Springfield Public Schools

Research Writing Manual

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Springfield Public Schools
Springfield, New Jersey

Writing Manual

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August 2007

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Part One: General Overview

What is a Research Paper?

A research paper is different from an essay, book report, or other general composition you might write in a history or English class. A "research paper" is written as the result of careful *examination* and *investigation* into a specific topic. The writer of the research paper uses a process, or a strategy, to locate, evaluate, and write about the information found in order to prove a point about the topic. The writer of the research paper uses information found from a variety of sources to prove his or her point, therefore, personal opinions will not be helpful. One interesting aspect of the research paper is that it is unique; no one else will have one like it. The experience of gathering, interpreting, and documenting information, developing and organizing ideas and conclusions, and then communicating them clearly will prove to be an important and satisfying part of your high school education.

The 10 Steps of the Research Process

Step One: Understand the Assignment

Read over the instructions for the research assignment to make sure you fully understand what you are being asked to do. Although this may seem obvious, following directions is a vital aspect of any research project. There are a variety of types of research assignments a teacher may assign, therefore it is important that to ask questions that will help you complete the project with success. If you are not given a rubric, ask for grading guidelines or a list of criteria to help you focus.

Step Two: Set Deadlines

Because research is an ongoing process, and often tedious, consider setting some deadlines for yourself. Although your teacher may assign homework and due dates for specific parts of the project such as the thesis sentence, note card check, having a certain number of sources located by a certain date, or turning in your introductory paragraph early, it may be a good idea to be ahead of a given due date. This way, if you find you have to rewrite something or locate another source, you will not fall behind. The bottom line is to not wait until the last minute to begin the work because it will guarantee extra stress and an inferior grade.

Step Three: Evaluate Possible Topics

Are you choosing your own topic, or have you been assigned one by your teacher? If you are able to choose your own topic, selecting the right one could feel overwhelming or confusing at first. After brainstorming some ideas for possible topics, ask yourself the following questions:

- ✓ Am I truly interested in the topic?
- ✓ Does it meet the requirements for the assignment?
- ✓ Do I have access to enough information?
- ✓ Is the topic limited enough, but not too narrow?

The last question is very important. Think about the topic and exactly what you want to say about it, and what point you want to prove about it. Remember that a thesis statement will have to be created for the topic, so try to choose a topic that is interesting and one that is going to have information written about it.

Step Four: Focus Ideas/Conduct Preliminary Research

Now that you have a topic, you will need to focus on one specific aspect of that topic. A good way to do this is to conduct some preliminary research to learn more about it. This will help you narrow your focus from a general topic (such as music) to a more focused topic (such as the jazz age) and will eventually help you create a thesis sentence. For this preliminary research, visit the library, locate a few books on the subject matter, and read through some sections of the books. Use the index or table of contents to help your search. You do not have to read entire books! In this step, you are just checking to make sure you can locate enough information about your topic so you can narrow down a focus.

Using the internet may be helpful; however, be careful of what websites you read because some of them could be biased or written by people who aren't experts in that subject. This type of information will not be useful for your paper. More about this will be discussed later in this handbook.

Step Five: Write a Thesis Statement

This step is one of, if not the most, important step in the research process. Your thesis sentence will control the rest of your research and your entire paper or project. An effective thesis statement tells readers specifically what you plan to write about in your paper. It also shows the reader the stand you are taking or a feeling you have about your topic. Use the following guideline to help you write a thesis sentence:

Identify a broad topic: *Music*
Narrow it down: *The Jazz Age*
Specify a focus, feature, feeling, or opinion: *There is such diversity found within the genre of jazz music because the Jazz Age is a reflection of the social and political changes America faced in the early 1900s.*

        Thesis Checklist:
        Make sure your thesis sentence…
        ____ Identifies a limited, specific topic
        ____ Focuses on a particular feature, feeling, or opinion about the topic
        ____ Is stated using concise and clear language
        ____ Can be supported with convincing facts and details
        ____ Meets the requirements of the assignment

*Your thesis sentence may change once or several times throughout the process. You may change your thesis as long as you are still locating sources and learning more about your topic.

Step Six: Locate and Evaluate Sources

In order to get the information you will use in your paper, you need to locate sources. Sources are materials you find in the library and on the internet. Sources might include the following: non-fiction

books, reference books, magazine articles, newspaper articles, films, interviews, maps, charts, a speech, a television or radio program. Above all, you <u>must</u> make sure that <u>each</u> <u>source</u> you use for your paper is valid. If you use a source that is biased, vague, or incorrect, you run the risk of earning a poor or even a failing grade. Use the following method to help you find out if your sources are valid and are appropriate to use for the project:

The CARRDSS test:

Credibility
- Who is the author? What are his/her credentials? Education? Experience?
- What evidence is offered of his or her knowledge?

Accuracy
- Can facts, statistics, or other information be verified through other sources?
- Are there any errors in terms of spelling, grammar, or facts?

Reliability
- Does the source present a particular view or bias?
- Is the information affiliated with an organization that has a political or social agenda?

Relevance
- Does the information directly support the thesis or help to answer the question?
- Can it be eliminated or ignored because it does not help my thesis?

