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# Writing Guide

5th Edition

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# The Keystone School Writing Guide

This *Guide* is designed to give you useful tips and information on proper writing techniques. It will serve to help you use consistent form across all your writing when conveying an idea or making an argument. If you are receiving this guide, you will have to complete a writing assignment for which this guide will be of great help.

**Think**  **Organize**  **Write**  **Review** 

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# Section 1: Think

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## Identify Goals of the Question or Assignment

Before you even begin to write, it is extremely important to think about the objectives of the question or the assignment. Identifying what needs to be accomplished will set the tone for answering the question or approaching the assignment. The requirements, goals, and strategies for writing an observational essay for an English class will be much different from those for an Economics research paper.

## Ask Questions

It is essential to understand everything that the question or assignment is asking. In the thinking part of the process, you need to determine whether or not you completely understand all parts of the question. This means asking questions, defining terms that may not be familiar or deciphering language that may be confusing. This simple step will lessen the chance of misinterpreting the question. Your teachers are your best resource to answer any questions since they are the ones who will grade the assignment. It is always a good idea to make sure you know what they are expecting.

## Follow Directions

The specific directions for each assignment are the ultimate guide to successfully completing the assignment and achieving a high grade. Take time to read the assignment or question thoroughly. Many people make the mistake of reading the first part of an assignment and assuming that they fully understand its purpose. Understanding all of the expectations of the assignment will help you avoid doing the assignment wrong, which might result in a lower grade. It is also important to check for rubrics for your writing assignments. All courses have rubrics that you can use to understand your teacher's expectations on your submissions. If you cannot access your rubrics, please contact your teacher for a copy.

# Section 1: Think (continued)

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## Background Information:

This information is provided to help you better understand your writing.

## Point-of-View

### First person point-of-view

**First person point-of-view** refers to the use of first-person pronouns *I* or *We*. If you write a paper with co-authors, you might use *we* in the paper when you are referring to actions or beliefs that you and your co-authors have taken. In the first person point-of-view, you write your paper from your own perspective. This includes your opinions, thoughts, ideas, and experiences. The use of first person point-of-view is usually avoided in academic writing. But, sometimes you are allowed to use it; for example, when you explain your own data or primary resources.

Example: *I was heading to the grocery store when I spotted a small dog crossing the road up ahead, in front of my car. I pulled to the side, to take a gander. Is this dog friendly? Should I approach it? I sat, with the car idling for a few moments, before gathering up the courage, to get out of the car, and walk toward the lost animal.*

### Second person point-of-view

**Second person point-of-view** means that you use the second-person pronoun *you*, in your writing. *You* can sound informal to your audience, so it is often avoided in academic writing. But, if you are writing a recipe for some food, or instructions, or in casual or creative writing, you may use second person point-of-view.

Example: *When you are going to make and bake a pizza yourself, the first items to gather are your cooking utensils and the ingredients needed. If making the dough from scratch, you will need ½ cup warm water, 1 package of active dry yeast, 3 ½ cups of flour, 2 tablespoons of olive oil, 1 ½ teaspoons of salt, and 1 teaspoon of sugar. Don't forget to preheat your oven, before you begin!*

### Third person point-of-view

**Third person point-of-view** refers to the use of third-person pronouns: *he*, *she*, *they*, and *it*. The third person point-of-view has a wide range of uses in both creative and academic contexts.

Example: *Nancy and Sue had just left their after school volunteer job at the local SPCA, when they noticed that a huge storm seemed to be brewing. Sue mentions the small, tiny snowflakes that began falling. The girls hurriedly ran to their car and began to warm it up. Once the whole car felt heated, Nancy and Sue started their drive on the already snow covered ground. It was slippery and wet, and Sue was surely nervous. "I hope we get home safely," she murmured, as they made their way onto the dimly lit highway.*

The Purdue OWL. Purdue U Writing Lab, 2010. Web. Dec. 2013.

# Section 1: Think (continued)

## Background Information:

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### Types of Writing

- **Expository** – This type of writing is informative. The writer’s purpose is to explain a subject or process to the reader. This type of writing is based on factual information, not opinions. Therefore, the writing *exposes* information.

Examples: *newspaper articles, magazine articles, research papers*

- **Persuasive** – This type of writing is influential. The writer’s purpose is to convince a reader to agree with his/her view about a topic. This type of writing contains justification and reasons to *persuade* a reader.

Examples: *advertisements for products, political debate speeches*

- **Narrative** – Writing in which the author tells a story. The story could be fact or fiction. This writing incorporates characters and a dialogue.

Examples: *novels, stories, biographies/autobiographies*

- **Descriptive** – A type of expository writing that uses the five senses to paint a picture for the reader. This writing incorporates imagery and specific details.

