

Rockwood School District

Research Paper Guide



*Growing Together,
Learning for Life*

Revised 2010

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What is a Research Paper?

What's the difference between a research paper and a report?

REPORT	RESEARCH PAPER
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a collection of information to address a topic• largely, if not all, concrete detail, with very little commentary from the writer	VS. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an opinion or argument of the writer, supported by research• carefully chosen concrete details that are interpreted and supported with well-written commentary that explains their relevance

To write a research paper, you must use the note cards to prove a point, win an argument, or analyze a topic, **NOT simply recopy every note card into essay format.**

When you choose a topic for your research paper, keep in mind that you must be able to argue or have an opinion about your topic.

Seven Steps To Writing a High-Quality Research Paper

1. Choose a topic.
 - You might be given a topic, or you may be able to choose your own. If able to select a topic, choose something that you are curious about but do not already have great knowledge of.
2. Refine your topic and create a working thesis.
 - Do some preliminary reading about your topic to find at least one aspect to explore in-depth.
3. Research your topic and take notes.
 - Gather information from reliable sources to develop credible, intelligent ideas about the topic.
4. Formulate a thesis.
 - Consider your purpose. Are you going to analyze (look at all the small parts of your topic) to prove your thesis, or are you going to argue (start with a strong opinion and support it with even stronger CDs) your point? When you have made that decision, construct a final thesis statement.
5. Write an outline.
 - Review note cards and select the strongest CDs to support the thesis and topic sentences. Order CDs logically. Refer to "How to Write an Outline" on page 15.
6. Begin drafting.
 - Transfer the information from the outline into paragraph form, remembering to correctly cite the source of quoted or paraphrased ideas.
7. Revise and polish.
 - Refer to Research Paper Checklist on page 26.

How to Efficiently and Effectively Conduct Research

There are many different sources you may use to find information for your research paper. Your goal is to choose resources that will provide *reliable*, *accurate*, and *current* information on your topic. The three most commonly used sources for the high school research paper are:

Print sources	Print sources are “hard copies” of texts, such as books, newspapers, magazines, and journals. Because these sources are subject to an editorial process before they are published, they are reliable.
Online databases	Because databases are accessed through the Internet, students often confuse them with “free” Internet sources, but they are very different. Online databases are usually created by companies that specialize in publishing informational resources, or educational resources. The contents of these databases usually consist of articles that originally appeared in magazines, journals, newspapers, or reference books. Therefore, database articles are also subject to an editorial process, making them reliable. Databases are not accessible to the general public; you must purchase a subscription to use them. Rockwood students can use the databases to which the District subscribes.
Internet websites	While there are many reliable sites on the World Wide Web, websites are not subject to an editorial process. Websites may be created by anyone, including individuals who have no idea what they are talking about. In order to persuade you to adopt a particular point of view, a website creator might not include all relevant information on a topic. Therefore, if your teacher allows you to use websites, you must critically evaluate them to be sure that they are accurate, reliable, and current. <i>NOTE: Teachers and librarians discourage the use of Wikipedia (and most will not allow you to use it as a source) as the contents of the site may not be reliable.</i>

How do I find these resources?

1) Use your high school library’s electronic card catalog to locate **books and other print sources**. Start with a subject or keyword search. If you have trouble, ask the librarian who will be happy to help you. The St. Louis County and St. Louis City Libraries’ card catalogs are available online if you’d like to look for sources at your local public library. Your school librarian can help you with this too.

2) Access the **databases** through your school library’s website (or through the “programs” folder on the desktop if you are using a school computer). Most RSD databases are accessible from home, *but you must know the username and password*. See your school librarian for a list of usernames and passwords. Once you access the database you want, use the search box to find information about your topic.

RSD databases include:

Database Name	Description
Student Resource Center Gold/Discovering Collection	Excellent general resource covering core curriculum areas including history, literature, science, social studies, and more.
SIRS (Social Issues Resources Series)	Selected newspaper and magazine articles about current events and controversial issues.
EBSCOhost	Access to full-text newspaper and magazines articles covering a broad range of topics.
NewsBank	Access to full-text newspaper articles (<i>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</i> and <i>Kansas City Star</i>) dating back to the late 1980s.
Grolier Online	Collection of three general encyclopedias and four subject encyclopedias
Opposing Viewpoints	Collection of essays and articles exploring all aspects of controversial issues.

See your librarian for a complete list of online databases.

3) If your teacher allows you to use **Internet websites**, you can use an Internet search engine such as Google or Yahoo. As you look for relevant and reliable websites, remember that URLs ending in .gov, .edu, and .org are usually more reliable than those ending in .com or .net. In evaluating Internet resources, use the acronym **RADCAB**^{TM*}:

R elevancy	Is the information important to my topic?
A ppropriateness	Is the information suitable to my age/grade level?
D etail	How much information do I need? Is the depth of coverage adequate?
C urrency	When was the information published or last updated?
A uthority	Who is the author? What are his or her qualifications and credentials?
B ias	Why was this information written? Is its purpose to inform, persuade, entertain, or sell something?

* Created by Karen M. Christensson, M.S. Library Media Education

You will have to judge how many “No” answers are too many, but if you start with “A,” Authority, and can’t even find an author listed or you determine the author is not an expert, go no further. A site without an author is not ever considered worth exploring. Take your time, though; sometimes author information is found at the bottom of the page or at a “Contact Us” link. **Many people do consider websites published by reputable organizations like the American Red Cross to be credible sources of reliable information.**

Research is all about collecting the relative truths about a topic that others have and considering them in your mind to determine what you feel the truth of the matter to be. Quality research must be based on relative truth and while library materials undergo much screening and evaluation by experts before they are printed, Internet materials do not. You need to be the screener, so you are not wasting your time reading irrelevant, untruthful, or outdated information.

Because anyone can create and publish a website, it is imperative that you evaluate Internet sources. Use only relevant, appropriate, current, authoritative, and objective sources in your research.

Search Strategies for the Databases, Electronic Card Catalog, and Internet Search Engines

Step One: Think through your topic and brainstorm two lists of words: one which is **closely related to the topic** you are researching and one which includes words that might be associated with your topic but definitely **don't relate to your topic**. The lists below illustrated what might be collected if one was searching Charles Schulz and his career creating the Peanuts comic strip.

