Ram's Den MLA Form and Style Guide

Highlands High School

MLA (Modern Language Association) style is most commonly used to write papers and cite sources within the liberal arts and humanities. This resource, updated to reflect the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th ed.) and the MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing (3rd ed.), offers examples for the general format of MLA research papers, in-text citations, endnotes/footnotes, and the Works Cited page.

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MLA Format

General Format

MLA style specifies guidelines for formatting manuscripts and using the English language in writing. MLA style also provides writers with a system for referencing their sources through parenthetical citation in their essays and Works Cited pages.

Writers who properly use MLA also build their credibility by demonstrating accountability to their source material. Most importantly, the use of MLA style can protect writers from accusations of plagiarism, which is the purposeful or accidental uncredited use of source material by other writers.

If you are asked to use MLA format, be sure to consult the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th edition). The MLA Handbook is available in the Ram's Center writing center and the library; it is also widely available in bookstores, libraries, and at the MLA web site. See the Additional Resources section of this handout for a list of helpful books and sites about using MLA style.

Page Format

Paper Format

The preparation of papers and manuscripts in MLA style is covered in chapter four of the MLA Handbook, and chapter four of the MLA Style Manual. Below are some basic guidelines for formatting a paper in MLA style.

General Guidelines

- Type your paper on a computer and print it out on standard, white 8.5 x 11-inch paper.

- Double-space the text of your paper, and use a legible font (e.g. Times New Roman). Whatever font you choose, MLA recommends that the regular and italics type styles contrast enough that they are recognizable one from another. The font size should be **12 pt**.

- Leave only one space after periods or other punctuation marks (unless otherwise instructed by your instructor).

- Set the margins of your document to 1 inch on all sides

- Indent the first line of paragraphs one half-inch from the left margin. MLA recommends that you use the Tab key as opposed to pushing the Space Bar five times.

- 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. (Note: Your instructor may ask that you omit the number on your first page. Always follow your instructor's guidelines.)

- Use italics throughout your essay for the titles of longer works and, only when absolutely necessary, providing emphasis.

Formatting the First Page of Your Paper

- **Do not** make a title page for your paper unless specifically requested.

- In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date. Again, be sure to use double-spaced text.

- Double space again and center the title. Do not underline, italicize, or place your title in quotation marks; write the title in Title Case (standard capitalization), not in all capital letters.

- Use quotation marks and/or italics when referring to other works in your title, just as you would in your text: *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* as Morality Play; Human Weariness in "After Apple Picking"

- Double space between the title and the first line of the text.

- Create a header in the upper right-hand corner that includes your last name, followed by a space with a page number; number all pages consecutively with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.), one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. (Note: Your instructor or other readers may ask that you omit last name/ page number header on your first page. Always follow instructor guidelines.)

Here is a sample of the first page of a paper in MLA style:
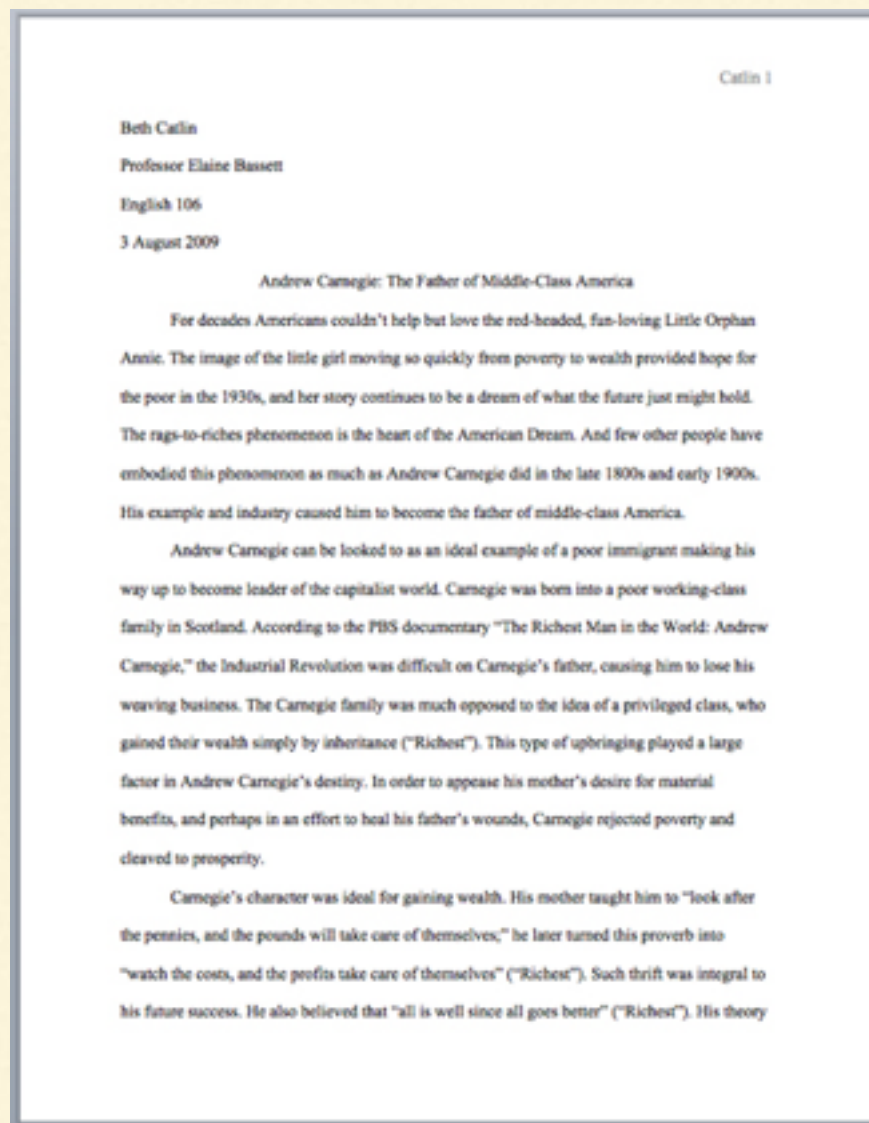
MLA In-Text Citations

MLA In-Text Citations: The Basics

Guidelines for referring to the works of others in your text using MLA style are covered in chapter six of the MLA Handbook and in chapter seven of the MLA Style Manual. Both books provide extensive examples, so it's a good idea to consult them if you want to become even more familiar with MLA guidelines or if you have a particular reference question.

Basic In-Text Citation Rules

In MLA style, referring to the works of others in your text is done by using what is known as parenthetical citation. This method involves placing relevant source information in parentheses after a quote or a paraphrase.

General Guidelines

- The source information required in a parenthetical citation depends (1.) upon the source medium (e.g. Print, Web, DVD) and (2.) upon the source's entry on the Works Cited (bibliography) page.

- Any source information that you provide in-text must correspond to the source information on the Works Cited page. More specifically, whatever signal word or phrase you provide to your readers in the text, must be the first thing that appears on the left-hand margin of the corresponding entry in the Works Cited List.

In-Text Citations: Author-Page Style

MLA format follows the author-page method of in-text citation. This means that the author's last name and the page number(s) from which the quotation or paraphrase is taken must appear in the text, and a complete reference should appear on your Works Cited page. 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. For example:

- 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).