Examples: *poetry*

## Section 2: Organize

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### **Brainstorm**

Brainstorming is the best way to begin thinking about how to approach an assignment. When you are brainstorming, you write down all of your ideas about what should be included in the assignment or essay. After you have your ideas written down, take time to think through this list to make sure that you have included everything that needs to go into the essay. You should go back to look at the directions to make sure that you have covered every part of the question or assignment.

### **Identify Main Points**

Using your brainstorming list, identify the main ideas that need to be covered. These main points will eventually become the topics for your paragraphs and will help you form your topic sentences. These ideas will become the skeletal part of the essay on which all other ideas will be organized.

### **Outline Your Ideas**

An outline is a crucial part of the process of putting an essay or paper together. The outline is a brief, organized look at the ideas that will be contained in the essay or paper. An outline will help you think about how to best organize your thoughts, ideas, and facts so that they come through in a smoothly flowing piece of writing where everything is in its place.

Start the outline by organizing the main points previously identified in an order that makes logical sense. Use the main points as the headings, and choose sub-points from the brainstorming list that will support or enhance the main ideas. Organize these sub-points under the main points in a logical manner. Once the outline is written, it can be used to write the essay or paper by simply expanding on the ideas that have been identified as important or useful. If you don't want to use an outline format, you may use another graphic organizer to arrange your ideas.



## Section 3: Write

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### Essay Guidelines

1. A paragraph develops a single point or idea and is almost always at least five to seven sentences. It usually takes five to seven sentences to compose a well-developed idea.
2. A question labeled as a short essay is usually at least three paragraphs. A well-developed essay is four to six paragraphs long and includes an introduction and conclusion.
3. Transition sentences help bridge the gap from one thought or idea to another, especially between paragraphs. A transition sentence is frequently either the first or last sentence in a paragraph. Often the topic sentence may be a transition sentence.
4. These essay guidelines are just that – guidelines. They do not need to be followed exactly point by point. However, following the guidelines will help you write a better essay.
5. Proofreading is a must! Check the setup of your essay to make sure it is in order and includes examples from your text or other sources. You should also double check your essay for grammar, punctuation, and spelling mistakes. You do not want to lose points because of minor errors. It is best to write your essay in a single day and then put it away for a while. After a day or two, reread your essay. You will be able to make improvements with a fresh outlook.

### Parts of an Essay

#### The Introduction

The introductory paragraph is an extremely important part of your essay because it gives the reader their first impression of your work. An effective introduction must grab the reader's interest and let the reader know what is to come. Some examples of various techniques to pull the reader in are:

1. Surprising fact or startling statistic  
Using a precise fact/statistic gives the essay greater meaning. Stating, "A lot of people died in the tsunami that happened in the other part of the world" is not nearly as effective as stating, "Over 250,000 men, women and children lost their lives in the tsunami that followed a devastating 9.3 earthquake in Indonesia on December 26, 2004."
2. A quote  
Using a quote from an expert on the subject will also make the essay more credible. A quality quote will help the reader connect to the essay. "Preliminary evidence shows that the tsunami's height along an extensive section of the shoreline south of the city of Banda Aceh, Indonesia, averaged about 80 feet above sea level and estimated the wave velocity of 45 feet per second moving toward shore" said Yoshinobu Tsuji of the University of Tokyo.
3. A definition  
Begin the paper by defining a word that directly relates to the topic of the essay. "Webster's dictionary defines a tsunami as a great sea wave produced by submarine earth movement or volcanic eruption."
4. A question  
Begin with a question that gets the reader thinking. The writer does not need to answer the question immediately, but it should be answered throughout the essay. "Can you imagine sitting on the beach and seeing a wall of water forty feet high racing toward you?"

## Section 3: Write (continued)

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### 5. An anecdote

An anecdote is a short descriptive story that helps to illustrate the writer's point. "People were sunbathing on the beach enjoying the morning when suddenly the water seemed to be pulled away from the shore exposing yards of beach and leaving hundreds of fish stranded."

### Thesis Statement

An introduction should also include a thesis statement, which is usually one sentence in the first paragraph that clearly states the main point of your essay. A strong thesis expresses one main idea. The reader needs to be able to see that your paper has one main point. If your thesis expresses more than one idea, then you might confuse your readers about the subject of your paper. Your thesis should also present a specific argument that you are proving with your paper.

Avoid announcing the thesis statement as if it were a thesis statement. In other words, avoid using phrases such as "The purpose of this paper is . . ." or "In this paper, I will attempt to . . ."

### Things to Avoid

1. Avoid referring to the title. "The Great Tsunami of December 2004."
2. Avoid uninteresting beginnings, such as "This essay is about" or "I am going to write about."
3. Avoid moving too abruptly into the main body; a smooth transition is important.
4. Avoid overdoing the introduction. Remember KISS-Keep It Short and Simple.

