



CONCORD HIGH SCHOOL

WRITING HANDBOOK

Concord High School Writing Handbook

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The Concord High School Writing Handbook was written and edited by teachers at CHS, adapted from the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 5th ed.*, by Joseph Gibaldi. The handbook was first developed in 2009 and is not for sale.

The Basics of Essay Writing

What Makes for an Effective Introduction?

Hook: A “hook” or “lead in” should grab the reader’s attention and focus, implicitly, on the theme of the essay, foreshadowing the thesis statement. It should do so in one or two sentences. A “hook” is commonly done in a number of ways:

- Relates a quotation (from a book, a statistical figure, etc.) on the essay’s topic
- Shares a personal anecdote that relates directly to an essay’s topic
- Informs the reader by giving information that relates directly to an essay’s topic
- Appeals to a universal experience; this must relate directly to the essay’s topic

Title/Author Statement: The purpose of this component of an introductory paragraph is to give some essential background and context. When writing about literature, it typically requires mentioning, in one or two sentences, the piece being analyzed, along with its author, setting, and protagonist. It can also explicitly touch upon a work’s conflict or theme – as long as it directly relates to the thesis. Besides giving background and context, this statement should lead the reader logically from the “hook” to the thesis statement.

Thesis Statement: The purpose of a thesis statement is for the writer to convey the opinion or argument that they will prove in the essay. A good definition would be “an opinion or argument that is proven with evidence.” It is a broad statement that will later be supported with a great deal of evidence. The thesis statement is typically, although it does not have to be, written in a single sentence. It can be likened to a “roadmap” since it gives the “traveling” reader an indication of where they are going and how they will get there...the body paragraphs.

What Makes for an Effective Body Paragraph?

The purpose of each of the body paragraphs is to explain and prove your thesis statement. Each of your body paragraphs should be limited to one main idea and must include evidence (details, examples, quotations, etc.), and analysis.

To help you remember what to include in, and how to structure, your body paragraphs, think of these acronyms: **T.E.A.** and **I.C.E.**

Topic Sentence: The main idea of each body paragraph; what the paragraph will be about. Everything in the body paragraph must relate to and explain the topic sentence.

Evidence: When writing about literature, this will typically be quotations from the work. In other types of essays, the evidence may take the form of details, examples, statistics and other specific information that relates to your topic sentence and proves your thesis statement.

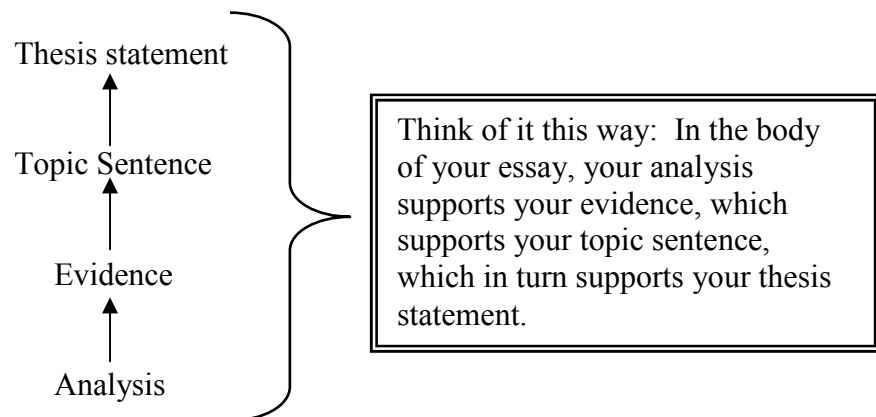
Be sure to **I.C.E.** all Evidence.

Introduce the Evidence: Evidence cannot appear without introduction. Give the context for your evidence, but avoid excessive summary.

Cite all Evidence: Where did you find this evidence in the text? Use proper parenthetical documentation (see *Parenthetical*).

Explain all Evidence: Assume the reader knows nothing about your topic. It is the writer's job to ensure the evidence presented is clear to the reader.

