

Table of Contents and the Writing Process

Great writing does not “just happen.” Great writers follow an organized process that allows time to think, time to reflect upon drafts, and time to perfect a piece of writing. The steps of this process are not necessarily linear (that is, something you would follow step by step in a line), but more a fluid progression in which you may revisit previous steps (like a circle) as you work to create a perfected final piece.

This guide should assist by providing a quick reference to many problems you may encounter throughout the writing process. It does not substitute for your teacher’s specific guidelines for a particular assignment, nor should it be considered a comprehensive guide.

Prewriting: Brainstorming	<p>Objective: Get your brain working!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • come up with as many relevant ideas for topics as possible • choose an idea to write about • write down everything you can think of about the topic 																				
Prewriting: Organizing	<p>Objective: Come up with a plan for your writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the purpose and audience • select the most relevant details to your topic and narrow your focus • gather support for ideas and design an outline 																				
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Drafting	<p>Objective: Create a first draft.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formulate a thesis statement • support your thesis statement with evidence and your own thoughts • remember that your first draft is just that – your FIRST of many 																				
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Revising	<p>Objective: Improve structure, organization, and coherence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use specific strategies to clarify ideas • vary word choice and improve sentence structure • examine connections between ideas 																				
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Editing

Objective: Re-read and correct mistakes.

- look for mistakes in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and usage
- seek out a second pair of eyes to double-check your corrections
- use resources such as this guide, dictionaries, thesauri & style manuals

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Publishing

Objective: Produce a polished final copy to share with others.

- be sure you use the appropriate format and documentation if needed
- save and print a copy of your final draft
- consider a source for publishing your work, such as a school newspaper

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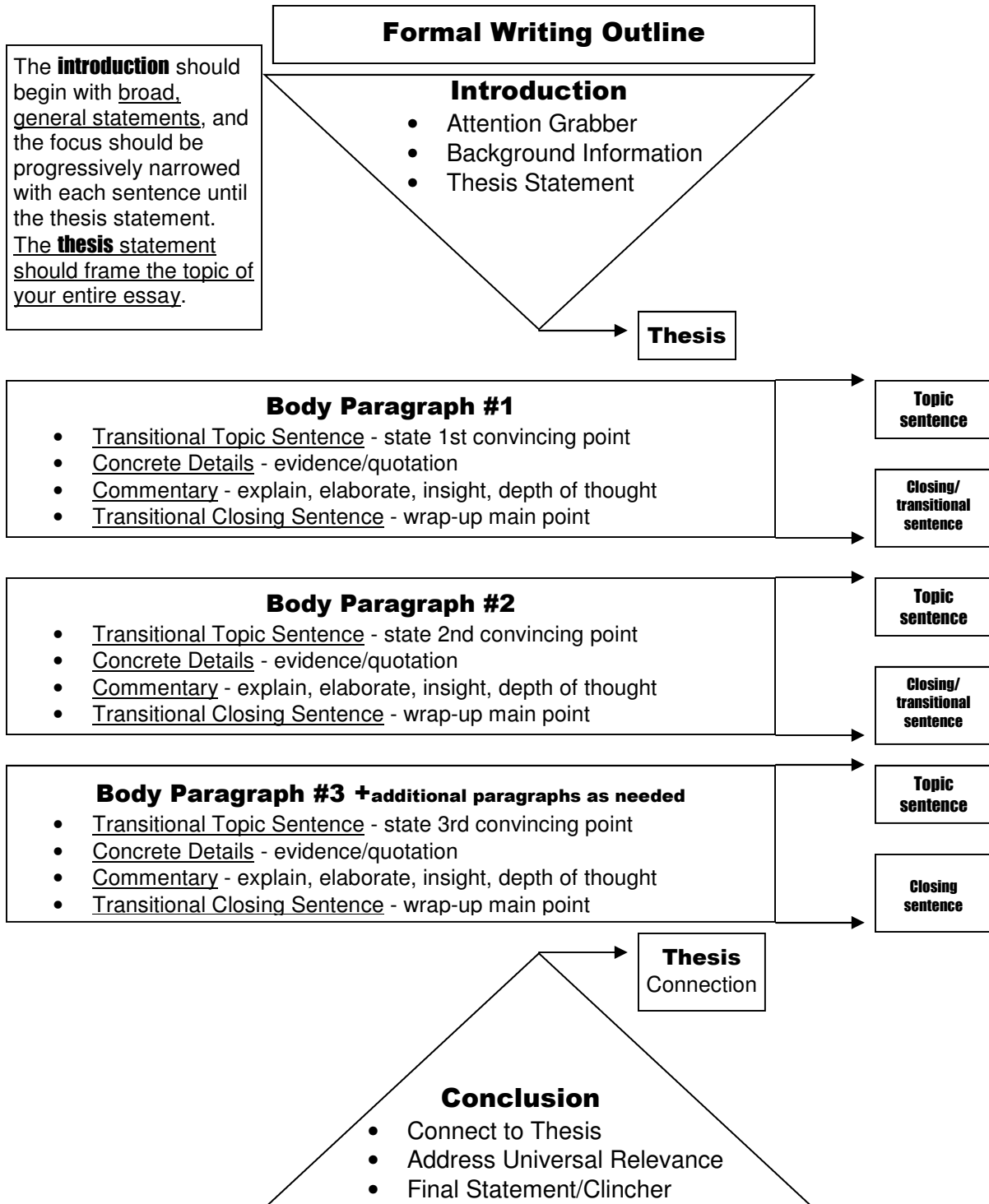
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Organizing the Essay

Most essays need an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Your thesis, evidence, and commentary should determine how you map out the essay and how many body paragraphs the essay contains. This basic outline may help.



Thesis Statements

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.
- is usually a single sentence in your first paragraph that presents your argument to the reader. The rest of the paper, the body of the essay, gathers and organizes evidence that will persuade the reader that your thesis statement is correct.

An effective thesis statement should be limited to the purpose of the assignment and only broad enough to address the essay's central question.

When you start to write a thesis statement for your essay, consider these steps

1. Define or identify the **TASK** set by the prompt or assignment
2. Consider **WHAT** needs to be addressed in the response
3. Decide **HOW** to respond/what *you* want to say

See MODES section, page 5-10, for thesis statement examples.

Expository Writing

The purpose of expository writing is to give the audience information. Expository essays inform, explain, clarify, and/or define. If you are writing a research paper, a lab report, a newspaper article, a description of the processes of cell development, a comparison/contrast essay, a summary, or any essay that helps your reader understand your topic, you are writing in the expository mode.

Take a look at these thesis statements for expository essays:

- The culture and history of Afghanistan significantly reflects the conflicts, clashes, and leadership of the Sunni and Shiite Muslims.
- The characters of Amir and Hassan in Khaled Hosseini's novel *The Kite Runner* vividly reflect the tumultuous events of Afghanistan's history.
- No more important lesson is to be learned than that which relates to the ways in which milk is contaminated with germ life of various kinds; for if these sources of infection are thoroughly recognized they can in large measure be prevented, and so the troubles which they engender overcome.

Here is a sample from the essay written about the third thesis:

When examined under normal conditions milk always reveals bacterial life, yet in the secreting cells of the udder of a healthy cow germ life is not found. Only when the gland is diseased are bacteria found in any abundance. In the passage of the milk from the secreting cells to the outside it receives its first infection, so that when drawn from the animal it generally contains a considerable number of organisms.

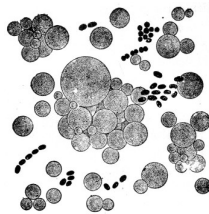


Fig. 5. Microscopic appearance of milk showing relative size of fat globules and bacteria.