Search Key Words

Closely related to topic	Not related to your topic
Charles Schulz artist	nuts painter
Peanuts cartoon, cartooning	food sculptor

Step Two: Review search engine search symbols and signs and the results of using them:

Symbols, Signs and Words	Search Results
AND Charles Schulz AND Peanuts	Narrow search and retrieve records containing <i>all</i> of the words it separates.
OR Charles Schulz OR Peanuts	Broaden search and retrieve records containing <i>any</i> of the words it separates.
NOT Peanuts NOT nuts	Narrow search and retrieve records that do <i>not</i> contain the term following it.
() (Charles Schulz or Peanuts)	Group words or phrases when combining Boolean phrases and to show the order in which relationships should be considered: e.g., (mouse or mice) and (gene or pseudogene).
No symbol or sign used with key words, as in: peanuts comic	Search will locate records with EITHER peanuts OR comic as key terms within them.
Quotation Marks surrounding key words, as in: "peanuts comic"	Search will locate records containing the phrase enclosed in the quotation marks, so records containing "peanuts comic" as a phrase within them.
Plus sign (+) between key words, as in: Schulz+cartoon Schulz+cartoon+artist+comic	Search will locate records containing all key terms listed within them. Terms might not be in phrases or in the same order listed, but the records located will contain all of the terms linked by the plus sign.
Minus sign (-) between key words, as in: Peanuts-food Schulz-sculptor	Search will locate records containing the first key term listed but definitely not containing the term preceded by the minus sign. The first 'peanuts-food' search would not list records relating to peanuts as a food.
Asterisk (*) means 'wild card' or 'any possible missing letters' as in: Cartoon*	Search will locate records with key term and variations of the key term. In this case, records would be located which contained 'cartoon,' 'cartoons,' 'cartooning.'
Signs and Symbols may be mixed in any combination, as in: "Charles Schulz"+peanuts- food+comic*	Search will locate records containing the phrase 'Charles Schulz' along with the terms 'peanuts' and variations of the term 'comic,' but the search would not list any records relating to peanuts as a food.

Notice there are no spaces between words and symbols AND that the plus and minus signs relate to the term they come before.

Remember to keep your key words all in lower case or uncapitalized letters unless they label a name or a place. If you needlessly capitalize words, the search will look to match just capitalized words.

What Types of Information to Collect

Primary and Secondary Sources: Information about a topic is available in two major forms: primary and secondary sources.

<p>Primary Sources</p> <p>As the name suggests, these provide first-hand information on the topic (such as letters, photographs, articles of clothing, historical documents, paintings, or writings by an author especially when doing a literary analysis). They contain unfiltered information recorded at the time of the event or issue.</p>

<p>Secondary Sources</p> <p>These provide reflection on and evaluation of ideas related to the topic under consideration. Secondary sources are accounts of the past created by people writing about events sometime after they happened who did not experience it firsthand. For example, a history textbook is a <i>secondary source</i>.</p>
--

Is one type of information better to include in a research paper than another? The answer is that a balance of information creates the highest quality effort. In secondary sources, you get to explore what other researchers have determined about your topic. You will need to have an opinion on your subject, and secondary sources present others' varied opinions and comments about that topic. Yet, the primary sources are the most exciting to explore for they are the closest you can get to the topic you are researching.

Some websites containing primary sources related to American history and the Presidents:

Title	Internet Address
Digital History	http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu
American Memory	http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html
US Historical Document Archive	http://www.archives.gov/global-pages/subject-index.html
Repository of Primary Sources	http://www.uidaho.edu/special-collections/Other_Repositories.html
Repository of Primary Sources	http://www.asij.ac.jp/middle/lib/curlinks/primarysources/primarysources.htm
American History documents	http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/20th.htm
Making of America	http://moa.umdl.umich.edu
Library of Congress Learning Page	http://rs6.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/psources/source.html
National Archives	http://www.nara.gov
National Museum of American History	http://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/index.cfm
Avalon Project	http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/avalon.htm
History Matters	http://historymatters.gmu.edu/
Ease History	http://www.easehistory.org/index2.html
Making of America	http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/magrp/
World Wide Web Virtual Library	http://vlib.iue.it/history/index.html
New Deal Network	http://newdeal.feri.org
Presidential Libraries	http://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/presidential-libraries.html
The Presidential Timeline	http://www.presidentialtimeline.org
C-SPAN's Presidential Libraries	http://c-span.org/presidentiallibraries
American Experience: The Presidents	http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/presidents/
Presidents of the United States	http://www.ipl.org/div/potus/

How to Write Source Cards for a Research Paper

Source card information is included in the Works Cited section of MLA 7th Edition-chapter 5

Definition: A source card is an index card that lists the information needed for the Works Cited or Works Consulted page. Information on source cards should be reverse indented.

Tips about . . .

Author	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For sources with two or three authors, list the first author by last name, first name and then list the other author(s) by first name, last name. <i>For example:</i> Owens, Margaret, Joyce Smith, and Dan Williams. ● For sources with four or more authors, list the first author by last name, first name, and in place of the other authors' names type "et al." (<i>MLA 5.5.4</i>) <i>For example:</i> Owens, Margaret, et al. ● If no author is given, see the first bullet in Missing Information.
Page Numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When page numbers are required, use only the numbers; do NOT include p. or pp.
Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Each source card is labeled with a different letter of the alphabet. ● When the date is needed, you should write it using the international method: date month year. Months longer than four letters should be abbreviated. For example: 10 Feb. 2004. ● All source entries end with a period.
Missing Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If no author is given, begin entry with the next piece of information required (usually the title). ● If any publication information is missing from a book such as publisher, date, or place of publication, refer to <i>MLA 5.5.24</i>. ● If any publication information is missing from an internet source, cite what is available.
Titles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Titles of articles are put inside quotation marks. <i>For example:</i> "Dating Etiquette" ● Titles of books, magazines, newspapers, and encyclopedias are italicized. (<i>MLA 5.6.1</i>)

Common Sources and Examples Bibliographical Information Needed for a Correct Source Card

Book
(*MLA – 5.5.2*)

Source Letter
Author's last name, first name. <i>Title of Book</i> . City of publication: Company of publication, copyright year. Medium of Publication.

Book Example

A
Lee, Harper. <i>To Kill A Mockingbird</i> . New York: Warner Book, Inc., 1960. Print.

**One Chapter, Article,
or Entry from a Book**
(*MLA – 5.5.6*)

Source Letter

Author’s last name, first name (if given). “Title of article or entry.” *Title of book*. Ed. Editor’s first name last name. Volume number. City of publication: Publisher, copyright date. Pages. Medium of Publication.

**One Chapter, Article,
or Entry from a Book**
Example

B

Graves, Vivian. “Stephen King.” *Authors and Artists*. Eds. Diane Telgen and E.A. Des Chenes. Vol. 17. Detroit: Gale Research, 1995. 161-174. Print.