Analysis: Why is your evidence significant? How does it relate to and prove your topic sentence and your thesis? This part is all you! It is where you get to tell the reader what you think about your topic. Your job, in an essay, is to make the implicit explicit; you do so in your analysis.



End each body paragraph with a concluding sentence, or transition sentence, which sums up the body paragraph and leads into the next topic sentence.

What Makes For An Effective Conclusion?

Writing a truly effective conclusion is perhaps the most challenging task in your essay. What makes it challenging is that, unlike the introduction and body paragraphs, there is no real formula to follow. Maybe it would help to first identify some common flaws of conclusions. **Do not only summarize / paraphrase the entire essay or simply restate the thesis/main ideas.** That being said, here are some suggestions for an effective conclusion:

- The conclusion is your final opportunity to make your most important opinions clear
- The conclusion should all be commentary, which means it is all your thoughts. Drive home why your topic is interesting/important
- Use the conclusion to go beyond the text and show the universal nature of your topic
- End the conclusion with a sentence or statement that rephrases the thesis statement in a way that gives a finished feel to the essay

Some Do's and Do Not's of Formal Writing

Do Write in Present Tense for Literary Analysis

Present tense is used when writing as if something is currently happening. You can remember to write about literature in the present tense because you are currently reading or thinking about it. Every time you open a book it seems as though the events are currently happening. So, the rule is talk about a text in present tense but if you shift focus to talking about history, or something in the text's past, you may need to use past tense for this part. Remember to go back to present tense as soon as you are talking about the text again. While using present tense is proper for literary analysis, remember that for other essays, such as research essays, the past tense is the proper tense to use.

Example:

At the end of the novel *Of Mice and Men*, Lennie **sees** an enormous rabbit that chastises him, making him think of George.

Do Use Formal Diction

Diction is a writer's choice of words, phrases, sentence structures, and figurative language. Formal diction uses proper English (not slang), proper grammar and academic vocabulary, is impersonal, and often has a more intelligent tone than common speech.

Do Select Relevant Quotations

Quotations are evidence meant to prove your topic/thesis. Therefore, a quotation that does not connect to the topic / thesis, or aid the essay in any way, is not relevant and should not be used. Do not quote to summarize; use quotations that can be analyzed to prove your thesis.

Do Provide Relevant Context for Evidence

All evidence, such as quotes, needs to be properly introduced using information providing the necessary background to fully understand and appreciate the significance of the evidence, helping to further prove the topic.

Do Use Transitional Words or Phrases for Clarity

Transitional words include: however, although, therefore, for example, consequently, additionally, etc. These words improve clarity because they help the reader to follow your logical line of reasoning.

Do Include Proper Subject-Verb Agreement

Subject-Verb agreement means that the subject and verb agree in number; if the subject is singular the verb is singular, if subject is plural the verb is plural.

Do Include Verb Tense Agreement

When you write an essay, the verbs you use should be in the same tense (typically present tense), especially within a given sentence. Moving between tenses is confusing. In the example below, the verb "twisted" is the only verb that appears in the past tense. It should appear in the present tense, "twists," or the other verbs should be changed to the past tense as well.

Example:

Mrs. Mallory sees her returning son and, in her excitement, **twisted** her ankle rather badly. Her sister calls the doctor immediately.

Do Proofread Your Work

Proofreading is extremely important for writing a quality essay. Do not rely on spell checkers and grammar checkers available on the computer. Suggestions: Read your essay aloud to yourself and to another person. Write a draft of the essay ahead of time, put it aside for a day or two and then give it another look for mistakes and whether it still makes sense.

Do Not Refer to Yourself in Literary Analysis Essays

In Literary Analysis essays, stating "I" is stating the obvious because the reader knows you are the one writing the essay, therefore it is your opinion. In Literary Analysis essays you should avoid similar pronouns, such as "we," "us," "you," even "the reader." In other types of essays, such as persuasive and reflective essays, it may be appropriate to use "I," although it should not be done too often.

Do Not State the Obvious

This is obvious. Just in case it is not, your essay should be filled with insights. Although it is your job to be explicit about your topic, do not insult your reader by stating the obvious.

