MLA STYLE

GUIDELINES FOR THE RESEARCH PAPER

Fall 2004
When you are given a research paper assignment, you should first find out what specific instructions your instructor has as to length, subject matter, etc., then follow these guidelines:

I. Choose a topic.
   A. Narrow it down.
   B. Do some preliminary reading. (Record your sources.)
   C. Choose an approach. (Think of it as a problem or question to which you have to find a solution.)

II. Write a temporary outline with a thesis statement.

III. Begin to develop a list of sources. (This will eventually become your "Works Cited.")

IV. Take notes.
   A. Use index cards.
      1. Put one note on each card, plus author and page number where information was found.
      2. Put source of note on each card in proper form.
      3. Indicate all direct quotes.
      4. Put heading on each card.
   B. Organize note cards according to headings.

V. Write final thesis statement and outline.

VI. Write the body of the paper.
   A. Begin with thesis statement.
   B. End with a definite conclusion or summary statement.
   C. Document properly.
   D. Read and revise the paper.
   E. Write the final draft.

VII. Write the "Works Cited" page in the proper form.

VIII. Type research paper.
   A. The first page of the paper may be an outline page with thesis statement or the first page of actual text. Outlines are optional; check with your instructor about including an outline page. If an outline/thesis page is not required, the first page will start the text of the paper.
B. Spacing and margins – Refer to the page of illustrations for details of margin and spacing directions.

1. Spacing – Double space throughout the whole paper, including the Works Cited page.

2. Margin – If you are using the computer, do not justify the right margin of the paper.

C. Page numbering – Start page numbering with the first page of the text being number one and continuing on consecutively through the paper, appendices, illustrations, et cetera, ending with the last of the Works Cited pages. The page number, always preceded by your last name, goes in the upper right hand corner of each page. Stay within the top and right hand margin. (See illustration.)

D. Your information – At the top left-hand corner of the first page, staying within the top and left-hand margin, in a double spaced column, type your name; under that, type your instructor's name; under that, type the name of the course; and under that, type the date (in order of day, month, year). (See illustration.)

E. Title – Center the title (See illustration.)
MARGIN AND SPACING INFORMATION

The top of the first page of a research paper.

Double-spaced

Mary T. Conley
Professor Brown
English 258
2 May 2000

Ferber's So Big: Early Cook County
Edna Ferber's setting of small farms south of Chicago is

Indent 1/2" background for a novel that pictures the attitudes and society of

Running head of a research paper.

Ferber's attempt to show the contrast between the teacher's love of beauty and the farmer's lack of imagination...
The top of the first page of a works-cited list.

Begin at left margin

Double-space between title and first entry

Page Number

Indent 1/2"

Works Cited

Caudle, John J. "South Holland and Chicago's Farmers' Market,"


Double-space within and between entries
GATHERING DATA

Summary of How to Use the Library

There are basically two types of publications most students use for their source materials. These include books and/or periodicals. When trying to find books on your topic, the Prairie State College Online Public Access Catalog allows you access to a database for books and audio visual materials. The database represents the holding of over 70 Suburban Library System (SLS) libraries. In it you will see all the information found in a card catalog. The Online Catalog goes beyond a traditional card catalog in its ability to combine different types of searches and in its ability to search more than the author, title and subject headings assigned to an item. The Catalog also gives you the ability to see which library owns a particular item and whether it is currently on the shelves.

If you are interested in using information from periodicals (magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, etc.), the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature is very useful in locating journals that carry stories on your topic. Under your subject heading, you will find lists of articles that tell you in what magazine or newspaper the information you need is in. Go to the right window in the Learning Center and someone will assist you by either getting the magazine you need or by setting up a microfilm reader for you.

If ever you are in doubt about where to find something or desire more information than you have been able to locate, please be sure to see the reference librarian. She will be more than happy to help you.

What Information Should Be Considered

When writing a research paper, an individual is researching that which is interesting and important to himself. In a sense, the writer is trying to persuade others to his point of view, and thus, the writer should use only valid, professional sources. By using these types of sources, you command your audience to respect your written word.

Valid sources can be found in periodicals that are well known for their good journalistic techniques (i.e. Sun Times, Christian Science Monitor, Saturday Review, etc.) Sensationalist periodicals should be avoided (i.e. National Inquirer, The Star, Teen Magazine, etc.)

A source is even more reliable when it is a professional periodical that deals specifically with your general topic (American Journal of Sociology, The Wall Street Journal, Personnel and Guidance Journal, etc.)
Finally, a periodical is valid if it relates to your topic, whether it is or is not a journal for those in certain professions (i.e. topic: "The Whys Behind the Black Lawyer Shortage"--source: Ebony).

To be certain whether or not a book is a reliable source, the best method to check validity is to see what has been said about a book in the Book Review Digest. The reference librarian can show you where these books are located and how to use them.