Encyclopedia
(*MLA – 5.5.7*)

Source Letter

Author’s last name, first name. “Subject.” *Title of Encyclopedia*. Edition. Year Published. Medium of Publication.

Encyclopedia
Example

C

Persiful, Meghan. “Jackson, Michael.” *World Book Encyclopedia*. 25th ed. 2000. Print.

Magazine
(*MLA – 5.4.6*)

Source Letter

Author’s last name, first name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Magazine*. Date of magazine: page(s). Medium of Publication.

Magazine Example

D

Thottam, Jyoti. “Why They’re Picking on Martha.” *Time*. 16 June 2003: 44-46. Print.

Newspaper
(*MLA – 5.4.5*)

Source Letter

Author’s last name, first name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Newspaper*. Date of issue: page(s). Medium of Publication.

Newspaper Example

E

Rushton, Bruce. “Under Fire.” *Riverfront Times*. 18-24 June 2003: 12-13. Print.

**SIRS, EBSCO, Gale,
or NewsBank (or
Library Databases)**
(*MLA – 5.6.4*)

Source Letter

Author's last name, first name. "Title of Article." *Title of Original Publication*. Date of original publication: page(s). *Name of the database*. Medium of Publication Consulted. Date of access.

Database Example

F

Maddren, Gerry. "Against All Odds." *Newsweek*. Feb. 1998: 21-23. *Student Resource Center Gold*. Gale. Web. 10 July 2003.

An Entire Website
(*MLA – 5.9.2*)

Source Letter

Title of site. Name of editor, publisher, or sponsor of the site (if given; if nothing is available use n.p.). Date of the publication (if given, if no date use n.d.) Medium of Publication. Date of access.

**An Entire Website
Example**

G

The Cinderella Project. U of Southern Mississippi, Oct. 2005. Web. 15 May 2008.

**A Work from a
Website**

Source Letter

Last name, First name. "Title of work." *Title of Web Site*. Date of publication or latest update. Sponsoring organization. Medium of Publication. Date accessed.

**A Work from a
Website Example**

H

Elliott, Christopher. "Don't let a natural disaster ruin your vacation." *CNN.com/travel*. 2 July 2008. CNN. Web. 10 July 2008.

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Source Letter

Expert's name. Type of interview (e-mail, personal, telephone). Date.

Interview
(MLA – 5.8.7)

Interview Example	I
	Hawk, Tony. Telephone interview. 28 Sept. 2004.

Television or Radio Program (MLA – 5.7.1)	Source Letter
	“Title of the Episode.” <i>Title of program</i> . Network. Station call letters, city. Date of broadcast. Medium of Reception (radio, television).

TV or Radio Program Example	J
	“Influenza 1918”. <i>The American Experience</i> . PBS. KETC, St. Louis. 30 Sept. 2004. Television.

Article in Online Newspaper (MLA – 5.6.4)	Source Letter
	Author’s last name, first name. “Article Title.” <i>Name of newspaper</i> . Date of publication. Medium of Publication. Date of access.

Article in Online Newspaper Example	K
	Frankel, Todd C. “A Forgotten Racehorse Finds Luck Once More.” <i>STLtoday.com</i> . 30 June 2008. Web. 2 July 2008.

How to Write Note Cards for a Research Paper

The basic parts of any note card are *Topic*, *Source Letter*, *Fact* and *Author's Last Name / Page Number*.

Topic: A category that helps organize your note cards into sections that will allow you to relocate information quickly. Some examples include: *Early Life, Records, Awards, Music Career.*

Source Letter: An alphabet letter assigned to the source card to identify where the information was found (A, B, C, etc.). It will help you correctly document within the paper.

Example of Note Card Format

TOPIC	SOURCE LETTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Using direct quote, summary, or paraphrase, write only one piece of information per card. Write on only one side of the note card.	
(AUTHOR'S LAST NAME AND PAGE NUMBER)	

Internal Documentation Information: Include the author's last name (if available) and the page number. Do NOT put a comma or "p." or "pp." before the page number.

Information: This is your information acquired from the source.

Example of a Note Card for a Research Paper about Michael Jordan

HARDSHIPS	A
Michael Jordan was cut from the freshman squad of his high school basketball team but practiced hard and later earned a starting spot on the varsity squad.	
(Timmons 99-103)	

A Quick Guide to the Three Main Types of Note Cards:

Type 1) Summary Note Card: Summarize the facts and ideas of a long passage into your own words. Although it does not have to be complete sentences, it will probably be more helpful to you if it is so that you remember what you were thinking at the time and will be better able to write effective commentary.

Summary Note Card Example from Ch. 11 of To Kill a Mockingbird

Bravery	B
<p>Mrs. Dubose refuses to die until she has painfully broken her addiction to morphine, even though there was no medical reason requiring her to do so. Atticus calls her the bravest woman he knows for taking on a difficult task that she might not succeed at, thereby giving Scout a new insight into what courage is.</p> <p>(Lee 99-112)</p>	

Type 2) Direct Quote: Words are taken EXACTLY from a book, author, or character. **DIRECT QUOTES MUST BE IN QUOTATION MARKS AND INTEGRATED INTO THE SENTENCE YOU ARE WRITING.**

Direct Quote Note Card Example for a Paper about Michael Jordan:

Character	C
<p>“Jordan provides an outstanding role model for the youth of America.”</p> <p>(Kuhler 37)</p>	

Example of How the Quote Could Be Worked into a Sentence:

<p>Although he is an incredible athlete, perhaps an even greater reason to respect him is because “Jordan provides an outstanding role model for the youth of America” (Kuhler 37).</p>

See page 17 of this guide for more information about integrating quotes.

Type 3) Paraphrase Note Card: Paraphrased note cards are close to the original text but use YOUR OWN WORDS. Make sure not to “borrow” words whose meaning you do not know unless you quote them.

Example of a Paraphrase Note Card for a Paper about Michael Jordan:

The **original source** had the following words: “*Michael Jordan has been highly acclaimed for his athletic prowess and has earned a place in the annals of professional basketball.*”

The following is an example of these same words being put into your own words. *Note that none of the words in the quote are used, but the meaning of the note card matches the meaning of the quote.

Character	D
M.J. has great athletic skills and will be remembered by basketball fans for years to come.	
(Strauss 101)	

How to Write a Thesis

A thesis statement is:

- a single sentence stating your opinion on the research topic without using the phrase “I think”.
- an argument or idea you intend to support in your paper.
- simply a concrete detail (your topic) followed by a commentary (your opinion/argument).
- ALWAYS a sentence and NEVER a question.