Do Not Use Contractions

Contractions are not considered part of formal diction, they are slang. Common contractions to avoid: I'm, don't, won't, didn't, can't, shouldn't, wouldn't, etc.

Do Not Repeat Yourself Needlessly

Do not keep making the same point over and over. Once something is explained thoroughly there is no reason to state the point again. A portion of your conclusion, as noted earlier, may be used to wrap up the thoughts of the essay, such as restating the main ideas of the essay in different words, but this should be done as little as possible.

Other Common Grammar and Usage Mistakes

Mistaking its and it's

Wrong: That pillow has lost **it's** stuffing.
Right: That pillow has lost **its** stuffing.
Because: "Its" is used to indicate possession.

Wrong: **Its** raining outside.
Right: **It's** raining outside.
Because: "It's" is a contraction of "it is."

Mistaking your and you're

Wrong: **Your** very intelligent.
Right: **You're** very intelligent.
Because: "You're" is a contraction for "you are."

Wrong: **You're** mother is calling you.
Right: **Your** mother is calling you.
Because: "Your" is used to indicate possession.

Mistaking their and there and they're

Wrong: **Their** is a place where **there** always able to do **they're** work.
Right: **There** is a place where **they're** always able to do **their** work.
Because: "Their" is used to indicate possession; "there" is used to indicate a location; "they're" is a contraction for "they are."

Mistaking then and than

Wrong: I like that picture more **then** the other.
Right: I like that picture more **than** the other.
Because: "Than" is used for comparisons.

Wrong: I did my homework and **than** I went to sleep.
Right: I did my homework and **then** I went to sleep.
Because: "Then" is used to talk about time.

Mistaking good and well

Wrong: I did **good** on the test.
Right: I did **well** on the test.
Because: "Well" is an adverb; "good" is an adjective.

Mistaking to and too

Wrong: That car is **to** expensive for me, so I will go **too** a used dealer.
Right: That car is **too** expensive for me, so I will go **to** a used dealer.
Because: “To” is a preposition; “too” is used to mean “also” or “too much.”

Mistaking could of and could have

Wrong: I **could of** given it to you, but you were out of town.
Right: I **could have** given it to you, but you were out of town.
Because: They sound similar, but “of” is a preposition and “have” is a helping verb.

Mistaking me and I

Wrong: **Me** and Chris went to the mall.
Right: Chris and **I** went to the mall.
Because: “I” must be used as a “subject;” “me” must be used as an object.

Mistaking affect and effect

Wrong: How will the election **effect** the course of history? We will see the **affects**.
Right: How will the election **affect** the course of history? We will see the **effects**.
Because: “Affect” is typically used as a verb. “Effect” is typically used as a noun.

Mistaking who and whom

Wrong: For **who** should I vote for?
Right: For **whom** should I vote for?
Because: “Whom” is used for an object; “who” is used for a subject.

Do Not Forget a “comma” After an Introductory Phrase

Wrong: **To tell the truth** I have never liked the Giants.
Right: **To tell the truth,** I have never liked the Giants.
Because: Always add a comma after a phrase that introduces a sentence.

Do Not Use Pronouns Without Clear Antecedents

Wrong: Transmitting radio signals by satellite is a way of overcoming the problem of scarce airwaves and limiting how **they** are used.
Right: Transmitting radio signals by satellite is a way of overcoming the problem of scarce airwaves and limiting how **the airways** are used.
Because: Which was being used, the signals or the airwaves? The pronoun must be clear.

The Basics of MLA Formatting

The information below is the requirements for Concord High School students, as specified by the Modern Language Association (MLA). When writing any essay, use these guidelines for formatting (see Appendix “Example Title Page”):

Type Settings

- 12 pt. font size
- Helvetica, Arial, or Times (choose a plain font style that is easy to read)
- Always type a formal paper (unless your teacher has given permission to hand write it)

Paper

- 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper
- Black ink only
- Print on only one side of the paper

Spacing

- Double space entire essay including the heading, quotes, notes and Works Cited page
- For punctuation: 1 or 2 spaces after colons, commas, periods, question marks and exclamation points

Margins

- Include 1” margins at the TOP, BOTTOM and on BOTH SIDES of the text
- Indent the beginning of each paragraph ½” from the left margin (typically, the Tab setting)
- Indent all quotations that take up more than four lines **in your essay**, and all poetry quotations that are more than three lines **in the original poem**, 1” inch from the left margin (typically, the Tab button twice). This is called a block quote (see *Quotations*).