Date
- Does my project need current and up-to-date information?
- When was the book or article published? When was this website created or last updated?

Source
- Is the information based on primary or secondary sources?
- Did the author document his or her sources?

Scope and Purpose
- Does this source address the thesis in a comprehensive or peripheral way?
- Is it material that can be easily read and understood?

This CARRDSS test is excellent for determining if any source is valid; however, it is <u>very</u> important that you use this test when using the Internet. Although the Internet can be a useful source for many things in today's society, each of us has to be careful when using it for educational purposes. If you aren't sure if an expert wrote the article or Web site you are reading, you must find out. You cannot use false information or the random opinions of others in your research paper. For example, www.wikipedia.com is NOT a valid website to use for a research paper because *anyone* can make additions to or change the information found within this Web site.

Luckily, Jonathan Dayton High School subscribes to several online databases such as EBSCO or Facts on File. These subscription databases have been pre-evaluated by experts and a researcher just needs to locate an article within the site on the topic they choose. More information about this can be found on pages 9 and 10.

Once you have located and evaluated each source, take the time to sit down and read them. If you have access to a photocopier, take the time to make copies so that you can use a highlighter to underline important information as you read.

Step Seven: Organize Research - Prepare Note Cards

As you read your sources, it is important to take notes. A helpful way of doing this is by using note cards, or index cards. Adhere to the following guidelines for each card:

✓ Keep notes on cards of the same size and style (four-by six-inch white lined cards are most useful).
✓ Write one fact or idea per card.

✓ On the top line of each card, write the author's last name, title of the source, and the page the fact
   is from. This way, you will know which source the fact is from without having to look it up.
✓ Place quotation marks around word-for-word quotations.
✓ If you are summarizing or paraphrasing, state this on the card – *this is the only way to avoid
   plagiarism.*
✓ Look up unfamiliar words and define them right on the card. This will be useful for future
   reference.

Example of a Note Card

Brown, James	Shakespeare's World	Page 42
"William Shakespeare wrote his famous play, *Romeo and Juliet*, between the years 1591 and 1597." Direct quote		

Step Eight: Organize Research - Prepare Source Cards

Just as you made note cards for your facts, you must also make them for the sources you use. Each source only needs one source card, even if you created twenty note cards from it. Source cards are used for two purposes: One, to keep track of your sources and how many you've used. Secondly and more importantly, to help create your Works Cited page.

The tedious part of making these source cards is sifting through books or the Internet to locate the information needed for the card. Book source cards will be the easiest cards to make, whereas Internet source cards are more time consuming. Following are two examples:

Source card for a book requires the following information:
Author's name – first, last and middle initial if given
Title of the book (underlined)
Edition and Number of volume (if applicable)
Name of series (if applicable)
Place of publication
Name of publishing company
Date of publication

Example of a Source Card

Source Card
Brown, James M. Shakespeare's World. London: Oxford UP, 20005.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
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<u>Source card for a subscription database requires the following information:</u>
Author's name – first, last and middle initial if given
Title of article (in quotation marks)
Print publication information (name of magazine, book or newspaper it is from and date of publication)
Volume or issue number
Name of database (underlined)
Name of service
Name of library from which you accessed the article
Date accessed at the library
Internet address for the homepage of the service
Add a keyword or path statement if appropriate.

Source Card
Davis, Jerome. "Massacre in Kiev." <u>Washington Post</u> 29 Nov. 2005, final ed.: C12. <u>National Newspapers</u>. ProQuest. Jonathan Dayton High School IMC. 30 Nov. 2005 http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb.com.

Step Nine: Reread/Revise Thesis Statement

Throughout the process of locating and reading through your sources and taking notes, you should check back to your thesis sentence several times to make sure that the sentence is indeed what you are researching. Once a researcher begins reading enough material about the topic, he or she may want to change the wording of, or even an entire idea presented in the thesis. Remember, if the thesis sentence presents an idea or ideas that you aren't able to find enough information about, then the sentence needs to be changed in some way. It is much easier to change the sentence prior to writing the outline and beginning the draft.

Step Ten: Begin Writing the Paper

Use the writing process explained below in order to stay focused and organized while writing your research paper.

Writing the Research Paper

1. **Create a Formal Outline** by reading each note card and clustering and labeling them into categories. You will notice as you read, that your note cards will fall under specific topics or subtopics that you will want to cover in your paper. Lay out the cards on a table, read them over, and place them into piles accordingly. Use a blank index card to put a topic or subtopic heading, or label, on each of the piles. Some students prefer to code these clusters according to their own system. You should try to use a system that helps you stay organized at this point.

   Remember the following about outlining:
   A. There must be at least two main divisions to any outline or part of an outline. In other words, never put only one subheading under a heading or only one detail under a subheading.
   B. Throughout the outline, use either topics or sentences. Do not use both. Follow the requirements of the teacher in this matter. Generally speaking, a sentence outline is much more useful when you are writing the paper than a topic outline.
   C. Your thesis sentence should be at the very beginning of the outline.
   D. You may continue to change and develop your outline as you find more information, or if you decide to take information out.
   E. If you notice any areas within the outline are underdeveloped or lack enough support, you should go back and locate a source to help fill in the blanks.

