Lyons Central School

Standard Format for Research Papers

(Based on the MLA Format)
Revised, Summer of 2001

You will be required by many of your teachers to write research papers. The purpose of this task is for you to be able to:

> select a specific topic and study it in depth

> gather information on that particular subject

> verify (prove the truth of) the information, using different sources

> organize that information in a logical way

> form conclusions based on your research

> communicate that information, clearly, in a written document

Because research is not original writing – it is a collection of other authors' facts and findings – it is important to give credit to each author. It is essential in good communication that a standard system is used. Although there are many different formats for writing a research paper the Lyons School District has chosen to follow the MLA (Modern Language Association of America) format. Please note that this is an overview of the MLA style. The entire MLA Handbook is available in the school library.

GENERAL FORMAT INSTRUCTIONS

PAPER

Type the manuscript on one side of a standard-sized
(8 ½ inch x 11 inch) heavy white bond paper. All pages of one
manuscript must be the same size. Do not use half sheets or strips of
paper glued, taped, or stapled to the pages.

TYPE FONT & SIZE (also called Style, Element, Face)

- For general purposes the size of the font should be 12 point.
- Use a standard type font, such as Times New Roman.
- Do not use italicized fonts or decorative fonts.

Acceptable Fonts	Unacceptable Fonts
Times New Roman (12 point)	✝✠✡✢✣✤✥ ✦✧ ▫▪✦ (Wingdings, 12 point)
Arial (12 point)	**Wide Latin** (12 point)
Century School Book (12 point)	Curlz (12 point)
Garamond (12 point)	Σψμβολ, 12 ποιντ (Symbol, 12 point)

BINDING

A paper is written to be evaluated by the teacher. Using a plastic
cover, staples, or pins may be neat, but they are actually in the way.
The best thing to use is a paper clip, or to insert the entire paper in a
plastic sheet protector.

DOUBLE-SPACING

The research paper must be double-spaced throughout, including quotations, notes, and the list of works cited.

MARGINS

Use one inch margins on the top, bottom, left, and right.

PAGE NUMBERING

Number all pages consecutively throughout the manuscript in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top. The title page does not have a number.

ORDER OF MANUSCRIPT

<u>The Usual Order of the Manuscript is as Follows:</u>
- ➤ Title Page
- ➤ Text
- ➤ Works Cited

<u>For More Advanced Manuscripts:</u>
- ➤ Title Page
- ➤ *(Some teachers may require an outline)
- ➤ Text
- ➤ Works Cited
- ➤ Appendixes
- ➤ Tables, Charts, Graphs

TITLE PAGE

➤ The title page should:
- be in the same font and size as the text of the paper
- be double spaced
- be centered left to right (center justification)

➤ The title page should include the following elements:
- Title of Research Paper
- Author's Name
- Teacher's Name
- Course Identification (Name of Course)
- Date Submitted

QUOTATIONS AND USE OF PARENTHETIC NOTATION

(Parenthetic notation means putting the material in parenthesis)

Since a research paper relies heavily on collecting information already written, credit **MUST** be given to the original author. You must document (give credit) in two circumstances:
- ➤ when a work, or part of a work is quoted directly
- ➤ when the writer of a research paper relies very heavily on the content of another author's work

Information that is "common knowledge" does not have to be documented.

Common knowledge includes:

- ➤ Information found in multiple sources

- ➤ Certified dates in history and basic information about the historic event
  EXAMPLES:

  > You would **NOT** have to document that the attack on Pearl Harbor was on December 7, 1941, or that the battleship Arizona took a torpedo down the smokestack and sunk.

  > You **WOULD** have to document specific information on the type of bomb, a particular individual killed, or other specific information.

QUOTATIONS & PARENTHETIC NOTATION (continued)

In the MLA Style, parenthetic notation is used within the text to give documentation to the original author. (Author's Last Name, page number)

    Example:

        (Miller, 234)

Note: If an author is not listed in the source citation, give the first few words of the title or the source title.