Thesis Checklist

- Is your thesis statement focused on a single limited topic?
 - Is your thesis a clear direct sentence? (Does it make a STATEMENT?)
 - Does your thesis convey your point of view or attitude about the topic without using “I think...”?
 - Does the thesis suggest a pattern of development? (for example- compare/contrast, cause/effect, argumentative, exemplification, division/classification)
-

Reminder:

A manageable topic + a specific feeling/opinion = an effective thesis statement

Examples:

- Coretta Scott King (topic) achieved the American Dream by working hard, helping others, and becoming a role model during the modern civil rights movement (opinion).
- Even though Southern plantation owners felt that they provided the best environment for their slaves (topic), the slaves’ lives on the plantation were harsh, humiliating, and strenuous for the majority (specific feelings).
- The Vietnam War (topic) was a devastating event that cost over 58,000 soldiers their lives, destroyed much of the beautiful country of Vietnam, and caused numerous anti-war movements in the U.S (specific feelings).
- Franklin Delano Roosevelt (topic) helped the United States both socially and economically to overcome the Great Depression (specific feelings).
- Although the Warren Commission found that John F. Kennedy was killed by a lone gunman (topic), evidence suggests that his death was the result of a conspiracy (opinion).
- Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X had different viewpoints (topics); however, they both changed the course of history by fighting for civil rights (feeling).
- JK Rowling’s Harry Potter (topic) is a charming reminder of the imaginary world of children (specific feeling).
- High power rifles (topic) should be banned from deer hunting to protect undersized deer (opinion).
- In order to improve communications between student and teacher and to enhance learning (topic), the college grading policy should be modified to eliminate negative, punishing grades of D and F (feeling).

How to Write an Outline

An outline is:

- a prewriting technique utilized to help organize your thoughts and information.
- a graphic organizer that allows you to visualize what support you have and what support you still need to find.
- logical, full of grouped information, and specifically formatted to MLA guidelines.

This is how the various subpoints of an outline should appear on a page in MLA Format.

I. Main Idea 1

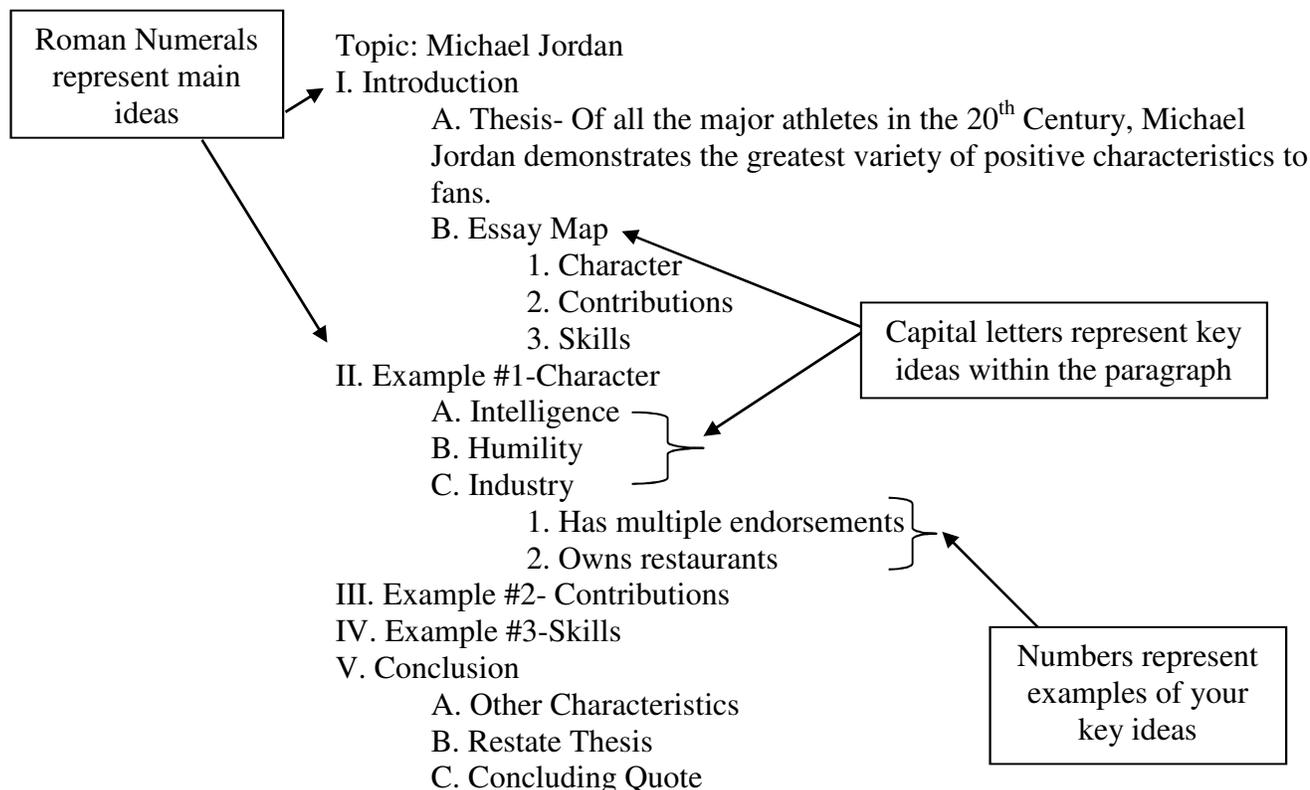
A. Key Idea 1

1. Support for key idea 1
2. Support for key idea 1
 - a. additional support
 - b. additional support
 - i. details to mention
 - ii. details to mention

B. Key Idea 2

II. Continue with next Main Idea

This is an example of how the various subpoints of an outline should appear in MLA Format.



Important Note

- According to MLA Guidelines, within an outline, every capital “A” must also have a capital “B” because if you only have one key idea to support your main idea, it’s probably not enough to argue something strongly.
- Similarly, for every “1”, there should also be a “2”. If you don’t have multiple examples of your key ideas, it might mean the key idea isn’t strong enough to support your main idea.

How To Structure Writing Within a Research Paper

Just as in any other essay, paragraphs in a research paper contain these elements: TS, CD, CM, CS. The number and pattern of the support will vary according to topic and preference, but the basic uses remain the same.

A Topic Sentence...

- is the first sentence in each body paragraph.
- is sort of like a “mini-thesis” for each paragraph.
- will have a subject and an opinion about the subject and introduce the point that you will argue or support in that particular body paragraph.

