

# F.I.S.D. HIGH SCHOOL RESEARCH GUIDE

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Research is a complex process, but one that is rewarding – provided you know what you’re doing! This packet is designed to be sure that you have the skills that you will need to research for any class, any project, AND when you have questions in “real life”!

## Research, defined

**re·search** (ri-'sərch) *noun*

Etymology:

Middle French *recerche*, from *recercher* to go about seeking, from Old French *recerchier*, from *re-* + *cerchier*, *sercher*, 1577

1: careful or diligent search

2: studious inquiry or examination ; *especially* : investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws

3: the collecting of information about a particular subject (Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary)

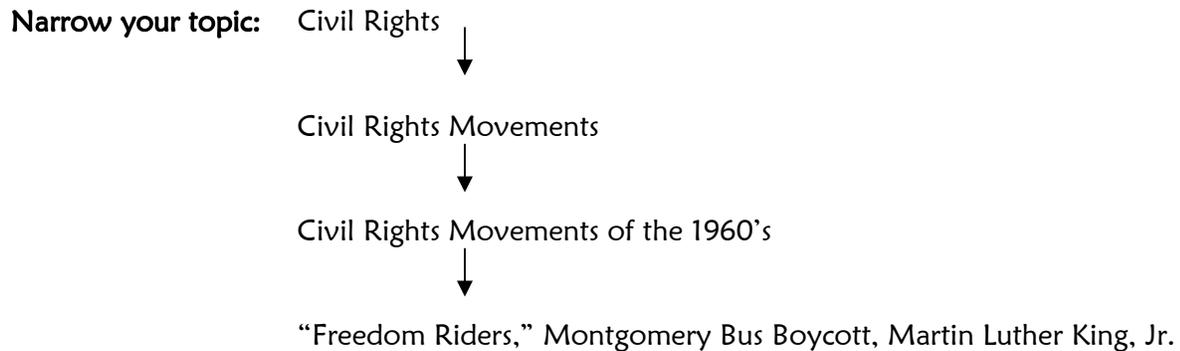
Writing a research paper involves (1) first familiarizing yourself with the works of "experts"--for example, on the page, in cyberspace, or in the flesh through personal interviews--to build upon what you know about a subject and then (2) comparing their thoughts on the topic with your own.

You'll end up using relevant information--facts and/or opinions--from these expert sources, these "others," to support the topic you have chosen to explore. The final product will be a unique and appropriate **integration** of evidence you have located outside yourself *and* personal insights generated from your own internal think tank--your mind! (The Online Writing Lab of Purdue University)

# PHASE ONE: PREPARE

## Step 1: Define your objective.

Narrow your chosen subject down to a topic that can be thoroughly researched within the assigned time limits of your research project and the available resources. Remember, you must always be prepared to adjust your topic as needed throughout the writing process.



## Step 2: Develop a specific research question.

Your topic is your starting place. From there, you should develop an engaging research question. Merely presenting a topic in the form of a question does not transform it into a good research question.

Your question should be:

- Relevant
- Interesting
- Focused and specific
- Researchable

Broad Topic	Narrowed Topic	Focused Topic	Research Question
video games	video game violence	video game violence and children	How does violence in video games affect children?
eating disorders	teens and eating disorders	teen peer pressure and bulimia	What role, if any, does peer pressure play in the development of bulimia among teens?

### **Step 3: Do some background reading on your topic.**

Read one or two general articles on your topic. Your goal is to get a general understanding of the topic, not to find sources for your paper yet; therefore, sites like Ask.com or Wikipedia are acceptable at this stage, although they are not considered acceptable sources for use in your final product.

Ask yourself:

- Is this an interesting topic?
- Do I understand the topic?
- Is there enough information available to answer my research question?
- Is there a better question I could ask now that I know more?

## PHASE TWO: RESEARCH

### Step 4: Develop a working thesis.

Now that you've learned a little more about your topic, you are ready to draft a preliminary answer to your research question. This is your working thesis, what you will attempt to prove or explain through your research.

#### What is a thesis statement?

A thesis statement is a road map for the paper; in other words, it tells the reader what to expect from the rest of the paper. Here are characteristics of a thesis statement:

- ☑ It is a single, declarative sentence, not a question
- ☑ It states the specific focus the paper will have.
- ☑ It does NOT use the words, "The purpose of this paper is . . ." or "In this paper I will . . ." or "My topic is about . . ."

<b>Research Question:</b>	Has the Internet been a positive influence on society?
<b>Thesis:</b>	The Internet has forever changed how the world communicates, but the effects of technology have been both positive and negative.

<b>Research Question:</b>	Does America need a national health care system?
<b>Thesis:</b>	A change in the health insurance system may be necessary to ensure that people receive adequate health care.

<b>Research Question:</b>	What is being done to solve the problem of homelessness?
<b>Thesis:</b>	Government, private organizations, and individuals are all working to solve what seems to be the insurmountable problem of homelessness.

Remember, at this stage, you are only guessing at what you will find in your research. You will revise this as you discover what you *actually* find while researching.