### The Body

The body of the essay is the combination of all paragraphs used to explain and support the thesis or main idea of your essay. Each paragraph should have its own topic sentence that shows the main point of the paragraph and relates the paragraphs to each other. There must be some reason why the third paragraph follows the second. It is important to arrange the supporting paragraphs in a logical order. The paragraphs should fit together in a way that will make sense to the reader and will be easy to follow.

Some ideas for arranging paragraphs include:

1. Time Order: starts at the beginning and tells the events in the order in which they happen.
2. Space Order: can be used to describe people, places or things in sequential order, top to bottom, front to back or clockwise.
3. Order of Importance: There are many ways to construct the body. You can arrange from most important to least important, least important to most important, or the most important with the least important 'sandwiched'. It all depends on what kind of message you are trying to convey.

### Transitions

Transitions can help you tie the paragraphs of an essay together. Transitions are words, phrases, or sentences that guide readers as they move through the paragraphs and signal connections among ideas. Transitional words may include:

1. Time or sequence: first, later, next, finally
2. Example: for example, for instance, such as
3. Enumeration: first, second, next
4. Contrast: on the other hand, however, in contrast

## Section 3: Write (continued)

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5. Comparison: like, likewise, similarly
6. Cause-Effect: because, therefore, since
7. Summation: in short, in summary, to conclude

### The Conclusion

The concluding paragraph should be a clear signal to your reader that you have completed what you had to say. It is important to summarize the main points of the essay and restate your thesis.

Some tips for writing effective conclusions are:

1. Keep the summary brief and to the point.
2. A phrase of transition such as *in short*, *so we can see*, and *finally* will let the reader know you are going to write a few sentences to summarize the essay.
3. Do not list the main points of each paragraph.
4. Do not introduce a new topic.
5. Do not restate your thesis statement in your final paragraph *in exactly the same words!*
6. Your conclusion should not end with a quote or paraphrase for a source.

### 6 + 1 Writing Traits

There are certain elements that are common to all types of writing, from one paragraph essays to ten page research papers. The *6 + 1 Writing Traits* were developed by teachers from throughout the country working together with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory to develop a model to evaluate writing and to help students improve their writing. This system is used in schools across the country and around the world. These traits can help you make sure that your writing presents your ideas effectively and keeps your reader engaged. Teachers can use these traits to evaluate all aspects of your writing, so be sure to address each one as you go.

#### 1. Idea Development

The Idea Development trait is how the message and thesis of the paper are supported by details and developed throughout. The thesis is a single, declarative sentence developed within the introduction of the paper which conveys the main message.

The details that support the message and thesis should be carefully chosen and clear. The Idea Development of the paper should hold the reader's attention throughout the essay by being fresh and original.

#### 2. Organization

Organization is how the writer structures the paper with a logical order. It should be developed with a clear beginning, middle and end.

#### 3. Voice

Voice is the writer's personal style developed through words and maintained within the paper. Through voice the writer expresses enthusiasm, thus creating interest for the reader.

## Section 3: Write (continued)

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4. Word Choice  
Word Choice involves the selection of rich and exact words to clearly convey the message.
5. Sentence Fluency  
Sentence Fluency strengthens the readability of the paper. The paper should be developed with complete sentences that vary in length and structure. The paper should be free of sentence fragments and run-ons.
6. Conventions  
Conventions consist of the mechanics of a paper including grammar, spelling, usage, punctuation, and capitalization. The paper should be free from errors in these areas.
7. Presentation  
Presentation is how the paper looks. Presentation affects the readability of a paper and needs to follow the format indicated by the teacher.

### Drafts

#### The Rough Draft

The rough draft is the first time you put your paper together and is based on your outline. Each part of the essay, the introduction, the body and the conclusion, should flow together logically and smoothly. The rough draft of an essay is not intended to be a paper ready to be handed in. The purpose of the draft is to allow you to get your ideas down on paper in sequences of sentences and paragraphs. Try not to get too tied up in details. The most important thing is to get your ideas on paper. The revisions will come later. Also, it's ok to delete sections from the rough draft, especially if it doesn't add to the point of your writing. Remember the rough draft is not the final paper.

#### Editing and Revising

When editing your essay it is important to focus on both the bigger picture (idea clarity, sentence structure, and phrases) and the smaller details (word choice and spelling). You will be checking for clarity, making sure you have addressed each part of the assignment in a logical way. Reread what you have written looking for places in which you may have missed part of a step or failed to link one step to another. Finally, check to see if your paragraphs flow together and have a sense of completeness and organization. Try reading your essay aloud. Often times you will be able to find errors in continuity that you may have overlooked. In some courses, you will turn in outlines or drafts of writing assignments. If your assignment is submitted in parts, it is important to incorporate any suggestions the teacher makes into your final submission. Submitting all parts at the same time does not allow for you to implement these suggestions into your work. Grades on these types of assignments can possibly suffer if all parts are submitted at the same time. Some assignments will ask you to submit a rough draft and a final copy. Use your teacher's feedback on your rough draft to edit and revise your essay. Be sure to do one final proofread for errors before you submit your final copy.