    Example:

        An article found in Time magazine is "How to Create an Environment for Healthy Air":

        ("...Healthy Air," 13)

           or

        (Time, 13)

The following information on quotations comes from <u>MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers</u>, fifth edition, by Joseph Gibaldi, published by The Modern Language Association of America in New York , 1999.

USE AND ACCURACY OF QUOATIONS

Quotations are effective in research papers when used selectively. Quote only words, phrases, lines, and passages that are particularly interesting, vivid, unusual, or apt, and keep all quotations as brief as possible. Overquotation can bore your readers and might lead them to conclude that you are neither an original thinker nor a skillful writer.

The accuracy of quotations in research writing is extremely important. They must reproduce the original sources exactly. Changes must not be made in spelling, capitalization, or interior punctuation of the source. You must construct a clear, grammatically correct sentence that allows you to introduce or incorporate a quotation with complete accuracy. Alternatively, you may paraphrase the original and quote only fragments, which may be easier to integrate into the text. If you change a quotation in any way, make the alteration clear to the reader, following the rules and recommendations in the Handbook.

PROSE

If a prose quotation runs no more than four lines and requires no special emphasis, put it in quotation marks and incorporate it into the text.

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, " wrote Charles Dickens of the

eighteenth century.

You need not always reproduce complete sentences. Sometimes you may want to quote just a word or phrase as part of your sentence.

For Charles Dickens the eighteenth century was both "the best of times" and "the

worst of times."

QUOTATIONS & PARENTHETIC NOTATION (continued)

If a quotation ending a sentence requires a parenthetical reference, place the sentence period after the reference.

For Charles Dickens the eighteenth century was both "the best of times" and "the

worst of times" (35).

If a quotation runs more than four lines in your paper, set it off from your text by beginning a new line, indenting one inch (or one tab) from the left margin, and typing it double-spaced, without adding quotation marks. A colon generally introduces a quotation displayed in this way, though sometimes the context may require a different mark of punctuation or not at all. If you quote only a single paragraph or part of one, do not indent the first line more than the rest. A parenthetical reference to a prose quotation set off from the text follows the last line of the quotation.

At the conclusion of <u>Lord of the Flies</u>, Ralph and the other boys realize the horror of their

actions:

> The tears began to flow and sobs shook him. He gave himself up to them now for the
>
> first time on the island; great, shuddering spasms of grief that seemed to wrench his
>
> whole body. His voice rose under the black smoke before the burning wreckage of the
>
> island; and infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake and sob too.
>
> (186).

OTHER

For parenthetic notations of other genres, including poetry, drama, ellipsis, and other literature, refer to the MLA Handbook.

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NUMBERS

The information that follows once again is quoted from the MLA Handbook.

ARABIC NUMERALS

Although there are still a few well-established uses for roman numerals, virtually all numbers not spelled out are commonly represented by arabic numerals. (1,2,etc)

USE OF WORDS OR NUMERALS

The general rule states: numbers from one to nine are written out as whole numbers.

Examples: There are three reasons for the beginning of the War Between the States.

A dozen consists of 12 items.

If you are writing about literature or another subject that involves infrequent use of numbers, you may spell out numbers written in one or two words and represent other numbers by numerals (one, thirty-six, ninety-nine, one hundred, fifteen hundred, two thousand, three million, but $2\frac{1}{2}$, 101, 137, 1,275). To form the plural of a spelled-out number, treat the word like an ordinary noun (sixes, sevens).

If your project is one that calls for frequent use of numbers – say, a paper on a scientific subject or a study of statistical findings – use numerals for all numbers that precede technical units of measurement (16 amperes, 5 milliliters). In such a project, also use numerals for numbers that are presented together and that refer to similar things, such as in comparisons or reports of experimental data. Spell out other numbers if they can be written in one or two words. In the following example of statistical writing, neither "ten years" nor "six-state region" is presented with related figures, so the numbers are spelled out, unlike the other numbers in the sentence.