Both citations in the examples above, (263) and (Wordsworth 263), tell readers that the information in the sentence can be located on page 263 of a work by an author named Wordsworth. If readers want more information about this source, they can turn to the Works Cited page, where, under the name of Wordsworth, they would find the following information:

Wordsworth, William. *Lyrical Ballads*. London: Oxford
      U.P., 1967..

In-text Citations for Print Sources with Known Author

For Print sources like books, magazines, scholarly journal articles, and newspapers, provide a signal word or phrase (usually the author's last name) and a page number. If you provide the signal word/phrase in the sentence, you do not need to include it in the parenthetical citation.

- Human beings have been described by Kenneth Burke as "symbol using animals" (3).

- Human beings have been described as "symbol-using animals" (Burke 3).

These examples must correspond to an entry that begins with Burke, which will be the first thing that appears on the left-hand margin of an entry in the Works Cited:

Burke, Kenneth. Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life,
      Literature, and Method. Berkeley: U of California P, 1966.

In-text Citations for Print Sources with No Known Author

When a source has no known author, use a shortened title of the work instead of an author name. Place the title in quotation marks if it's a short work (e.g. articles) or italicize it if it's a longer work (e.g.

plays, books, television shows, entire websites) and provide a page number.

- We see so many global warming hotspots in North America likely because this region has "more readily accessible climatic data and more comprehensive programs to monitor and study environmental change . . ." ("Impact of Global Warming" 6).

In this example, since the reader does not know the author of the article, an abbreviated title of the article appears in the parenthetical citation which corresponds to the full name of the article which appears first at the left-hand margin of its respective entry in the Works Cited. Thus, the writer includes the title in quotation marks as the signal phrase in the parenthetical citation in order to lead the reader directly to the source on the Works Cited page.

The Works Cited entry appears as follows:

"The Impact of Global Warming in North America." GLOBAL
   WARMING: Early Signs. 1999. Web. 23 Mar. 2009.

We'll learn how to make a Works Cited page in a bit, but right now it's important to know that parenthetical citations and Works Cited pages allow readers to know which sources you consulted in writing your essay, so that they can either verify your interpretation of the sources or use them in their own scholarly work.

Author-Page Citation for Classic and Literary Works with Multiple Editions

Page numbers are always required, but additional citation information can help literary scholars, who may have a different edition of a classic work like Marx and Engels's The Communist Manifesto. In such cases, give the page number of your edition (making sure the edition is listed in your Works Cited page, of course) followed by a semicolon, and then the appropriate abbreviations for volume (vol.), book (bk.), part (pt.), chapter (ch.), section (sec.), or paragraph (par.). For example:

- Marx and Engels described human history as marked by class struggles (79; ch. 1).

Citing Authors with Same Last Names

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 the authors' full name if different authors share initials) in your citation. For example:

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

Citing a Work by Multiple Authors

For a source with three or fewer authors, list the authors' last names in the text or in the parenthetical citation:

- Smith, Yang, and Moore argue that tougher gun control is not needed in the United States (76).

- The authors state "Tighter gun control in the United States erodes Second Amendment rights" (Smith, Yang, and Moore 76).

For a source with more than three authors, use the work's bibliographic information as a guide for your citation. Provide the first author's last name followed by et al. or list all the last names.

- Jones et al. counter Smith, Yang, and Moore's argument by noting that the current spike in gun violence in America compels law makers to adjust gun laws (4).
    Or
- Legal experts counter Smith, Yang, and Moore's argument by noting that the current spike in gun violence in America compels law makers to adjust gun laws (Jones et al. 4).
    Or
- Jones, Driscoll, Ackerson, and Bell counter Smith, Yang, and Moore's argument by noting that the current spike in gun violence in America compels law makers to ad just gun laws (4).

Citing Multiple Works by the Same Author

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 others. Put short titles of books in italics and short titles of articles in quotation marks.

Citing two articles by the same author:

- Lightenor has argued that computers are not useful tools for small children ("Too Soon" 38), though he has acknowledged elsewhere 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).

Citing two books by the same author:

- Murray states that writing is "a process" that "varies with our thinking style" (Write to Learn 6). Additionally, Murray argues that the purpose of writing is to "carry ideas and information from the mind of one person into the mind of another" (A Writer Teaches Writing 3).

Additionally, if the author's name is not mentioned in the sentence, you would format your citation with the author's name followed by a comma, followed by a shortened title of the work, followed, when appropriate, by page numbers:

- Visual studies, because it is such a new discipline, may be "too easy" (Elkins, "Visual Studies" 63).

Citing Multivolume Works

If you cite from different volumes of a multivolume work, always include the volume number followed by a colon. Put a space after the colon, then provide the page number(s). (If you only cite from one volume, provide only the page number in parentheses.)

> . . . as Quintilian wrote in Institutio Oratoria (1: 14-17).

Citing the *Bible*

In your first parenthetical citation, you want to make clear which *Bible* you're using (and underline or italicize 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).

If future references employ the same edition of the *Bible* you're using, list only the book, chapter, and verse in the parenthetical citation.

Citing Indirect Sources

Sometimes you may have to use an indirect source. An indirect source is a source cited in another source. For such indirect quotations, use "qtd. in" to indicate the source you actually consulted. For example:

- Ravitch argues that high schools are pressured to act as "social service centers, and they don't do that well" (qtd. in Weisman 259).

Note that, in most cases, a responsible researcher will attempt to find the original source, rather than citing an indirect source.

Citing Non-Print or Sources from the Internet

With more and more scholarly work being posted on the Internet, you may have to cite research you have completed in virtual environments. While many sources on the Internet should not be used for scholarly work, some Web sources are perfectly acceptable for research. When creating in-text citations for electronic, film, or Internet sources, remember that your citation must reference the source in your Works Cited.

Sometimes writers are confused with how to craft parenthetical citations for electronic sources because of the absence of page numbers, but often, these sorts of entries do not require any sort of parenthetical citation at all.

For electronic and Internet sources, follow the following guidelines:

- Include in the text the first item that appears in the Work Cited entry that corresponds to the citation (e.g. author name, article name, website name, film name).

- You do not need to give paragraph numbers or page numbers based on your Web browser's print preview function.

- Unless you must list the website name in the signal phrase in order to get the reader to the appropriate entry, do not include URLs in-text. Only provide partial URLs such as when the name of the site includes, for example, a domain name, like CNN.com or Forbes.com as opposed to writing out http://www.cnn.com or http://www.forbes.com.

Multiple Citations

To cite multiple sources in the same parenthetical reference, separate the citations by a semi-colon:

> . . . as has been discussed elsewhere (Burke 3; Dewey 21).

When a Citation Is Not Needed

Common sense and ethics should determine your need for documenting sources. You do not need to give sources for familiar proverbs, well-known quotations or common knowledge.

MLA Formatting Quotations

When you directly quote the works of others in your paper, you will format quotations differently depending on their length. Below are some basic guidelines for incorporating quotations into your paper. Please note that all pages in MLA should be double-spaced.

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. Provide the author and specific page citation (in the case of verse, provide line numbers) in the text, and include a complete reference on the Works Cited page. 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.