### Step 5: Create a working bibliography.

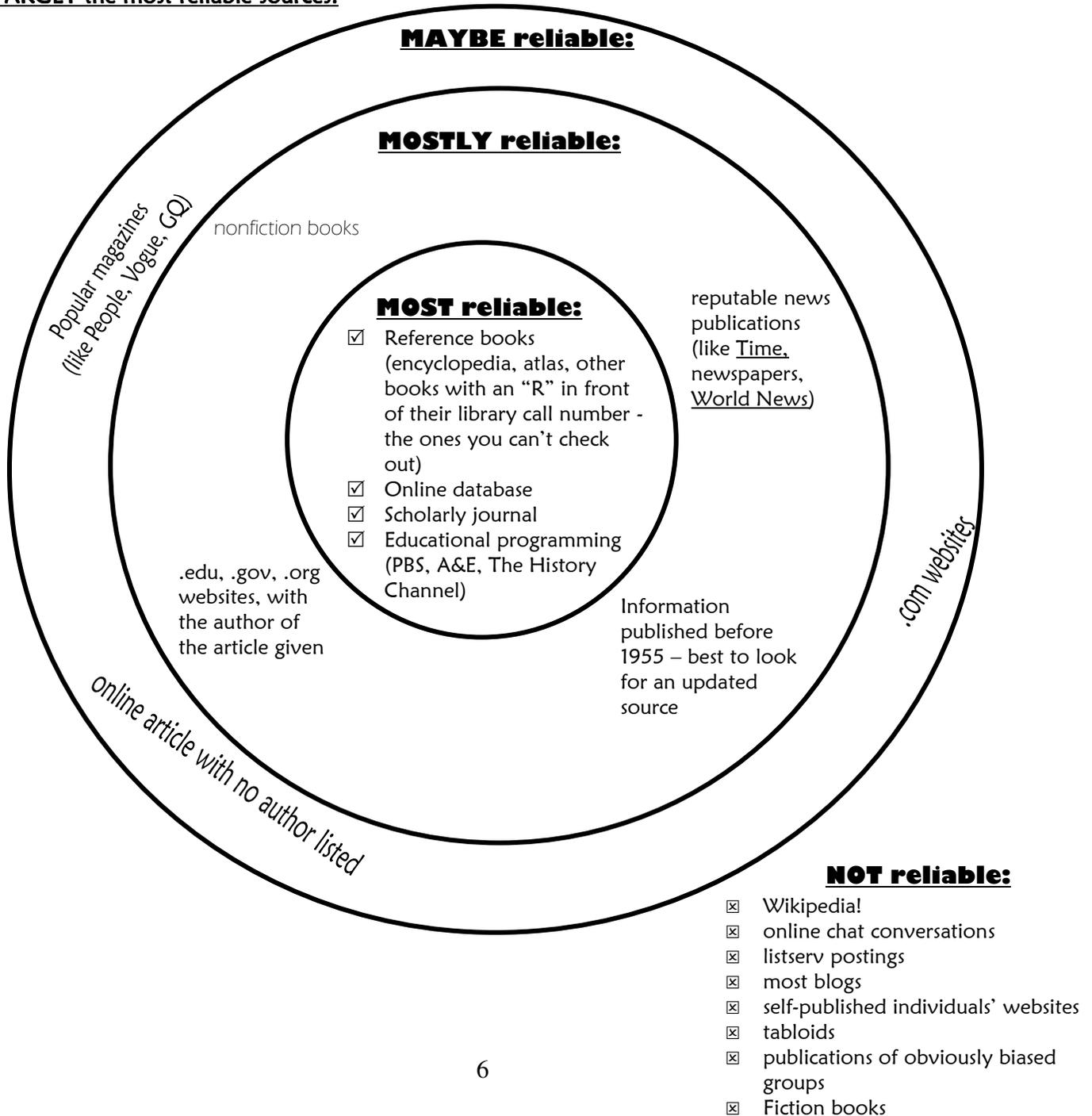
In this step, you make sure that the sources you will find are both credible resources for information and useful for your topic. Of course, you will also have to let your audience know where you got your information.

Evaluate the credibility of your source.

Consider:

- ✓ **Authorship** (Who wrote this? Do you recognize their name?)
- ✓ **Authenticity** (Where does the information originate? Are the sources documented?)
- ✓ **Objectivity** (Is the information fact or opinion? Is a balance of perspectives represented?)
- ✓ **Reliability** (What's the purpose of the information? Does this matter to you?)
- ✓ **Timeliness** (How current are the sources? Does currency matter with your topic?)

TARGET the most reliable sources!



**Internet sources can be tricky! Here are some general tips for finding reliable information online:**

- ☑ Use online databases (like those available through the library webpage) as a first resource.
- ☑ Stick to websites ending .edu, .gov, and .org.
- ☑ Try looking in the archives of publication websites (like the Dallas Morning News website).
- ☑ THINK while you read online sources! Be wary of articles that present only one side of an issue, those that do not provide facts and evidence to support arguments, or those that seem motivated by a bias.
- ☑ Some online sources are unreliable in general. These include Wikipedia, listservs and chatrooms, and most blogs. There is really no way to evaluate the credibility of authors on these locations.

**Cite your sources.**

- ☑ It is helpful to create a bibliography card for each source *as you find it*.
  1. Each source is recorded on an index card.
  2. Each source must be assigned a “source number” which is recorded on the card.
  3. Each source is recorded according to proper MLA format (see the following page for examples).
  4. Bibliography cards follow the format below:

Proper MLA bibliography entry

<b>3</b>
Thomas, Paul. Essay on "Sonnet 130 - William Shakespeare." <u>Poetry for Students</u> . Eds. Marie R. Napierkowski and Mary K. Ruby. Vol 1. Detroit: Gale, 1997. 246-57.

Source number – assigned in the order that sources are found

Notice that bibliography entries have a sort of backwards indentation – this is called a *hanging indent*. All lines except for the first one are indented to the same margin.