From this time until it is consumed in one form or another, it is continually subjected to contamination. The major part of this infection occurs while the milk is on the farm and the degree of care which is exercised while the product is in the hands of the milk producer is the determining factor in the course of bacterial changes involved. This of course does not exclude the possibility of contamination in the factory, but usually milk is so thoroughly seeded by the time it reaches the factory that the infection which occurs here plays a relatively minor role to that which happens earlier. The great majority of the organisms in milk are in no wise dangerous to health, but many species are capable of producing various fermentative changes that injure the quality of the product for butter or cheese. To be able to control abnormal changes of an undesirable character one must know the sources of infection which permit of the introduction of these unwelcome intruders.

Russell, H.L. *Outlines of Dairy Bacteriology: A Concise Manual for the Use of Students in Dairying*. Project Gutenberg. 11 Jan. 2009. Web. 16 June 2009. <<http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/27778>>.

Tips and Tricks for Expository Writing:

- Maintain neutrality – don't express an opinion or emotional stance.
- Consider your purpose when organizing – definition, compare and contrast, cause and effect, process analysis.
- Include specific evidence and examples.

Analytical Writing

The purpose of analytical writing is to respond to and examine ideas within a topic, text, or a variety of texts. To analyze means to break down the topic or text into parts and show the relationship between the arguments and overall controlling ideas. Analysis moves beyond summary, description, or narration.

Take a look at these thesis statements for analytical essays:

- War forces Gene and Finny to recognize their own weaknesses and learn about life and themselves in John Knowles' novel *A Separate Peace*.
- The Pythagorean Theorem plays a significant role in real world applications, such as basketball or home design.
- The "Roaring Twenties" were called such because of the rising economic prosperity and changing social attitudes.

Here is a sample excerpt from a literary analysis examining the symbolism of water in Charlotte Bronte's *Villette*:

The properties of water make it an excellent literary device, especially when water imagery is used to define the character of a woman. Water ebbs and flows, sparkles, reflects, and evaporates. It can carry a vessel, or take the shape of any vessel that holds it. Water can form deep pools, impenetrable and mysterious, or puddle into shallowness. It wears many faces—snow, sleet, and ice and can fall from the heavens as a light rain or a cold rain or a fierce, driving storm. Water falls from the eyes as tears; it can mirror the self; it can quench thirst. As a method of defining character, Charlotte Bronte uses many of these characteristics of water to capture the elusive Lucy Snowe in the 1853 novel *Villette*.

Jordan-Henley, Jennifer. Circumnavigating the Psyche: The Use of Water Imagery in Charlotte Bronte's *Villette*. 20 April 1987.

Tips and Tricks for Analytical Writing:

- Remember: YOU ARE NOT WRITING A SUMMARY OR SIMPLY DESCRIBING THE SUBJECT.
- Ask questions.
- Identify and/or develop and organize the argument.
- Collect evidence.
- Identify and/or develop and organize the reasoning behind the argument.
- Construct a thesis.

Persuasive Writing

The purpose of persuasive writing, or argument, is to convince your audience to agree with your position. Persuasive essays provide logical, emotional, and ethical reasons that support a specific opinion to a specific audience. If you are writing a letter to the editor, an advertisement, a political speech, a letter to a congressman about your opinion on capital punishment, an essay about the right to bear arms, or any writing that strives to sway someone to agree with you, you are writing in the persuasive mode.

Take a look at these thesis statements for persuasive essays:

- School uniforms should be adopted in Frisco ISD.
- Children need violent entertainment in order to explore the inescapable feelings that they've been taught to deny, and to reintegrate those feelings into a more whole, complex, and resilient childhood.
- While medical research on animals may have benefits, these limited gains do not justify the suffering the test subjects must endure.
- Prison, like the police and courts, has minimal impact on crime because it is a response after the fact, a mop-up operation.

Here is a sample from the essay written about the fourth thesis:

Prison has a role in public safety, but it is not a cure-all. Its value is limited, and its use should also be limited to what it does best: isolating young criminals long enough to give them a chance to grow up and get a grip on their impulses. It is a traumatic experience, certainly, but it should be only a temporary one, not a way of life. Prisoners kept too long tend to embrace the criminal culture, its distorted values and beliefs; they have little choice – prison is their life. There are some prisoners who cannot be returned to society – serial killers, serial rapists, professional hit men, and the like – but the monsters who need to die in prison are rare exceptions in the criminal landscape.

Rideau, Wilbert. "Why Prisons Don't Work." *Seeing the Pattern*. Ed. Kathleen T. McWhorter. Boston: Bedford, 2006. 493-495.

Tips and Tricks for Persuasive Writing:

- Establish an appropriate tone – your reader needs to believe that you are rational, logical, and, well, not crazy.
- Consider the arguments your opponent would make – this proves that you are rational *and* allows you to effectively defend against them.
- Clearly state the reasons that your position is correct – one good way to organize is to use each reason as the topic sentence of a paragraph.
- Provide clear, specific evidence to support each reason, and find reliable sources that agree with you (be sure to cite them!).

Procedural Writing

Procedural text is nonfiction reading material. The intent of these written works is to inform or explain something to the reading audience. Procedural text can vary in nature. Some common formats of procedural writing include the following: Instructional guides, emails, and correspondence, and memos, project plans, and resumes

Example Thesis (*Generic*): To create your own Web site and reap the benefits associated with having one, you need to follow a five-step process that includes: planning, designing, creating content, testing, and reviewing, and finally publishing and promoting your Web site.

Business Letter Example:

Mrs. Susan Smith
12187 S. Santa Monica Dr.
Frisco, TX 75035

May 10, 2009

The Kiddie Koral Toy Company
15456 Funhaving Way
Sunnidale, FL 33133

To Whom it May Concern:

I recently purchased one of your Kiddie Koral “Jon” army man action figures and his coordinating accessories (Model # 47485) for my five-year old son. Unfortunately, after receiving the action figure and accessories, I discovered that 2 of the main accessories were missing. Jon’s outfit cannot be completed because we do not have his army backpack or canteen. Also the attached hat on the action figure was loose and completely detached within minutes of taking the toy from the package. Both of these situations have resulted in the action figure remaining incomplete and unacceptable as a toy for my son.

Memo Example:

To: All Princeton High School Students
From: Dr. Andrew Marshall
Date: June 1, 2009
Re: Registration Process

If you would like to be considered for admission to Freespirit Community College, it is important that the following items be included in your registration packets when entering the Registrar's Office.

- Application
- Transcripts
- Essay of intent
- Three letters of recommendation

Once all registration packets have been submitted and reviewed, you will receive notification of your admission status by mail no later than July 15th.

Thank you.

Project Plan Abstract Example:

The Princeton High School, in Frisco, TX is seeking a grant to expand our Lead to Succeed program with the intention of helping all of our advanced placement students increase their leadership roles in the community. The objective is that by the end of the year the students will have at least 30 hours of community service in leadership positions throughout various components of our community. The Lead to Succeed program is based on the latest research on effective leadership programs for advanced students. Funding in the amount of \$14,525 is requested for staff/ community training and to allow each student to attend the Lead to Succeed student retreat.

Tips and Tricks for Procedural Writing:

- No matter how informal the writing, make sure to follow all grammatical and punctuation rules.
- Make sure to consider the format and structure for each specific type of procedural writing.

Literary Writing

Literary works are primarily distinguishable from other pieces of writing by their creative or artistic intent. When creating a literary piece you construct original writing rather than analyzing or synthesizing the writing of others. Literary writing includes: poetry, short stories, novels, and scripts.