Page Numbering

- The page number and your last name should appear ½” down in the top right hand corner of every page (use the Header and Footer tab under “View”).
- The title page is page 1.
- Outlines do not need page numbers

Title Page

- The title page is just the first page of your essay; it is not a separate piece of paper.
- Include your name, your teacher’s name, the name of the class and the date in the top left hand corner, exactly 1” from the top of the paper
- Your name and the page number should appear in the top right hand corner exactly ½ in” from the top of the paper
- The title is centered, 12 pt. font and is not in quotation marks, bold or italicized

Stapling

- Upper left-hand corner only

The Basics of Plagiarism

What Is It?

Plagiarism is, essentially, a form of theft. In this case it is intellectual theft and, while there may be consequences in school and in life, the greatest reason not to plagiarize is because it is dishonest. As stated in the MLA handbook, “To use another person’s ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source is to plagiarize” (Gibaldi 30). There was a time in elementary school, and unfortunately it may have continued to today, where you were told that if you paraphrased from your source you were not committing plagiarism. So as you wrote your state report in the 5th grade, you got your information from the encyclopedia and just “put it in your own words.” While it did not matter in elementary school, you actually were plagiarizing and today, in high school and beyond, it would matter. Again, the MLA handbook puts it this way, “Forms of plagiarism include the failure to give appropriate acknowledgement when repeating another’s wording or particularly apt phrase, when paraphrasing another’s argument, or when presenting another’s line of thinking” (Gibaldi 30). So then, how do you avoid it?

When to Cite / When Not to Cite

For some time now you have known that you had to cite, or reference, direct quotes. When you copy a source word for word you put it in quotation marks and cite where it came from (see *Parenthetical*). But when you paraphrase or summarize, you are indirectly quoting from that source. Even though the indirect quote does not go inside of quotation marks, you still need to cite where it came from. As a general rule, if the ideas and information did not come from you, then you must cite the source. When assigning a research essay, your teacher assumes you are learning about a subject and that your knowledge comes from somewhere else. That is what is expected, so just cite where you found the information. In fact, it is to your benefit to cite so that your teacher can tell the difference between your thoughts and someone else’s.

But do you need to cite everything? No. Again, from the MLA handbook, “You rarely need to give sources for familiar proverbs [sayings]...well-known quotations...and common knowledge” (Gibaldi 33). So let’s say you are giving the date of the Declaration of Independence. Would you have to cite the date? No, that is common knowledge. Now if you read a scholar’s ideas about that date and put it into your own words, would you need to cite your source? Yes, because the ideas did not come from you. Remember, you can plagiarize more than just someone’s words; you can also plagiarize ideas, arguments, or thinking. If you are unsure of whether or not you might be committing plagiarism, just cite your source. You can never be accused of plagiarism by citing too much, but you can if you do not cite enough.

Consequences at CHS and Beyond

CHS: 1st offence – “F” on assignment / parent notification / 45 day activity suspension.

2nd offence – “F” on assignment. Parent conference / 3 day suspension.

3rd offence – “F” on assignment. 5 day suspension.

Beyond: In college, plagiarism can range from an “F” on the assignment, to an “F” in the class, to expulsion from the college.

The Basics of Quotation

When to Quote, Paraphrase and Summarize

The primary reason to quote is to prove your topic/thesis. It also lends authority and credibility to your essay. It is especially important to use direct quotations, instead of indirect quotations, such as summary or paraphrase, when the original author's word choice is particularly unique and appropriate. You do not need to quote an entire sentence. In fact, it is preferable to quote just the most important words or phrases. If what you quote is not a complete sentence, do not capitalize the first letter of the quote. If what you quote is a complete sentence, then you should capitalize the first letter of the quote.