**Use MLA to create bibliography entries.**

Use the following models as a formatting guide for creating bibliography entries:

- ☑ You will need to “plug in” the various pieces of information in the right place with the right punctuation.
- ☑ Many more specific types of citations are available - consult easybib.com or citationmachine.com for reference.

## BOOKS:

### One Author

Author's last name, first name. *Book Title*. Edition statement. City: Publishing company, publication date.

### Two or Three Authors

Author's last name, first name, Author's first name last name, and Author's first name last name.  
*Book Title*. City, State of publication: Publishing company, publication date.

### Book with No Author

*Book Title*. City: Publishing company, Publication date.

### Book with an Editor

Editor's last name, first name, ed. *Book Title*. City: Publishing company, Publication date.

### Work/Chapter in an Anthology/Textbook

Last name, first name. "Title of Article." *Book Title*. Ed. First name Last name. Vol. #. City: Publishing Company, Publication year. Page-page.

## REFERENCE BOOKS:

### A Signed Article in a Reference Book

Last name, first name. "Title of Article." *Book Title*. Year of published edition.

### Unsigned Article in a Reference Book

"Title of Article." *Book Title*. Year of published edition.

## PERIODICALS:

### Signed Article from a Daily Newspaper

Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Periodical*. Day Month Year of publication, section # page.

**Signed Article from a Daily Newspaper from an Online Database**

Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Periodical*. Day Month Year of publication: section # page. *Name of Database*. Web. Date of access.

**Article from a Magazine**

Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine* Day Month Year: Page-Page.

**Article from a Magazine from an Online Database**

Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine*. Day Month Year: Page-Page. *Name of Online Database*. Web. Date of Access.

**INTERNET SOURCES:**

**Personal Site**

Last name, first name. "Title of Article." *Title of Website*. Name of Organization Sponsoring Web Site, Date of Publication. Web. Day Month Year of Access.

**Book from the Internet**

Author's Last name, first name. *Title of Book*. City: Publishing Company, Year of Publication. Date published online. Organization Sponsoring Web Site. Web. Day Month Year of access.

**Poem from the Internet**

Last name, First name. "Title of Poem." *Title of Original Book*. City: Publishing Company, Year of Publication: Page-Page. *Title of Web Page*. Organization Sponsoring Web Site. Web. Day Month Year of access.

**Articles (not periodicals or books) in a Reference Database**

Last name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Source*. Month Year of Publication. Publishing Company. Owner of Database. Web. Day Month Year of access.

## OTHER SOURCES:

### Films

*Title of the Film.* Dir. First name Last name. Actor's First name Last name and First name Last Name. Company, Year.

### Television

"Title of the Episode." *Title of the Program.* Producer First Name Last Name. Network. Station Call letters, City, and State. Day Month Year.

### Maps & Charts

*Title of Map.* Map. City, State of Publication: Publishing Agency, Year.

*Note: If any part of the needed information for the citation is not available after a good faith effort to find it, you may leave it off and skip it in the citation without using a placeholder.*

*For more information and examples, consult the Fisd Writing Guide and the MLA Handbook ([www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org)).*

## Step 6: Take accurate and workable notes.

As you record information, concentrate only on those parts that are relevant to your topic and purpose. The use of note cards allows a researcher to cleverly organize and re-organize information.

### Use note cards.

Follow these rules for using note cards effectively:

1. Include information from only one source on each card.
2. Write the subtopic in the top left corner. There should be only one subtopic per card.
3. Write the source number in the top right corner.
4. Write the quote from the source in the middle of the card.
5. Write the page number at the bottom of the card.
6. Paraphrase the quote on the back of the card.

Note cards look like this:

(Front of card)

Taking notes	Source 2
Nor did Congress care what happened to Third Class. Senator Smith's <i>Titanic</i> investigation covered everything under the sun, including what an iceberg was made of ("Ice," explained Fifth Officer Lowe), but the steerage [another name for Third Class] received little attention. Only three of the witnesses were Third Class passengers. Two of these said they were kept from going to the Boat Deck, but the legislators didn't follow up. Again, the testimony doesn't suggest any deliberate hush-up - it was just that no one was interested.	
page 46-47	

(Back of card)

Disaster investigations were thorough, but no one cared about Third Class passengers. Congress failed to follow up on stories of discrimination against Third Class passengers.

Remember, your notes are *worthless* without the source number and page number!

### How to Paraphrase

1. Reread the original passage until you understand its full meaning.
2. Set the original aside, and write your paraphrase on a note card.
3. Check your paraphrase with the original to make sure that your information is accurate.
4. Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.

#### Example

##### Direct quote:

"Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final [research] paper. Probably only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter. Therefore, you should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes."

##### An effective paraphrase:

In research papers students often quote excessively, failing to keep quoted material down to a desirable level. Since the problem usually originates during note taking, it is essential to minimize the material recorded verbatim.

### Create an electronic document:

If many of your sources are on-line, you may prefer to record information electronically in a document that combines the functions of source cards and note cards. For example:

#### **Source Citation #1:**

Wagner-Martin, Linda. "History of American Literature: 1920-1940." Benet's Reader's Encyclopedia of American Literature, 1. HarperCollins Publishers, 1991.

"The aim of the modernist was to charge verbal expression with new energy as well as meaning. Finding the work of many late Victorian writers dull and moralistic, 20th-century writers turned to an organic form. Whether called free verse or vers libre in poetry, expressionism in drama, or lyricism, impressionism, or stream of consciousness in fiction, styles and techniques were to be engaging and, above all, innovative. New truths could be expressed only in new forms" (2).