Literary Writing Example (*Script*):

SCENE I. A lane by the wall of Capulet's orchard.

Enter ROMEO

ROMEO. Can I go forward when my heart is here?
Turn back, dull earth, and find thy centre out.

He climbs the wall, and leaps down within it

Enter BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO

BENVOLIO. Romeo! my cousin Romeo!

MERCUTIO. He is wise;
And, on my lie, hath stol'n him home to bed.

BENVOLIO. He ran this way, and leap'd this orchard wall:
Call, good Mercutio.

MERCUTIO. Nay, I'll conjure too.
Romeo! humours! madman! passion! lover!
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh:
Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied;
Cry but 'Ay me!' pronounce but 'love' and 'dove';
Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,
One nick-name for her purblind son and heir,
Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim,
When King Cophetua loved the beggar-maid!
He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not;
The ape is dead, and I must conjure him.
I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,
By her fine foot, straight leg and quivering thigh
And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,
That in thy likeness thou appear to us!

Excerpt from William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet

REVISING

In this stage of the writing process, the writer adds to, deletes from, elaborates upon, replaces, and rearranges sections of his or her writing. The goal is to make the writing clearer, more interesting, more informative, or more convincing.

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.

1. Voice

Voice is what allows the reader's eyes to move over silent print words and actually "hear" the writer speaking. It is the first thing we notice in compelling writing, what reaches out and pulls us into the page. Voice makes the reader interested in what is being said, and it makes the reader trust the person who is saying it.

Your voice is composed of your family heritage, your personality and interests, your education, and your experiences.

You should revise your essay for voice. Read it back. Listen to how the writing sounds. What parts sound most like you? If you feel your essay lacks voice, you will need to put a little of yourself into the essay. That does not mean write *about* yourself; write *from* yourself.

Here are tips on revising for voice:

- a. Consider your purpose. Your voice changes as your purpose changes.
- b. Think of your audience. Your voice changes as your audience changes.
- c. Think of your topic. How do you feel about it? Put those feelings into your writing. Don't tell the reader how you feel; show him/her how you feel through your word choice, selected details, and your tone.

- d. Look at your topic from different angles, and choose the one you are most comfortable with presenting. Humor, seriousness, light-heartedness, and mysteriousness are just a few of the angles you can use.
- e. Try going through your essay and choosing sections that feel particularly flat. Revise those sentences/sections.
- f. Introductions and conclusions are the easiest places to insert voice. Start there.

Make sure:

- 1. Your tone is appropriate for your purpose.
- 2. Your tone is appropriate for your audience.
- 3. You convey your interest in and connection to the topic through your writing.
- 4. Your tone conveys your personality without distracting the reader from the topic.

2. Thesis Statement

A thesis statement is a road map for your writing; in other words, it tells the reader what to expect. It is usually a single sentence somewhere in your first paragraph that presents your argument to the reader. The rest of the paper, the body of the essay, gathers and organizes evidence that will persuade the reader of the logic of your interpretation.

A thesis is the result of a lengthy thinking process and may need adjustment along the way.

Make sure:

- 1. The thesis is present and clear.
- 2. A position is taken that could be opposed.
- 3. The thesis is specific and connects to a broader topic.
- 4. The essay supports the thesis.

See Thesis Statements on page 3 for more information.

3. Introductions and Conclusions

Introductions

The purpose of an introduction (lead) is to gain the readers' attention. It provides the first impression of your writing and should be interesting and informative.

There are several ways to begin your writing. The chart below lists a few:

Action*	Jump into the middle of something (<i>like the middle of action</i>), leaving the reader wanting more.	And then suddenly everything stops. ~ <u>Runa</u> , J. Alison James
Anecdote	Tell a short but potent story	In a famous dialogue between two great

	that leads in to your topic. Use this sparingly and only use a story that is obviously related to the issue, topic, or prompt at hand. Give proper accreditation to the source of the story.	American writers, F. Scott Fitzgerald once said, “The rich are different from you and me” to his friend and drinking buddy Ernest Hemingway. To this statement Hemingway replied, “Yeah, they’ve got more money.” This quick-witted exchange shows the attitudes that many Americans have towards people simply because they have amassed great wealth. In Elizabeth Johnson’s article “Will the Real Donald Trump Please Stand Up!” the author argues that many people create images in their heads of what people who are fabulously wealthy must be like, images that are many times far from the truth.
Assertion	Make a bold assertion. Test whether your assertion is arguable, asking yourself whether it would be possible to argue the opposite. If not, then it's not a thesis – it's more of a fact.	Heavy use of computers may disrupt family cohesion and increase divorce in society.
Character*	Provide a glimpse of a character through brief description or insight into the personality or status of a character (not necessarily the character’s thoughts).	My name is India Opal Buloni, and last summer my daddy, the preacher, sent me to the store for a box of macaroni-and-cheese, some white rice and two tomatoes and I came back with a dog. This is what happened... ~ <u>Because of Winn-Dixie</u> , Kate DiCamillo
Dialogue*	Start with someone talking.	“Where is Papa going with that ax?” said Fern to her mother as they were setting the table for breakfast. ~ <u>Charlotte’s Web</u> , E. B. White
Fact/Example	Begin with a fact or example. Facts can come from your reading, observation, or personal experience. Examples enhance your meaning and make your ideas concrete. They are the proof.	Every 29 seconds, one student drops out of high school. Mother at 15. Drop-out at 16. Hungry today.
Historical Review	Give some background information on the subject or a brief review of the history of the topic; even a biographical sketch of person you may writing about.	With inflation slowing down, many companies have understandably lowered prices, and the oil industry should be no exception. Consequently, homeowners have begun wondering whether the relatively high price of home heating oil is justified given the economic climate. It makes sense, therefore, for us to start examining the pricing policies of the major oil companies. In Francis Bacon’s essay “Big Oil and Big Politics” the writer senses a shift in priorities in Washington on the energy question.
Question	Raise a question (use	Have you ever killed a man? If you were

	<p>rhetorical questions sparingly) Though asking a question is the easiest way to begin an essay, it is by far the most clichéd. That being said, take yourself to task to come up with a creative way to ask a question that will inspire your reader to read on.</p>	<p>called upon tomorrow to go to Iraq knowing that you might have to kill another person, could you do it? These same questions faced James Dannenburg almost 40 years ago when he, as a young man, chose to avoid being drafted to fight in the Vietnam War, a war he didn't believe in. Dannenburg's article "What I Did Was Legal, But Was it Right?" recounts the thoughts and feelings that whirled through his youthful mind.</p>
Quotation	<p>Using a quote or paraphrasing one works well if it is not tacked at the end like a note on the bulletin board. It needs to be worked into the writing so the quote reinforces the main idea.</p>	<p>Although President Roosevelt said, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," many Americans worried about where their next meal would come from.</p>
Reaction*	<p>Start right after the action is completed.</p>	<p>The war was over. A young soldier was returning home when, high in the mountains, his path came to an end at the precipice. ~ <u>The Tinderbox</u>, Hans Christian Anderson</p>
Setting*	<p>Describe the setting, the time and place where the story occurs.</p> <p>For the more sophisticated reader, the state of mind of the character becomes the setting. This sometimes surfaces as a character's thinking, like about what already happened.</p>	<p>Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendia was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice. At that time Macondo was a village of twenty adobe houses, built on the bank of a river of clear water that ran along a bed of polished stones, which were white and enormous, like prehistoric eggs. ~<u>One Hundred Years of Solitude</u>, Gabriel Garcia Marquez</p>

**from Barry Lane's Reviser's Toolbox and Joyce Armstrong Carroll's Authentic Strategies for High-Stakes Tests*

This is not a comprehensive list. Look for models in the texts you read and note which seem effective.