A Concrete Detail (CD)...

- is specific relevant information about the subject found during research and recorded on note cards.
- is almost always followed by internal documentation to identify the source of the information.

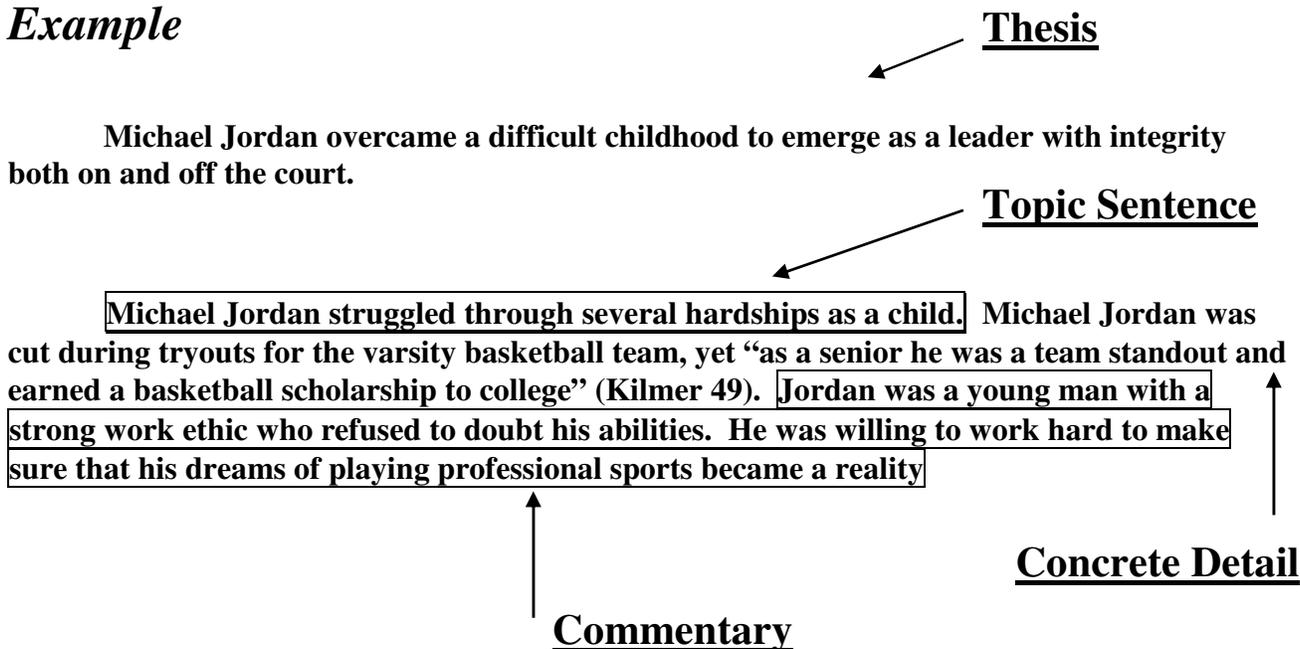
Commentary (CM)...

- is analysis and explanation accompanying a concrete detail.
- shows why that CD matters or what that CD reveals about the subject.

Example

Michael Jordan overcame a difficult childhood to emerge as a leader with integrity both on and off the court.

Thesis



Topic Sentence

Michael Jordan struggled through several hardships as a child. Michael Jordan was cut during tryouts for the varsity basketball team, yet “as a senior he was a team standout and earned a basketball scholarship to college” (Kilmer 49). **Jordan was a young man with a strong work ethic who refused to doubt his abilities. He was willing to work hard to make sure that his dreams of playing professional sports became a reality**

Concrete Detail

Commentary

**The MOST important part of the research paper is COMMENTARY.
This prevents it from being simply a report.**

How to Integrate Quotes

Concrete details (CDs) **CANNOT** “stand alone”. This means that they must be incorporated into one of your own sentences and woven into your paper, rather than just dropped in. Therefore, as you write your paper, you will want to add CM to lead into the direct quotes. Several effective strategies exist to accomplish this task.

1. **Include information about the author.** Give the author’s name and brief information about his/her authority (Why should the reader believe him/her?). When you include the author’s name in the sentence, you do not place it in the internal documentation.

GOOD Example: Hubie Brown, Turner Sports analyst and former NBA head coach, attributes Michael Jordan’s importance to the fact “he set the bar of excellence at such a high level that in our immediate future, his status is unlikely to ever be challenged” (93).

2. **Provide the context of the quote.** Identify when and where the quote was given.

GOOD Example: In reviewing his success in basketball, Michael Jordan reflects, “I’ve missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over in my life. And that is why I succeed” (Brown 103).

3. **Use short phrases and powerful words from the text.** DO NOT settle by quoting several lines of text. To avoid interrupting the flow of your writing, place the internal documentation where a pause would naturally occur as near as possible to the material documented. Though sometimes a “natural pause” may not occur until the end of the sentence, it may be at the end of a clause or phrase as seen below. It should always be placed before the punctuation that concludes that clause, phrase, or sentence.

GOOD Example: In *Lord of the Flies*, Golding uses the weather to symbolize the changing attitudes of the stranded boys. Therefore, after “an expression of pain and inward concentration altered the pale contours” of Piggy’s face (124), thunder erupts.

4. **Use signal words/introductory phrases AND commentary to transition into a quote.**

GOOD Example: After describing Heathcliff’s courageous, though unrewarded actions, Bronte makes a sense of injustice evident to the reader: “It hurt me to think the master should be made uncomfortable by his own good deed” (231).

Internal Documentation

For any special situations not covered below, please refer to section 6 of the MLA Handbook

Any time you use information from a source that is not common knowledge, you must document the source of the information.

In general, internal documentation...

- is the information you listed at the bottom of the note card, which is the **author's last name** and **page number inside parentheses** with **no comma** separating them.
- occurs at the end of the sentence **before** the period.
- clearly corresponds to a specific source on the Works Cited page.

Each of the following examples corresponds with the sample Works Cited entry above it.

Sample Works Cited Entry

Packer, Alex. *How Rude! The Teenagers' Guide to Good Manners, Proper Behavior, and Not Grossing People Out*. Minneapolis: Free Spirit Publishing, 1997. Print.

Documenting direct quotes:

Example: The book mentions that, strangely enough, sometimes "Negative invitations soften the blow of rejection" (Packer 249).

Documenting paraphrased information:

Example: When asking someone out on a date, phrasing the question in a negative way helps to ease the pain of rejection (Packer 249).