"Modern writing tried to avoid the sentimental and the overly didactic. It concentrated on the image or the scene, presented without extensive authorial comment. Irony was often used as a distancing device. The narrative was often told through a mythic, archetypal, or traditional literary pattern, with liberties taken in the accepted tradition so that readers would realize that innovation was confronting them" (5).

#### **Source Citation #2:**

"Imperfect Critics Swinburne As Poet." DISCoveringAuthors. Online ed. Detroit: Gale, 2003. Student Resource Center - Gold. Gale. LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL. 18 Apr. 2008 <<http://find.galegroup.com/ips/start.do?prodId=IPS>>.

"Modernism: experimentation, formal complexity, artistic and intellectual eclecticism, and a classicist's view of the artist working at an emotional distance from his or her creation" (4).

"In the 1930's, one of its best-known proponents, Frank Lloyd Wright, was creating houses that melded into the landscape. In the 50's, boomerang furniture enlivened interiors, and in the high-tech years of the late 70's, industrial objects found their way into living rooms. Always, these styles have intrigued and shocked us, and challenged the conventions of the time" (6).

For websites and databases, click File>Print Preview to view the page number.

### Create an annotated bibliography.

An annotated bibliography includes a summary and/or evaluation of each of several properly documented sources.

Annotations accomplish both of the following steps in paragraph form for each source (usually in about 150 words):

- Summarize: Cover major points and try to make the summary an overall view of the source as a whole. If someone asked what this article/book is about, what would you say? What are the main arguments? What is the point of this book or article? What topics are covered? Are some topics emphasized more than others? What is the focus of the source?

- ☑ Assess: After summarizing a source, it is helpful to evaluate it. Is it a useful source? How comprehensive is the information in the source? How does it compare with other sources in your bibliography? Is it providing new information or repeating what you have found in other sources? Is the information reliable? Is this source biased or objective?

*This information is adapted from the website <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>.*

### Example entry from an annotated bibliography:

Waite, Linda J., Frances Koberg Goldscheider, and Christina Witsberger. "Nonfamily Living and the Erosion of Traditional Family Orientations Among Young Adults." *American Sociological Review* 51 (1986): 541-554.

The authors, researchers at the Rand Corporation and Brown University, use data from the National Longitudinal Surveys of Young Women and Young Men to test their hypothesis that nonfamily living by young adults alters their attitudes, values, plans, and expectations, moving them away from their belief in traditional roles. They find their hypothesis strongly supported in young females, while the effects were fewer in studies of young males. Increasing the time away from parents before marrying increased individualism, self-sufficiency, and changes in attitudes about families. In contrast, an earlier study by Williams cited below shows no significant gender differences in attitudes as a result of nonfamily living.

### Step 7: Analyze your notes and revise your thesis.

Hopefully, now you have a clear idea of exactly how to answer your research question. If not, you have more work to do on step 6. Here's how to determine where you stand.

Ask yourself:

- ☑ Do I have enough information to write a balanced paper?
- ☑ Does my information come from a variety of sources?
- ☑ Is any information missing?
- ☑ Does this information support my working thesis, or do I need to adjust the way I am answering my research question?

If the working thesis is not fully supported by your research, revise it to reflect your findings accurately.

# PHASE THREE: COMPILE

## Step 8: Organize your information.

First, stack your note cards by subtopic/category:

- Is there too much or too little information in any of your stacks?
- Which cards need to be omitted?

Decide which stacks represent the main points you will make.

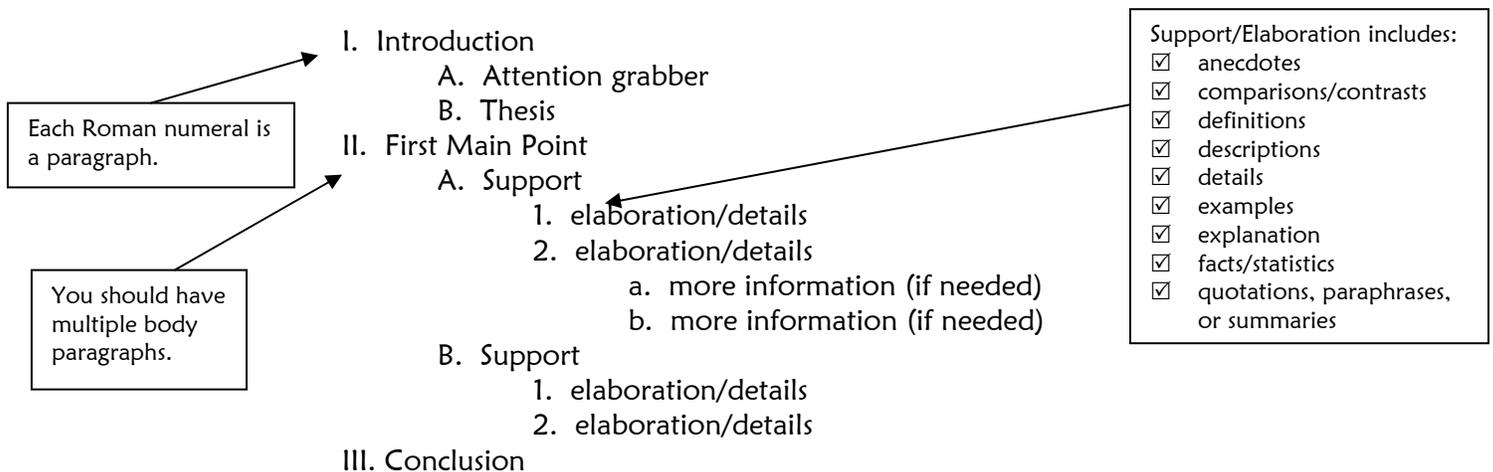
- How does each piece of information fit in the big picture?
- What is the most effective sequence of ideas to support your thesis?