How to Take Notes

When taking notes from a book, make sure that you include a heading about what the note deals with and all the information you will need in your documentation (see pages on documentation). The best way to take notes is to just jot down what you remember reading after you close the book. In other words, read a small section dealing with one of your sub-topics and then close the book before writing anything down. Do not worry about your writing style for these notes since that will come later when you do the actual writing.

If you find that you cannot put information into your own words, then you must be sure to put quotation marks around the quoted material in your notes. Be careful about making too many quoted notes.


**DOCUMENTING SOURCES**  
(MLA STYLE)

When writing a research paper, you must document sources to let readers know where the information came from and to give credit to the writers whose words and ideas you have used. Give the sources of your information in parentheses as close as possible to the material you are documenting.

The following examples give the most commonly used forms of parenthetical references:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Source</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A work by one author</td>
<td>(Smith 46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author or work named in actual text, cite only page number</td>
<td>(46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another work by author already cited, add abbreviated title of work</td>
<td>(Smith, <em>Causes</em> 22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works by different authors with same last names</td>
<td>(John Smith 98) (Jane Smith 24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A work by 2 or 3 authors</td>
<td>(Brown and Jones 123)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A work by 4 or more authors</td>
<td>(Brown et al. 127)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A work by an anonymous author, cite abbreviated title</td>
<td>(&quot;Mass Communication&quot; 42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A work in multi-volumes</td>
<td>(Robinson 4:241)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A quotation within a Cited Work - double reference</td>
<td>(qtd. in Smith 274)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary Works:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic verse play and poems</td>
<td>If the title is given in the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Act 3, Scene 1, Lines 56-89)</td>
<td>(3. 1. 56-89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novels</td>
<td>If the title is not given in the text, start reference with an abbreviated title (Ham. 3.1. 56-89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(page 216, part 2, chapter 12)</td>
<td>(216; pt.2, ch. 12) Note: See note above re: title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible - First Reference</td>
<td>(New Jerusalem Bible, John 1:5-10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another reference to same Bible</td>
<td>(Rev. 4: 6-8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following sample uses the MLA form with parenthetical in-text citations keyed to an alphabetical list of Works Cited at the end of the paper.

After spending the summer of 1922 in New York, the Fitzgeralads rented a house in Great Neck, Long Island. At Great Neck things turned disastrous for Fitzgerald. He would get drunk for two and three days at a time. Fitzgerald's expensive living soon "drained" his 1920-1924 income of $113,000 or more than $22,000 yearly (Blair 1278). Then after his play The Vegetable failed, Fitzgerald had to spend the winter of 1923 working on magazine stories in order to pay his debts. Fitzgerald said that these stories were "all trash and it nearly broke my heart" (Brown 156). Fitzgerald was in need of a change so in April, 1924, the Fitzgeralads sailed to the French Riviera.

The exhausting work of the previous winter made Fitzgerald feel that his novel The Great Gatsby was a "big test" for him. Piper writes that it took Fitzgerald two years to decide on the form to be used in The Great Gatsby, for he "wanted to write something new -- something extraordinary, beautiful, simple, and intricately patterned" (125). He then spent ten months in France and Italy writing The Great Gatsby. The Great Gatsby is now considered by many critics as the best novel of Fitzgerald's generation.

Works Cited

(These sources are found only at the end of the paper.)


WORKS CITED PAGE GUIDELINES

A list of all the sources used in your research paper must appear at the end of your paper on a page titled Works Cited. This list gives full publishing information for each source cited in the paper. Sources not actually cited in the paper should not be given in this list even if you may have read them.

Here are some general guidelines to help you prepare the Works Cited page:

- Number this page as a continuation of your text.
- Center heading 1 inch from the top of the page.
- Arrange each citation alphabetically according to the last name of the author or editor. If a source has no known author, list it alphabetically according to the first word of its title (ignoring a, an, or the).
- Do not indent the first line of each entry but indent any additional line five spaces.
- Double space throughout: between items and between lines in each item.
- Alphabetize multiple works by the same author according to title.
- Underline or italicize the titles of books, plays, long poems, pamphlets, periodicals, and films.
- Use quotation marks to indicate titles of short works that appear in larger works such as short stories, periodical and newspaper articles, and song titles.
- If you are citing a book whose title includes the title of another book, underline the whole title and put quotation marks around the title of the other author's book (for example, Twentieth Century Interpretations of "The Scarlet Letter").
- Use appropriate shortened forms for the publisher's name whenever possible (Harcourt instead of Harcourt Brace).