For example, when quoting short passages of prose, use the following examples:

- According to some, dreams express "profound aspects of personality" (Foulkes 184), though others disagree.

- 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)?

When short (fewer than three lines of verse) quotations from poetry, mark breaks in short quotations of verse with a slash, /, at the end of each line of verse (a space should precede and follow the slash).

- Cullen concludes, "Of all the things that happened there / That's all I remember" (11-12).

Long Quotations

For quotations that extend to more than four lines of verse or prose, place quotations in a free-standing block of text and omit quotation marks. Start the quotation on a new line, with the entire quote indented one inch from the left margin; maintain double-spacing. Only indent the first line of the quotation by an additional quarter inch if you are citing multiple paragraphs. Your parenthetical citation should come after the closing punctuation mark. When quoting verse, maintain original line breaks. (You should maintain double-spacing throughout your essay.)

For example, when citing more than four lines of prose, use the following examples:

- Nelly Dean treats Heathcliff poorly and dehumanizes him throughout her narration:

    They entirely refused to have it in bed with them, or even in their room, and I had no more sense, so, I put it on the landing of the stairs, hoping it would be gone on the morrow. By chance, or else attracted by hearing his voice, it crept to Mr. Earnshaw's door, and there he found it on quitting his chamber. Inquiries were made as to how it got there; I was obliged to confess, and in recompense for my cowardice and inhumanity was sent out of the house. (Bronte 78)

When citing long sections (more than three lines) of poetry, keep formatting as close to the original as possible.

In his poem "My Papa's Waltz," Theodore Roethke explores his childhood with his father:

    The whiskey on your breath
    Could make a small boy dizzy;
    But I hung on like death:
    Such waltzing was not easy.
    We Romped until the pans
    Slid from the kitchen shelf;
    My mother's countenance
    Could not unfrown itself. (quoted in Shrodes, Finestone,Shugrue 202)

When citing two or more paragraphs, use block quotation format, even if the passage from the paragraphs is less than four lines. Indent the first line of each quoted paragraph an extra quarter inch.

> In "American Origins of the Writing-across-the-Curriculum Movement," David Russell argues:
>> Writing has been an issue in American secondary and higher education since papers and examinations came into wide use in the 1870s, eventually driving out formal recitation and oral examination. . . .
>> From its birth in the late nineteenth century, progressive education has wrestled with the conflict within industrail society between pressure to increase specialization of knowledge and of professional work (upholding disciplinary standards) and pressure to integrate more fully an ever-widerning number of citizes into intellectually meaningful activity within mass society (promoting social equity). . . . (3)

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.

- 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 words by using ellipsis marks, which are three periods (. . .) preceded and followed by a space. For example:

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

Please note that brackets are not needed around ellipses unless adding brackets would clarify your use of ellipses.

MLA Works Cited Page

According to MLA style, you must have a Works Cited page at the end of your research paper. All entries in the Works Cited page must correspond to the works cited in your main text.

Basic Rules

- Begin your Works Cited page on a separate page at the end of your research paper. It should have the same one-inch margins and last name, page number header as the rest of your paper.

- Label the page Works Cited (do not italicize the words Works Cited or put them in quotation marks) and center the words Works Cited at the top of the page.

- Double space all citations, but do not skip spaces between entries.

- Indent the second and subsequent lines of citations five spaces so that you create a hanging indent.

- List page numbers of sources 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.

Capitalization and Punctuation

Capitalize each word in the titles of articles, books, etc, but do not capitalize articles (the, an), prepositions, or conjunctions unless one is the first word of the title or subtitle: Gone with the Wind, The Art of War, There Is Nothing Left to Lose.

Listing Author Names

Entries are listed alphabetically by the author's last name (or, for entire edited collections, editor names). Author names are written last name first; middle names or middle initials follow the first name:

> Burke, Kenneth
> Levy, David M.
> Wallace, David Foster

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.

More than One Work by an Author

If you have cited more than one work by a particular author, order the entries alphabetically by title, and use three hyphens in place of the author's name for every entry after the first:

> Burke, Kenneth. A Grammar of Motives. [...]
> ---. A Rhetoric of Motives. [...]

When an author or collection editor appears both as the sole author of a text and as the first author of a group, list solo-author entries first:

> Heller, Steven, ed. The Education of an E-Designer.
> Heller, Steven and Karen Pomeroy. Design Literacy: Understanding Graphic

Work with No Known Author

Alphabetize works with no known author by their title; use a shortened version of the title in the parenthetical citations in your paper. In this case, Boring Postcards USA has no known author:

> Baudrillard, Jean. Simulacra and Simulations. [...]
> Boring Postcards USA. [...]
> Burke, Kenneth. A Rhetoric of Motives. [...]

Bibliographies in MLA Style

Books

1. A Book by a Single Author:

Author's Last Name, First Name Middle Name. <u>Title</u>. City of Publication: Publisher, Copyright Date.

Example:
Jansen, Sue Curry. <u>Censorship: The Knot that Binds Power and Knowledge.</u> New York: Oxford UP, 1991.

2. A Book by Two or Three Authors:

First Author's Last Name, First Name Middle Name and Second Author's First Name Middle Name Last Name. <u>Title</u>. City of Publication: Publisher, Copyright Date.

Example:
Leonard, Warren H. and John H. Martin. <u>Cereal Crops</u>. New York: Macmillan,1963.

Silverstein, Alvin, Virginia B. Silverstein and Robert A. Silverstein. <u>TheAddictions Handbook</u>. Hillside, NJ: Enslow, 1991.

3. A Book by More Than Three Authors:

Author's Last Name, First Name, et al. <u>Title</u>. City of Publication: Publisher,Copyright Date.

Example:
Gilman, Sander, et al. <u>Hysteria Beyond Freud</u>. Berkeley: U of California P, 1993.

4. A Book with an Editor But No Author:

Editor's Last Name, First Name, ed. <u>Title of the Book</u>. City of Publication: Publisher, Copyright Date.

Example:
Whitman, Wanda Wilson, ed. <u>Songs That Changed the World</u>. New York:Crown, 1969.

5. An Anonymous Book:

<u>Title</u>. City of Publication: Publisher, Copyright Date.

Example:
<u>American Christmas Crafts & Foods</u>. DesMoines: Meredith, 1984.

6. A Book by a Corporate Author:

Corporation. <u>Title</u>. City of Publication, Publisher, Copyright Date.

Example:
American Medical Association. <u>Home Medical Encyclopedia</u>. New York:Random, 1989.

7. A Work in an Anthology:

Author's Last Name, First Name Middle Name. "Title of the Piece." <u>Title of the Work</u>. Ed. Editor's Name. City : Publisher, Copyright Date. Pages.

Example:
Gamache, Denise. "Domination and Control: The Social Context of Dating Violence." <u>Dating Violence: Young Women In Danger.</u> Ed. Barrie Levy. Seattle: Seal, 1998. 69-83.

8. An Article in a General Encyclopedia:

Author's Last Name, First Name Middle Name. "Title of the Article." <u>Title of the Encyclopedia</u>. Date (ed).

Example:
Rockwell, Ford A. "Pirates and Piracy." <u>Compton's Encyclopedia</u>. 2001 ed.

9. A Book in a Numbered Series:

Author's Last Name, First Name. <u>Title of the Book</u>. Series. Series Number. City: Publisher, Copyright Date.