Using the author's name in the sentence: If you mention the author's name within the sentence (when integrating the quote), it does not need to be included inside the parentheses at the end of the sentence.

Example: According to Alex Packer, it's easier to ask someone out if you phrase the question in a negative way to "soften the blow of rejection" (249).

Sample Works Cited Entry

"Dating Etiquette." *The World Book Encyclopedia*. 10th ed. 1979. Print.

Documenting a source with no author: When documenting a work with no author, put a shortened version of the title in the internal documentation. Be sure the reference clearly refers to the beginning of the corresponding entry on the Works Cited page.

Example: Dating etiquette changes over time; however, many people still follow traditional dating rules ("Dating Etiquette").

Sample Works Cited Entry

Martin, Judith. *Miss Manners' Guide to Excruciatingly Correct Behavior; The Ultimate Handbook on Modern Etiquette*. New York: Galahad Books, 1991. Print.

Indirect sources: If the information that you quote or paraphrase is quoted from another source, abbreviate “quoted in” as “qtd. in.”

Example: A gentle reader asked, “Is it possible to be guilty of being rude when you absolutely can’t help it?” (qtd. in Martin 470).

Sample Works Cited Entry

Hamilton, Anita. “iPhone Apps: To Pay or Not to Pay?” *Time*. 1 July 2008. Web. 25 July 2008.

Documenting a website WITH an author: When citing a website that has an author, use only the author’s last name in the internal documentation.

Example: Despite the much anticipated release of the new iPhone, consumers will find “it’ll be anything but a bargain” (Hamilton).

Sample Works Cited Entry

The Etiquette Place Home Page. The Etiquette Place. 1 Sept. 2004. Web. 25 July 2008.

Documenting a website WITHOUT an author: When citing a website with no author, use a shortened version of a title (2-3 words) in the internal documentation.

Example: Etiquette is a crucial skill for those who may attend business meetings throughout his/her respective career (*Etiquette Place*).

SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT PAGE NUMBERS FROM ELECTRONIC SOURCES:

For internet and other electronic sources, a page number should not be included UNLESS it is the number of the page from its original publication. For instance, if it is on Time magazine’s website and you learn that it originally appeared on page 48 of the magazine, you may include that in the internal documentation. However, most websites do not have true page numbers, meaning that though the pages may be numbered by a printer, the version on the screen is not numbered and therefore the printer’s page numbering should not be used.

Sample Works Cited Entry

Ellington, Duke. *Black, Brown, and Beige*. 1945. RCA Bluebird, 1988. L.P.

---. *The Far East*. 1965. RCA, 1995. L.P.

---. *The Latin American Suite*. 1969. Fantasy, 1990. L.P.

Documenting more than one work by the same author: When documenting multiple sources with the same author, put a comma after the author's last name and add a shortened version of the title referenced at that point.

Example: "The album's title is something of a misnomer, since only one track concerns a country in the 'Far East'" (Ellington, Far East). The mellifluous style of this album starkly contrasted with the salsa rhythms present in his 1969 Latin-influenced work (Ellington, Latin).

Sample Works Cited Entry

"Jordan, Michael (1963-)." *DISCovering Biography*. 2003. *Student Resource Center Gold*. Gale Group Databases. Web. 2 July 2008.

"Jordan, Michael (1963-)." *American Decades*. 2003. *Student Resource Center Gold*. Gale Group Databases. Web. 2 July 2008.

Documenting two sources with the same title (and no author): When documenting two anonymous sources with the same title, list by title and add a publication fact, such as a date, that distinguishes the works.

Example: "The intensely competitive guard for the Chicago Bulls dominated the National Basketball Association (NBA) for more than a decade" ("Jordan, Michael," *DISCovering*).

Works Cited

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The Works Cited page at the end of your paper lists the sources that you documented internally. Each internal documentation in the paper must correspond to a specific entry on the Works Cited page. The information from your source cards goes on the Works Cited page.

Example Works Cited page:

-Center the “Works Cited” title.

-Do NOT bold or underline it.

-Alphabetize sources by author’s last name.

-If no author, use the first key word in the title.

Smith 7

Works Cited

Cooper, Eugene. “You are how you eat; Chinese table manners.” *Faces: People, Places And Cultures*. May 2007: 32. *Student Resource Center Gold*.

Gale Group Databases. Web. 1 July 2008.

“Dating Etiquette.” *The World Book Encyclopedia*. Vol. 6. 1979. Print.

The Etiquette Place Home Page. The Etiquette Place. 1 Sept. 2004. Web. 25 July 2008.

Hamilton, Anita. “iPhone Apps: To Pay or Not to Pay?” *Time*. 1 July 2008. Web. 25 July 2008.

Martin, Judith. *Miss Manners’ Guide to Excruciatingly Correct Behavior; The Ultimate Handbook on Modern Etiquette*. New York: Galahad Books, 1991. Print.

Packer, Alex. *How Rude! The Teenagers’ Guide to Good Manners, Proper Behavior, and Not Grossing People Out*. Minneapolis: Free Spirit Publishing, 1997. Print.

-Begin each entry on the left margin. Indent subsequent lines.

-Double Space entire page with no extra spaces.

Formatting the Final Copy

MLA 7th edition – Page 116-117

Header-
-This should be in the upper right hand corner of each page.

Smith 1

Heading-
-This appears on the first page *ONLY*.

-Double space these items.

John Smith

Ms. Teacher

Language Arts 9

10 May 2003

-Below the heading and centered on the page, you should place your title.

-This is typed in exactly the same font and format as the rest of your paper.

-Directions on how to do this are in the second paragraph on this page.

Title Goes Here

Start your paper here. Notice the heading is double spaced. Double space above and below the title, too. Center the title. In Word, go to "Format", then select "Paragraph", then choose "Line spacing" then "Double," then click OK. Use Times New Roman 12 point font. Do *not* force justify the text to line up the right margin. All margins—top, bottom, and both sides—are one inch. Do not include a cover page.

Go to "File," and "Page Setup" to set up margins. To create headers, go to "View," then "Header and Footer." Choose right justify, then type in your last name. Leave one space, then hit the # choice to insert page numbers so that each of your pages will be numbered automatically.

Do *not* hit "Enter" twice to start a new paragraph. If you include a quote that is longer than four lines, you will need to indent each of the lines 10 spaces (2 tabs) like this.

Joseph Gibaldi points out:

Quotations are effective in research papers when used selectively.