### Try Different Organization Methods

- **cause and effect** – describes how one or more things cause or are related to one another
- **chronological** – describes the sequence in which events occur in time.
- **classification** – divides a topic into parts based on shared characteristics
- **comparison and contrast** – discusses similarities and/or differences among ideas
- **generalization and example** – provides examples that clarify a broad, general statement
- **order of importance** – describes ideas in order of priority or preference
- **process** – describes the order in which things are done or how things work

### Use an outline.

You may want to form your notes into an outline. This can be done informally, with bullets under your thesis and topic sentences. However, if you need to construct a formal outline, follow this example:



## Step 9: Learn how to incorporate quotations effectively.

### Embed quotations into your own sentences.

- ☑ Provide clear signal phrases either at the beginning or in the middle of the sentence to prepare readers for the quotation:

Although the bald eagle is still listed as endangered, the species has recovered numbers. According to Jay Sheppard, "The bald eagle seems to have stabilized its population, at the very least, almost everywhere" (96).

"It is curious," Orwell notes, as the hanging party approaches the gallows and the prisoner steps slightly aside to avoid a puddle, "but till that moment I had never realized what it means to destroy a healthy, conscious man" (47).

The following list demonstrates the way to vary your signal phrases:

acknowledges	comments	describes	maintains	reports
adds	compares	disputes	notes	responds
admits	concedes	emphasizes	observes	shows
agrees	confirms	endorses	points out	states
argues	contends	illustrates	reasons	suggests
asserts	declares	implies	refutes	summarizes
claims	denies	insists	rejects	writes

- ☑ Use quotation marks to enclose a quotation of three lines or fewer. Place quotation marks around the quoted material only.

According to Natalie Angier, the sinking of the *Titanic* "signaled the end of the Edwardian era in all its cocky opulence."

- ☑ Use a block quotation for a quotation that is longer than three lines. Block quotations are indented one inch, and are not enclosed in quotation marks. Use a colon to introduce block quotations.

Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst gave this explanation for the Titanic tragedy:

The two sore spots which really run into one another and which constitute the disease that is gnawing into our civilizations are the love of money and the passion for luxury. These two combined is what sunk the Titanic and sent 1500 souls prematurely to their final account.

### Omit words when necessary using ellipses.

- ☑ Use an ellipsis mark to signal that you have deleted the original writer's words in the material you are quoting.

Thomas Szasz claims that the "greatest analgesic . . . known to medical science is work."

- ☑ When the material you are omitting is the last part of a quoted sentence, use appropriate punctuation before the three ellipses points.

Smith asserts, "The mood and momentum of the late Victorian era could not be tempered... The Golden age had become in Mark Twain's famous epithet, the *Gilded Age*, a period of pronounced money grubbing."

### **Follow conventions for quotations.**

- ☑ Capitalize the first word of a direct quotation that is a complete sentence.

As Walter Lord noted, "The *Titanic* was the last stand of wealth and society in the center of public affection."

- ☑ Commas and periods always go inside closing quotation marks.

"At last," said the old woman, "I can say I am truly happy."

- ☑ Semicolons and colons always go outside closing quotation marks.

She never liked the poem "Dover Beach"; in fact, it was her least favorite piece of Victorian literature.

He clearly states his opinion in the article "Of Human Bondage": he believes that television has enslaved and diminished an entire generation.

- ☑ Question marks, exclamation marks, and dashes go inside closing quotation marks when they are part of the quotation, and outside when they do not.

Where is your copy of "The Raven"?

"How cold is it outside?" my mother asked.

- ☑ When you interrupt a quotation with explanatory words, use commas and two sets of quotation marks

"All ambitions are lawful," said Conrad, "except those which climb upward on the miseries or credulities of mankind."

- ☑ Use single quotation marks to enclose a quotation within a quotation. This rule does not apply to block quotations.

According to one source, George Bernard Shaw "refused many offers to turn *Pygmalion* into a musical, insisting that it was good enough 'with its own verbal music.'"

## Step 10: Document as you create a rough draft.

All information included in your research product should document, or give credit to, the source and/or author. Follow these guidelines:

1. A citation is placed before the punctuation mark at the end of a sentence, phrase, or clause containing a quotation, paraphrase, or summary from a source.
2. In most instances, provide the author's last name and page number with *no punctuation* between them.

"The period from 1958 to 1968 marked the most active years in the United States for demonstrations and actions that opened up opportunities for black Americans" (Jacobs 199).

3. If the work has more than three authors, use just the first author's last name, followed by *et al.*, and the page number. (Samson et al. 8).
4. If there is more than one title by the same author, use the author's last name and the title or a shortened form of it, and the page number. In this case, a comma comes between the author's last name and the title. (Gardner, *On Becoming* 123).
5. If a work has no author, use the title or a shortened form of it and the page number. Do not place a comma between the title and the page number. ("Writing Life" 11).
6. Whenever the author's name or title of the work is mentioned nearby in your paper, it is not necessary to repeat either the author or title in your citation.