USE OF WORDS OR NUMERALS (continued)

In the ten years covered by the study, the number of participating institutions in the United States

doubled, reaching 90, and the membership in the six-state region rose from 4 to 15.

But do not begin a sentence with a numeral.
Nineteen ninety-two began with several good omens.

Except at the beginning of a sentence, always use numerals in the following instances:

With Abbreviations or Symbols
6 lbs.	4:20 p.m.	3%	4¢
8 KB	$9	2"	

In Addresses
4401 13th Avenue

In Dates
(Note: be consistent in writing dates; select one format and stick to it.)
1 April 2001
April 1, 2001

Spell out centuries in lowercase letters.
the twentieth century

Hyphenate centuries when they are used as adjectives before nouns
eighteenth-century thought
nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature

Decades are usually written out without capitalization
The nineties

USE OF WORDS OR NUMERALS (continued)

In Dates

But, it is acceptable to express them in figures (whichever form you use, be consistent)

The 1990s, the '60s

The abbreviation BC follows the year, but AD precedes it

19 BC
AD 565

In Decimal Fractions

8.3

In Page References

page 7

For large numbers, you may use a combination of numerals and words.

4.5 million

Express related numbers in the same style

Only 5 of the 250 delegates
Exactly 3 automobiles and 129 trucks

Commas in Numbers

Commas are usually placed between the third and fourth digits from the right, the sixth and seventh, and so on.

1,000
20,000
7,654,321

Following are some of the exceptions to this practice:

Page and Line Numbers

On page 1014

USE OF WORDS OR NUMERALS (continued)

Addresses
At 4132 Broadway

Four-Digit Year Numbers
In 1999

But commas are added in year numbers of five or more figures:
In 20,000 BC

Percentages and Amounts of Money

Treat percentages and amounts of money like other numbers: use numerals with the appropriate symbols.

1%	$5.35	76¢
45%	$35	
100%	$2,000	

Text

It is expected that the text of a research paper follows the accepted and correct rules of grammar and usage. This applies to abbreviation, numeration, capitalization, citation, and punctuation. If necessary, refer to the MLA Handbook and/or English grammar texts.

Titles

When using the title of another work in the text of the paper it is important to indicate that it is a title.

The following titles are <u>underlines</u> in the text:
(NOTE: if using a word processor, any title that is underlined should be italicized.

        books
        plays
        long poems published as a book (epic poems)
        pamphlets
        newspaper titles
        magazine titles
        films (movies)
        television programs
        record albums (CDs, tapes, etc)
        ballets
        operas
        instrumental musical compositions identified by name
        paintings
        sculptures
        ships
        aircraft

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> books
> plays
> long poems published as a book (epic poems)
> pamphlets
> newspaper titles
> magazine titles
> films (movies)
> television programs
> record albums (CDs, tapes, etc)
> ballets
> operas
> instrumental musical compositions identified by name
> paintings
> sculptures
> ships
> aircraft

Titles (continued)

The following titles are put in "quotation marks" in the text"

> newspaper articles
> magazine articles
> encyclopedia articles
> essays in a book
> short stories
> poems
> songs
> chapters in a book
> television episodes
> lectures

PLAGIARISM

You may have heard the word plagiarism used in relation to lawsuits in the publishing and recording industries. You may also have had classroom discussions about academic plagiarism. Plagiarism is the act of using another person's ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source. The word comes from the Latin word plagiarius ("kidnapper"), and Alexander Lindey defines it as "the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person's mind, and presenting it as one's own" (Lindey, 2). In short, to plagiarize is to give the impression that you have written or thought something that you have in fact borrowed from someone else.

Plagiarism in student writing is often unintentional, as when an elementary school pupil, assigned to do a report on a certain topic, goes home and copies down, word for word, everything on the subject in an encyclopedia. Unfortunately, some students continue to use such "research methods" in high school and even in college without realizing that these practices constitute plagiarism. You may certainly use other persons' words and thoughts in your research paper, but you must acknowledge the authors.