#### Final Draft

Before you hand in your final draft, carefully correct any typographical errors along with any mistakes in spelling, grammar, and usage that remain. Do not depend on Spell Check!



## Section 4: Review

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### Peer Review

Have you ever turned in an assignment only to have your teacher catch obvious mistakes that you cannot believe you missed? It is always a good idea to have someone else take a final look at your writing. A fresh pair of eyes will often catch awkward sentences, incorrect word choices, or bad grammar that you missed yourself. Sometimes a sentence might look perfectly clear to you since you wrote it, but someone else might notice when your ideas are not coming through clear. A brother, sister, parent, or friend can be a valuable tool to help fine tune your writing.

### Proofread

Now that the writing process is complete, there is one more step that will help make sure you turn in a polished final product. By this point you have put a lot of time and effort into your project—do not let its quality or overall effectiveness be diminished by little mistakes that you did not catch during the writing process.

Take your final draft and read it one more time. In this review you should focus on how well your ideas and presentation of information come through. Are all of your sentences clear? Are there any word choices that could be improved? Is your punctuation and spelling correct?

## Section 5: Documentation

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### Plagiarism

You must always give proper credit to the sources who supplied you with facts, ideas, or statistics. We fully expect and encourage you to seek out answers and information, but you must document your sources to avoid plagiarism.

Plagiarism is taking someone else's words or ideas and presenting them as your own. It can range in seriousness from simply not properly citing your sources or quotations to copying the work of others into your own paper without giving them credit. Plagiarism can easily be avoided by both properly using quotes and in-text citations as well as including a bibliography or works cited page. At Keystone we ask you to use MLA format for all documentation. You will find a detailed MLA style guide at the end of this section, but we will explain the basics here.

Online students may check their work using the web based plagiarism detection service Turnitin.com. Please contact your teacher for information on accessing and using Turnitin.com. Specific details regarding Keystone's Academic Honesty Policy can be found in the Student Handbook. If you have any questions, be sure to ask your teacher.

### Quotes

Well-placed quotes can add great flair, but they should not be overused and they absolutely must be placed within "quotation marks" and cited. This protects you from accidentally plagiarizing, and it shows your teacher that you truly understand what you are writing about. If you do use a quote, do not let it stand alone. Introduce the author in your writing and explain why the quote is significant to your topic. Quotes should not make up your argument; they should be used to make your argument stronger. See more information regarding short and long quotations Section 6: MLA Guidelines.

## Section 5: Documentation (continued)

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### Citations

Citations are notes placed in your paper that identify the sources of information used. They are placed at the end of a sentence in which you use a source or at the end of a paragraph where you used the same source throughout. If you use more than one source in a paragraph, each source should be cited. MLA uses parenthetical citations that list the first item in the bibliography entry—usually the author—and the page. The citations should show exactly where the information from a source can be found. See Section 6 for examples.

### Works Cited v. Bibliography

You may be wondering why the list of sources at the end of your final paper is called a works cited list and not a bibliography. A works cited list is a list of sources at the end of your paper that shows the sources that are actually cited in your paper in parenthetical citations. Before you cite all of your sources in the text of the paper, your list of sources is actually a working bibliography. Once you remove sources that you did not use in the paper (which you should do), you should rename your list “Works Cited”. This is proper MLA style. Any source listed in the Works Cited should be quoted at least once in your paper.

### Works Cited Page

The works cited page is where you provide detailed information **in alphabetical order** about the sources you used in your writing. A works cited entry should include the author, name of book, article, or website, publisher information, and date. This information enables your reader to find the source you used, while the citation tells them exactly where within that source a particular piece of information came from. See Section 6 for examples.

### A Note about Internet Sources

Any information found on the web must be cited in your writing and included in the works cited. Material taken word for word must be quoted and cited, just as it would if taken from a print source.

Just as with a print source, a citation should show the reader exactly where in a source the information can be found. Websites do not always have the information usually found in a works cited entry. If no author is given, use the title of the article or webpage as the first item in the works cited entry. If the article or webpage is part of a larger website like an encyclopedia, that can act like the title of a book or the publisher information. Also list the URL/web address, the date the material was posted if available, and the date you accessed the site.

## Section 5: Documentation (continued)

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### Credible Sources

It is very important that any sources that you use are credible. Credible means that these sources are from a reliable author, have current information, and are not biased. Using sources that fit these criteria ensure that your essays will have factual information.