Conclusions

The purpose of a conclusion is to conclude, summarize, emphasize, or complete the logic of your writing. It should leave your audience with a final thought and provide a sense of completion.

There are several types of conclusions. The chart below lists a few:

Callback#	Use the same method taken with the introduction to end the writing.	Look at Gary Paulson's "The Library." He starts: <i>I first started seriously going to the library to work when I left Hollywood and moved to a cabin in the north woods.</i> He concludes: <i>...and that is how I came to work seriously in the library.</i>
Contemplation#	Provides reflection, realization or share the <i>Eureka!</i> of the experience.	<i>I am not a smart man, particularly, but one day, at long last, I stumbled from the dark woods of my own, and my family's and my country's past, holding in my hands these truths: that love grows from the rich loam of forgiveness; that mongrels make good dogs; that the evidence of God exists in the roundness of things. This much, at least, I've figured out. I know this much is true.</i> ~Wally Lamb, <i>I Know This Much Is True.</i>
Dialogue#	Try putting some realization or lesson into the mouth of a character to add depth.	See Chinua Achebe's myth about the tortoise: <i>"Did he die?"</i> <i>"No," replied Ekwefi. "His shell broke into pieces. But there was a great medicine man in the neighborhood. Tortoise's wife sent for him and he gathered all the bits of shell and stuck them together. That is why Tortoise's shell is not smooth."</i>
Quotation#	Use a quotation or paraphrase one.	Look at the twist Ana Veciana-Suarez made on a familiar adage in an editorial: <i>An apple can-and does-fall far, far from the tree.</i>

from Joyce Armstrong Carroll's Authentic Strategies for High-Stakes Tests

This is not a comprehensive list. Look for models in the texts you read and note which seem effective.

Make sure:

1. The introduction clearly states the writer's purpose.
2. The introduction hooks the reader and makes them want to read on.
3. The conclusion is interesting and provides a sense of closure.
4. The introduction and conclusion match and are consistent in the ideas presented.

4. Development of Ideas

Well-constructed paragraphs are essential to an effective essay.

Make sure:

1. Each paragraph has a topic sentence clearly stating that paragraph's main idea. This topic sentence is clearly related to the thesis.
2. Each body paragraph develops only one supporting point.
3. Each paragraph offers evidence, examples, or details in support of the topic sentence.
4. There is sufficient support, and each point is fully explained.
5. Each idea is equally developed.

See Modes of Writing, pages 4-10 for more information.

5. Organization and Coherence

No matter what you write, there should be a clear structure that organizes your writing. The better your organization, the more your reader will understand your writing. Audience and purpose should be considered when revising this structure.

Make sure:

1. Within paragraphs, ideas are presented in a clear and logical manner.
2. Paragraphs follow a logical line of thought. Their order emphasizes what is most important.
3. Transitions are used to connect ideas and make them more understandable. (See list below.)

See Organization on page 3 for more information.

6. Transitions

Transitions are used to make writing flow and to provide coherence. A transition may be a word or phrase that helps readers move from one sentence to the next, but it may also be a sentence (or two) that moves the reader from one paragraph to another.

Keep in mind that simply adding a transitional word will not work if the ideas do not lead into each other. Transitions signal relationships between ideas and convey the unity of the entire piece of writing.

Here is a list of commonly-used transitions, organized by purpose:

add a thought	additionally, again, along with, also, and, as well as, besides, finally, furthermore, in addition to, in fact, likewise, moreover, next, since, that is, too then
clarify	actually, clearly, in other words, of course, too
compare and contrast	after all, also, although, although this may be true, another similarity, at the same time, but, but, conversely, even so, however, in contrast, in spite of, in the same way, likewise, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, on the contrary, on the other hand, otherwise, otherwise, similarly, still, though, yet

give an example	at the same time, for example, for instance, in fact, in other words, once, since, specifically, such as, that is, that is, to be exact, to cite a reference, to explain, to illustrate, to show
indicate sequence	after, afterward, again, also, and, as soon as, before, besides, besides, consequently, during, finally, first(second, third...), from this point, furthermore, immediately, in addition, in the first, initially, meanwhile, moreover, next, now, place, soon, starting with, subsequently, then, today, tomorrow, too, ultimately, until, when, while, yesterday
make conditional	if, unless, until, when
show cause and effect	accordingly, as a result, because, consequently, for this reason, hence, therefore, thus
show a change of direction or a reversal of thought	although, but, even though, however, in contrast, instead of, nevertheless, on the contrary, on the other hand, otherwise, rather, regardless, still, yet
show a conclusion	all in all, as a result, consequently, finally, in summary, last of all, then, therefore, thus, to conclude
show emphasis	certainly, for this reason, indeed, in fact, truly, yes/no
show results	accordingly, after all, as a result, hence, in short, then, therefore, this
summarize	as stated ,earlier, finally, in brief, in fact, in short, most important, on the whole, to clarify, to explain, to reconsider, to reiterate
show time or place	above, adjacent to, afterward, afterward, against, along, around, below, below, beneath, between, beyond, beyond, formerly, here, immediately, in back of, in front of, in front of, in the meantime, later, meanwhile, nearby, next to, now, on the opposite side, on top of, over, previously ,across, since, soon, throughout, to the left, to the right, under, until now, while

7. Paragraphing

Paragraphs are usually focused on a central idea in an essay. Remember that paragraph breaks help to organize and structure your writing; in other words, paragraph breaks help the reader navigate your essay.

You should be conscious of when and why you break for paragraphs. Don't simply count sentences to make paragraph breaks. Paragraphs can be of any length depending on the material and the effect you as the writer want to create.

For more information, see the Organization on page 3.

8. Sentence Structure

Sentence structure is essential to effective essays. Don't make the mistake of "playing it safe" by choosing to write short, simple sentence structures with little to no sentence variety. Using various types of sentences makes your writing interesting.

Here is an explanation of the different types of sentences to use as you revise:

- **Simple Sentences** contain one complete thought (independent clause) and may have a compound subject or verb.

For example:

The lab experiment was a success. (one subject and one verb)

The boys and girls in the class will be on a team. (two subjects and one verb)

The boys ran and played on the football field. (one subject and two verbs)

- **Compound Sentences** contain two simple sentences (independent clauses) that are connected. The two sentences, or clauses, are equal in meaning; one does not depend upon the other. You may connect the two sentences using the following three methods:

1. Use a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, nor, so, for, yet) and a comma.

The school was modern and new, but it was empty.

2. Use a semicolon.

The school was modern and new; it was empty.

3. Use a semicolon, a conjunctive adverb (however, therefore, consequently, etc.), and a comma.

The school was modern and new; however, it was empty.

- **Complex Sentences** contain one simple sentence (independent clause) and one or more subordinate (dependent) clauses. Subordinating conjunctions begin the subordinating clause.

Subordinating Conjunctions				
after	before	though	whenever	while
although	if	unless	where	
as	since	until	wherever	
because	than	when	whether	

When the subordinate clause is first, place a comma after it.

When we finished the final exam, we were rewarded with candy.

When the subordinate clause is second, do not use a comma.

I was very excited because I never dreamed Harvard would accept me!

- **Compound-Complex Sentences** contain two or more independent clauses and one or more subordinate (dependent) clauses.

For example:

When I looked into the classroom, I saw a sub, and I was scared.

- **Balanced Sentences** contain phrases or clauses that balance each other by virtue of their likeness of structure, meaning, or length. The second independent clause extends the meaning.

For example:

"Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." (JFK)

- **Antithetical Sentences** contain two statements that are balanced but opposite.