According to Jacobs, the period from 1958 to 1968 was marked by many civil rights demonstrations (199).

7. One exception is the block quotation (more than four lines), which is set off from the text by indentation and does not use quotation marks; in this case, the citation follows the last punctuation mark.

On closer examination, however, the findings seem to show that social factors are not as important as motivation. Stable reasons:

Based on the results of this questionnaire ... it can be hypothesized that the amount and kind of motivation the second language learner has plays a decisive role in the degree to which he will acculturate toward the "model" language group and accounts for his degree of linguistic development toward the "model" language. (50)

<i>What information needs documentation?</i>	<i>What information does NOT need documentation?</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A direct quotation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The ideas or opinions of another person – <i>even if summarized or paraphrased</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A copy of a table, chart, diagram, or other image <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A table constructed from data provided by others <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific examples or factual information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your personal opinions or interpretations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Well-known facts (for example, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated)

***If you are uncertain about how to cite a particular source, please reference the MLA handbook.***

**Avoid plagiarism.**

A person plagiarizes when he represents somebody else’s words or thoughts as his own. Some plagiarism in student papers is done unintentionally. If the false impression is given that the words or thoughts are the student’s, when in fact they are not, plagiarism has been committed.

The following illustration may help you to avoid plagiarism in your project:

The publication of *Life and Writings of St. Augustine* by A.B. Cragg contains the following paragraph cited by a student in his research:

From his earliest origins, St. Augustine was destined to take a leading role in the reformation of the early Church. His manifold talents and his extensive publications quickly advanced him to a leading position in the church.

The Student writes...	The Teacher says...
<p>St. Augustine was a very important man in the early Church. From his earliest origins, St. Augustine was destined to take a leading role in the reformation of the early Church. The reason is that he was so smart.</p>	<p><b>Pure Plagiarism:</b> The second sentence is lifted word-for-word from the source and no documentation is given.</p>
<p>St. Augustine was a very important man in the early Church. From his earliest origins, St. Augustine was destined to take a leading role in the reformation of the early Church (Cragg 9).</p>	<p><b>Plagiarism with Documentation:</b> Although cited, this passage is still plagiarized since there are no quotation marks around the actual words lifted from the text.</p>
<p>There were many causes of Augustine’s success. As one commentator summarizes, “His manifold talents and his extensive publications...quickly advanced him to a leading position in the church...”(Cragg 9).</p>	<p><b>Correct Documentation:</b> This is a properly-punctuated quote that is cited accurately.</p>
<p>The chief causes of St. Augustine’s success seem to have been, as A.B. Cragg suggests, his great personal abilities and his numerous writings (9).</p>	<p><b>Correct Paraphrase:</b> This is a paraphrase – the words and sentence structure have been changed – and the information is cited accurately..</p>

## Step 11: Revise.

At this point, you should look critically at your research product with the goal to make it clearer, more interesting, more informative, or more convincing.

Here are some questions to ask yourself or someone else:

- Is my thesis clear, or should it be revised?
- Does everything support my thesis, or is there information that needs to be removed?
- Are my main points supported equally, or is further elaboration needed?
- Do I incorporate research seamlessly into my writing, and have I documented it properly?
- Is the order of ideas easy to follow, or do I need to rearrange them?
- Is it interesting?

You may also want to utilize this checklist when revising:

	1. Voice is evident and engaging.
	2. The thesis is focused.
	3. The introduction and conclusion are clear and effective.
	4. Ideas are complex and fully developed.
	5. The essay is organized and coherent.
	6. Transitions are used to connect thoughts seamlessly.
	7. Paragraphing is functional and enhances the reader's understanding.
	8. Sentences are structured correctly and varied for impact.
	9. Words are well-chosen.
	10. Strong verbs are employed.

*For specific explanation of each of these elements see the Fisd Writing Guide.*

## PHASE FOUR: FINALIZE

### Step 12: Prepare a properly formatted final copy and Works Cited page.

#### Set up your paper in MLA format using MS Word.

1: Open Microsoft Word

2: Set your **Font**



- On the Formatting Toolbar, click the “Font” scroll-down menu
- Scroll to “Times New Roman” and click once
- On the Formatting Toolbar, make sure that the font size is set to 12-point

3: Create your **Header**

- On the Standard Toolbar, click “View”
- Click “Header/Footer”
- On the Formatting Toolbar, click the “Align Right” icon
- Type in your last name and hit the spacebar
- On the Header/Footer Toolbar, click the “Insert Page Number” icon
- On the Header/Footer Toolbar, click “Close”



4: **DoubleSpace** your paper

- On the Standard Toolbar, click “Format”
- Click “Paragraph”
- On the Indents and Spacing Tab, click the drop-down menu under “line spacing”
- Click “Double”
- Click “OK”

5: Set up your **Margins**

- On the Standard Toolbar, click “File”
- Click “Page Setup”
- On the Margins Tab, make sure that the Top, Bottom, Left, and Right margins are each set at one inch (1”).
- Click “OK”

6: Type your **MLA Heading**

- Type your first and last name and hit “Enter”
- Type the name of your instructor and hit “Enter”
- Type the name of your course and section and hit “Enter”
- Type the due date of the paper (day first, then month, then year) and hit “Enter”



### 7: Create your **Title**

- ☑ On the Formatting Toolbar, click the “Center” icon
- ☑ Type your title and hit “Enter”
- ☑ On the Formatting Toolbar, click the “Align Left” icon