Refer to examples on the following page.
Abbreviations for MLA Documentation

Selected Publishers

Then the publisher’s name includes the name of one person (Harry N. Abrams, Inc.), cite the surname alone (Abrams). When the publisher’s name includes the name of more than one person (Harcourt Brace), cite only the first of these names (Harcourt).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abrams</td>
<td>Harry N. Abrams, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allyn</td>
<td>Allyn and Bacon, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appleton</td>
<td>Appleton-Century-Crofts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Basic Books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowker</td>
<td>R. R. Bowker Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dodd</td>
<td>Dodd, Mead, and Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doubleday</td>
<td>Doubleday and Co., Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farrar</td>
<td>Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist</td>
<td>The Feminist Press at the City University of New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harcourt</td>
<td>Harcourt Brace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harper</td>
<td>HarperCollins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard UP</td>
<td>Harvard University Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holt</td>
<td>Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houghton</td>
<td>Houghton Mifflin Co</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knopf</td>
<td>Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lippincott</td>
<td>J. B. Lippincott Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIT P</td>
<td>The MIT Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLA</td>
<td>The Modern Language Association of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norton</td>
<td>W. W. Norton and Co., Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford UP</td>
<td>Oxford University Press, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princeton UP</td>
<td>Princeton University Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rand</td>
<td>Rand McNally and Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random</td>
<td>Random House, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Martin’s</td>
<td>St. Martin’s Press, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scribner’s</td>
<td>Charles Scribner’s Sons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon</td>
<td>Simon and Schuster, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMI</td>
<td>University Microfilms International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U of Chicago P</td>
<td>University of Chicago Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viking</td>
<td>The Viking Press, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yale UP</td>
<td>Yale University Press</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10
NOTE: ALTHOUGH ALL THE WORK CITED SAMPLES ARE SINGLE SPACED IN THIS HandOUT, THEY MUST BE DOUBLE SPACED IN YOUR PAPER.

THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES SHOW SOURCES MOST COMMONLY CITED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOOKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AN INTRODUCTION, A PREFACE, A FOREWORD, OR AN AFTERWORD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIODICALS</th>
<th>(Note: If article is not printed on consecutive pages, write the page number and + sign to show that it is continued elsewhere. Example: 52+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Note: sec.1: 1 means section 1, page 1)</td>
<td>(Note: If the city is not included in the name of the newspaper, include it after the paper's name in brackets.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE IN NEWSPAPER WITH NO AUTHOR</td>
<td>&quot;Israel, PLO Plan New Talks.&quot; Chicago Tribune 20 June 1993, sec. 1:3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER SOURCES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TELEPHONE INTERVIEW</td>
<td>Smith, Paul. Telephone interview. 8 June 1994.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INFORMATION TAKEN FROM

Hacker, Diana. *A Pocket Style Manual*


Trimmer, Joseph. *A Guide to MLA Documentation*
WEB SITES FOR RESEARCH WRITERS

Search Engines

Visit “Using Search Engines to Find Web Resources”

Style Manuals

[APA] Publication Manual FAQ
http://www.apa.org/journals/faq.html
Official guide to “frequently asked questions” about the APA Publication Manual.

Columbia University Press
Columbia Guide to Online Style by Janice R. Walker and Todd Taylor

Chicago Manual of Style FAQ
http://www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/cmosfaq.html
Official guide to “frequently asked questions” about the Chicago Manual of Style

MLA Style
http://www.mla.org/set_stl.htm
Official Modern Language Association guidelines on MLA style.

Subject Guides

Academic Info
http://www.academicinfo.net/table.html
Guide to Internet resources in many academic disciplines.

Infomine
http://infomine.ucr.edu/Main.html
Thousands of links in ten major academic subject areas.

Literary Resources on the Net
http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Lit/
Searable index focusing on English and American literature, with some coverage of other national literatures plus classical and Biblical literature.

Voice of the Shuttle
http://humanitas.usab.edu/
Large collection of humanities links organized by subject area.

World Wide Web Virtual Library
http://vlib.org/Home.html
Subject guides to hundred of topics by academic specialists.

http://www.cs.cmu.edu/books.html
Searchable index of thousand of online books. Good place to look for non-academic items (for example, “how-to” book).

Project Bartleby
http://www.cc.columbia.edu/acis/bartleby/
Collection of online literary texts.
Project Gutenberg
http://promo.net/pg/index.html
Thousands of public-domain books in plain ASCII format.

University of Toronto Libraries: Resources
http://www.library.utoronto.ca/www/resources.html
Extensive collection of electronic texts.

Resources for Research Writers

Online Writing Lab (OWL)
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/
Large, useful collection of resources for writers and teachers of writing, including links to other sites for writers.

OWLs on the Web
http://www.ipl.org/teen/plus/linksowls.htm
Links to many online writing labs.

Paradigm Online Writing Assistant
http://www.powa.org/
Limited coverage of research writing, but well designed presentation of general advice for college writers.