Example:
Walcott, Charles Child. <u>John O'Hara</u>. Pamphlets on American Writers. 80. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1969.

10. A Book in an Unnumbered Series:

Author's Last Name, First Name. <u>Title of the Book</u>. Series. City: Publisher,Copyright Date.

Example:
Chandler, David P. <u>The Land and People of Cambodia</u>. Portraits of the Nations.New York: Harper, 1991.

11. A Book with a Translator:

Author's Last Name, First Name. <u>Title of the Book</u>. Trans. Translator's Name. City: Publisher, Copyright Date.

Example:
Camus, Albert. <u>The Stranger</u>. Trans. Stuart Gilbert. New York: Knopf, 1970.

12. An Introduction, Preface, Foreword, or Afterward:

Author's Last Name, First Name Middle Name. Part of the Work Being Cited. <u>Title of the Book</u>. By Author of the Book. City of Publication: Publisher, Copyright Date. Page Numbers.

Example:
Elliott, Emory. Afterward. <u>The Jungle</u>. By Upton Sinclair. New York: Signet, 342-350.

13. One Volume of a Multivolume Work with the Same Title:

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of the Article." <u>Title of the Book</u>. Ed. Editor's Name. Vol. Number. City: Publisher, Copyright Date.Pages.

Example:
Rutland, Robert A. "James Madison." <u>The American Presidents</u>. Ed. Frank Magill. Vol. 1. Pasadena: Salem, 1986. 84-108.

14. One Volume of a Multi-Volume Work with Each Volume Having a Different Title:

Author's Last Name, First Name. <u>Title</u>. City: Publisher, Copyright Date. Vol.No. of <u>Title of the Multi-Volume Work</u>. Ed. Editor's Name. Total No. of vols. Inclusive Dates of Publication (if applicable).

Example:
Sherburn, George. <u>The Restoration and Eighteenth Century (1660 1789)</u>. New York: Appleton, 1948. Vol. 3 of <u>A Literary History of England.</u> Ed. Albert C. Baugh. 4 vols. 1948.

15. A Reprint of a Previously Published Work:

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of the Article." <u>Name of the Periodical</u> Volume (Date):Pages. Rpt. in <u>Title of the Book</u>. Ed. Editor's Name. Series Title. City: Publisher, Date. Pages.

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of the Article." <u>Title of the Book</u>. Ed. Editor's Name. City: Publisher, Date. Pages. Rpt. in <u>Title of the Book</u>. Ed. Editor's   Name. Series Title. City: Publisher, Date. Pages.

Examples:
Davidson, Edward H. "Dimmesdale's Fall." <u>New England Quarterly</u> 36 (Sept., 1963): 358-370. Rpt. in <u>Twentieth Century Interpretations of</u> The Scarlet Letter. Ed. John Gerber. Twentieth Century Interpretations. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice, 1968. 82-92.

Fiedler, Leslie A. "From 'Achievement and Frustration'." <u>Love and Death in the American Novel</u>. New York: Dell, 1966. 233-234. Rpt. in <u>Twentieth Century Interpretations of</u> The Scarlet Letter. Ed. John Gerber. Twentieth Century Interpretations. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice, 1968. 113-114.

MLA Works Cited: Electronic Sources

MLA lists electronic sources as Web Publications. Thus, when including the medium of publication for electronic sources, list the medium as Web. *It is always a good idea to maintain personal copies of electronic information, when possible. It is good practice to print or save Web pages or, better, using a program like Adobe Acrobat, to keep your own copies for future reference.* Most Web browsers will include URL/electronic address information when you print, which makes later reference easy. Also, you might use the Bookmark function in your Web browser in order to return to documents more easily.

Important Note on the Use of URLs in MLA

MLA no longer requires the use of URLs in MLA citations. Because Web addresses are not static (i.e., they change often) and because documents sometimes appear in multiple places on the Web (e.g., on multiple databases), MLA explains that most readers can find electronic sources via title or author searches in Internet Search Engines.

However, all instructors in the Highlands' English Department will require you to submit your Works Cited page electronically. You will be required to hyperlink the electronic source to the word "Web" in your entry. Your instructor will then be able to click on the source directly from your bibliography entry. Please visit the writing lab for help creating hyperlinks.

> Aristotle. *Poetics*. Trans. S. H. Butcher. *The Internet Classics Archive*. Web Atomic and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 13 Sept. 2007. Web. 4 Nov. 2008.

Abbreviations Commonly Used with Electronic Sources

If publishing information is unavailable for entries that require publication information such as publisher (or sponsor) names and publishing dates, MLA requires the use of special abbreviations to indicate that this information is not available.

- Use **n.p.** to indicate that neither a publisher nor a sponsor name has been provided.
- Use **n.d.** when the Web page does not provide a publication date.
- Use **n. pag.** when an entry requires that you provide a page but no pages are provided in the source.

Basic Style for Citations of Electronic Sources (Including Online Databases)

Here are some common features you should try and find before citing electronic sources in MLA style. Not every Web page will provide all of the following information. However, collect as much of the following information as possible both for your citations and for your research notes:

- Author and/or editor names (if available)
- Article name in quotation marks (if applicable)
- Title of the Website, project, or book in italics. (Remember that some Print publications have Web publications with slightly different names. They may, for example, include the additional information or otherwise modified information, like domain names [e.g. .com or .net].)
- Any version numbers available, including revisions, posting dates, volumes, or issue numbers.
- Publisher information, including the publisher name and publishing date.
- Take note of any page numbers (if available).
- Date you accessed the material.
- URL (if required, or for your own personal reference; MLA does not require a URL).

Citing an Entire Web Site

It is necessary to list your date of access because web postings are often updated, and information available on one date may no longer be available later. If a URL is required or you chose to include one, be sure to include the complete address for the site. (Note: The following examples do not include a URL because MLA no longer requires a URL to be included.)

Remember to use **n.p. if no publisher name is available** and **n.d. if no publishing date is given.**

Editor, author, or compiler name (if available). Name of Site. Version number. Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher), date of resource creation (if available). Medium of publication. Date of access.

> *The Purdue OWL Family of Sites*. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2008. Web. 23 Apr. 2008.

> Felluga, Dino. *Guide to Literary and Critical Theory*. Purdue U, 28 Nov. 2003. Web. 10 May 2006.

A Page on a Web Site

For an individual page on a Web site, list the author or alias if known, followed by the information covered above for entire Web sites. Remember to use **n.p. if no publisher name** is available and **n.d. if no publishing date** is given.

"How to Make Vegetarian Chili." eHow. Demand Media, Inc., n.d. Web. 24 Feb. 2009.

An Image (Including a Painting, Sculpture, or Photograph)

Provide the artist's name, the work of art italicized, the date of creation, the institution and city where the work is housed. Follow this initial entry with the name of the Website in italics, the medium of publication, and the date of access.

Klee, Paul. *Twittering Machine*. 1922. Museum of Modern Art, New York.The Artchive. Web. 22 May 2006.

An Article in a Web Magazine

Provide the author name, article name in quotation marks, title of the Web magazine in italics, publisher name, publication date, medium of publication, and the date of access. Remember to use **n.p. if no publisher name** is available and **n.d. if no publishing date** is given.