Plagiarism often carries severe penalties, ranging from failure in a course to expulsion from school.

The most blatant form of plagiarism is to repeat as your own someone else's sentences, more or less verbatim (Gibaldi, 21-22).

BIBLIOGRAPHIES OR WORKS CITED

When writing a research paper you **MUST** include a list of all of the sources you used for any information. The information given below is taken from the MLA Handbook.

HOW TO DO THE "WORKS CITED" SECTION

> The list of "Works Cited" appears at the end of the paper.

> Begin the list on a new page and number each page, continuing the page numbers of the text.

> Type the page number in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top (just like the text itself).

> Center the title "Works Cited" 1" from the top of the page.

> Double-space between the title and the first entry.

> Begin each entry flush (even, at) the left margin, and if it runs more than one line, indent the subsequent line or lines five spaces from the left margin.

> Double-space the entire list, both between and within entries.

> Continue the list on as many pages as necessary

> Arrange "Works Cited" alphabetically, using the letter-by-letter system

BIBLIOGRAPHIES OR WORKS CITED
(continued)

Each citation entry has three main divisions
- Author
- Title
- Publication Information

Each division is followed by a period and two spaces

The following is a partial list of sample citations. Refer to the MLA Handbook for more specific examples.

Each sample citation is labeled as to the genre, and then divided into three parts

- Genre

- Information needed for the citation

- A sample citation

- A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text

Genre – BOOK BY A SINGLE AUTHOR OR EDITOR

Information needed for the citation
Author or Editor's Name. <u>Title of Book</u>. Place of Publication: Publisher, Copyright Date.

A sample citation
Cotterell, Arthur. <u>Ancient China</u>. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994.

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text
(Cotterell 342)

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Genre – BOOK BY TWO OR MORE AUTHORS OR EDITORS

Information needed for the citation
Authors' or Editors' Names. <u>Title of Book</u>. Place of Publication: Publisher, Copyright Date.

A sample citation
Golenback, Peter and Greg Fielden, eds. <u>The Stock Car Racing Encyclopedia</u>. New York:

    Macmillan, 1997.

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text
(Golenback 127)

****

Genre – A BOOK BY A CORPORATE AUTHOR

Information needed for the citation
Corporation Name. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Copyright Date.

A sample citation
Time-Life Books. The Spanish West. Alexandria: Time-Life, 1976.

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text
(Time-Life 76)

****

Genre – A WORK IN AN ANTHOLOGY

Information needed for the citation
Author of Work. "Title of Work." Author of Anthology. Title of Anthology.   Place of

Publication: Publisher, Copyright Date. Page Reference.

A sample citation
Mullen, Harryette. "She Landed on the Moon." Kevin Young. Giant Steps. New York: Harper

Collins, 2000. 144.

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text
(Mullen 144)

****

Genre – ENCYCLOPEDIA ENTRY WITH A SIGNED ARTICLE

Information needed for the citation
Author. "Article Title." <u>Encyclopedia Name</u> copyright.

A sample citation
Watt, Ward B. "Insects." <u>World Book Encyclopedia</u> 1999 ed.

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text
(Ward 432)

****

Genre – ENCYCLOPEDIA ENTRY WITH AN UNSIGNED ARTICLE

Information needed for the citation
"Article Title." <u>Encyclopedia Name</u> copyright.

A sample citation
"Great Smoky Mountains." <u>Academic American Encyclopedia</u> 1998 ed.

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text
(Smoky Mountains 54)

****

Genre – MAGAZINE ENTRY WITH A SIGNED ARTICLE

Information needed for the citation
Author's Name. "Article Title." <u>Magazine Name</u>. Publication Date: page number(s)

A sample citation
Raloff, Janet. "Endangered Condors Lay First Eggs in Wild." <u>Science News</u>. 9 June 2001:

357.