With the Internet, it is even more important that you find credible resources to use. Many of the websites available that you may find while researching are not written by experts in that subject matter. Also, some websites can become out of date and not have the most current information. Websites may also be sponsored by agencies, corporations, or individuals that may present information that is very biased to one side of the topic. It is important to find websites that explain both sides of the argument so you get the whole story in your research.

There are several key questions to ask when you are reviewing a source for its credibility. You will want to consider the credibility, accuracy, objectivity, and support for each source that you use. The link below has some additional information to help you review websites or other resources. Your teachers will also be able to answer any questions that you may have about the credibility of resources!

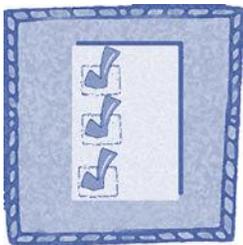
<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/evaluation.html>

Please note the above site has a specific domain that makes it particularly beneficial. Though certain wiki sites can be useful to gather information and point you to effective sources, they should NOT be used as a reference in your paper. Examples of trustworthy sites include domains with .edu/.gov/.org.

### Use the following checklist to ensure that you're using credible sources:

- Author
  - If you cannot find an author name, look for copyright credit or a hyperlink to an organization, individual, corporation, institution, and so on.
  - Credentials of author/authors and see if this information is verifiable
  - Contact information of author/authors is available
- Domain
  - The last segment of the “root” of the URL (.edu/.gov/.org)
- Purpose
  - Intended purpose of information (advertisement, advocacy, news, entertainment)
- Audience
  - Reading level of the page
  - Children, political extremists, academic researchers
- Currency
  - Recent date (recent dates does not mean the information is current)
  - Compare sources to determine if the information is up to date
- Objectivity
  - Author biases or balanced in her/her views
  - Conflicts of interests
- Accuracy/Support
  - Links for citations or sources

- Bibliographies included



## Section 6: MLA Guidelines

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### *MLA Style Sheet Guidelines*

The MLA style is quite easy; there are no endnotes or footnotes. First introduce the section you want to cite or use it in your paragraph and follow it with the author's name (unless it was included in the introduction) and the page number where you found the information. This documentation is placed in parentheses at the end of the section, generally before the ending punctuation. You should cite both direct quotes and paraphrased information. Below are several examples of parenthetical citations and a works cited page.

#### PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

The Modern Language Association (MLA) guidelines require that you **cite the quotations, summaries, paraphrases, and other material used from sources** within parentheses typically placed at the end of the sentence in which the quoted or paraphrased material appears. Citations should not appear at the end of paragraphs, as all source information should be followed up by further explanation. All information learned from research must be cited. The parenthetical method replaces the use of citation footnotes. These in-text parenthetical citations correspond to the full works cited entries found in a list of references at the end of your paper. (Note that the titles of works are italicized rather than underlined.) Unless otherwise indicated, on-line sources follow the same pattern as print versions.

#### ONE AUTHOR, NOT NAMED IN INTRODUCTION

This description of Grant and Lee extends itself to a contrast of the political philosophies of the two sides in the conflict (Lestler 97).

#### ONE AUTHOR, NAMED IN INTRODUCTION

According to Lestler, Americans must learn to recycle most of their waste or "communities will face never-ending debates over disposal sites" (129).

#### TWO OR MORE AUTHORS

Learning at home presents some challenges because this setting can be subject to distraction. Students must acquire the skills and habits of being effective distance learners (Moore and Kearsley 12).

## Section 6: MLA Guidelines (continued)

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### LONG QUOTATION

For quotations that are five or more lines, 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 five or more lines of text, 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 the formatting as close to the original as possible. See the following example:

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)

*The Purdue OWL*. Purdue U Writing Lab, 2010. Web. Dec. 2013.

## Section 6: MLA Guidelines (continued)

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### SHORT QUOTATION

To indicate short quotations (fewer than four typed lines) in your text, enclose the quotation within double quotation marks. Provide the author and specific page citation 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, use the following examples:

- o According to some, dreams express "profound aspects of personality" (Foulkes 184), though others disagree.
- o According to Foulkes's study, dreams may express "profound aspects of personality" (184).
- o Is it possible that dreams may express "profound aspects of personality" (Foulkes 184)?

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

For example:

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

## Section 6: MLA Guidelines (continued)

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### PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS FOR ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

This refers to information you may find on the World Wide Web, in emails, or on a CD-ROM. Since it is rare that you would be able to cite specific page numbers, make sure to include the author's name if possible, or the first significant word in the article title or the website title. If you aren't aware of the author's name, you should question the reliability of the source. Reliable sources will have citable authors. If you aren't sure of a source's reliability, you can always ask your teacher.