2. **Begin the First Draft** by starting with an introductory paragraph with your thesis sentence (generally found at the end of the introductory paragraph). You may choose to revise the introductory paragraph as you write the draft or after the paper is finished. Use the formal outline as a guide to help you write the body of the research paper.

3. **Revise** your paper as you would any other written piece. Remember the differences between revising and editing! Revising means *rereading and rewriting* the paper multiple times, checking for organizational problems, making sure all ideas are fully developed, and that you have used *correct citations* throughout the paper. Do not skip this aspect of writing and go right to editing. A good writer knows that editing is much easier than revising, and although it takes more time and energy to revise, higher grades are most often the result.

4. **Edit/Proofread** your revised copy in order to create your final paper. You or your teacher may advise participation in a peer critique/edit in class. These sessions can be helpful for some students, but remember no one knows your topic as well as you do and therefore any suggestions made about content should be carefully considered before making changes. Do consider making changes especially if someone notices you lack support in an area of the paper, or if MLA format was not properly used.

5. **Final Draft** – Double check any changes you made when editing and to ensure the general format of the paper is correct (margins, spacing, use of MLA format, pagination, etc.).

Part Two: Search Strategies

Once you understand the expectations of the assignment and know your topic, you begin to locate sources. Ask your teacher if there are specific requirements for how many sources you should use or if you are required to use certain types of sources, such as limiting Internet sources and focusing mainly on reference materials. Before beginning to seek your sources, you can develop an effective search strategy by identifying the place to begin looking for each type of source and by expanding your list of subject headings.

Identifying the Place to Begin Searching for Each Type of Source

The following chart will show you the relationship between what source you need and where to find it:

Type of Information Needed	Best Source(s)	Place to Search
General overview of topic	Reference books	IMC computer catalog (OPAC) Reference collection
Supporting information: (examples, causes, effects, comparisons, proof, arguments)	Reference books	IMC computer catalog (OPAC) Reference collection
Not extremely current information	Nonfiction books	IMC computer catalog (OPAC)
More current information	Magazine articles Newspaper articles	Subscription databases
Specific information (definitions or statistics)	Reference books Magazine articles Newspaper articles	IMC computer catalog (OPAC), Reference collection Subscription databases
Predictions, conclusions or hypotheses of authors	Nonfiction books Magazine articles	IMC computer catalog (OPAC) Subscription databases
Biographical information	Reference books Magazine articles	IMC computer catalog (OPAC) Reference collection Subscription databases
Primary source information	Nonfiction books Reference books	IMC computer catalog (OPAC)
Illustrations, pictures, photographs	All of the above	IMC computer catalog (OPAC) Subscription databases

* Remember to use various *key words* when searching for information about your topic. Your search words, or key words, may vary depending on which database you use. In other words, do not simply type in the same one or two words for your topic; try alternate sub headings or subjects similar to your topic to locate what you need.

Types of Sources

Reference Books – All libraries have a reference collection, but few students understand what it is; thus, they do not find the valuable overview and supporting information that actually does exist. At some point in freshman year, all students are given a tutorial of the IMC during which time the reference section is explained.

A reference books is a book (on one or many subjects) that is designed to be searched for specific items or sections of information. It is *not* designed to be read straight through. By comparing books on the same subject, you may notice that a book from the regular collection will have chapters

built one upon the next, whereas a reference book will be in another format such as a dictionary or encyclopedia. You can look up a specific term or concept, read the usually brief information, and move on to another source.

You will probably be familiar with the various types and functions of reference books. Dictionaries usually provide short, succinct definitions. Encyclopedias are best for general information and overviews. Almanacs and handbooks specialize in statistics and other brief facts. Atlases provide maps.

These general types of reference books can be found throughout a reference collection. If a short definition of a term in botany is needed, you can use a dictionary of biology or botany. If a basic understanding of the Teapot Dome scandal is required, you can choose an encyclopedia of history. While the editors of reference books do not always apply the labels (dictionary, encyclopedia, handbook) accurately to reflect the content of the book, you can usually make a prediction of a book's contents. To help make searching easier and faster, use the index and table of contents in each reference book to locate information about your topic or subtopics.

Finding information on a particular topic within the reference collection is confusing because the computer based catalog does not always help. Reference books contain too many subjects for each to be listed in the computer catalog. A sports encyclopedia will include information about archery, badminton, bagatelle fishing, football, golf, horseshoes, parachuting; there will not be a direct computer catalog reference from each sport to the book.   One of the best things you can do is to browse the reference section for titles that correspond with your topic and examine any likely book. Use the computer catalog to get a start on call numbers and start browsing from there.

Nonfiction Books – With your list of topic or subject headings, you should use the computer catalog (OPAC) to locate books in the regular section of the library; this is typically the nonfiction section, as fiction books are not usually appropriate for research. Ironically, the OPAC may be more of an obstacle than an aid. Alphabetization can be word by word or letter by letter. Punctuation (such as dashes, parentheses, and commas) in the top line of the entry also influence how books are filed. Finally, some sources are filed chronologically (U.S. – POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT – 1933-1945 would be filed before U.S. – POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT – 1971-1975).

