondervan,
1978. Print.

Films & Recorded TV- Include Writers, Producers, Others, as Pertinent

Raiders of the Lost Ark. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Paramount, 1982. DVD.

Guggenheim, Charles, dir. *The Shadow of Hate*. The Southern Poverty Law Center. 2006. Videocassette.

Recordings - Include Composers, Performers, Conductors, and others as pertinent

Gabriel, Peter. *Shaking the Tree*. Geffen Records, 1990. CD.

Mozart, Wolfgang A. *Così fan tutte*. Cond. Alain Lombard. Strasbourg Philharmonic Orch. RCA, 1978. MP3 file.

TV and Radio Broadcasts - Include Writers, Producers, Directors, Others

"Pollution in the Desert." *Sixty Minutes*. Narr. Mike Wallace. Prod. Jock

Fenway. Dir. John Brett. CBS. WHIO, Dayton. 6 Mar. 1984. Television.

Social Issues Resources Series

Cruver, Philip C. "Lighting the 21st Century." *Futurist* (Jan./Feb. 1989): 29-34.

Rpt. in *ENERGY*, Vol. 4. Ed. Eleanor Goldstein. Boca Raton, Fla.: Social Issues Resources Series, Inc., 1990. Art. 84.

Pamphlet with or with no Author

Short, Thomas J. *10 Warning Signs of Alcoholism*. New York:

Alcoholics Anonymous, 1990. Print.

Facts You Need to Know About AIDS. New York: American

Medical Association, 1995. Print.

Citations for Electronic sources (including online databases)

(if not all information is known, cite what is available, roughly in the following order)

1. Name of author or editor (with appropriate ed. after name for editor).
2. Article name in quotation marks or title of page from website
3. Title of the Website (or original publication from a database) in italics.
4. Publisher or sponsor of the site (if not available use n.p.).
5. Date of electronic publication, posting, or update (if no date use n.d.).
5. Original page numbers (if this is a reprint)
6. Name of the database or subscription service (i.e. ProQuest; EBSCOhost)
7. Medium of Publication (Web)
8. Date when the research accessed the source.
9. Electronic address or URL in angle brackets (*if required by instructor)

*MLA no longer requires URL addresses in citations; however, it is up to specific instructors whether or not to include them.

Web Sites (articles on line, web pages, and whole websites)

Alpert, Lindsey. "Lecture Traces Plea of Insanity." *The Michigan Daily*. The University of Michigan, 6 April 2000: 1A. Web. 22 May 2008.

<<http://www.pub.umich.edu/daily/2000/apr>>.

United States Dept. Of Health and Human Services. "Childhood Immunization."

U.S. National Library of Medicine. 21 Feb. 2008. Web. 25 Feb. 2008.

<<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/childhoodimmunization.html>>.

American Bar Association. "Factsheet: The Juvenile Death Penalty." *Abanet.org*.

American Bar Juvenile Justice Center, Apr. 2003. Web. 14 Apr. 2008.

<<http://www.abanet.org/crimjust/juvjus/juvdp.html>>.

"Integrated Pest Management." *Ohio Agricultural Research and Development*.

Ohio State Univ, n.d. Web. 18 April 2004.

<<http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/>>.

Kummer, Corby. "The Great Grocery Smackdown." *The Atlantic Online*. The

Atlantic Monthly Group, March 2010. Web. 3. March 2010.

<<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/201003/walmart-local-produce>>.

“Clinton, Obama Go At It Over Trade.” *CNN.com*. Cable News Network, 25 Feb. 2008. Web. 25 Feb. 2008. <<http://www.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/>>.

Walmartwatch.com. The Center for Community and Corporate Ethics, 2010. Web. 7 April 2010.

Grant, Susan. “Fradulent Schemes on the Internet.” *Natlconsumersleague.org*. National Consumers League, n.d. Web. 11 Mar. 2009.

E-mail

Wilson, Ted. “Re: Questions.” Message to the author. 23 Feb 2010. E-mail.

Riley, Sandra. “Opportunities On-line.” Message to Terry Moore. 14 Oct. 2009. E-mail.

Work from a Database

Koretz, Gene. “Econmic Trends: Uh-oh, Warm Water.” *Business Week* 21 July 1997: 22. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 17 Oct. 2008.

Pietrucha, Bill. “ACLU Condemns Library Use of Blocking Software.” *The Plain Dealer* 17 Jan. 1998: 10B. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 31 Mar. 2006.

Reynolds, Tom. “Screening and Prevention Trials Step Up Minority Recruitment.” *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* 88.18 (1996): 1265-. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 5 March 2003.

Escobar-Chaves, Soledad Liliana and Craig A. Anderson. “Media and Risky Behaviors.” *Future of Children* 63:7 (Spr. 2008): 147-180. *ERIC Digests*. Web. EJ795862. 13 Feb. 2010. <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/3d/cd/b9.pdf>.