Bernstein, Mark. "10 Tips on Writing the Living Web." A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites. A List Apart Mag., 16 Aug. 2002. Web. 4 May 2009.

An Article in an Online Scholarly Journal

For all online scholarly journals, provide the author(s) name(s), the name of the article in quotation marks, the title of the publication in italics, all volume and issue numbers, and the year of publication.

Article in an Online-only Scholarly Journal

MLA requires a page range for articles that appear in Scholarly Journals. If the journal you are citing appears exclusively in an online format (i.e. there is no corresponding print publication) that does not make use of page numbers, use the abbreviation **n. pag. to denote that there is no pagination for the publication**.

Dolby, Nadine. "Research in Youth Culture and Policy: Current Conditions and Future Directions." Social Work and Society: The International Online-Only Journal 6.2 (2008): n. pag. Web. 20 May 2009.

An Article from an Online Database (or Other Electronic Subscription Service)

Cite articles from online databases (e.g. LexisNexis, ProQuest, JSTOR, ScienceDirect) and other subscription services just as you would print sources. Since these articles usually come from periodicals, be sure to consult the appropriate sections of the Works Cited: Periodicals page. In addition to this information, provide the title of the database italicized, the medium of publication, and the date of access.

Note: Previous editions of the MLA Style Manual required information about the subscribing institution (name and location). This information is no longer required by MLA.

Junge, Wolfgang, and Nathan Nelson. "Nature's Rotary Electromotors."Science 29 Apr. 2005: 642-44. Science Online. Web. 5 Mar. 2009.

Langhamer, Claire. "Love and Courtship in Mid-Twentieth-Century England." Historical Journal 50.1 (2007): 173-96. ProQuest. Web. 27 May 2009.

E-mail (including E-mail Interviews)

Give the author of the message, followed by the subject line in quotation marks. State to whom to message was sent, the date the message was sent, and the medium of publication.

Kunka, Andrew. "Re: Modernist Literature." Message to the author. 15 Nov. 2000. E-mail.

Neyhart, David. "Re: Online Tutoring." Message to Joe Barbato. 1 Dec. 2000. E-mail.

A Listserv, Discussion Group, or Blog Posting

Cite Web postings as you would a standard Web entry. Provide the author of the work, the title of the posting in quotation marks, the Web site name in italics, the publisher, and the posting date. Follow with the medium of publication and the date of access. Include screen names as author names when author name is not known. If both names are known, place the author's name in brackets. Remember **if the publisher of the site is unknown, use the abbreviation n.p.**

Editor, screen name, author, or compiler name (if available). "Posting Title." Name of Site. Version number (if available). Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher). Medium of publication. Date of access.

Salmar1515 [Sal Hernandez]. "Re: Best Strategy: Fenced Pastures vs. Max Number of Rooms?" BoardGameGeek. BoardGameGeek, 29 Sept. 2008. Web. 5 Apr. 2009.

A Tweet

MLA posted guidelines on their website for how to cite a tweet on a Works Cited page. Begin with the user's name (Last Name, First Name) followed by his/her Twitter user name in parentheses. Insert a period outside the parentheses. Next, place the tweet in its entirety in quotations, inserting a period after the tweet within the quotations. Include the date and time of posting, using the reader's time zone; separate the date and time with a comma and end with a period. Include the word "Tweet" afterwards and end with a period.

Brokaw, Tom (tombrokaw). "SC demonstrated why all the debates are the engines of this campaign." 22 Jan. 2012, 3:06 a.m. Tweet.

Bibliography FAQS

1. What is the correct inverted order for a name?

The correct inverted order for a name is last name, first name middle name. Omit titles, affiliations and degrees from the citation. Include suffixes that are an essential part of the name at the end, preceded by a comma.

Examples:
On title page: *In bibliographical citation:*
Richard Moore, M.D., PhD.   Moore, Richard
Lady Susan Pulbrook   Pulbrook, Susan
Martin Luther King, Jr.   King, Martin Luther, Jr.

2. How do I underline a title of a book within another title?

If the title of one book is incorporated into the title of a second, do not underline the incorporated title.
Example:
Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Tempest.

3. Which city do I include in the bibliographic citation if there is more than one city on the title page?

Use the first one.

4. Which date do I use: publication date, printing date or copyright date?

Use the publication date if it appears on the title page. If not, use the latest copyright date from the verso (back) of the title page.

5. What if I know the publisher but cannot find the city?

The librarian has a copy of Books In Print that has addresses in it. The library catalog may provide the city by doing a keyword search for the publisher's name. A third way to locate the city is to locate the company's website.

6. What should I do when I cannot find an example that exactly matches my article or book?

There are always articles or books that do not exactly fit the molds. Often, several different formats must be blended together to make an accurate citation.

In general this is the order of the book citation:
Author. "Title of the Part." Title of the Book. Editor, Translator, or Compiler. Edition Used. Number of the Volume Used. Series. City: Publisher, Date. Pages Numbers.

In general, this is the order of a world-wide web citation:

Author. "Title of the Part." Title of the Book. (if applicable) City: Publisher, Date. (if applicable) Title of the Database.. Name of the editor (if known). Version Number. Date of Latest Update. Name of the Sponsoring Organization. Date of Access < URL>.

7. What if I cannot find publication information or page numbers:

These are the appropriate abbreviations:
No place (city)   N.p.
No publisher   n.p.
No date   n.d.
No pages   N.pag.

8. How should I abbreviate the names of publishers?

- Omit articles (a, an, the), business abbreviations (Corp., Inc., Ltd.), and descriptive words (Press, Books, Publisher). When citing a university press, always use the letters UP (Ohio State UP).
- If the publisher's name is the name of one person, use only the surname. If the publisher's name is the surname of several people, use only the surname of the first (Harper, Norton, Harcourt).
- Use standard abbreviations where possible (Assn., Soc., Acad.).
- If the publisher's name is commonly abbreviated in capital letters, you may use them (NASA, AMA, ASPCA).

9. How do I abbreviate the names of the months?

Use these abbreviations: Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec. May, June and July are not abbreviated.

10. What do I do with Roman numerals?

If the Roman numerals indicate page numbers, leave them alone. If they indicate volume numbers, convert then to Arabic numerals. M = 1000, D = 500, C= 100, L = 50, X = 10, v = 5, I = 1. A smaller character before a larger character means subtract, e.g. XC = 90.

2

Bibliography and Note Cards

Bibliography Cards

You must follow the directions (form) which appears on this sheet, exactly. Do not add, subtract or "move around" anything specified in the samples below.

Size of cards: - 4 x 6 –lined

Medium: Blue or black ink. Do not use pencil. It smears.

You should have a bib card for each source that you read and take notes on. I am not interested in bib cards for sources that you never researched or which proved not useful to your needs.

DO NOT MAKE OUT A BIB CARD FROM THE CARD CATALOGUE OR THE READER'S GUIDE. MAKE OUT THE CARD ONLY WHEN YOU HAVE THE SOURCE IN YOUR HANDS AND YOU KNOW THAT THE INFORMATION CONTAINED THEREIN WILL BE USEFUL.