Once you have call numbers, you must still locate the items on the shelves. Codes within the call number may designate special materials (audiovisual items or periodicals) or special shelving locations (for oversized or reference books). Finding the particular source, therefore, requires familiarity with the library or a willingness to ask for directions.

Many students approach locating sources in the narrowest sense: they write down a call number for a specific book and look for that one book. Unfortunately, that book may be out of place, checked out, or missing. These students declare that the library has nothing on their topic.

Teachers and media specialists will counter this narrow approach by teaching a browsing process for the regular collection.

1. Find all appropriate call numbers and titles using the OPAC. Many subjects will appear in more than one Dewey area.
2. Write the call numbers, title, and author on a piece of paper.
3. Go to the shelves and look for specific titles/call numbers.
4. Browse in those Dewey areas for any other appropriate title(s).
5. Examine any other likely book by perusing the index or table of contents.
6. If sufficient sources are not located, return to the OPAC and look up broader subject headings. Repeat the browsing process, checking for chapters or sections within the books. (For example, information on the topic of *dreams* can be found in books on psychology, the brain and sleep – not only in books with the word *dream* found in the title.)

Magazine Articles – See Subscription Databases

Newspaper Articles – See Subscription Databases

Electronic or Subscription Databases – National, subscription databases are available through Jonathan Dayton High School. By using these sophisticated information tools, you can find recent magazine and newspaper articles; locate abstracts of articles from journals or periodicals; read full texts of wire service news stories and some encyclopedia articles; as well as locate the citations to the documents. Subscription databases may include but not be limited to EBSCO, Grolier, Discovering Collection, or Facts on File. Use our website www.springfieldschools.com/library/databses/index.html for locating these sources. You will be required to enter a username and password in order to access these databases from the IMC and from home. This information will be given to you by either the media specialist or your teacher.

Primary Source Versus Secondary Source – All information sources can be divided into two categories—primary and secondary.

     A primary source is an original source and good researchers should begin to seek these sources first if they can. Primary sources are documents or visuals in their original form, often without interpretation or explanation; this means that you must draw your own conclusions, an important critical thinking skill. Primary sources offer an immediate picture of events. Often they reveal information not found elsewhere and serve as an excellent source of compelling quotes for a research project. Primary sources may include letters, surveys, speeches, diaries, wills, interviews, government documents, or photographs.

     Students beginning to use primary sources should be aware of some problems. The sources are often difficult to read, with language that is complex, archaic, or full of jargon. The document represents one point in time, with no explanation of preceding or following events. Some primary source can even be biased or emotional because of a limited perspective. Students using primary sources may require some study hints to decipher the information. Reading slowly and carefully and making good use of a dictionary should be the first steps. Other helpful activities include reading background material (secondary material) before tackling the primary source, using "self-questioning" techniques to clarify understanding, being aware of bias and emotionalism, reading the document several times, and using copies so that notes can be made on the document.

     A secondary source is not an original source. A secondary source is one that contains information other people have gathered and interpreted. It is at least once removed from the original. Secondary sources extend, analyze, interpret, or evaluate the primary information. You're working with secondary sources when you…

- read a magazine article
- refer to an encyclopedia
- consult a nonfiction book
- watch a documentary on television
- visit a Web site

Evaluating the Source

     Once you've found some information, you need to find out if it's right for the assignment and appropriate to use for a research paper. You have to test the information. On the surface, all information looks the same. It all seems to be valid, professional and trustworthy. But not all information is created or recorded equally. It's your responsibility as the researcher to sort it out before presenting it to an audience. One of the best ways to do this is to put each source to the CARRDSS test.

*NOTE: Be especially careful to evaluate all sources found on the Internet. Although the Internet contains a plethora of information on almost every topic imaginable, <u>this does not mean the information you find is valid or written by an expert in that topic</u>.

The CARRDSS test:

Credibility - The quality/qualifications of the writer.
- Who is the author? What are his/her credentials? Education? Experience?
- What evidence is offered of his or her knowledge?

Accuracy - Freedom from mistake and error.
- Can facts, statistics, or other information be verified through other sources?
- Are there any errors in terms of spelling, grammar, or facts?

Reliability - The extent to which a source gives the same information as other sources.
- Does the source present a particular view or bias?
- Is the information affiliated with an organization that has a political or social agenda?

Relevance - The relationship to the focused topic or question.
- Does the information directly support the thesis or help to answer the question?
- Can it be eliminated or ignored because it does not help my thesis?

Date - The time at which an information source is published or produced.
- Does my project need current and up-to-date information?
- When was the book or article published? When was this website created or last updated?

Source - A primary reference work or point of origin.
- Is the information based on primary or secondary sources?
- Did the author document his or her sources?

Scope and Purpose - The range of information on a given topic and the reason behind its creation.
- Does this source address the thesis in a comprehensive or peripheral way?
- Is it material that can be easily read and understood?

These questions should be posed each time a research source is considered. If a source does not pass the CARRDSS test, it should not be used.