For example:

"We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools." (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

- **Loose (Cumulative) Sentences** contain the main or independent clause at the beginning of the sentence followed by a string of details.

For example:

The bell rang, filling the hall with the sound of lockers opening and students greeting each other.

- **Periodic Sentences** contain the main or independent clause at the end of the sentence with additional details leading up to the point. A periodic sentence does not make sense until the end. It forces the reader to retain information from the beginning of the sentence and often builds to a climactic statement with meaning unfolding slowly.

For example:

Willing to work, meeting all deadlines, responsive to feedback, Leslie was one of Mrs. Jackson's favorite students.

9. Word Choice

When revising your writing, you should choose the best word for your meaning and correct areas that are too wordy, too vague, or too repetitive.

For example:

My English teacher says there are more than a few, in fact, many reasons why it is important to revise essays carefully. (Wordy!)

My English teacher says there are many reasons why it is important to revise essays carefully. (Better!)

I ordered a drink at the coffee place. (Vague!)

I ordered a grande skinny cinnamon dolce latte with soy, no whip at Starbucks. (Better!)

The essay was brief, concise, and to the point. (Repetitive!)

The essay was focused. (Better!)

A Warning about “Thesauritis”:

Sometimes, words are just plain wrong: they aren’t used the way you think they are or don’t mean what you think they mean. Don’t use a word you don’t know just because the thesaurus tells you it’s a synonym. While it may have a similar “dictionary” meaning (denotation), it’s likely that you’ll miss its subtler shades of meaning (connotation) or standard usage, and get it wrong.

For example:

Thin is more or less neutral, *slender* may have a positive connotation, and *gaunt* a negative one.

10. Strong Verbs

Writers tend use the same words, particularly verbs. This can make their writing seem repetitive and dull. Using strong verbs will make your writing clear and more interesting for the reader.

For example:

I asked Lucy for a pen, and she gave it to me. (Dull!)

I begged Lucy for a pen, and she launched it at my head. (Interesting!)

Here’s a list of some strong words you might want to use as you revise:

abolish	create	evolve	offer	regard
accomplish	define	exhibit	operate	represent
achieve	delegate	exist	organize	resemble
act	deliver	expedite	outline	reveal
administer	demand	experience	overcome	serve
analyze	describe	expose	personify	solve
appear	design	express	persuade	state
argue	develop	impact	portray	streamline
assume	discuss	impress	present	struggle
base	display	incorporate	preserve	suffer
believe	distinguish	influence	presume	supervise
challenge	educate	inquire	prioritize	supply
claim	embody	install	process	symbolize
coach	emerge	involve	project	tackle
consider	encourage	launch	promote	transform
consolidate	eradicate	maintain	recommend	undergo
contradict	establish	manage	reflect	upgrade
convey	evoke	note	refute	value

Note: This is not a comprehensive list. Use a reference book for additional verbs.

EDITING

In this stage of the writing process, the writer proofreads his or her writing by applying correct conventions. This is precision work that requires multiple readings, perhaps even one aloud. The goal is to create a polished work to share with an audience.

Utilize this checklist when editing:

	11. Every sentence is complete. There are no fragments or run-ons.
	12. Punctuation marks are used correctly.
	13. Verb tenses are used correctly.
	14. Every verb agrees in number with its subject.
	15. Personal pronouns are used correctly.
	16. Pronoun references are clear. Every pronoun agrees with its antecedent in number and in gender.
	17. Frequently-confused words are used correctly.
	18. All words are capitalized correctly.
	19. All words are spelled correctly.
	20. The paper is neat and in correct and consistent form.

See the corresponding numbers below for more information on this step.

11. Fragments and Run-Ons

To be complete, a sentence must have a subject, a verb, and express a complete thought. A **fragment** is an incomplete sentence because it is missing one or more of these. To correct a fragment, identify what's missing and add it.

For example:

Scored 12 goals last night, including a three-pointer.

Who did? This is missing a subject! Correction: Taylor scored 12 goals last night, including a three-pointer.

A girl from my English class and a guy from my history class last year.

Did what? This is missing the verb! Correction: A girl from my English class and a guy from my history class last year rented a limo for prom.

Until the lunch line was shorter.

Who did what? This doesn't express a complete thought because it is missing both a subject and a verb! Correction: I sat and talked with my friends until the lunch line was shorter.

A **run-on** is the opposite of a fragment, “too much” information rather than “not enough.” A run-on occurs when two or more complete sentences are joined incorrectly.

For example:

Our first football game is this Friday it should be a lot of fun! (Incorrect!)

These are two complete thoughts that should be separated. There are many ways to correct this error:

1. Make it into two separate sentences with a period in between:
Our first football game is this Friday. It should be a lot of fun! (Correct!)
2. Use a semicolon:
Our first football game is this Friday; it should be a lot of fun! (Also correct!)
3. Use a comma *and* a coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so):
Our first football game is this Friday, and it should be a lot of fun! (Also correct!)
4. Use a subordinating conjunction (e.g. although, if, since, unless, whenever, etc.):
Because our first football game is this Friday, it should be a lot of fun! (Also correct!)
5. Use a dash for emphasis:
Our first football game is this Friday - it should be a lot of fun! (Also correct!)

Note: Simply adding a comma between the two sentences results in what’s called a **comma splice**. Here’s an example: *Our first football game is this Friday, it should be a lot of fun!*

This is NOT correct. You can fix a comma splice the same way you fix a run-on—either change the punctuation or add a conjunction.

2. Punctuation Marks

These are some of the more common errors you should check against:

An **apostrophe** [’] is used to indicate possession (e.g. *the teacher’s classroom, the students’ tests*) and to indicate the omission of a letter when forming a contraction (e.g. *does not* → *doesn’t*).

The **comma** [,] is one of the most commonly-used punctuation marks. It is used in a variety of ways, including (but not limited to!):

- Items in a series (e.g. *This six weeks we studied the geography of Canada, the United States, and Mexico.*)
- Introductory words, phrases, and clauses (e.g. *After PE class, I go to lunch.*)
- Parenthetical expressions and non-essential words, phrases, and clauses (e.g. *Mr. K., my favorite teacher, is obsessed with horror movies.*)

Colons [:] are used to introduce a list after a complete thought has been expressed (e.g. *For English, I need the following supplies: a spiral, a folder, and a writing utensil.*)

Quotation marks [“ ”] are used around all quoted material and around the titles of shorter works (essays, poems, short stories). Note: *The titles of longer works should be italicized.*

Refer to other sections of this guide or a published grammar handbook for any additional questions you may have.

3. Verb Tense

Verb tense reflects the time in which an action occurred (e.g. past, present, future). It should not shift from one to another without reason.

For example: *John studied for eight hours before he took his Calculus exam yesterday.* (past)
Jillian studies three hours every night, so she makes all A's. (present)
Josh will study for the exam, so he will receive credit for the class. (future)

4. Subject-Verb Agreement

A verb should **agree** in number (singular, plural) with its subject.

For example: *That boy delivers the school newspaper to my 3rd period class every six weeks.*
 (sing.)

Those boys deliver the school newspaper to my 3rd period class every six weeks.
 (plural)

5. Personal Pronouns

A **personal pronoun** refers to who is speaking, who is spoken to/about, and who owns something. It is important to use the correct form.

		<i>who is speaking (subject)</i>	<i>who is spoken to/about (object)</i>	<i>who owns what (possessive)</i>
Singular	1 st person	I	me	my, mine
	2 nd person	you	you	your, yours
	3 rd person	he/she/it	him/her/it	his/her(s)/its
Plural	1 st person	we	us	our/ours
	2 nd person	you	you	your, yours
	3 rd person	they	them	theirs

For example: *My lab partner and me were the first to finish the experiment.* (Incorrect!)
My lab partner and I were the first to finish the experiment. (Correct!)

6. Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

An **antecedent** is the word to which a **pronoun** refers. A pronoun should be clearly stated and agree in both number and gender with its antecedent.

For example: *Miguel and Richard forgot his homework.* (Incorrect!)



Miguel and Richard forgot their homework. (Correct!)



7. Frequently-Confused Words

Check your draft for correct usage of these pairs of commonly misused words.

1. accept/except	accept – to receive	He <i>accepts</i> compliments well.
	except – to take or leave out	I like all of my classes <i>except</i> for fourth period.
2. affect/effect	affect – to influence	Not getting enough sleep <i>affects</i> the quality of your education.
	effect – result	The <i>effect</i> of the bright lighting made the school look welcoming.
3. already/all ready	all ready – prepared	My teammates were <i>all ready</i> for the playoffs.
	already – by this time	We were <i>already</i> ahead 10 points by half time.
4. cite/site	cite – to quote or document	We have to <i>cite</i> three sources in the paper.
	site – position or place	The <i>site</i> of the new high school is just east of the Tollway.
5. its/it's	its – of or belonging to it	Please put the book back in <i>its</i> place on the shelf.
	it's – contraction for it is	<i>It's</i> a beautiful day!
6. lose/loose	lose – to misplace or not win	The teacher glared at the student. "Don't <i>lose</i> this writing guide!"
	loose – to not be tight	The student's pants were so <i>loose</i> that he had to hold them up when he walked.
7. passed/past	passed –past tense of "to pass," to have moved	The storm <i>passed</i> through downtown quickly, but it caused great damage
	past – belonging to a former time or place	In the <i>past</i> , Frisco only had one high school; now there are five!
8. than/then	than – use with comparisons	She would rather go out to eat <i>than</i> eat in the cafeteria.
	then – at that time, or next	Blake studied for his AP exam for five hours, and <i>then</i> he went to bed.
9. their/there/they're	their – possessive form of they	<i>Their</i> class is at the end of the hall.
	there – indicates location	<i>There</i> is still hope!
	they're – contraction for "they are"	<i>They're</i> going to state again!
10. through/threw	through – by means of; finished; into or out of <i>Note: "Thru" is abbreviated slang for through; it is not appropriate in standard writing</i>	Because she had studied, she sailed right <i>through</i> the final exam.
	threw – past tense of "throw"	He <i>threw</i> away his notes at the end of the year.

11. to/too/two	to – toward	Alex went <i>to</i> the library to finish her project.
	too – also, or excessively	Because he procrastinated, Martin had <i>too</i> much to do and was unable to finish the assignment on time.
	two – a number	Only <i>two</i> students did not turn in the essay.
12. who/which/that	who – pronoun, referring to a person or persons	Cindy wondered how Ben, <i>who</i> is so smart, could be having difficulties in AP World.
	which – pronoun, replacing a singular or plural thing(s);not used to refer to persons	<i>Which</i> section of the gym is designated for the home team?
	that – used to refer to things or a group or class of people	I lost the folder <i>that</i> I bought for my final project.
13. your/you're	your – relating to you or yourself	Write <i>your</i> name at the top of the paper.
	you're – a contraction of "you are"	" <i>You're</i> capable of great things!" his teacher wrote in his yearbook.

Note: *This is not a comprehensive list. Use a reference book for additional problems.*

8. Capitalization

- Always capitalize the first word of every sentence.
- Always capitalize the pronoun *I*, both alone and in contractions.
- Capitalize the first word of every direct quotation.
 - Jessica said, "Hurray it's Friday!"
 - "I like science," he said, "but Biology is not my favorite class." ("but" is not capitalized because it doesn't start a new sentence.)
 - "Tutorials start at four," he said. "Late comers will not be admitted." ("Late" is capitalized because it starts a new sentence.)
- Always capitalize content words in a title. Short connecting words, such as the *to* in front of a verb, or articles, like *a*, *an*, or *the* are not content words and should not be capitalized.
- Always capitalize proper nouns - the names of people, places, historical events/documents, and languages/races/nationalities*.
 - John, Mrs. Smith, Dr. Reedy, etc.
 - Frisco, Lake Lewisville, Collin County, North America, etc.
 - The Civil War, the Bill of Rights, etc.
 - English, Spanish, French, etc.

**Also capitalize the adjectives that come from these words: French food, Roman architecture, etc.*

6. Always capitalize the names of the months, the days of the week, and special days such as holidays, but not the seasons of the year (fall, winter, spring, summer) unless they are part of a specific name of an event.
 - June, July, August, etc.
 - Friday, Saturday, Sunday, etc.
 - Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Spring Break, etc.

7. Always capitalize a "title of relationship" if it takes the place of the person's name or is used as part of the person's name. If a pronoun such as "my" is in front of the word, a capital is not used.
 - Mom came to my game last night.
 - My dad will come to tonight's game.

8. Always capitalize the names of particular people or things, but never general ones.
 - I had dinner with Principal Jones.
 - I had dinner with the principal.

 - I am taking AP World History and Algebra II along with English and Spanish.
 - I am taking history and math along with English and Spanish. (Note: English and Spanish are capitalized because they are the formal names of languages.)

 - I graduated from Frisco High School.
 - I graduated from high school.

9. Always capitalize East, West, South, and/or North if they are locations, but never capitalize them if they are directions.
 - I used to live in the South.
 - I live south of Oklahoma.

9. Spelling

When editing for spelling, the first step should be to use spell-check in your word processing program. A dictionary should be used to verify your choices.

*The following rules can also help you to decipher the mysteries of spelling. But remember, even the best rules have their exceptions. **Check your dictionary to make sure when you are uncertain.***

Rule	Explanation	Example
Using ie and ei	Apply this rule: "Use i before e , except after c , or when sounding like a , as in <i>neighbor</i> and <i>weigh</i> ."	bel <u>ie</u> ve rece <u>iv</u> e fre <u>igh</u> t
Dropping the Final e	If a word ends in silent e , drop the e before adding the -ing .	write + -ing → <u>w</u> riting make + -ing → <u>m</u> aking

Changing y to i	<p>If a word ends in a consonant plus y, change the y to i before adding -ed, -es, -er, -est, or -ness.</p> <p>If the final consonant is y, do not change the y to i before adding -ing.</p>	<p>study + -es → <u>studies</u> try + -ed → <u>tried</u> happy + -er → <u>happier</u> pretty + -est → <u>prettiest</u> sloppy + -ness → <u>sloppiness</u> cry + -ing → <u>crying</u></p>
Doubling the Final Consonant	<p>If a one-syllable word ends with one vowel plus one consonant, double the final consonant before adding -ed, -er, -est, or -ing</p> <p>If a two-syllable word ends with one vowel plus one consonant, double the final consonant ONLY if the final word is accented on the second syllable.</p>	<p>hop + -ed → <u>hopped</u> step + -ing → <u>stepping</u> bat + -er → <u>batter</u> big + -est → <u>biggest</u></p> <p>begin + -ing → <u>beginning</u> BUT gather + -ing → <u>gathering</u></p>
Forming Plurals	<p><i>To change a singular noun to a plural noun, follow these rules:</i></p> <p>Rule 1: Usually, just add -s.</p> <p>Rule 2: If the singular noun ends in s, ch, sh, x, or z, add -es.</p> <p>Rule 3: If the singular noun ends in a consonant plus -y, change the y to i and add -es.</p> <p>Rule 4: For most nouns ending in a consonant plus o, add -es.</p> <p>Rule 5: For some singular nouns ending in f or fe, change the f or fe to v and add -es. For other singular nouns ending in f or fe, just add -s.</p> <p>Rule 6: Some plurals are formed in special ways. LEARN THESE!</p>	<p>one student → two <u>students</u></p> <p>one wish → two <u>wishes</u></p> <p>one puppy → two <u>puppies</u></p> <p>one tomato → two <u>tomatoes</u></p> <p>one leaf → two <u>leaves</u> BUT one safe → two <u>safes</u></p> <p>one child → two <u>children</u> one woman → two <u>women</u></p>

Remember to check your dictionary whenever you are uncertain!