II. Mechanics

1. Rules For the Comma

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|--|--|
| 1. To set off nominative of address | Come here, Joe. |
| 2. After friendly salutations and complimentary closes | Very truly yours, |
| 3. To set off absolute expressions | My work being finished, I left. |
| 4. To set off parenthetical expressions | This is, as you know,
the last cupcake. |
| 5. To set off appositives | Helen, the winner of the
contest, spoke. |
| 6. To set off nonessential clauses | My father, who works at
night, sleeps until early afternoon. |
| 7. To set off direct quotations | "I'm sorry," he explained. |
| 8. To set off mild interjections | Oh, don't do that now. |
| 9. To set off titles or degrees | He is Jay Jackson, Jr. |
| 10. Before the coordinate conjunction in a compound sentence | I don't know how to do
it, but I'll try my best. |
| 11. To set off introductory adverb clauses and introductory verbal phrases | If the clause comes first,
it is followed by a
comma. |
| 12. To set off an interrogative expression at the end of a sentence | You enjoy this, don't
you? |
| 13. To separate items in a series | He studies science,
Spanish, and American
history. |
| 14. To separate items in dates and addresses | On June 8, 1963, we moved from
Dayton, Ohio, to Denver, Colorado. |
| 15. To set off contrasting expressions | He comes from the
South, <u>not the East</u> . |

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|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 16. To indicate omissions | I enjoy plays; Henry, sports. |
| 17. To prevent misreading | With Jack, Jim sent the message. |

2. Rules For the Semicolon

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|---|---|
| 18. To separate clauses in a compound sentence with no coordinate conjunction | Some work; others play. |
| 19. To separate coordinate clauses joined by conjunctive adjectives | He worked hard; however, he was still a failure. |
| 20. Before the coordinate conjunction in a compound sentence if its clauses are internally punctuated | If you understand the principle, you can punctuate correctly; but if you do not know the rule, you may make errors. |
| 21. Before <u>for example</u> (e.g.), <u>namely</u> (viz), <u>that is</u> (i.e.) when they join two independent clauses | Mary takes part in many activities; e.g., she participates in sports, music, and dramatics. |

3. Rules For the Colon

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|---|--|
| 22. After a formal salutation | Dear Sir: |
| 23. Before a formal quotation | Lincoln began thus:
"Fourscore and" |
| 24. After a complete sentence which introduces a formal list. | |

4. Rules For the Dash (when typed it should consist of two hyphens)

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|---|--|
| 25. After a list which precedes the sentence itself | Fathers, brothers, sons--all were called to battle. |
| 26. To set off an appositive series | Several students--Joe Glass, Tom Watts, and Eddie First--had already signed up for the course. |
| 27. To indicate a break in thought | His name is--oh, what is his name? |

5. Rules For Ellipses

28. To indicate omission of words

The delay . . . is having serious consequences.

6. Rules For Quotation Marks

(when used with other punctuation)

29. Commas and periods always inside quotation marks.

"I'll do that," she said.
He said, "Please sit here."
I have been reading
"The Raven."

30. Semicolons and colons are always outside the quotation marks

Jack whistled "Dixie";
Joe strummed his
guitar.

31. Exclamation marks or question marks may be used either inside or outside, depending upon the sentence meaning.

The crowd screamed,
"Kill the umpire!"
Did Ruskin say, "Crime
can be truly hindered
only by letting no man
grow up a criminal"?
"What shall we do now?"
I asked.

7. Rules For Punctuating Titles

32. Put titles of songs, poems, short stories, one-act plays, and essays in quotation marks.

A short story which emphasizes horror is Poe's "The Masque of the Red Death."

33. Underline titles of novels, full-length plays, magazines, biographies, and other full-length books.

The seniors are reading Jane Eyre.

III. The Writing Process

The writing process contains three steps: prewriting, drafting, and revision. Although the process will be different for each writer, the three components should be included for each paper; furthermore, the process is recursive and all aspects should be considered at all points in the writing experience.

Prewriting Activities

Prewriting, or the invention stage, consists of many possibilities and steps. The writer should give significant attention to this area; most problems in writing can be traced back to inadequate planning. Besides topic selection and audience analysis, the writer should consider the following aspects:

1. Thesis: A thesis is an assertion about your topic, the scope of the paper, and the tone and mood that your paper will conduct. A thesis can be placed at the beginning of your paper to act as a starting point or at the end of your paper to provide a conclusion. It should include the role of the writer whether it be a reporter, critic, persuader, etc.; likewise, it should contain the attitude of the writer toward the subject.

2. Outlining: Outlining consists of arranging subject material in an organizational paradigm. It should have a pattern and be logically connected. An outline provides a guide for the writer as an overview of one or more sections of the paper. There are a few rules to follow for outlining:

- Main points or subpoints should have at least two supports.
- Subpoints must be logically connected and organized.
- Limit main points to five or less.
- Do not use introductions and conclusions as main points.

