MLA STYLE GUIDE
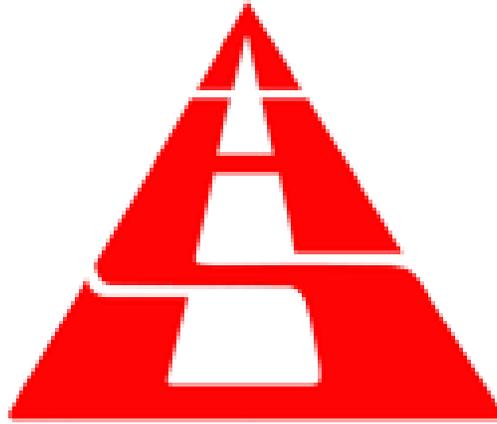

This document has been prepared for the use of students in grades 9 to 12.
Revised – Winter 2017
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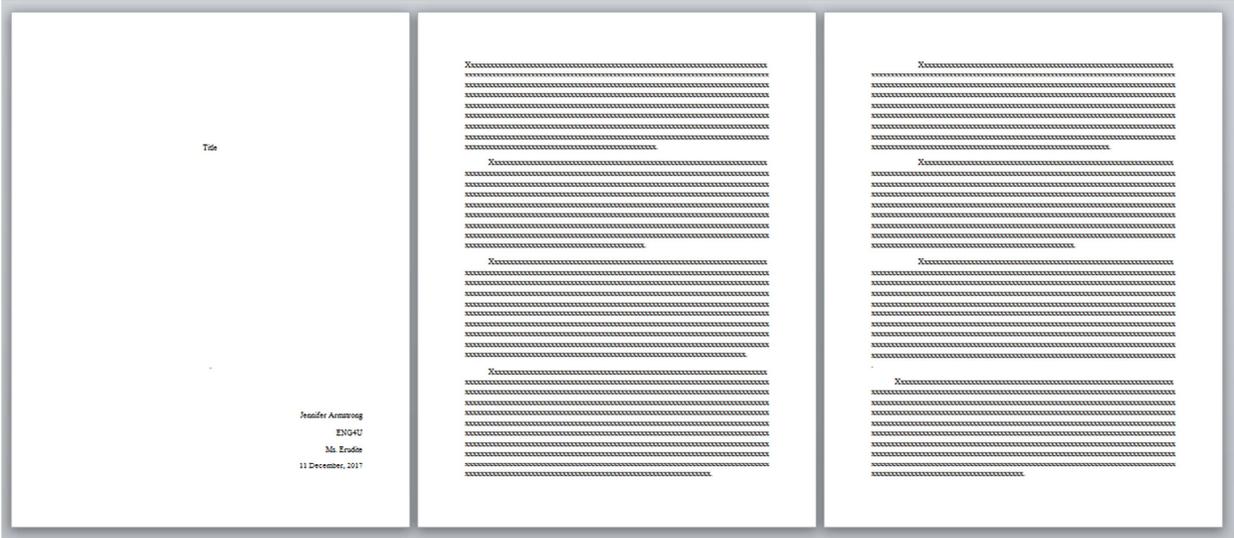# Formatting Your Essay

General Guidelines:

- **Use** only one side of the page
- **Double-space** the body of your essay **(**indented quotations can be single-spaced**)**
- **Margins** are one-inch on the top and bottom
- **Indent** the beginning of a new paragraph **(press ENTER then the TAB key)**
- **Font** should be Times New Roman size 12
- **Page numbers** start on the second page, top right corner **(INSERT** then click **Page Numbers)**
- **Choose** either Option A or Option B and follow the examples below to properly format your essay and page numbers

Option A: Separate, full title page

Title Page   Page 1 of Essay   Page 2 of Essay

Title

Jennifer Armstrong
ENG4U
Ms. Erudite
11 December, 2017

Option B: Title on first page of the essay

- **First page** has your name, the course code, your teacher's name, and the due date on the <u>top left corner</u>; add a title (centre this); start your essay
- **Page number** starts on the second page, top right corner (**INSERT** then click **Page Numbers)**
- **Do not** add extra space between paragraphs. Press **ENTER** then **TAB** to indent a new paragraph.

Parenthetical Citations

Why cite your sources?