### SPECIFIC AUTHOR

When citing information from a specific author, you can model based on the following setup: "One problem of searching for materials on the World Wide Web, for instance, is that a search engine can return a listing from the Yale University English Department alongside a listing from my Aunt Millie" (Jones).

### NO SPECIFIC AUTHOR

If you do not have a specific author for the website, use the first significant word in the title of the article (in quotation marks) or the title of the website (italicized) for your citation. One basic approach to thinning is sport hunting, which is still legal, though restricted in various ways, in every western state except California ("Hunting Laws").

## THE WORKS CITED PAGE

### FORMAT GUIDELINES

- o Hanging Indents should be used for sources that take up more than one line.
- o Double-space between all entries.
- o Alphabetize the list by the first letter of the entry.
- o Web Sites should have author (if given), title underlined, date of publication or update (if available), originator (if available), date of access, and the URL (electronic address). Please note: when referencing electronic sources, the url/website is optional. However some instructors may still require it.
- o Needs to be on a separate page at the end.
- o The words, "Works Cited" should always be centered at the top of the page.

### BOOKS

To cite books (novels, textbooks, anthologies), give the author/s last name, and first name (if known). Next, include the title of the book, in italics; place (city) of publication, followed by semi-colons, and the publisher, and the date published. Finally, include the word Print.

Gumpert, David E. *How to Really Create a Successful Business Plan*. Boston: Inc. Publishing, 1996. Print.

Lestler, James D. *A Writer's Handbook: Style and Grammar*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1991. Print.

Moore, Michael G. and Greg Kearsley. *Distance Education: A Systems View*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1996. Print.

## Section 6: MLA Guidelines (continued)

### ELECTRONIC RESOURCES (websites, email, e-journals, discussion groups, etc.)

To cite files available on the WWW, give the author's name; last name first (if known); the full title of the work, in quotation marks; the title of the complete work (if applicable), in italics; any version or file numbers; and the date of the document or last revision (if available). Next, include "Web", followed by a period, and the date accessed.

Burka, Lauren P. "A Hypertext History of Multi-User Dimensions." 1993. MUD History. Web. 2 Aug. 1996.

"2004 Volcanic Activity of Mount St. Helens." Answers.com. Web. 19 Aug. 2010.

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.

For instructors or editors who still wish to require the use of URLs, MLA suggests that the URL appear in angle brackets after the date of access. Break URLs only after slashes.

Aristotle. *Poetics*. Trans. S.H. Butcher. *The Internet Classics Archive*. Web Atomic and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 13 Sept. 2007. Web. 4 Nov. 2008. <<http://classics.mit.edu/>>.

To cite electronic publications and databases, list the author's name, last name first (if known); the title of the article, in quotation marks; and the title of the software publication, in italics. Next, list any version or edition number or other identifying information, the series name (if applicable), and the date of publication. Finally, cite the name of the database (if applicable) and the name of the online service—both in italics—(or the word "Web" before date accessed), any other publication information, and the date accessed.

Christopher, Warren. "Working to Ensure a Secure and Comprehensive Peace in the Middle East." U.S. Dept. of State Dispatch 7:14, 1 Apr. 1996. *FastDoc*. OCLC. File #9606273898. 12 Aug. 1996.

To cite CD-ROMS, software programs, or games, cite the name of the author or corporate author (if available); the title of the software program, in italics; the version number (if applicable and if not included in the software title); and the publication information, including the date of publication (if known).

*ID Software*. *The Ultimate Doom*. New York: GT Interactive Software, 1995.

### FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT MLA CITATIONS:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>

# Section 7: Common MLA Formats

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## **An article or publication retrieved from an electronic database**

Author Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." Publication Name Volume Number (if necessary) Publication Date: page number-page number. Database name. Service Name. Library Name, City, State. Date of access <electronic address of the database - or remove angle brackets and include the word "Web">.

## **Article from a reference book**

"Title of Article." Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Print.

## **Article in a Periodical (such as a newspaper or magazine)**

Author Last Name, First Name. "Title of Author." Title of Source Day Month Year: pages. Print.

## **Article on a Web Site**

Author Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." Name of Web Site. Date of Posting/Revision. Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site. Web. Date of Access.

## **Book with one author**

Author Last Name, First Name. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Print.

## **Book with more than one author**

Author Last Name, First Name and First Name Last Name. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Print.

## **Recorded Films or Movies**

Title of Film. First and Last Name of Director. First and Last Names of Performers. Name of Distributor. Medium of publication.

## **Speeches, Lectures, or Other Oral Presentations**

Speaker Last Name, First Name. "Title of Speech." Name of meeting. Name of organization. Location of occasion. Date. Type of presentation.

## **Personal Interviews**

Interviewee Last Name, First Name. Personal interview. Date of interview.