3. Notetaking: This is the process of obtaining direct quotations, paraphrases, summaries, and statistical information from source material. Using your sources well involves a few simple rules:

- Use quotation marks around direct quotes.
- Use direct quotes sparingly and effectively (i.e. passages that sum up a point, are dramatic or memorable, are judgments or conclusions of an authority, and that cannot be presented in any other way).
- Use summary and paraphrasing for all other information.
- All condensed or modified material should be free from the original writer's style and point of view (simple substituting a few words from the original with your own words is not sufficient to avoid copyright infringement).
- **All** material from sources should be cited.

Drafting

Drafting consists of the process of relating ideas in a unified and coherent format in pursuit of an overall point. The most important aspects of drafting relate to the ideas of the writer's focus and audience analysis. Each writer should find his/her own methods of relating the material by continually keeping in mind the focus and thesis of the paper, and the writer should always unify and relate details for the reader. Well developed paragraphs are designed for reader understanding.

1. Organization: A paper should consist of an introduction, conclusion, and a body of three to five major points. The organization can be based on a major form of development such as compare/contrast, argument, persuasion, reasons, process, definition, etc.; or, the writer may design his/her own organization that is clear and logical for reader understanding. Each major idea should be parallel to other ideas and have a clear point/goal. When addressing your ideas, the paragraph is the basic building block. The simple goal of a paragraph is to relate one idea from your overall purpose. In order for a paragraph to be unified, it must be focused around one limited idea and have a specific development. Sentences that make up a paragraph must relate and build your ideas; this connection is called coherence. For these reasons, changing paragraphs involves a change in focus and not necessarily topic; however, it is still necessary to relate your paragraphs to each other. This is done by using transitions.

2. Citations: The proper method for documenting sources for MLA consists of parenthetical documentation within the text itself. Always place the documented source at the end of the sentence within parenthesis but before the period (except when citing two pieces of information from two different source). There are a few rules for proper citations:

- Always use the first word from the works cited entry plus the page number in parenthesis. For one page sources, the writer may disclude the page number.
Example: Many advocates claim that America protects us from aspirin bottles better than “they protect guns from accidents by children” (Lott 9).
- If the first word is not an author's name but the first word of a title, the citation must consist of a shortened version of the title with proper punctuation along with the page number.
Example: (“Case” 6).
- If the author's name is used in the paragraph, only include a page number in parenthesis at the end of the sentence.
Example: John R. Lott in his book *More Guns, Less Crime: Understanding Crime and Gun Control Laws* indicates that more children are hurt in bathtubs than by guns (9).
- When citing an author who wrote two of the paper's sources, use a shortened version of the title with the author's last name and a comma separating the author from the work.
Example (Kopel, “Japanese” 1).

- Try to place the citation at the end of the sentence so it doesn't impede the flow; however, if you are using two different sources in the same sentence, place the citation close to the information it reflects near a pause.
Example: While Lott maintains that gun accident statistics are exaggerated rejecting the need for regulation (9-11), public opinion polls indicate that Americans support restriction (Cannon 5).
- When you can not find the original source and a secondary source is available, you need to note the location of the quote by adding *qtd. in* before the indirect source you cite.
Example: Sarah Brady, Chair of Handgun Control, released a statement saying, "I am pleased that President Bush has finally acknowledged that gun violence is a serious problem in the United States...an American teenager is more likely to die from a gunshot wound than from natural causes (qtd in Teepen 2)
- When citing two authors who share the same last name include a first initial.
Example: Significant steps include criminal background and FBI checks (R. Smith 2).
- Do not use commas or an abbreviation for "page" in a citation.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism can be defined as "Improper use of another's ideas or language." Paraphrasing closely without quotation marks is an example of plagiarism. Make sure to give the proper credit and to follow good notetaking procedures. Penalties for plagiarism can include failure.

Revision

The revision process should consist not only of proofreading or editing for punctuation mistakes, but it should also involve a check for understanding. Many writers who skip this stage may end up with a draft that is unclear, unorganized, or unfocused. After each draft ask yourself the following questions:

- ✓ Have you accomplished what you set out to do? Does it say everything you want it to say? Have you said too much? Have you emphasized what matters most?
- ✓ Have you given credit to your sources?
- ✓ Does your topic make itself clear in the paper? Do you think that your paper is confused? Does it follow an outline?
- ✓ Would any more paragraphs make more sense or follow better if arranged in a different order? Does everything follow clearly? Does one point lead to another?
- ✓ Who will read this paper? Does your paper tell them what they need or want to know? Does the beginning of your paper promise your readers anything that the paper never delivers? Is your language clear to an unfamiliar reader? What is your tone or attitude towards your reader? Is it effective?