Evaluating Web sites: Another strategy for evaluating material found on the Internet is to examine the end, or suffix, of a domain name. The suffix identifies who the source of information is and therefore what their purpose in conveying information might be. The most familiar is **.com**, a commercial site. The purpose of a commercial site is to sell a product or service, so there is a built-in bias that you must be aware of. Other examples include:

.biz – A business that could be trying to sell a product or service
.edu – A school, university, museum, or educational site
.gov – A U.S. government site
.int – An international institution
.name – An individual Internet user
.net – A network service provider; Internet administrative site
.org – An organization, often non-profit. Most have bias, but can provide some accurate information
.pro – A professional's site
~ (tilde) or % - A personal site that varies on its credibility

Part Three – Documentation and Citation within the Paper

Documenting Quotes and Information

You must show where you obtained your expert information, ideas, and quotations! When writing a paper in which you find information and ideas in the writings of others who are more expert in the matter than you are, you must show where you found your information and ideas. You do this in your paper by showing the source of the information or quotation in parentheses after the section of information. This can be done in the following ways:

1. You put the author's last name, or the appropriate identifying words (if not author is given, give the first important word of the title of the book or article), and the page number(s) of the source in parentheses.

   Example:
   Some famous and influential psychologists have made the unscientific statement that "the

   ideas of the language capacity of apes is so preposterous that it should not be investigated

   at all" (Linden 11).

2. You use the author's last name in your sentence and place only the page number(s) of the source in parentheses.

   Example:
   According to Eugene Linden, some psychologists have expressed the unscientific idea

   that "the idea of the language capacity of apes is so preposterous that it should not be

   investigated at all" (11).

3. Even when you do not use the author's words, you must give a reference when you are giving ideas or information that you obtained from his or her writing.

   Example:
   Several scientists have said that, not only did the great apes not use any language, but any study

   of such a possibility would be ridiculous (Linden 11).

Placing and Punctuating the Parenthetical Reference

To avoid clutter in sentences, MLA recommends placing the parenthetical references at the end of the sentence but before the final period. Notice that there is no punctuation mark between the author's name and the page citation.

In the nineteenth century, the supposed golden age of American education, "college faculties

acted as disciplinary tribunals, periodically reviewing violations of rules…" (Graff 25).

On some occasions, you may want to place the reference within your sentence to clarify its relationship to the part of the sentence it documents. In such instances, place the reference at the end of the clause but before the necessary comma.

Graff suggests that even though college faculties in the nineteenth century "acted as disciplinary tribunals, periodically reviewing violations of rules" (25), the myth persists that they taught in the golden age of American education.

When the reference documents a long quotation that is set off from the text, place it at the end of the passage but after the final period. (Note that a long quote is determined as one which exceeds three (3) typed lines.) The quotation should be double-spaced, each line should be indented ten spaces, and you <u>don't</u> need to use quotation marks. The sentence that preceded the off-set quote should end with a colon.

Gerald Graff's description of the college in the nineteenth century corrects the popular myth about the golden age of American education:

> College faculties acted as disciplinary tribunals, periodically reviewing violations of rules such as those requiring students to attend chapel services early every morning, to remain in their rooms for hours every day, and to avoid the snares of town. Nor were these restrictions relaxed for the many students in their late twenties or older, who lived alongside freshmen as young as fourteen. The classes themselves, conducted by the system of daily recitation, were said to have "the fearsome atmosphere of a police station." (25)   (Note that this example contains a quote within a quote.)

Quoting Sources

Although quoting an author's text word for word is the easiest way to record information, use this method selectively and quote only the passages that deal directly with your subject in memorable language. If you decide to omit part of the passage, use ellipsis points to indicate that you have omitted words form the middle or ends of the original source. (…)

To move a quotation from a note card to your paper, making it fit smoothly into the flow of your text, use one of the following methods:

1. **Work the quoted passage into the syntax of your own sentence.**

Morrison points out that social context prevented the authors of slave narratives "from dwelling too long or too carefully on the more sordid details of their experience" (109).

2. **Introduce the quoted passage with a sentence and a colon.**

Commentators have tried to account for the decorum of most slave narratives by discussing social context: "popular taste discouraged the writers form swelling too long or too carefully on the more sordid details of their experience" (Morrison 19).

3. **Set off the quoted passage with an introductory sentence followed by a colon.**

This method is reserved for long quotations (more than three lines of prose; more than two lines of poetry). Double-space the quotation, and indent it ten spaces from the left margin. Because this special placement identifies the passage as a quotation, do not enclose it within quotation marks. Notice that the final period goes before rather than after the parenthetical reference. Leave one space after the final period.

Toni Morrison, in "The Site of Memory," explains how social context shaped slave narrative:

…no slave society in the history of the world wrote more-or more thoughtfully-about its

own enslavement. The milieu, however, dictated the purpose and the style. The

narratives are instructive, moral and obviously representative. Some of them are

patterned after the sentimental novel that was in vogue at the time. But whatever the

level of eloquence or the form, popular taste discouraged the writers from dwelling too

long or too carefully on the more sordid details of their experience (109).

Summarizing and Paraphrasing Sources

Summarizing and paraphrasing an author's text are the most efficient ways to record information. The terms summary and paraphrase are often used interchangeably to describe a brief restatement of the author's ideas **in your own words**, but they may be used more precisely to designate different procedures. A summary condenses the content of a lengthy passage. When you write a summary, you reformulate the main idea and outline the main points that support it. A paraphrase restates the content of a short passage. When you write a paraphrase, you reconstruct the passage phrase by phrase, recasting the author's words into your own.