## **Published Interviews (Broadcast)**

Interviewee Last Name, First Name. "Television, film series, etc. Title". Medium of publication. Medium Location, Date.

## **Web Site**

Author Last Name, First Name. Name of Page. Date of Posting/Revision. Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site. Web. Date of Access.

## Section 7: Common MLA Formats (continued)

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### Tips:

- 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.
- Medium of publication means how you obtain the information. Some examples would include print, web, DVD and/or television.
- Set your default font as Times New Roman, 12 point.
- Margins should be set at one inch on each side of your document.



## Section 8: Sample Essay

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Below is an example of an essay that illustrates some key types of citations:

### Introductory Paragraph

People who believe Mount St. Helens is the only active volcano in the continental United States are mistaken. To the casual observer, Mount St. Helens is the only volcano that is currently in the news. What people fail to recognize is that the Cascade Mountains have a series of dormant and active volcanoes that include Mount St. Helens, Mount Rainier, Mount Baker and Mount Hood. Further to the east lies Yellowstone National Park, which is the center of constant volcanic activity. Southward in California is Mount Lassen that last erupted from 1914 -1927.

### First Body Paragraph

Though Mount St. Helens had been quiet since the major eruption May 18, 1980, on October 1, 2004, the mountain reawakened. The ash plumes and steam eruptions have continued on almost a daily basis since. The new dome of the volcano has grown steadily since October 11, 2004, and is already 44 million cubic meters in volume. ("Volcanic Activity").

### Second Body Paragraph

Because of the natural wonders, tourists flock to Yellowstone National Park by the millions to view the boiling springs, Old Faithful, and the serene beauty of the forest. What the tourists do not realize is that they are in the midst of an active volcano. Though Yellowstone is not an erupting volcano, all the hot springs and geysers that abound in the Park are part of an ongoing active volcano system (Fishbein 12).

### Third Body Paragraph

On the other hand, most of us today have never heard of Mount Lassen. Yet on May 22, 1915, there was an explosive eruption at Lassen Peak, California. This volcano devastated nearby areas and rained volcanic ash as far away as 200 miles to the east. The explosion was the most powerful in a 1914-1917 series of eruptions that were the last to occur in the Cascades before the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens, Washington. Today hydrothermal activities abound in Mount Lassen with bubbling mudpots and hissing fumaroles ("Volcanic History").

### Concluding Paragraph

As you can see, the United States has many active volcanoes. Tourists may view the steam rising from Mount St. Helens, watch Old Faithful in Yellowstone erupt, and walk among the mudpots in Mount Lassen. We are lucky to be living in a time when we may view daily volcanic activity in our own country.

### Works Cited

"2004 Volcanic Activity of Mount St. Helens." *Answers.com*. Web. 19 Aug. 2005.

Fishbein, Seymour. *Yellowstone Country—the Enduring Wonder*. Washington D.C.: National Geographic Society. 1989. Print.

"Volcanic History of Lassen Park." *Exploring Lassen Volcanic National Park*. Mount Shasta,

## Section 9: Subject Specific Writing Tips

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You will notice as you get started with your courses that each of them will have some elements of writing- even the math ones! In order to help you with writing in different subject areas that you may not have had before, your teachers have provided some helpful tips. Please keep these in mind as you write!

### Science

- Pretend like you are writing to an anonymous reader.
- Your reader may not be an expert in the field so be sure to provide enough information that they will be comfortable reading your essay.
- Use a lot of **SPECIFIC** details to support what you say.
- Stay away from generalized information. In science, you are trying to prove a point!

### Math

- The rules of spelling and grammar still apply.
- Do not start sentences with equations.
- Use terminology appropriately. Some common English words have different meanings in math (eg. mean).

### Social Studies

- Don't start any sentence with a date.
- Use different forms of evidence (dates, names, places, reasons, causes, anecdotes) to support your claims.

### Foreign Languages

- Don't use slang specific to the language of that culture. Use language appropriate for a school environment.
- Work on the content first and then go back to put in the accent marks, etc.
- Many languages don't have the same syntax as English. Translating word for word is often inaccurate and incorrect.
- Keep your entries fluid, like a discussion.

### Arts

- Remember, in analysis and critiques, you are writing about your own personal reactions to different works. Don't include just facts, but your opinions as well.
- When discussing specific examples of artwork, be sure to identify them correctly; include the title in quotations, the artist and the date of completion.