10. Proofreading Marks

As you edit your paper and those of your classmates, it might be helpful to employ the following marking system. Also use it to decode the feedback you receive from your teacher!

	Delete.	<i>Why should you write?</i>
	Close up space.	<i>It all ows for expression.</i>
	Delete and close up space.	<i>Writing exercises the brain.</i>
	Put back deleted material.	<i>Writing is the most important ^{stet} form of communication.</i>
	Add a letter or word.	<i>Writing helps ^{us} feel.</i>
	Add a space.	<i>Writing brings [#] joy.</i>
	Transpose letters or words.	<i>Writing is painting ^{wavy} words with.</i>
	Change a letter or word.	<i>Writing is music ⁱ through words.</i>
	Add a comma.	<i>Writing begins with thinking [↑] planning and dreaming.</i>
	Add a period.	<i>Writing can be fun [○]</i>
	Add an apostrophe.	<i>It's [↓] your chance to choose.</i>
	Change to capital letter.	<i>it can be serious. [≡]</i>
	Change to lower case letter.	<i>It can be humorous.</i>
	No new paragraph; run together.	<i><u>It can be gloomy.</u> It can be cheerful.</i>
	Add quotation marks.	<i>Teachers say, [↘] Writing is awesome! [↗]</i>
	Start new paragraph.	<i>"Write!" chirps the teacher. [≡] "Please, no!" groans the student.</i>
	Awkward phrasing	<i>Students' difference in writing ^{awk} abilities from the superior, to those who struggle, is a huge problem</i>
	Run-on	<i>Writing is a way to reflect on life ^{RO} and writing is a way to record life.</i>
	Fragment	<i>The miracle of writing ^{frag}</i>
	Word Choice	<i>Authors strive to create writing that has an <u>affect</u> on their audience.</i>
	Tense shift	<i>I dreamed, I ^{ts} plan, I wrote!</i>

DOCUMENTATION - PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

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. You do not need to cite a source when an idea is your own or an idea is common knowledge. Follow these guidelines:

- A. In most instances, provide the author's last name and page number with no punctuation between them.

EXAMPLE

"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).

- B. 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).
- C. 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).
- D. 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).
- E. 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.

EXAMPLE

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

- F. One exception is the extended 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.

EXAMPLE

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)

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

INTEGRATING QUOTATIONS

Quotations should be integrated into your own sentences. Don't drop quotations into your text without warning, and avoid standing quotations alone as sentences; instead, provide clear signal phrases 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).

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

You can also split the quotation by using the signal phrase in the middle of the sentence:

"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).

Prose:

- Use quotations to enclose a prose 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."

- 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."

- 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.

Use of Punctuation:

- Commas and periods always go inside closing quotation marks.

I know you are fond of the story "Children of the Corn," but is it an appropriate subject for your essay?

"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."

Quotations within Quotations:

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

Grafton has no faith in early modern ethnography: "It will become clear that Europeans did not see the New World 'as it really was,' and that most of them did not much like what they thought they saw."

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.'"

Ellipsis Points:

- 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.

"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."

Use Quotation Marks For:

- Titles of short or minor works, such as songs, short stories, essays, short poems, one-act plays, and other literary works that are shorter than a three-act play or a complete book.
- Titles of parts of larger works, such as chapters in books; articles in newspapers, magazines, journals, or other periodical publications; and episodes of television and radio series.
- Use underlining or italics for titles of major works or of works that contain smaller segments such as books; plays of three or more acts; newspapers, magazines, journals, or other periodical publications; films; and television and radio series.

AVOIDING 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.

1. The use of quotation marks, adequate paraphrasing, and needed documentation illustrates how to avoid plagiarism.
2. A paraphrase is permissible when most of the writer's words and phrases are replaced by yours in a different sentence structure.
3. A paraphrase is permissible when credit is given to the writer for his ideas on the Works Cited page and in the text as well.

The publication of *Life and Writings of St. Augustine* by A.B. Cragg contains the following paragraph:

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.

A. Pure Plagiarism

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.

This is the simplest case. The second sentence is lifted word-for-word from the source and no documentation is given.

B. Plagiarism with Documentation

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).

If the student had included the following notation, the passage would still be plagiarized since the actual words have been lifted from the text. They should be enclosed in quotation marks.

C. Adequate Documentation

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).

D. Acceptable Paraphrase

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).

MLA RULES FOR WRITING A BIBLIOGRAPHY AND/OR WORKS CITED

General Guidelines:

The following information, when applicable, should be included in order as follows:

- 1.) Author's name
- 2.) Title of a part of the book (article/chapter)
- 3.) Title of the book/website
- 4.) Name of the editor, translator, or compiler
- 5.) Edition used
- 6.) Number(s) of the volume(s) used
- 7.) Name of the series
- 8.) Place of publication, name of the publisher, and date of publication
- 9.) Page numbers
- 10.) Supplementary bibliographic information and annotation

Sample Works Cited Entries:

BOOKS:

One Author

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

EXAMPLE:

Bartlett, John. *Familiar Quotations: A Collection of Passages, Phrases, and Proverbs Traced to Their Sources in Ancient and Modern Literature*. 16th Ed. Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1992.

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.

EXAMPLE:

Dolan, Edward F., and Margaret M. Scariano. *Guns in the United States*. Chicago: Franklin Watts, 1994.

Book with No Author

Book Title. City: Publishing company, Publication date.

EXAMPLE:

Go Ask Alice. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971.

Book with an Editor

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

EXAMPLE:

Avery, Catherine B., ed. *The New Century Classical Handbook*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962.

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.

EXAMPLE:

Shelton, Frank W. "The Family in Hemingway's Nick Adams Stories." *Contemporary Literary Criticism*. Ed. Dedria Bryfonski. Vol. 10. Detroit: Gale, 1979. 270-271.

A Signed Article in a Reference Book

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

EXAMPLE:

Fowler, William Morgan, Jr. "Valley Forge." *The World Book Encyclopedia*. 1998.

Unsigned Article in a Reference Book

“Title of Article.” *Book Title*. Year of published edition.

EXAMPLE:

“Voyageurs National Park.” *The World Book Encyclopedia*. 1998.

PERIODICALS:**Signed Article from a Daily Newspaper**

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

EXAMPLE:

Lee, Christopher. “10 Years After the Gulf War, Sick Vets Looking for Answers.” *The Dallas Morning News*. 1 March 2001: A4.

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.

ONLINE EXAMPLE:

Lee, Christopher. “10 years After the Gulf War, Sick Vets Looking for Answers.” *The Dallas Morning News*. 1 March 2001: 4A. *Proquest*. Web. 27 January 2002.

Article from a Magazine

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

EXAMPLE:

Horsburgh, Susan. “Spark of life.” *People*. 27 January 2003: 77-78.

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.

ONLINE EXAMPLE:

Horsburg, Susan. "Spark of life." *People*. 27 January 2003: 77. *Proquest*. Web. 3 February 2003.

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.

EXAMPLE:

Green, Joshua. "The Rove Presidency." *The Atlantic.com*. Atlantic Monthly Group, Sept. 2007. Web. 15 May 2008.