- Citations add credibility and authority to your work
- To avoid plagiarism (stealing someone else's ideas and passing as your own)
- To indicate the sources of these citations in a Works Cited list at the end of your paper

Copying any material and submitting it as your own (plagiarism) is an academic offence. Plagiarism may result in failure on the assignment.

How does Parenthetical Citations work?

- Parenthetical citations (also known as "in-text citations") involve placing relevant source information in parentheses immediately following a **direct quote** or a **paraphrase** within your essay.
- Parenthetical citations are brief because they refer readers to the Works Cited page at the end of your essay.
- MLA Style uses an author-page method of parenthetical citation.

How do I quote another person's words and ideas in my writing?

You have 3 options when quoting or paraphrasing from another source:

A) **Author's name and page number in citation:**
   An inference is "the ability to connect what is in the text with what is in the mind to make an educated guess" (Beers 62).
B) **Author's name in an introductory phrase, page number in citation:**
   Beers defines an inference as "the ability to connect what is in the text with what is in the mind to make an educated guess" (62).
C) **Author's name in paraphrase, page number in citation:**
   Beers stresses the importance of connecting background knowledge to the words in the text in order to create meaning. (62)

Each citation in the examples above shows readers that the information in the sentence can be found on page 62 of a work by an author named Beers. If readers want to know more about this source, they will look at the Works Cited page at the back of your essay.

Works Cited
Beers, Kylene. *When Kids Can't Read: What Teachers Can Do*. Portsmouth: Heineman, 2003.

Formatting Parenthetical Citations

- **The following are examples of the MLA author-page method of parenthetical citation.**
- **The page number should ALWAYS be in parentheses following the quotation/paraphrase.**
- **Don't forget, full details about the source will be in the Works Cited page at the end of the essay.**

1) **ONE AUTHOR:**

"Keep parenthetical references as brief—and as few—as clarity and accuracy permits" (Gibaldi 185).

2) **TWO OR THREE AUTHORS:**

"But like it or not, the Internet is here to stay" (Dickinson and Ellison 1).

"To be human is to be part of the natural world" (Wilson, Davies, and Brunty 33).

3) **FOUR OR MORE AUTHORS:**

"People like the feel of books, thus they'll never become obsolete" (Boxton et al. 56)

4) **AUTHOR UNKNOWN (COMMON WITH ONLINE SOURCES)**

It is clearly argued in *Man, Myth, and Magic* that "all the major religions are based upon distinctive evaluations of human nature and destiny" (14-15)

"All the major religions are based upon distinctive evaluations of human nature and destiny" *(Man, Myth and Magic* 14-15).

5) **PAGE NUMBER UNKNOWN (COMMON WITH ONLINE SOURCES)**

"Except for some whales, the elephant is among the largest of all animals in size" (Sanderson).

6) TWO or MORE WORKS by the SAME AUTHOR:

Self-awareness allows us to "evaluate and learn from others' experiences as well as our own" (Covey, *People* 66).

It is uniquely human that we can observe our own lives and thoughts, and then contemplate ways to change and improve them" (Covey, *Families* 30-31).

> ➢ Note: the titles *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* and *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families* have been shortened to keep the parenthetical citations brief. The full titles will appear in the list of Works Cited.

7) SOURCE QUOTED IN ANOTHER SOURCE:

Always cite the source you used. Indicate the person(s) being quoted in your introductory phrase, and begin your citation with the abbreviation "qtd. in."

Researchers Johnson and Steiler discovered that "books are good for the soul" (qtd. in Jamieson 13).

Direct Quotations vs. Paraphrase

Direct Quotations	Paraphrase
- Copying word-for-word someone else's ideas - Use quotation marks around the words or sentences you are copying - Use quotes that clearly support your argument. Irrelevant quotes actually weaken an essay because they confuse the reader - If you want to condense a larger text into a shorter quotation, use ellipsis marks (…) to indicate that unnecessary words or lines have been left out. - Still use the author and page number in parentheses right after the quote. The rest of the information will be in your Works Cited page.	- This is an "indirect quotation"→ using <u>your</u> words but taking another person's ideas - To paraphrase correctly you have to: 1) change the words; 2) change the paragraph/sentence structure; 3) preserve the meaning of the original text - Still use the author and page number in parentheses right after your paraphrase. The rest of the information will be in your Works Cited page.