Quote only words, phrases, lines, and passages that are particularly interesting, vivid, unusual, or apt, and keep all quotations as brief as possible. Overquotation can bore your readers and might lead them to conclude that you are neither an original thinker nor a skillful writer. (80)

Plagiarism

According to Rockwood School District policy, plagiarism is defined as “the taking of ideas or writings from someone else and presenting them as one’s own” (“Plagiarism”. *Webster’s New World Dictionary*). Consequences for plagiarism (first offense) range from no credit for work up to 3 days out-of-school suspension. Consequences for subsequent offenses range up to 10 days out-of-school suspension. Refer to Rockwood Policy 2611 for specific guidelines. The District defines three levels of plagiarism:

- Level 1:** Though most of the work is the student’s, a few lines or phrases of text or a paragraph is used without proper attribution.
- Level 2:** A significant portion of the work is not the student’s and is not cited. This would include use of multiple paragraphs of someone else’s work, use of someone’s ideas, and/or repeated paraphrasing of someone else’s work without attribution.
- Level 3:** Little, if any, of the work is the student’s; most, if not all, or the work has been copied verbatim or copied and slightly altered.

The following information comes from the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* by Joseph Gibaldi, Fifth Edition, published by the Modern Language Association of America, 1999.

- **Level 1: using another’s words without giving proper credit while paraphrasing**

Original Source: Everyone uses the word language and everybody these days talks about culture [...]. “Languaculture” is a reminder, I hope, of the necessary connection between its two parts [...]. (Michael Agar, *Language Shock: Understanding the Culture of Conversation* [New York: Morrow, 1994] 60).

WRONG: At the intersection of language and culture lies a concept that we might call “languaculture.”

[With no credit given to Mr. Agar, this is plagiarism.]

RIGHT: At the intersection of language and culture lies a concept that Michael Agar has called “languaculture” (60).

- **Level 2: using another’s idea(s) without giving proper credit**

The following passage is from an essay by Wendy Martin in *Columbia Literary History of the United States*, “Some of Dickinson’s most powerful poems express her firmly held conviction that life cannot be fully comprehended without an understanding of death” (625).

WRONG: Emily Dickinson strongly believed that we cannot understand life fully unless we also comprehend death.

[With no documentation in the above, the writer has plagiarized Ms. Martin.]

RIGHT: As Wendy Martin has suggested, Emily Dickinson strongly believed that we cannot understand life fully unless we also comprehend death (625).

- **Level 3: using words and phrases verbatim or slightly altered**

Original Source: “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” (Hughes 168).

WRONG: 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. [Words, phrases, and ideas belong to Mr. Hughes; this is plagiarism.]

RIGHT: 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).

What should you **always** document (or give credit for)? **Everything that you borrow, from direct quotations and paraphrases to information and ideas.**

What do you **NOT** have to document? **Familiar proverbs and sayings (“You can’t judge a book by its cover”), well-known quotations (“We shall overcome”), or common knowledge (“George Washington was the first president of the United States”).**

You **MUST** give the source for any borrowed material that readers might mistake for your own. **IF YOU HAVE ANY DOUBT ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT YOU ARE COMMITTING PLAGIARISM, CITE YOUR SOURCE OR SOURCES.**

Other types of plagiarism include:

- **turning in your sibling or friend’s paper as your own**
- **turning in a paper that you turned in previously for another course.** This is a kind of self-plagiarism. A teacher might find it acceptable to rework a paper that you used in a previous English class; always ask before you do so.
- **turning in a paper that you have purchased**

If you have any questions about plagiarism, check with your English teacher or librarian.

Carol Felsenthal in her article “Plagiarism” says:

“I only copied one sentence here or one paragraph there” is no defense. Any uncredited lifting of another person’s words or ideas—no matter how small—constitutes plagiarism.”

“But I put it in my own words” is also no defense. Some students believe that careful paraphrasing gives them carte blanche to plunder another’s work. They forget that ideas as well as words are the property of the person who created them. Suppose you had devised a theory for a political science term paper on why President Reagan won such a sweeping victory in the last election. Another student read your paper and presented the exact theory but in his own words. If he neglected to credit your paper as the source of the idea, he plagiarized...You must acknowledge every appearance of borrowed material.”

Things to remember:

- Document any ideas that you borrow or that are not considered common knowledge.
- Be sure to put anything you find in a source that you wish to use word-for-word in quotation marks on your note cards so you will remember that you are, indeed, quoting from your source directly.
- When reading from a source and taking notes, close the book (or turn away from your computer) and put the information in your own words.

Recognizing and Avoiding Plagiarism

The following information comes from the book entitled *The Bedford Guide to the Research Process* by Jean Johnson, published by St. Martin’s Press, Inc., 1987.

Plagiarism results from a writer’s failure to integrate information from sources into his or her own thinking. Such failure often originates in inadequate paraphrasing and summarizing when you take notes; attempts to shorten the process and write directly from sources can lead to plagiarism. Plagiarism is usually recognizable because the borrowed material is written in a different style from that of the author of the paper. Sometimes the borrowed material alternates with the author’s words with resulting distortion and lack of clarity. See example below.

Original Source:

The long epoch from the Second Awakening to the war with Spain was also a century of great tribulation, and “ordeal of faith” for church-going America. . . .

On the intellectual level the new challenges were of two sorts. First, there was a set of specific problems that had to be faced separately: Darwin unquestionably became the nineteenth century’s Newton, and his theory of evolution through natural selection became the century’s cardinal idea . . . Accompanying these specific problems was a second and more general challenge: the rise of positivistic naturalism, the cumulative result of modern methods for acquiring knowledge. In every discipline from physics to biblical criticism, myth and error were being dispelled, and the result of this activity was a world view which raised problems of the most fundamental sort. (Ahlstrom, Sydney E. *A Religious History of the American People*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972.)

Plagiarized Version:

The long epoch from the Second Awakening of 1785 and the war with Spain in 1898 was a century of tribulation and ordeal for religious Americans. During this period, but most notably between the years 1865-1900, many intellectual clergymen created a new Liberal Theology built on the tenets of Darwinism and positivistic naturalism, while the unlettered population remained staunchly conservative based on the orthodoxy of the Puritans.

The intellectuals dealt with two challenges, each of them separately. First, there was Darwin, who had become by (1865) the Newton of the nineteenth century, whose theory of natural selection had become the century’s cardinal idea.

The second was a more general challenge: the rise of positivistic naturalism, or the cumulative result of modern methods for acquiring information. In every discipline from physics to biblical exegesis, myth and error were being dispelled, and the resulting world view raised fundamental problems concerning faith and the deterministic principles held by the church (Ahlstrom 763-64).