A summary or a paraphrase is intended as a complete and objective presentation of an author's ideas, so do not distort the original passage by omitting major points or by adding your own opinion. Because the words of a summary or a paraphrase are yours, they are not enclosed by quotation marks. But because the ideas you are restating came from someone else, you need to cite the source on your note card and in your paper.

The following examples illustrate two common methods of introducing a summary or a paraphrase into your paper.

1. **Summary of a long quotation (see the Morrison quotation on previous page)**

Often the best way to proceed is to name the author of a source in the body of your sentence and place the page numbers in parentheses. This procedure informs your reader that you are about to quote or paraphrase. It also gives you an opportunity to state the credentials of the authority you are citing.

Award-winning novelist Toni Morrison argues that although slaves wrote many powerful narratives, the context of their enslavement prevented them from telling the whole truth about their lives (109).

2. **Paraphrase of a short quotation (see the fourth sentence of the Morrison quotation)**

You may decide to vary the pattern of documentation by presenting the information from a source and placing the author's name and page numbers in parentheses at the end of the sentence. This method is particularly useful if you have already established the identity of your source in a previous sentence and now want to develop the author's ideas in some detail without having to clutter your sentences with constant references to his or her name.

Slave narratives sometimes imitated the popular fiction of their era (Morrison 109).

<u>Avoiding Plagiarism</u>

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas without giving proper credit – or without giving any credit at all – to the writer of the original. Whether plagiarism is intentional or unintentional, it is a serious offense that you can avoid by adhering to the advice for research and composing outlined in this handbook.

The following excerpt is from Robert Hughes's *The Fatal Shore*, an account of the founding of Australia. The examples of how students tried to use this excerpt illustrate the problem of plagiarism.

Original Version:

Transportation did not stop crime in England or even slow it down. The "criminal class" was not eliminated by transportation, and could not be, because transportation did not deal with the causes of crime.

Version A

Transportation did not stop crime in England or even slow it down. Criminals were not eliminated by transportation because transportation did not deal with the causes of crime.

Version A is plagiarism. Because the writer of Version A does not indicate in the text or in a parenthetical reference that the words and ideas belong to Hughes, her readers will believe the words are hers. She has stolen the words and ideas and has attempted to cover the theft by changing or omitting an occasional word.

Version B

Robert Hughes points out that transportation did not stop crime in England or even slow it down. The criminal class was not eliminated by transportation, and could not be, because transportation did not deal with the causes of crime (168).

Version B is also plagiarism. Even though the writer acknowledges his source and documents the passage with a parenthetical reference, he has worked from careless note cards and has misunderstood the difference between quoting and paraphrasing. He has copied the original word for word yet has supplied no quotation marks to indicate the extent of the borrowing. As written and documented, the passage masquerades as a paraphrase when in fact it is a direct quotation.

Version C

Hughes argues that transporting criminals from England to Australia "did not stop crime…The 'criminal class' was not eliminated by transportation, and could not be, because transportation did not deal with the causes of crime" (168).

Version C is one satisfactory way of handling this source material. The writer has identified her source at the beginning of the sentence, letting readers know who is being quoted. She then explains the concept of transportation in her own words, placing within quotation marks the parts of the original she wants to quote and using ellipsis points to delete the parts she wants to omit. She provides a parenthetical reference to the page number in the source listed in Works Cited.

Additional Format Elements for Literary Papers

Placing References to Poetry in the Text:

When citing lines of poetry in the text of the paper, use a slash (/) to separate two lines.

"Success is Counted Sweetest / By those who ne'er Succeed" (Dickinson 62).

When citing three (3) or more lines of poetry, off-set the lines using the same structure as the author.

Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire. (Frost 696)

Placing References to Drama in the Text

When citing lines of dialogue from a play in the text of the paper, punctuate them as a regular quote and utilize two (2) quotation marks.

Soon after Tom responds, "You think I'm in love with Continental Shoemakers?" (Williams 43)   (note that a period is NOT used after the reference because of the "sentence closer")

When citing three (3) lines or more of dialogue from a play, off-set the quote utilizing the same structure as the author.   (note that a period is placed after the character's name instead of a colon)

HOWIE NEWSOME. Morning, Doc.
DR. GIBBS. Morning, Howie.
HOWIE NEWSOME. Somebody sick?
DR. GIBBS. Pair of twins over to Mrs. Goruslawski's. (Wilder 45)

General Rules for Placement of Punctuation

Working the quote into the context of the sentence

When working quotes into the context of the sentence, certain "common sense" rules apply.

Poe writes, "He was convinced that the house and its surroundings were alive" (16).
Note that authors write or state, instead of say.

Poe states that "he suffered from a nervous affliction" (18).
With a lower case "h", this sentence is still grammatically correct.

Poe states that: "It was brought upon by a constitutional family evil" (22).
Using the full colon (:) rectifies the grammatical error of having a capital letter in the middle of the sentence.

Poe states that "[h]e suffered from a nervous affliction" (18).
Using the brackets indicates that the writer changed the text for grammatical purposes.