How to embed a direct quotation:

1) **Examples of Setting off Quotations** (Set-off quotations are set off from the sentence with a comma. Capitalize the first word of the quote. Notice the signal phrases (in bold print) used in the following examples.)

   • As Jane Smith **explains**, "A duck's quack doesn't echo" (Smith 45).
   • "Cheese is the most stolen food in the world," **according** to Jane Smith (Smith 67).
   • In the article, Jane Smith **writes,** "Snails can sleep for three years without eating" (Smith 84).
   • "Dolphins," as Jane Smith **notes**, "have highly developed emotion centers in their brains" (Smith 87).

2) **Examples of Building In Quotations** (Built-in quotations are built seamlessly in to a sentence. They are not set off with commas and usually use the word "that" along with a signal phrase. Do not capitalize the first word of these quotes.)

   • In the interest of animal sleeping habits, Jane Smith **proposes** that "dolphins sleep with one eye open."

• Jane Smith **points out**, in her article about the sun, that "only 55% of all Americans know that the sun is a star."

3) **Examples of Introducing Quotes with a Colon** (The signal is a complete sentence that goes before the colon. The sentence provides some information about the quotation to introduce it. The quotation follows the colon, and the first word in the quotation is capitalized.)

    • In her book about pets, Jane Smith **discusses** the benefits of owning a dog: "Dog owners are less likely to suffer from depression and have lower levels of stress than people who do not own dogs."
    • Jane Smith **argues** that there are many good reasons for consuming dark chocolate: "Dark chocolate contains antioxidants, lowers blood pressure, and is high in vitamins and minerals."

Did you notice…

- Signal words or phrases that set off the quote? Here are key words to use before you embed a quote:

according to		discusses	states		argues	claims	proposes
writes	explains	points out		notes	says		demonstrates

- The punctuation and capitalization in the examples?
- The quote was introduced first (give the context, situation, or speaker)?

How to create a Word Cited Page

What is a list of Works Cited? (also known as a Bibliography)

- A list of <u>all </u>the sources you consulted while writing your essay or report
- It includes all the resources you quoted, summarized, or paraphrased
- The Works Cited is always the last page of your assignment
- Depending on your subject teacher your Works Cited list will be either MLA or APA format (ask your teacher what they prefer); however, MLA style widely used in English and the Humanities.

How do I format my list of Works Cited?

- Centre the title (Works Cited) at the top of the page and leave a double space before your first citation
- List citations in alphabetical order by author's last name
- For works without a given author, use the title in alphabetical order (except if it starts with The, A, An)
- Citations are not numbered or bulleted
- Each citation begins at the left margin; the second and following lines are indented (press tab key on your computer to indent)
- Double space between citations

How do I format each citation?

- As a general rule, titles of books, magazines, newspapers, encyclopaedias and websites are *italicized*
- If your citations are hand-written, use <u>underlining </u>in place or italics
- Titles of poems, magazine articles, songs, and encyclopedia articles are in "quotation marks"

Guess what? You can get extra help with formatting citations by going to www.easybib.com (this will create a citation for you) OR https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/ (this will show you MLA and APA styles)

Title centered at top of page

Works Cited

First line of each citation begins at margin

"Addictive nature of chocolate among women." Medical News TODAY. 18 Jul. 2005. Medical
News TODAY. Web. 7 Nov. 2006. http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/release/27571.php

Single-spacing within citations

Few, Martha. "Chocolate, Sex, and Disorderly Women in Late-Seventeenth- and Early-
Eighteenth-Century Guatemala." Ethnohistory 52.4 (2005): 673-678. Academic Search
Premier. Web. 7 November 2006

Fukuyama, Francis. Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution.

Second and all subsequent lines indented 5 spaces

New York: Farrar, 2002. Print.

Double-spacing between citations

"MLA Style Page Format." MLA Style Page Format. N.p., 20 Aug. 1998. Web. 03 Nov. 2015,
http://www.csus.edu/owl/index/mla/mla_format.htm.

Citations listed in alphabetical order by author's last name or by first significant word in the title (ignoring a/an/the) when author's name is not available

No bullets, no numbers!