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text
(Raloff 357)

****

Genre – MAGAZINE ENTRY WITH AN UNSIGNED ARTICLE

Information needed for the citation
"Article Title." <u>Magazine Name</u>. Publication Date: page number(s)

A sample citation
"Science Breakthroughs in the Twenty-First Century." <u>American Scientific Journal</u>. September

2000: 43.

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text
(Science Breakthroughs 43)

****

Genre – ARTICLE IN A NEWSPAPER

Information needed for the citation
Author's Name. "Article Title." <u>Newspaper Name</u>. Publication Date: page number(s). Section.

A sample citation
Wheeler, Carrie. "Varick Extends CAFO Ban." <u>Finger Lakes Times</u>. 20 June 2001, A1.
(note: A1 means Section A, Page 1)

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text
(Wheeler A1)

****

Genre – PAMPHLET

Use the same format as a Book

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ELECTRONIC WORKS CITED
ONLINE DATABASE (ex., SIRS, EBSCO, GALE GROUP, etc.)

Information needed for the citation
Author's Name. "Title of Work." <u>Original Source of Article</u>. Publication Date: page number(s).

    <u>Specific Part of Database</u>. Database Name. Name of Library with Subscription, Town.

    Download Date <http address>

A sample citation
Graves, Sr., Earl G. "Stop the Guns." <u>Black Enterprise</u>. 15 May 2001: 12. <u>MAS Online Plus</u>.

    EBSCO. Lyons Jr-Sr HS Lib., Lyons. 25 June 2001<<u>http://search.epnet.com/login.asp</u>.>

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text

(Graves 12)

ELECTRONIC WORKS CITED
ONLINE ENCYCLOPEDIA

Information needed for the citation
"Topic." <u>Name of Online Encyclopedia</u>. Copyright date. Publishing Company. Download date

    <http address>

A sample citation
"Nikki Giovanni." <u>Grolier Online</u>. 2001. Grolier Incorporated. 6 June 2001

    <u><http://go. Grolier.com</u>.>

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text
(Giovanni – Grolier 5)

****

ELECTRONIC WORKS CITED
BASIC INTERNET SEARCH

Information needed for the citation
"Title of Work." Copyright Date. Publishing Company. Download Date <http address>.

A sample citation
"Nikki Giovanni." 2001. About.com, Inc. 25 June 2001

    <u><http://womenwriters.about.com/arts/womenswriters/library/blngiovannipoems.htm</u>.>

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text
(Giovanni – About 3)

****

Genre – TELEVISION/RADIO PROGRAM

Information needed for the citation

"Topic Title." <u>Title of Program</u>. Title of Series (if available). Name of Network. Call letters (if

available), and city of local station. Broadcast date.

A sample citation

"Frederick Douglass." <u>Civil War Journal</u>. Arts and Entertainment Network. 6 April 2001.

"Yes...but Is It Art?" <u>Sixty Minutes</u>. CBS. WCBS, New York. 19 September 1993.

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text

(Douglass)

****

Genre – TELEVISION AND ONLINE INTERVIEWS

Information needed for the citation

Person being interviewed. Title of interview. TV Program or online source. Date. If internet,

the URL Address

A sample citation

<u>Example of TV Interview</u>
Blackmun, Harry. Interview with Ted Koppel and Nina Totenberg. <u>Nightline</u>. ABC. WABC,

New York. 5 April 1994.

<u>Example of Online Interview</u>
Smith, Jon. Online Interview (all experts). 10 Dec. 2000. <http://www.....etc>

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text

<u>Example of TV Interview</u>
(Blackmun)

<u>Example of Online Interview</u>
(Smith)

Genre – PERSONAL INTERVIEW

Information needed for the citation

Person being interviewed. Personal Interview. 10 May 2001.

A sample citation

Smith, Jon. Personal Interview. 10 May 2001.

Smith, Jon, Telephone Interview. 10 May 2001.

Smith, Jon. E-Mail Interview. 10 May 2001.

A sample of the parenthetic notation to be used in the text

(Smith)