NOTE: When quoting dialogue using a *specified* speaker, use three (3) quotation marks. With no speaker mentioned, use only two (2) quotation marks.

Part Four – Preparing the List of Works Cited

List of Abbreviations for MLA Documentation

Selected Publishers

When 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).

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

<u>Sample Entries for Works Cited</u>: Books

When citing books, provide the general categories of information:

**Author's last name, first name. <u>Book title</u>. City of Publication: Publishing company,
     publication date.**

Entries illustrating variations on this basic format appear below.

<u>A Book by One Author</u>

Crichton, Michael. *Jurassic Park.* New York: Ballantine Books, 1990. Print.

<u>Two or More Books by the Same Author</u>

Wilson, Issac. *The After Death Experience: The Physics of the Unphysical.* New York: Morrow,
     1987. Print.

---. *The Columbus Myth: Did Men of Bristol Reach America Before Columbus?* London:
     Simon, 1991. Print.

<u>A Book by Two or Three Authors</u>

Rico, Barbara, and Sandra Mano. *American Mossaic: Multicultural Readings in Context.*
      Boston: Houghton, 1991. Print.

Bentley, Nicholas, Michael Slater, and Nina Burgis. *The Dickens Index.* New York:
      Oxford UP, 1990. Print.

<u>A Book by Four or More Authors</u>

Medhurst, Martin J., et al. *Cold War Rhetoric: Strategy, Metaphor, and Ideology.* New York:
      Greenwood, 1990. Print.

<u>A Book with an Editor</u>

Hall, Donald, ed. *The Oxford Book of American Literary Anecdotes.* New York: Oxford UP,
      1981. Print.

A Book with an Author and an Editor

Toomer, Jean. *Cane.* Ed. Darwin T. Turner. New York: Norton, 1988. Print.

An Anthology or Compilation

Valdez, Luis, and Stan Steiner, eds. *Aztlan: An Anthology of Mexican American Literature.*
New York: Vintage-Knopf, 1972. Print.

A Single Work from an Anthology

Mitchell, Joseph. "The Bottom of the Harbor." *American Sea Writing.* Ed. Peter Neill. New York:
Library of America, 2000. 584-608. Print.

A Multivolume Work

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

An Introduction, Preface, Foreword, or Afterword

Bernstein, Carl. Afterword. *Poison Pennmanship: The Gentle Art of Muchraking.* By Jessica Mitford.
New York: Vintage-Random, 1979. 275-277. Print.

A Signed Article in a Reference Book

Schott, Webster, "Crichton, Michael." *Contemporary Literary Criticism.* Vol. 2. 1974 ed. Print.

An Unsigned Article in a Reference Book

"Crichton and Genetics." *Contemporary Authors.* Vol. 54. 17th ed. 1991. Print.

A Government Publication

United States. Dept. of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Occupational Outlook Handbook 2000-
2001.* Washington: GPO, 2000. Print.

<u>Sample Entries</u>: Periodicals

When citing articles in periodicals, provide the following general categories of information:

Author's last name, first name. "Article Title." *Periodical Title* Date: inclusive pages.

Entries illustrating variations on this basic format appear below.

<u>An Article in a Newspaper</u>

Bleakley, Fred R. "Companies' Profits Grew 48% Despite Economy." *Wall Street Journal* 1 May
    1995, nat. ed.: sec A: 12. Print.

<u>A Newspaper Editorial</u>

"Hospital Power." Editorial. *Bangor Daily News* 14 Sept. 2004: A6. Print.

<u>An Article in a Magazine</u>

Goodell, Jeff. "The Uneasy Assimilation." *Rolling Stone* 6-13 Dec. 2001: 63-66. Print.

<u>An Article in a Scholarly Journal Paginated by Issue</u>

Chu, Wujin. "Costs and Benefits of Hard-Sell." *Journal of Marketing Research* 32.2 (1995): 97-102.

    Print.

<u>A Review</u>

Kermode, Frank. "Criticism without Machinery." Rev. of *Literary Reflections,* by R.W.B. Lewis.
    New York Times Book Review 11 July 1993: 16. Print.

<u>An Article Whose Title Contains a Quotation or a Title within Quotation Marks</u>

DeCuir, Andre L. "Italy, England and the Female Artist in George Eliot's 'Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story.'"
    <u>Studies in Short Fiction</u> (1992): 67-75. Print.

<u>Sample Entries</u>: Other Sources

<u>A Television or Radio Program</u>

"Another Atlantis?" *Deep Sea Detectives*. The History Channel. 13 June 2005. Television.

Note: If the narrator or author is given, cite the appropriate abbreviation (i.e. Narrated- Nar.) after the quoted title.

<u>A Film or Video Recording</u>

The Aviator. Dir. Martin Scorsese. Perf. Leonardo DiCaprio. Miramax Films, 2004. Film.

<u>A Song</u>

Holiday, Billie. "God Bless the Child." Rec. 9 May 1941. *The Essence of Billie Holiday*. Columbia, 1991. CD.

<u>Works of Art</u>

Perutz, Dolly Hellman. *Bird Flying Machine*. 1973. Bronze. Central Park, New York.

<u>A Map or Chart</u>

Wisconsin Territory. Map. Madison: Wisconsin Trails, 1988. Print.