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.

EXAMPLE:

Foreman, Christopher H. *The Promise and Peril of Environmental Justice*. The Brookings Institute, 1998. 2000. The Brookings Institute Press. Web. 21 January 2003.

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.

EXAMPLE:

Cavalieri, Grace. "Athletes." *Cuffed Frays*. New York: Argonne House Press, 2002. *Poetry.com*.
Watermark Press. Web. 23 January 2003.

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.

EXAMPLE:

Sourtham, Brian. "Alfred Tennyson." *Scribner's Writers Series*. 2002. Gale Group. Web. 21
January 2003.

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.

EXAMPLE:

To Kill a Mockingbird. Dir. Robert Mulligan. Gregory Peck and Mary Badham. Pakula-
Mulligan Productions, Inc., 1962.

Television

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

EXAMPLE:

“The One with the Candy Hearts.” *Friends*. Producer James Burrows. NBC. KXAS. Dallas-Ft.
Worth, TX. 9 February 1995.

Maps & Charts

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

EXAMPLE:

Texas. Map. Austin, Texas. Texas Department of Transportation. 2002.

For more information on MLA works cited entries, please consult the MLA Handbook:
www.mla.org.

HOW TO SET UP A PAPER IN MLA FORMAT USING MS WORD

Step 1: Open Microsoft Word

Step 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

Step 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”

Step 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”

Step 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”

Step 6: Type your **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”

Step 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

Step 8: **Indent** each paragraph

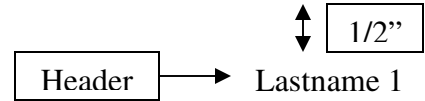
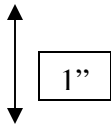
- Each new paragraph will need to be indented ½ inch
- Before you begin typing a new paragraph, hit the “Tab” key once

Step 9: Type your paper

- Hit “Enter” once after each paragraph

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

- This will be the last page of your paper
- 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 (do not number them)
- Hit “Enter” once after each source



Firstname Lastname

Instructor's Name



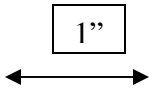
Course Number

16 June 2009

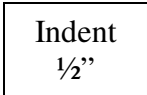
Center Title (Do Not Bold or Underline)

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.

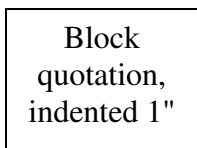
Because it is easy to read, this font is appropriate for high school and college essays.



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.

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*. 6th 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.

Hanging
Indent
1/2"



The works cited list begins on a new page.

GLOSSARY

active voice – voice in which the subject performs the action of the verb, rather than being acted upon.

analytical essay – an essay that analyzes and interprets a work of literature by using specific examples from the text to build a logical argument beyond a summary or description of the work.

antithetical sentence – a sentence that contains two statements that are balanced but opposite.

argumentative essay – an essay in which the writer develops or debates a topic using logic and persuasion.

audience – the intended reader(s) of a work.

balanced sentence – a sentence that contains phrases or clauses that balance each other by virtue of their likeness of structure, meaning, or length. The second independent clause extends the meaning.

bibliographic information – the locating information about a source. For example, a book's bibliographic information includes author, title, place of publication, publisher, and date of publication.

brainstorming – the quick generation of ideas without judgment or evaluation in order to solve a problem, clarify a concept, or inspire creative thinking.

coherence – logical order in writing.

comma splice – the error that occurs when a comma alone connects two independent clauses

complex sentence – a sentence with an independent clause and at least one dependent clause.

compound sentence – a sentence composed of at least two independent clauses linked with a conjunction or semicolon

compound-complex sentence – a compound sentence with at least one dependent clause.

conclusion – completes the work of the introduction and body paragraphs. A strong conclusion should give the reader a sense that all ideas have been explained thoroughly and tied together.

consistent tenses – using the same verb tense throughout a sentence, paragraph, or essay. Shifting from one verb tense to another should be done only when demonstrating a shift in time.

controlling idea – the main point or underlying direction of a piece of writing.

conventions – the rules of accepted grammar usage.

dependent clause – a clause that modifies a main or independent clause to which it is joined.

development – the elaboration of ideas.

dialogue – the lines spoken between characters in fiction or a play.

diction – word choice in speaking and writing.

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.

ellipses – three spaced periods or points indicating the omission of material from a quoted sentence or fragment.

embedded quotations – incorporating a direct quotation into the text of a composition.

evidence – the reasons that support a claim. Examples include anecdotes, facts, statistics, details, descriptions, comparisons, and contrasts.

expository text – nonfiction writing that provides factual information, explains a topic, the steps in a process or analyzes a work of literature.

fragment – a sentence that lacks either a subject or a verb and/or fails to express a complete thought.

idiom – an expression that has a different meaning from the literal meaning of its individual words.

independent clause – a clause containing a subject and a verb that can stand alone as a complete sentence.

interpretative response – an analysis of a piece of literature in which the writer takes apart what was written by another author and explains it.

introduction – catches the reader’s attention, sets the tone of the writing, and presents the thesis.

level of formality – writing format determined by the writer’s purpose and the intended audience.

literary text – written works that are generally recognized as having artistic value.

Organizational pattern – the pattern an author constructs as he or she organizes his or her ideas and provides supporting ideas.

loose/cumulative sentence – a sentence that contains the main idea or independent clause at the beginning of the sentence followed by a string of details.

organization – structure of a piece of writing.

paragraph – made up of sentence grouped together to support a single main idea. It is usually made up of a topic sentence and supporting sentences.

parallel structure – a rhetorical device in which the same structure is used within a sentence or paragraph to show that two or more ideas have equal importance.

paraphrase – restating information in your own words; must be cited.

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 by parenthesis.

passive voice – voice in which the subject of the verb is being acted upon by the verb.

periodic sentence – a sentence that contains the main or independent clause at the end of the sentence with additional details leading up to the point.

personal narrative – an expressive literary piece written in first person that centers on a particular event in the author's life and may contain vivid description as well as personal commentary and observations.

persuasive text – text written with the intent to persuade or convince the reader of something

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.

point of view – the perspective from which the events in the story are told (e.g., omniscient, third-person omniscient, third-person narrative, objective, first person/subjective, limited).

primary source – research from a source that has directly observed or studied something, including historical documents, statistical data, scientific data, scientific experiments, and literary works

procedural text – a type of informational text that is written with the intent to explain the steps in a procedure, as in a recipe.

purpose – what you want your audience to know and understand about your topic and point of view.

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.

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?

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.

run-on – a sentence in which independent clauses run together without the required punctuation.

script – a written version of the speech and actions of performers, as in a play or film.

secondary source – a source that is a step removed from the original accounts of an event or experience.

sensory detail – a detail in writing that describes what is seen, heard, smelled, tasted, or touched.

simple sentence – a sentence with one subject and one predicate.

style – the way something is written, in contrast to its content.

subject-verb agreement – the required match in number and person between a subject and a verb.

summarize – to reduce large sections of text to their essential points and main ideas.

support – see *evidence*.

syntax – the arrangement and sequence of words in sentences, clauses, and phrases.

synthesize – to combine elements and parts to form a coherent whole.

thesis – a single sentence that formulates your topic and point of view.

tone – style or manner reflecting a writer's emotional or intellectual position on a subject.

topic sentence – the main idea of a paragraph.

transitions – words and phrases that show relationships between statements.

verb tense – reflects the time in which an action occurred.

voice – articulation or expression in coherent form, either verbally or in a piece of writing.

word choice – the author's thoughtful use of precise vocabulary to fully convey meaning to the reader.

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.