Research and Writing Step by Step
http://www.ipl.org/teen/plus/stepfirst.htm
Basic introduction for high school and college writers, provided by the Internet Public Library.

Researchpaper.com
http://www.researchpaper.com/
A commercial site sponsored by Infonautics, Inc. that offers free tips and discussion of research writing. Topic ideas can be pursued free of charge via Infoseek, or, for a subscription fee, on Infonautics' service, Electric Library. (Note: Useful site, but Infonautics' documentation guidelines and examples are unreliable.)

Online Libraries and E-Texts

Alex—Catalogue of Electronic Texts
http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/alex
Downloadable English and American classics in PDF (Acrobat) format.

Cambridge University Library
http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/
Catalogs of books and manuscripts, virtual tour, history of the library and more.

Bodleian Library
http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/
Catalog and guide to the world's greatest library of English literature. Digitized images of pages from rare books and manuscripts. Access to OLIS (the catalog of the Bodleian and other Oxford Libraries), and OLIB (the Oxford Libraries Internet Gateway).

British Library
http://www.bl.uk/
Major center for electronic documents. The British Library's 18 million volumes make it one of the greatest literary research libraries in the world.
Electronic Text Center--University of Virginia
http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/
Thousands of on-line texts, some proprietary and limited to University of Virginia users, but many available to the general public.

English Server--Carnegie-Mellon University
http://english-server.hss.cmu.edu/
More than 20,000 diverse items (texts, online journals, discussions, links, audio recordings and even software) relating to various topics in the arts and humanities.

Internet Public Library
http://www.ipl.org/
Sponsored by the University of Michigan School of Information; offers guided online searching in a wide range of subject areas.

Library of Congress Home Page
http://lcweb.loc.gov/
Online search engines covering the catalogs of one of the world's greatest research libraries.

New York Public Library
http://www.nypl.org/index.html
Online catalog of one of the world's greatest public research libraries.

OhioLINK Central Catalog
http://olc1.ohiolink.edu/search/
Pioneering statewide library catalog with more than 31 million items.
Documenting Sources from the World Wide Web

**MLA Style**

Sources on the World Wide Web that students and scholars use in their research include scholarly projects, reference databases, the texts of books, articles in periodicals, and professional and personal sites. Entries in a works-cited list for such sources contain as many items from the list below as are relevant and available. Following this list are sample entries for some common kinds of Web sources.

1. Name of the author, editor, compiler, or translator of the source (if available and relevant), reversed for alphabetizing and followed by an abbreviation, such as ed., if appropriate.

2. Title of a poem, short story, article, or similar short work within a scholarly project, database, or periodical (in quotation marks); or title of a posting to a discussion list or forum (taken from the subject line and put in quotation marks), followed by the description Online posting.

3. Title of major works such as books, magazines, newspapers, etc. are underlined or italicized.

4. Name of the editor, compiler, or translator of the text (if relevant and if not cited earlier), preceded by the appropriate abbreviation, such as Ed.

5. Publication information for any print version of the source.

6. Title of the scholarly project, database, periodical, or professional or personal site (underlined); or, for a professional or personal site with no title, a description such as Home page.

7. Name of the editor of the scholarly project or database (if available).

8. Version number of the source (if not part of the title) or, for a journal, the volume number, issue number, or other identifying number.

9. Date of electronic publication, of the latest update, or of posting.

10. For a work from a subscription service, the name of the service and—if a library is the subscriber—the name and city (and state abbreviation, if necessary) of the library.

11. For a posting to a discussion list or forum, the name of the list or forum.

12. The number range or total number of pages, paragraphs, or other sections, if they are numbered.

13. Name of any institution or organization sponsoring or associated with the Web site.

14. Date when the researcher accessed the source.

15. Electronic address, or URL, of the source (in angle brackets); or, for a subscription service, the URL of the service’s main page (if known) or the keyword assigned by the service.
Typical Documentation of Web Site Sources

Scholarly Project

Professional Site
Portuguese Language Page. U of Chicago. 1 May 1997
<http://humanities.uchicago.edu/romance/port/>.

Personal Site
Lancashire, Ian. Home page. 1 May 1997

Book


Poem

Article in a Reference Database

Article in a Journal

Article in a Magazine
Landsburg, Steven E. “Who Shall Inherit the Earth?” Slate 1 May 1997. 2 May 1997

Work from a Subscription Service


Posting to a Discussion List
Government Publication

Television or Radio Program

Review


Article in Newspaper or on Newswire

Editorial

Reference Database

E-Mail Communication
Smith, Jean. “Re: Reclamation.” E-mail to Allen Jenkins. 5 Mar. 2001.

Green, James J. E-mail to the author. 5 Mar. 2001.

C-D Rom, Diskette


WORKS CITED


Sources of information for this handout are:

Hacker, Diane, A Writer’s Reference.