Requirements for Senior Research Paper:

• This will vary. Please see your instructor for specifics

The bibliography card will contain the following information:

1.   the correct bibliography entry – according to MLA

2.   call number or VF (Vertical File) or WEB if web source

3.   source number (upper right hand corner)

4.   if the book is from another library, specify the name of that library under the call number.

Note: Source numbers are merely determined by the order in which you pick up and read your sources. It has nothing to do grouping types of sources such as books, journals, newspapers. Your first source may be a book, the second may be an interview, etc.

Note: indention for a bib entry is important. Indent the second line about three letter in. Subsequent lines will fall under the second line.

Sample Bib Card

Call Number	Source Number
Bibliography information Reverse Indent. Correct Format & Punctuation	

Notecards

Each notecard should contain:

1. slug

2. reference number (or source number)

3. author's last name

4. page number(s) on which idea being noted appears

5. the idea being noted

Concerning The Slug:

It identifies the content of the card. It should be brief but not vague. It should not repeat the content of the card exactly. If it did repeat the content of the card too closely, it would not serve its purpose. It should provide a "guide" to the card's content.

Since every card will contain new information, it logically follows that no two slugs will be exactly alike. A category heading may be repeated, but some additional data must be added to make each card different.

Concerning page numbers:

Accuracy is crucial. If I look up a quotation or an idea which you have placed in your paper, the page number you have given me (on the notecard) should be on the exact page in the source where I can find the idea repeated.

If you decide to use an idea from your notecard in your paper, you must be able to identify the source of that idea. Identification takes place in the footnote. A footnote entry specifies the exact page on which the idea was found.

This is the main entry on the card.

It may be:

• an exact quote – be sure to use quotation marks
• a paraphrase
• a phrase (fragment)

Sample Notecard

Slug – More than one word	Source Number
Notes Centered " " for direct quotes	
(Author's Last Name & Page #)	

Please note: You will have only one bib card with source #3 but you may have many notecards marked #3.

Remember: There is not a single item on either the bibliography card or the notecard which you are permitted to eliminate. You are not permitted to arrange the data in any matter you wish. You must follow the guidelines provided on this and previous sheets.

Most important: The majority of students will copy down ideas verbatim – word for word. These constitute exact quotations. Do not paraphrase a little and quote exactly, a little on the same notecard. Paraphrase or quote completely. When you do quote exactly, use the quotation marks immediately after completing the card. Do not plan to go back and put them in later. You run the very real risk of setting yourself up for plagiarism later on.

Final Notice: NEATNESS DOES COUNT!

Writing eases my suffering. It's my soul's medicine. I write what I wanna write about. I write when I hurt. I write what I fear. Writing is my form of personal freedom. I write to save myself. I write to survive as an individual.

Amor Magn

3

Basic Tips For Writing A Literary Analysis

Basic Tips for Writing a Literary Analysis

1. Write in the present tense.

EXAMPLE: In Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily," the townspeople visit Emily Grierson's house because it smells bad.

NOT: In Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily," the townspeople visited Emily Grierson's house because it smelled bad.

2. Normally, keep yourself out of your analysis; in other words, use the third person (no I or you). Some instructors may require or allow the first or second person in an informal analysis if the usage is consistent, however, so check with your instructor.

FIRST PERSON: I believe that the narrator in "Sonny's Blues" is a dynamic character because I read many details about the changes in his attitude toward and relationship with Sonny.

THIRD PERSON: The narrator in "Sonny's Blues" is a dynamic character who changes his attitude toward and relationship with Sonny as the story progresses.

SECOND PERSON: At the end of "Everyday Use," Mama realizes that Maggie is like her but has not received the attention you should give your daughter to help her attain self-esteem.

THIRD PERSON: At the end of "Everyday Use," Mama realizes that Maggie is like her but has not received enough attention to build self-esteem.

3. Avoid summarizing the plot (i.e., retelling the story literally). Instead analyze (form a thesis about and explain) the story in literary terms.

PLOT SUMMARY: In Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart," the mad narrator explains in detail how he kills the old man, who screams as he dies. After being alerted by a neigh-

bor, the police arrive, and the madman gives them a tour through the house, finally halting in the old man's bedroom, where he has buried the man beneath the floor planks under the bed. As he is talking, the narrator hears what he thinks is the old man's heart beating loudly, and he is driven to confess the murder.

ANALYSIS: Though the narrator claims he is not mad, the reader realizes that the narrator in "The Telltale Heart" is unreliable and lies about his sanity. For example, the mad narrator says he can hear "all things in the heaven and in the earth." Sane people cannot. He also lies to the police when he tells them that the shriek they hear occurs in his dream. Though sane people do lie, most do not meticulously plan murders, lie to the police, and then confess without prompting. Finally, the madman is so plagued with guilt that he hears his own conscience in the form of the old man's heart beating loudly. Dead hearts do not beat, nor do sane people confuse their consciences with the sounds of external objects.

4. Include a clear thesis statement which addresses something meaningful about the literature, often about the theme. (See above)

5. Use literary terms to discuss your points (i.e., character, theme, setting, rhyme, point of view, alliteration, symbols, imagery, figurative language, protagonist, and so forth).

NONLITERARY TERMS: To show that women are important, Adrienne Rich writes about Aunt Jennifer and the tigers that she creates in her needlework.

LITERARY TERMS: The poem "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers" contains vivid images and symbols which reveal a feminist perspective.

6. Do not confuse characters' (in fiction or drama) or speakers' (in poetry) viewpoints with authors' viewpoints.

AUTHOR: As a black woman, Eudora Welty faces racism in "A Worn Path." (Eudora Welty, the author, was not black.)

CHARACTER: As a black woman, Old Phoenix faces racism in "A Worn Path." (Old Phoenix, a character, is black.)

POET: In "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," Robert Frost is tempted to drift into his subconscious dream world, yet he knows he has other obligations to fulfill when he states, "But I have promises to keep, / And miles to go before I sleep." (The pronoun "I" refers to the speaker of the poem, not to Robert Frost, the poet.)

SPEAKER: In "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," the speaker is tempted to drift into his subconscious dream world, yet he knows he has other obligations to fulfill when he states, "But I have promises to keep, / And miles to go before I sleep." (Here the "I" correctly refers to the speaker of the poem.)

7. Support your points with many quotations and paraphrases, but write the majority of your paper in your own words with your own ideas.

Writing eases my suffering. It's my soul's medicine. I write what I wanna write about. I write when I hurt. I write what I fear. Writing is my form of personal freedom. I write to save myself. I write to survive as an individual.

©Amor Magn

4

Literary Analysis: Using Elements of Literature

Students are asked to write literary analysis essays because this type of assignment encourages you to think about how and why a poem, short story, novel, or play was written. To successfully analyze literature, you'll need to remember that authors make specific choices for particular reasons. Your essay should point out the author's choices and attempt to explain their significance.

Another way to look at a literary analysis is to consider a piece of literature from your own perspective. Rather than thinking about the author's intentions, you can develop an argument based on any single term (or combination of terms) listed below. You'll just need to use the original text to defend and explain your argument to the reader.

Allegory - narrative form in which the characters are representative of some larger humanistic trait (i.e. greed, vanity, or bravery) and attempt to convey some larger lesson or meaning to life. Although allegory was originally and traditionally character based, modern allegories tend to parallel story and theme.