### 8: **Indent** each paragraph

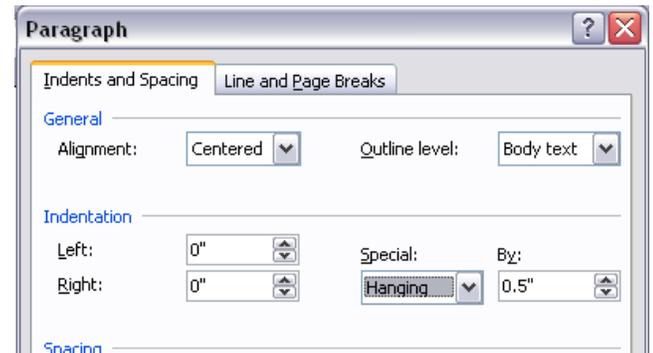
- ☑ Before you begin typing a new paragraph, hit the “Tab” key once

### 9: Type your paper

- ☑ Hit “Enter” *once* after each paragraph

### 10: Create your **Works Cited** page

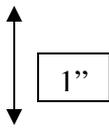
- ☑ This will be the last page of your paper
- ☑ Maintain double-spacing
- ☑ Center Align your title (Works Cited)
- ☑ Create a **Hanging Indent**
  - On the Standard Toolbar, click “Format”
  - Click “Paragraph”
  - On the “Indents and Spacing” tab, click the “Special” scroll-down menu
  - Click “Hanging”
  - Click “OK”
- ☑ Type your sources in alphabetical order
- ☑ Hit “Enter” once after each source



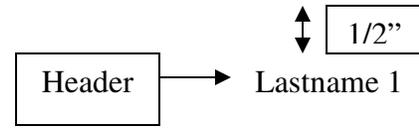
### PLEASE

- ☒ do NOT include any source not used in the project
- ☒ do NOT number your entries
- ☒ do NOT indent the first line of each source
- ☒ do NOT underline, bold, or enlarge anything (including the words Works Cited)
- ☒ do NOT hit enter more than once after an entry

The final copy should end up looking like the example on the following pages.



Firstname Lastname



Instructor's Name



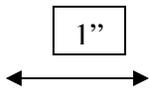
Course Number

16 June 2009

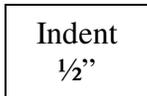
Center Title (Do Not Bold or Underline)

This is a template for formatting a paper typed in MLA format. The paper has one-inch margins all around. Each page has a header of last name and page number in the upper right corner. The paper will be double-spaced throughout, no extra space between sections or paragraphs. The entire paper, including the heading and title, needs to be in the same type and size of font. This template uses Times New Roman 12pt font.

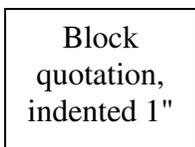
Because it is easy to read, this font is appropriate for high school and college essays.



Make sure that the essay is left aligned, not fully justified. One space in between sentences is standard; however, double-spacing between sentences is okay. Follow your instructor's preference in spacing and be consistent. Hit the enter key only once at the end of each paragraph.



In the MLA format, document sources within the paper by providing parenthetical citations. This allows you to “acknowledge your sources by keying brief parenthetical citations in your text to an alphabetical list of works that appears at the end of the paper” (Gibaldi 142). Notice that in this citation the period goes after the closing parenthesis. The information in parenthesis should be as brief as possible, using the author's last name or a shortened version of the title for works without an author. Gibaldi explains:



The information in your parenthetical references in the text must match the corresponding information in the entries in your list of works cited; For a typical works-cited-list entry, which begins with the name of the

author...the parenthetical reference begins with the same name....If the work is listed by title, use the title, shortened.... (238-239)

Notice how the lengthy quote was set off by an extra one-inch margin rather than quotation marks, and in this case, the period goes before the parenthetical citation (parenthesis). Chapters five and six of the MLA Handbook give more information on works cited and parenthetical citations.

After the last paragraph in an MLA style essay, force the document to a new page for the Works Cited page. The Works Cited page will still have one-inch margins all the way around and have the header of last name and page number in the upper right corner. This page will also be double-spaced throughout with no extra spaces between entries. Items in a Works Cited page will be alphabetized by the first word of each used source (author's last name or title of the work if an author's name is not given). Each entry will use a hanging indent, in which lines after the first line of a source entry indent half an inch. Because URLs in a Works Cited page are not underlined, remove the hyperlinks for Internet sources so that the URLs will be formatted correctly. To do this, right click on the hyperlink and select remove hyperlink. The sample Works Cited page that follows has the entry for the MLA Handbook and then templates for some of the most commonly used types of sources. For more information, refer to chapters five and six of the MLA Handbook or Purdue University's Online Owl Writing Lab at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>.

This sample MLA formatted essay is, in part, a reproduction of a handout created by Professor Audra Heaslip of Collin County Community College. Lastname 3

Sources are listed in alphabetical order by author's last name. If there is no author, alphabetize by the first major word in the title.

Works Cited

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. New York:

MLA, 2003.

Lastname, Firstname. "Title of Article." *Title of the Scholarly Journal*. Volume. Issue

(Date): firstpage-last-page.

Lastname, Firstname. *Title of Book*. City of Publication: Publisher, Year.

Lastname, Firstname. "Title of the Newspaper Article." *Title of the Newspaper*. Date,

Edition: SectionPageNumber.

"The Title of the Article." *Title of Magazine*. Date: page number. *Name of the Library*

*Database*: Name of the Service. Web. Date of access.