Research Paper Checklist

Heading

- Have you correctly structured the heading on your paper according to MLA/teacher guidelines?
- Do you have a creative, relevant title for your paper?

Paper

- Do you have an introductory paragraph (minimum of three sentences)?
- Do you have a thesis that argues a point?
- Is the thesis included in the introductory paragraph (usually the last sentence)?
- Do you have internal documentation within your paper to credit the source of the information?
- Is your internal documentation in MLA format? (author's last name page #) *Example: (Haynes 24)*
- Does each of your body paragraphs begin with a topic sentence that provides a specific focus for the paragraph and supports/ties in with the thesis in your introduction?
- Is the meaning of each CD explained so your paper is not simply a listing of CDs? (CD/CM format?)
- Do you have a conclusion that reiterates but does not restate your thesis?

Proofreading

- Have you run spell check and grammar check?
- Have you read through your paper at least once and looked for typos?
- Is your paper double-spaced and typed in a readable font such as Times New Roman 12 pt. size?
- Have you checked for complete sentences and avoided fragments and run-ons?
- Have you checked that your verb tenses are consistent?
- Have you eliminated the words "you" and "I" unless they are part of a quote?
- Have you eliminated passive voice (checked use of "to be" verbs)?
- Are all of your quotes integrated into sentences and not just "dumped" into the paper?
- Have you completed the following additional revision/editing steps required by your teacher?
 - _____
 - _____
- Have you had a classmate peer edit your paper?

Works Cited

- Is "Works Cited" centered across the top of the page?
- Are the sources in alphabetical order?
- Have you double checked the format for each source and made sure that you have all the necessary information?
- Do your sources have the correct punctuation (periods, colons, commas, and italics)?
- Is everything double-spaced?
- Is each entry on the Works Cited page reverse indented?
- Are all of the sources you used in your paper included on the Works Cited page?
- Are all sources listed on the Works Cited page cited within the body of your paper?

Final Check

- Have you assembled all the drafts and research materials required by your teacher for submission?
- Have you double checked to be certain that all ideas and statements that are the work of another person are cited through internal documentation to avoid plagiarizing?

My signature verifies that I have read and completed the above checklist to the best of my ability.

Your Name Printed

Your Signature

Glossary of Terms

Annotated bibliography: a listing of sources and their publication information plus a short paragraph describing the information found within each source

Boolean: A series of operators such as AND, OR, NOT, and + that can help a computer to limit internet search results and allow a user to more quickly find the information that is sought

Cite: to document; to give credit to the work from which information was taken

Commentary (CM): *NEW, ORIGINAL insight written by the author of the paper* to analyze and explain a concrete detail or show why that CD matters or what it reveals about the subject

Concrete Detail (CD): specific relevant information about the subject found during research and recorded on note cards; it is almost always followed by a internal documentation to identify the source of the information

Database: a collection of articles and information for convenient access, usually electronically (for example- Gale, SIRS)

Footer: the space at the bottom of the paper into which information that appears on each page can be placed; this is not usually used in MLA format

Header: the space at the top of the paper into which information that appears on each page can be placed; usually this includes only your last name and the page number

Heading: in MLA format, the specific, formal instructions for formatting the beginning of a paper to give relevant information about the author and the class for which it was written; specifically MLA heading directions include: text is one inch from the top, flush with the left margin, and the student's name, instructor, course name/number and date on 4 separate lines double-spaced

Indirect Source: a source that has been previously cited in another source

Internal Documentation: the use of parenthesis to indicate the source of the borrowed material in a research paper; this is a mandatory element of a research paper in order to prevent plagiarism (also called end note, in-text citation, or parenthetical documentation/citation)

MLA: Modern Language Association; this is the type of documentation and citation used for papers in Language Arts classes

Note card: the card on which the research information is placed; it must be punctuated accurately if it is a direct quote (in quotation marks) and identified with a letter that indicates the source from which it came and the page number (if there is one). Note cards should contain one main idea per card and should only be written on the front of the card

Outline: a roadmap for a paper that presents an organized listing of the key ideas and supports you plan to use to prove your thesis; MLA format uses a specific series of indentations that use Roman numerals, capital letter, numbers, etc.

Paraphrase: rewording the meaning expressed in something spoken or written into your own words while retaining all the original ideas and meaning

Periodical: a publication which is published on a regular basis, such as a newspaper or magazine

Plagiarism: either purposely or unintentionally using someone else's ideas or words as if they were your own, without acknowledging the original author

Primary Source: first-hand information on the topic (such as letters, photographs, novels, articles of clothing, historical documents and paintings) that contain unfiltered information recorded at the time of the event or issue

Reference: books such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, and directories which are used to find specific information, but are generally not meant to be read cover to cover; usually they cannot be checked out of a library

Report: a collection of information to address a topic which is largely, if not all, concrete detail, with very little commentary from the writer; the writer repeats information he/she has gathered without interpreting it or using it to show anything new

Research Paper: a paper that focuses on explaining an opinion of the writer or making an argument. Though this type of writing uses concrete details found through research to support the arguable thesis, it is different from a report because the writer uses carefully written commentary to interpret the facts and explain their significance and how they support the thesis statement

Reverse Indentation: an entry or a paragraph that has all lines *except the first* indented. This is used on both in the Works Cited page and source cards. Sometimes it is also called a hanging indentation. An example of reverse indentation can be seen in the format of each entry of this glossary

Secondary Source: reflection on and evaluation of ideas related to the topic under consideration; these are accounts of the past created by people writing about events sometime after they happened. For example, a history textbook is a *secondary source*

Source Card: an index card that lists the information needed for the works cited/consulted page

Summary: to make a brief statement or account of the main points that condenses a longer piece

Thesis: the central idea in a piece of writing which the contents of the paper work to support. The thesis in a research paper is a sentence which states both the topic and a point of view about that topic, expressing an attitude or position taken by a writer or speaker with the purpose of proving or supporting it

Topic Sentence: the first sentence of a paragraph which often functions as a “mini-thesis” and provides a clear focus for the paragraph; it should be related to thesis and be developing some aspect of it

Works Cited: the list of sources actually documented (paraphrased or quoted) in your paper, generally through internal documentation; all of the internal documentation references in the paper or project should lead the reader to this list of sources

Works Consulted: the list of sources used in the preparation of a research project; it is used to list background reading, summarized sources, or any sources used for informational purposes but not paraphrased or quoted. It is used to document those sources referred to, but not cited in your paper