<u>A Cartoon or Comic Strip (in Print)</u>

Luckovich, Mike. "The Drawing Board." Cartoon. *Time* 17 Sept. 2001: 18. Print.

<u>An Interview by the Author (Yourself)</u>

Brooks, Sarah. Personal Interview. 15 Oct. 2006.

<u>An Interview</u>

Wiesel, Elie. Interview by Ted Koppel. *Nightline*. ABC. WABC, New York. 18 Apr. 2002. Television.

<u>A Lecture, a Speech, an Address, or a Reading</u>

Annan, Kofi. "Acceptance of Nobel Peace Prize." Oslo City Hall, Oslo, Norway.

10 Dec. 2001. Lecture.

Note: If the title of the speech is listed, use it instead of the descriptive label, Lecture. For example:

Russo, Michael. "A Painter Speaks His Mind." Museum of Fine Arts. Boston, 5 Aug. 1984.

<u>Published Letters</u>

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. "To Ernest Hemmingway." 1 June 1934. *The Letters of F. Scott Fitzgerald.* Ed.
      Andrew Turnball. New York: Scribner's, 1963. 308-310. Print.

Sample Entries: Electronic Sources

A Work Cited Only on the Web

Quade, Alex. "Elite Team Rescues Troops behind Enemy Lines." CNN.com.
          Cable News Network, 19 Mar. 2007. Web. 15 May 2008.

Note: The above citation is an example of a news source that is only available online.

Note: Two dates are given in the above citation. The first date is the original date of online publication; the second date refers to the date of access (when it was called up online during research).

A Periodical Publication in an Online Database

Tolson, Nancy. "Making Books Available: The Role of Early Libraries, Librarians, and Booksellers in
          the Promotion of African American Children's Literature." African American Review 32.1
          (1998): 9-16. JSTOR. Web. 5 June 2008.

Note: The above citation is an example of a scholarly article found in an online database.

Note: These types of important journal articles can be found using the JDHS IMC's library databases.

A Work Found Online that is also Available in Print

Cascardi, Anthony J. *Ideologies of History in the Spanish Golden Age*. University Park:
          Pennsylvania State UP, 1997. *Penn State Romance Studies*. Web. 12 Mar. 2007.

Note: The above citation contains all of the information needed to find the same work in print.

A Work Found Online that is a Video, Visual or Audio Clip (ex: podcast)

Currin, John. *Blond Angel*. 2001. Indianapolis Museum of Art. *IMA: It's My Art*. Web. 9 May 2007.

Writing the Works Cited Page

Your "Works Cited" list must be thorough and accurate, as it is the only place where the reader of your research paper will find complete information about the sources you have cited. The list of works cited appears at the end of your paper and, as its title suggests, lists only the works you have cited in your paper. To prepare the list, follow these guidelines:

1. Paginate the works cited section as a continuation of your text. If the conclusion of your paper appears on page 8, then begin the list on page 9.

2. Double-space between successive lines of an entry and between entries.

3. Center the title of this page, *Works Cited*, using no italics, quotations, bold font or underlining.

4. Begin the first line of an entry flush left and indent successive lines five spaces.

5. List entries in alphabetical order according to the last name of the author, or, in the case of an unsigned article, alphabetize according to the first "important" word of the title, (excluding the articles *a, an,* and *the*).

6. If you are listing more than one work by the same author, alphabetize the works according to the title. Instead of repeating the author's name, type three (3) hyphens and a period, and then give the title.

7. Underline the titles of works published independently – books, plays, long poems, pamphlets, periodicals, and films.

8. If you are citing a book whose title includes a title of another book, underline the main title, but do not underline the other title (for example, A Casebook of Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man).

9. Use quotation marks to indicate titles of short works that appear in larger works – songs, unpublished works including dissertations, lectures, and speeches.

10. Use lowercase abbreviations to identify the parts of a work (for example, vol. for volume and ed. for editor). Unless these designations follow a period (for example, Woolf, Virginia. A Writer's Diary. Ed. Leonard Woolf.).

11. Whenever possible, use appropriate shortened forms for the publisher's name (Random instead of Random House). See "List of Abbreviations for MLA Documentation."

12. Separate author, title, and publication information with a period followed by one space. There are no double spaces between words or punctuation in the Works Cited list.

Helpful Websites and Resources

Important Notice: The Modern Language Association's <u>MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers</u> (7th Edition) should be consulted for citing unique sources not covered herein, such as dissertations and books by corporate authors. Besides our <u>Research Writing Guide</u> contained herein, the MLA handbook can and should be used to clear up any confusion regarding plagiarism and the process of gathering credible sources. The MLA handbook should also be used for explanations on quoting and paraphrasing in special cases, such as when you are working with sources written by people who share a last name.

University of Minnesota's Online Grammar Handbook provides helpful links to various sites on grammar, punctuation, writing, and the research process and steps. Visit:

http://www.tc.umn.edu/~jewel001/grammar/

<u>Writer's INC: A Student Handbook for WRITING and LEARNING</u> – copies can be found in Jonathan Dayton High School as well as local bookstores.

When looking for an at-home style guide or MLA reference book, be sure to look for the most recent published copy available, as MLA may change from time to time.