## Section 10: General Writing Tips

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Some general tips that could be shared among all courses include:

- Spell checker isn't always right. Don't rely on it to catch everything.
- Write in complete sentences!
- Proofread, Proofread, Proofread! Don't lose points for minor mistakes.
- Be aware of good references and poor ones. Stay away from wikis and blogs.
- Do not write just to get it done. Writing is a process. Brainstorm and outline your ideas before starting. Review them once complete.
- Use note cards to visualize your topic, if they help.
- Revise and edit your rough draft.
- ALWAYS include a works cited page.
- It's ok to have a friend or family member review work before you submit it. Just make sure the work is original and your own creation.
- When picking topics, choose something that interests you. This makes it easier to write about.
- Read the directions in the beginning, middle, and end of your writing process. Make sure you are aware of what's being asked in the beginning, that you've addressed it in the middle, and that you've answered all parts of the question at the end.
- Essays need to be paragraph forms.

### MEAL Format

Try this easy way to remember how to construct a really solid essay. Your essay can be constructed following the MEAL Paragraph.

M: Main Idea- what is this paragraph about? Introductory Statement.

E: Example- This could be a quote, statistic, or important fact. This is the part that uses someone else's words to support your claim.

A: Analysis- At this part of the paragraph, you are going to use your own words to describe why the example you used earlier fits into what you want to say.

L: Link- Use this to transition to your next paragraph or argument.

A real good body paragraph will be constructed like this:

M --- E --- A --- E --- A --- E--- A--- L

A strong essay or research paper will be constructed with several paragraphs that follow the above format.

## Section 11: Common Mistakes



Here is a quick list of common mistakes that drive teachers crazy!

**Do not rely on spell check.** Spell check will not tell you when you use the wrong word (*now* instead of *know*, *to* instead of *too*, etc.), which can make it look like you do not know the difference. Good proofreading should help you catch those mistakes.

**Do not use slang.** It is great to have flair and personality in your writing, but always use proper grammar and language. Never use swear words or text speak.

**Do not use "etc."** Show your teacher that you know the whole answer.

**Always capitalize the pronoun "I."** Stay away from versions of the word "you". These connote a friendly relationship with the reader. Often times, they are used to make general statements as well like "We all celebrate Christmas". In this example, the writer is assuming that everyone celebrates the same holiday.

### Commonly confused words

- Accept, except — *Accept* means "to receive willingly." *Except* means "leave this one out."
- Affect, effect — *Affect* is a verb that means "to change." *Effect* is a noun that means "result."
- Almost, most — *Almost* means "nearly." *Most* means "more than half."
- A lot, alot, allot — *Alot* is an incorrect spelling for *a lot*. *Allot* is a totally different word meaning "to give out shares." *A lot* is the proper way to write the word.
- Its, it's — *Its* is the ownership form of *it*. *It's* is a conjunction of *it is*.
- Than, then — *Than* is used for comparisons. *Then* is used to show the order of events in time.
- Their, there, they're — *Their* is the ownership form of *they*. *There* means "not here." *They're* is short for *they are*.
- To, too, two — *To* means "in the direction of." *Too* means "also" or "excessively." *Two* is a number.
- Were, we're, where — *Were* is a past tense form of the verb "to be." *We're* is a contraction for "we are." *Where* signifies a place.
- Who, which, that — *Who*, *which*, and *that* are pronouns used to combine sentences. *Who* refers to people only. *Which* and *that* refer to things and events, not people.
- Who's and whose — *Who's* is the contraction for "who is." *Whose* is the ownership form of *who* and is usually followed by a noun.
- Your, you're — *Your* means "belonging to you." *You're* is a contraction of "you are."

### Pronoun-antecedent agreement

Your pronoun must agree with the noun that it is replacing. For example, in the following sentence, the word 'you' should be replaced with 'he' or 'she'.

Incorrect sentence: If **a person** wants to succeed in corporate life, **you** have to know the rules of the game.

Correct sentence: If **a person** wants to succeed in corporate life, **he** needs to know the rules of the game.



## Section 12: EBSCOHost - Research Tool (ONLINE only)

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Keystone values the importance of quality research and resources. Because of this, we provide online students with access to EBSCOhost. This can be used to help you find resources to use on writing assignments.

Our subscription includes access to the following research databases:

ERIC - access to educational literature and resources

Health Source - a rich collection of consumer health information

MAS Ultra - This comprehensive database, designed specifically for high school libraries, contains full text for more than 500 popular, high school magazines

Newspaper Source - provides cover-to-cover full text for 185 national (U.S.) and international newspapers

Professional Development Collection - the most comprehensive and most valuable collection of full text education journals in the world

TOPICsearch - current events database allows researchers to explore social, political & economic issues, scientific discoveries and other popular topics discussed in today's classrooms including controversial opinions and viewpoints.

In order to log into EBSCO, you will to go to the following URL: [search.ebscohost.com](http://search.ebscohost.com)

Please check the announcements page in your online course for the current login and password for EBSCOHost. If you need any assistance using EBSCOHost, please contact your teacher.

## Contact Keystone



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