• William Faulkner's A Rose for Emily- the decline of the Old South

• Robert Louis Stevenson's Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde- man's struggle to contain his inner primal instincts

• District 9- South African Apartheid

• X Men- the evils of prejudice

• Harry Potter- the dangers of seeking "racial purity"

Character - representation of a person, place, or thing performing traditionally human activities or functions in a work of fiction

• Protagonist - The character the story revolves around.

• Antagonist - A character or force that opposes the protagonist.

- Minor character - Often provides support and illuminates the protagonist.

- Static character - A character that remains the same.

- Dynamic character - A character that changes in some important way.

- Characterization - The choices an author makes to reveal a character's personality, such as appearance, actions, dialogue, and motivations.

Look for: Connections, links, and clues between and about characters. Ask yourself what the function and significance of each character is. Make this determination based upon the character's history, what the reader is told (and not told), and what other characters say about themselves and others.

Connotation - implied meaning of word. BEWARE! Connotations can change over time.

- confidence/ arrogance

- mouse/ rat

- cautious/ scared

- curious/ nosey

- frugal/ cheap

Denotation - dictionary definition of a word

Diction - word choice that both conveys and emphasizes the meaning or theme of a poem through distinctions in sound, look, rhythm, syllable, letters, and definition

Figurative Language - the use of words to express meaning beyond the literal meaning of the words themselves

- Metaphor - contrasting to seemingly unalike things to enhance the meaning of a situation or theme without using like or as

You are the sunshine of my life.

- Simile - contrasting to seemingly unalike things to enhance the meaning of a situation or theme using like or as

What happens to a dream deferred, does it dry up like a raisin in the sun

- Hyperbole - exaggeration

I have a million things to do today.

- Personification - giving non-human objects human characteristics

America has thrown her hat into the ring, and will be joining forces with the British.

Imagery - the author's attempt to create a mental picture (or reference point) in the mind of the reader. Remember, though the most immediate forms of imagery are visual, strong and effective imagery can be used to invoke an emotional, sensational (taste, touch, smell etc) or even physical response.

Plot - the arrangement of ideas and/or incidents that make up a story

- Foreshadowing - When the writer clues the reader in to something that will eventually occur in the story; it may be explicit (obvious) or implied (disguised).

- Suspense - The tension that the author uses to create a feeling of discomfort about the unknown

- Conflict - Struggle between opposing forces.

- Exposition - Background information regarding the setting, characters, plot.

- Rising Action - The process the story follows as it builds to its main conflict

- Crisis - A significant turning point in the story that determines how it must end

- Resolution/Denouement - The way the story turns out.

Point of View - pertains to who tells the story and how it is told. The point of view of a story can sometimes indirectly establish the author's intentions.

Narrator - The person telling the story who may or may not be a character in the story.

- First-person - Narrator participates in action but sometimes has limited knowledge/vision.

- Second person - Narrator addresses the reader directly as though she is part of the story. (i.e. "You walk into your bedroom. You see clutter everywhere and...")

- Third Person (Objective) - Narrator is unnamed/unidentified (a detached observer). Does not assume character's perspective and is not a character in the story. The narrator reports on events and lets the reader supply the meaning.

- Omniscient - All-knowing narrator (multiple perspectives). The narrator knows what each character is thinking and feeling, not just what they are doing throughout the story. This type of narrator usually jumps around within the text, following one character for a few pages or chapters, and then switching to another character for a few pages, chapters, etc. Omniscient narra-

tors also sometimes step out of a particular character's mind to evaluate him or her in some meaningful way.

Setting - the place or location of the action. The setting provides the historical and cultural context for characters. It often can symbolize the emotional state of characters. Example – In Poe's The Fall of the House of Usher, the crumbling old mansion reflects the decaying state of both the family and the narrator's mind.

Speaker - the person delivering the poem. Remember, a poem does not have to have a speaker, and the speaker and the poet are not necessarily one in the same.

Structure (fiction) - The way that the writer arranges the plot of a story.

Look for: Repeated elements in action, gesture, dialogue, description, as well as shifts in direction, focus, time, place, etc.

Symbolism - when an object is meant to be representative of something or an idea greater than the object itself.

- Cross - representative of Christ or Christianity

- Bald Eagle - America or Patriotism

- Owl - wisdom or knowledge

- Yellow - implies cowardice or rot

Tone - the implied attitude towards the subject of the poem. Is it hopeful, pessimistic, dreary, worried? A poet conveys tone by combining all of the elements listed above to create a precise impression on the reader.

5

Active and Passive Voice in Writing

The English language has two voices—active voice and passive voice.   Both terms refer to the use of verbs.   Active voice is direct, vigorous, strong; passive voice is indirect, limp, weak, and—sneaky.

Active voice: Dan opened the bag.

Dan is the subject of the sentence, and Dan acted.   He did something—he opened.   The verb shows him in action. Any other sentence with an active verb could demonstrate the same principle:

• Rachel cheated.

• Chris skated.

• Mollie interrupted.

• Jamie tripped.

Whenever a verb shows the subject of a sentence doing something, the sentence is in active voice.

Passive voice: The bag was opened by Dan.

In this sentence, the subject is bag. But the bag is doing nothing at all. It is having something done to it.

The passive voice differs from the active voice in three ways:

• The subject expresses the goal of the action.

• A form of the verb be precedes a verb in its past participle form.

• The agent of the action appears after the verb in a "by-phrase" (but it may also be dropped).

Bells were rung, horns were blown, confetti was thrown from every office window, and embraces were exchanged by total strangers. (Passive Voice)

Bells rang, horns tooted, confetti streamed from every office window, and total strangers threw their arms around each other. (Active Voice)

The chief weakness of passive voice is its anonymity. It could almost be called the "nobody" voice: it is used by politicians to escape blame ("Mistakes were made.").

The room was cleaned.	The room was cleaned by Daniela.
The flowers were cut.	The flowers were cut by Josh.
The TV was turned on.	The TV was turned on by Fred.

Because of the anonymity of this style of sentence, the writer is tempted to include or tag on a name at the end of it. This may help the writer's conscience, but it doesn't help his writing. Despite adding the names, the subjects are still not acting; each is accepting whatever the rest of the sentence chooses to dish out. That's boring and makes for boring, uninteresting writing.

A good way to handle passive voice is to cut off the end of this kind of sentence and switch it around entirely:

• Daniela cleaned the room.

• Josh cut the flowers.

• Marcos turned on the lights.

6

Outlining Basics

Why create an outline? There are many reasons; but in general, it may be helpful to create an outline when you want to show the hierarchical relationship or logical ordering of information. For research papers, an outline may help you keep track of large amounts of information. For creative writing, an outline may help organize the various plot threads and help keep track of character traits. Many people find that organizing an oral report or presentation in outline form helps them speak more effectively in front of a crowd. Below are the primary reasons for creating an outline.

- Aids in the process of writing

- Helps you organize your ideas

- Presents your material in a logical form

- Shows the relationships among ideas in your writing

- Constructs an ordered overview of your writing

- Defines boundaries and groups

How do I create an outline?

- Determine the purpose of your paper.

- Determine the audience you are writing for.

- Develop the thesis of your paper.