The works cited list begins on a new page.

Hanging Indent 1/2"



**Consider other formats.**

Though MLA is most common in high school, some subjects (like psychology and science) often require a different formatting style called APA. In general, your teacher will determine the style used. This is a brief overview of the differences between MLA and APA.

	<b>MLA</b>	<b>APA</b>
<b>Title Page</b>	No title page required	Must be included
<b>Abstract (short summary of the essay)</b>	None required	Required on a separate page before the essay
<b>Header</b>	On the right margin, your last name and the page number of the essay	On the right margin, a 2-3 word summary of the essay and the page number of the essay
<b>Parenthetical Documentation</b>	(Name space page number) (Levin 13)	(Name comma year comma p.#) (Levin, 1982, p.13)
<b>Listing sources</b>	Called "Works Cited." Full name of author is included	Called "References." Initials used for first and middle names of authors

*For more information on the APA format, refer to [www.apastyle.org](http://www.apastyle.org).*

**Step 13: Edit and proofread.**

Proofreading is precision work that requires multiple readings, perhaps even one aloud by you or a friend. The goal is to create a polished work to share with an audience.

Utilize this checklist when editing:

	1. Every sentence is complete. There are no fragments or run-ons.
	2. Punctuation marks are used correctly.
	3. Verb tenses are used correctly.
	4. Every verb agrees in number with its subject.
	5. Personal pronouns are used correctly.
	6. Every pronoun agrees with its antecedent in number and in gender.
	7. Frequently-confused words are used correctly.
	8. All words are capitalized correctly.
	9. All words are spelled correctly.
	10. The paper is neat and in correct and consistent form.

*For specific explanation of each of these elements see the Fisd Writing Guide.*

## GLOSSARY

1. **active voice** – voice in which the subject performs the action of the verb, rather than being acted upon.
2. **analyze** – to break down into parts to study or determine the nature and relationship of the parts.
3. **anecdote** - a short account of a particular incident or event of an interesting or amusing nature, often biographical.
4. **annotate** - to make critical or explanatory notes or comment
5. **APA** – American Psychological Association
6. **audience** – the reader(s) of a work
7. **bibliography** – a constantly evolving list of sources that changes as new titles are added and others are eliminated during the research process, ultimately leads to the works cited page.
8. **block quotation** - also known as a long quotation, is a quotation in a written document, set off from the main text as a distinct paragraph or block. It is typically used for longer passages (four or more lines). a block quotation is distinguished visually using indentation.
9. **citation** – see parenthetical documentation
10. **concluding sentence** – the last sentence in a paragraph. it should in some way sum up, or tie up loose ends and lead in to your next paragraph.
11. **editing** – the part of the writing process in which writers check for a document’s technical correctness in grammar, sentence structures, punctuation, spelling, and mechanics.
12. **ellipses** – three spaced periods or points indicating the omission of material from a quoted sentence or fragment
13. **fragment** – a sentence that lacks either a subject or a verb and/or fails to express a complete thought.
14. **hanging indent** – style of paragraph in which the first line of a text is aligned with the left margin and all other lines are indented by an equal amount of space.
15. **header** – indicator in the top right corner of each page. In MLA format this would include your last name and page number.
16. **heading** – the placement of your name, teacher’s name, course and date (day, month, year) in the top left hand corner of the first page.
17. **MLA** – Modern Language Association
18. **paraphrase** – restating information in your own words, must be cited.
19. **parenthetical documentation** – a citation within the body of your paper and directly following the information derived, which gives credit to the source and usually includes the author’s last name, and a page reference set of by parenthesis

20. **passive voice** – voice in which the subject of the verb is being acted upon by the verb.
21. **plagiarism** – intellectual theft; to take the product of another’s mind and present it as one’s own either intentionally or unintentionally by quoting without using quotation marks or paraphrasing or summarizing another’s ideas or observations without giving credit
22. **primary source** – research from a source that has directly observed or studied something, including historical documents, statistical data, scientific experiments, and literary works
23. **purpose** – what you want your audience to know and understand about your topic and point of view
24. **quotation** – the exact words of a source, changes may not be made to a quotation unless made in any way unless made clear to the reader. If alterations are made to blend quotations, this must be through the use of ellipses and/or brackets and parenthesis.
25. **reliable source** – a credible or believable source. Some questions to evaluate credibility might be: is the author a respected authority on the subject? Does the author support opinions with strong argumentation and reasoning? How current is the information?
26. **revising** – the part of the writing process in which writers make decisions about how to improve the content of their writing. This includes adding, deleting, elaborating, replacing, and rearranging portions of the text.
27. **run-on** – a sentence in which independent clauses run together without the required punctuation.
28. **secondary source** – research from a source that has examined and written about the studies of others, including books and articles on political or historical events and literature and art
29. **signal phrase** - a phrase that signals to the reader that either a direct quote or a paraphrase is about to follow.
30. **subtopic** - one of the divisions into which a main topic may be divided.
31. **summarize** – to reduce large sections of text to their essential points and main ideas.
32. **synthesize** – to combine elements and parts to form a coherent whole.
33. **thesis** – a single sentence that formulates your topic and point of view
34. **tone and attitude** – style or manner reflecting a writer’s emotional or intellectual position on a subject
35. **topic sentence** – the main idea of a paragraph
36. **transitions** – words and phrases that show relationships between statements
37. **works cited** - the list following your paper that contains all of the sources of information cited in your text, usually including the author, text, place of publication, publisher, and date of publication