Then:

- Brainstorm: List all the ideas that you want to include in your paper.

- Organize: Group related ideas together.

- Order: Arrange material in subsections from general to specific or from abstract to concrete.

- Label: Create main and sub headings.

Remember: creating an outline before writing your paper will make organizing your thoughts a lot easier. Whether you follow the suggested guidelines is up to you, but making any kind of outline (even just some jotting down some main ideas) will be beneficial to your writing process.

Outline Basics:
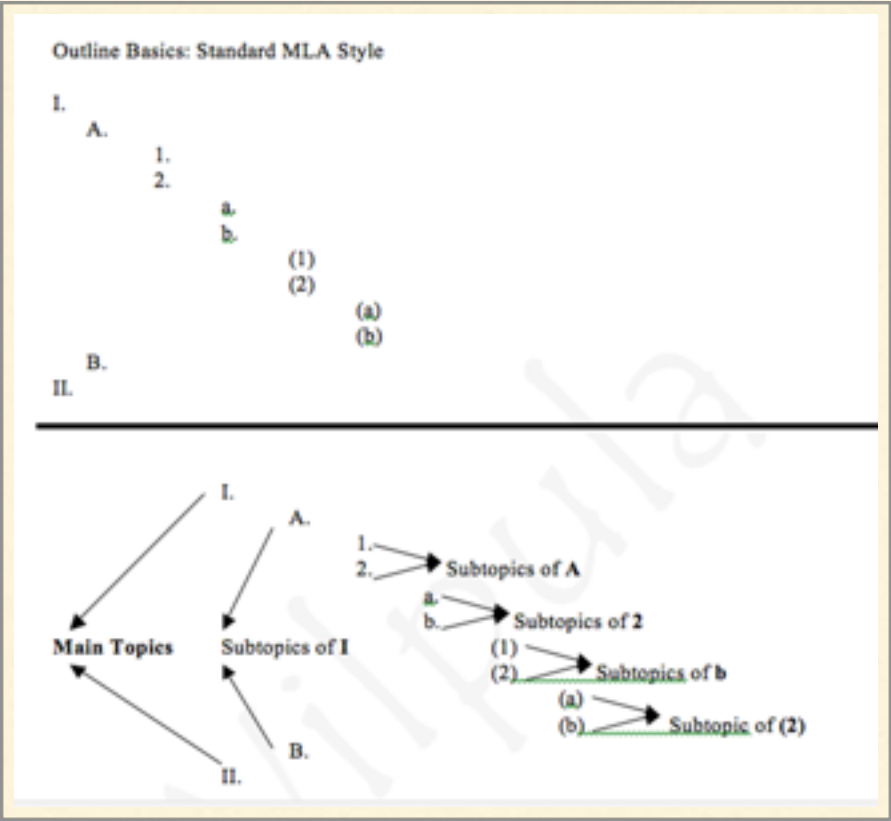
And so on. Your indentation of each heading will indicate the importance of the material; that is, you will progress from major concepts to minor ones. The degree to which you continue the subheads will depend, in part, upon the complexity of your subject; but, as a general rule, you should seldom find it necessary to carry the subheads beyond the first series of small letters.

In addition, headings of like rank on the same margin should have an equal importance. And, if you establish equal ideas, give them parallel form. Note the following:

I. Spring sports

A.   To play baseball

B.   Tennis

C.   Track

Obviously, the infinitive phrases "To play baseball" is not parallel with the nouns "Tennis" and "Track." If A is a noun, then make B and C nouns also, or if you prefer, make them infinities; but do not mix the grammatical forms.

When you indent outline headings, you are subordinating your ideas. Thus, if you find yourself attempting to enter a single subhead, you obviously have one major idea and not several subordinate ones. Note the following:

I. Spring Sports

A.   Baseball

    1.   History

B. Tennis

    1.   History

C.   Track

    1.   History

Clearly, the writer intends to discuss the history of the sports. Therefore, he might rearrange the entries in the following manner:

Spring Sports

I. The History of Baseball

  A. Origin

  B. Growth

  C. Maturity

II.   The History of Tennis

Since the reader knows that your introduction is first and that the conclusion is last, you need not insert such labels into your outline. Instead, you should name specifically the contents of that section.

Because it is the main idea of the entire paper and no other idea can rank equally with it, you should not label your thesis sentence as item I in the outline. Otherwise, you may find yourself searching fruitlessly for a parallel idea to put in II, III, and IV. Instead, you should write your thesis sentence separately, placing it above the outline.

There are three basic types of outlines: topic, sentence, or paragraph. You cannot alternate forms within a given outline. With the topic outline, every heading is a noun or its equivalent, a gerund phrase or an infinitive phrase. With the sentence outline, every heading is a sentence. With the paragraph outline, every heading is a paragraph or the major headings are nouns and the subheadings are paragraphs: however, you will seldom use the

paragraph outline, although it is valuable for papers that require multiple, complex details.

Reproduced below is a portion of a "Billy Budd" outline:

Topic Outline

Thesis sentence: Melville uses biblical references to support his interpretations of the moral issues that govern men's lives.

I. The Bible and Billy Budd

    A. The Bible

        1.   Righteousness

        2.   Wickedness

    B.   Billy Budd

        1.   A story of man's fall

        2.   A gospel story

    C.   Biblical references

        1.   Characters, ideas, and symbols

        2.   moral issues

            a.   Ambiguities

            b.   Rights and duties

Sentence Outline

I. The Bible and Billy Budd share similarities.

    A.   The Bible clarifies good and evil.

        1.   It praises righteousness.

        2.   It condemns wickedness.

    B.   Like the Bible, Billy Budd explores the realm of good and evil.

        1.   Melville centers his story around the fall of man.

        2.   He also writes a type of gospel story.

    C.   Melville intentionally uses biblical references.

        1.   He presents characters, ideas, and symbols.

        2.   He thereby offers moral principles that govern our lives.

            a.   He shows the ambiguities of these principles.

            b.   He pictures both the rights and obligations of man.

Rules for Outline

1) Place the title of you paper (a creative title) above the outline. It is not one of the numbered or lettered topics.

2) The terms Introduction, Body, Conclusion should not be included in the outline. They are not topics to be discussed in the composition. They are merely organizational units in the author's mind as he plans.

3) Use Roman numerals for the main topics. Subtopics are given letters and numbers as follows: capital letters, Arabic numerals, small letters, Arabic numerals in parentheses, small letters in parenthesis.

4) Indent subtopics so that all letters or numbers of the same kind will come directly under one another in a vertical line.

5) Begin each topic with a capital letter. Do not capitalize words other than the first in a topic or subtopic unless they are proper nouns or proper adjectives.

6) In a topic outline do not follow topics with a period

7) In a sentence outline, each sentence begins with a capital and ends with a period.

8) There must never be, under any topic, a lone subtopic; there must be either two or more subtopics or none at all. Subtopics are divisions of the topic above them. A topic cannot be divided into fewer than two parts.

9) As a rule, main topics should be parallel in form, and subtopics under the same topic should be parallel in form. If in a list of topics, the first is a noun, the others should be nouns; if it is an adjective, the others should be adjectives, etc. topics in the form of phrases should not be mixed with topics in the form of nouns or a noun and its modifiers