Whether quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing it is important to properly introduce the idea with context (see I.C.E.) When using direct quotes, you also want to avoid jolting the reader with quotations that feel thrown in. Try to make your writing smooth so it flows coherently from your own writing to your quotation. Depending on the circumstances, you might choose to introduce your quote using different types of punctuation.

Punctuation and Style

When quoting, it is best to use a variety of punctuation and style to avoid sounding mechanical. Feel free to place your quotes at the beginning, middle or end of a sentence as long as it does not make the sentence hard to read.

Using a Comma

The most common way to punctuate a quote is to use a comma. A comma comes before a quotation when you use an introductory phrase to introduce the quote and/or when you are only quoting a portion of a sentence. One way to sound academic when introducing a quotation is to include the author's name.

Example:

Steinbeck says, "The place was lifeless," suggesting a somber setting (2).

Using a Colon

A colon comes before a quotation only when you have used a complete sentence to introduce the quote and only when quoting a complete sentence. A colon is also used before a block quote. This type of quoting makes the quote feel separate from your writing. It is effective, at times, but should not be used too often.

Example:

Romeo is dissatisfied with the leniency of Prince Escalus' punishment: "Be merciful, say 'death'; / For exile hath more terror in his look, / Much more than death" (III.iii.12-14).

No Punctuation Needed / Embedded Quotations

The best way to include direct quotes into an essay is when no punctuation is needed. When your sentence blends logically with a portion of a quotation, you may not need any punctuation besides the quotation mark. This is the smoothest, therefore the most preferable.

Example:

According to Scieszka, boys do not read as much as girls because they “often have to read books they don’t really like” (Jacobs 27).

Do Not Include Stand Alone Quotations

Regardless of whether you use a comma, a colon, or an embedded quote, a quote must never stand alone. You must include your own words, context, within the sentence with the quote. Even if it is a simple introductory phrase (“He says”), you must include your words. A quote cannot be its own sentence. Below is an example of **what not** to do.

Example:

Lennie has a bad memory. “I tried not to forget. Honest to God I did, George” (Steinbeck 4).

Quoting Work That Already Contains Quotations

Whenever you need to include words from a source that already has quotations, simply turn the original quotation marks into single quotation marks.

Example:

Kingston writes, “She had one rule to keep us safe from toadstools and such: 'If it tastes good, it's bad for you,' she said” (92).

Changing Words Within a Quotation

Quotation marks show that you are quoting a source word for word. Because it has to be exact, you are not allowed to change any of the words in that quotation unless you use brackets around the letter, word(s), or punctuation you have changed.

Example:

Actual Quotation: Bradbury says, “Her face grew amazed and then horrified” (73).

But if we need to specify whose face we are referring to, it helps to include the name of the character:

Altered Quotation: Bradbury says, “[Mildred's] face grew amazed and then horrified” (73).

Omitting, or Leaving Out, Words in a Quotation

Sometimes a direct quotation is too long or perhaps too wordy to include in an essay. In this case you may want to borrow only a word or two to make a point.

Example:

George thinks Lennie is a “crazy bastard” (4).

In some cases, you may want to use more than a few words, without using the whole sentence you encounter in the source material. For example, if you want to leave out a few words in the middle of a sentence, substitute ellipses (three dots in a row) for the words that you are leaving out. **But do not use ellipses marks at the beginning or end of a quote!** You do not need to use ellipses in these cases because it should be obvious to the reader, and your teacher, that you have left words out.

Example:

Before arriving at the ranch, George instructs Lennie, “You just stand there...if he sees ya work before he hears ya talk, we’re set” (Steinbeck 6).

Block Quotations

While it is best to quote words and phrases, and while you can omit words, sometimes it is necessary to use a long quotation in your writing, such as to closely analyze the text. Block quotes should be used very rarely and when you do there is a special way to format it. First, end your sentence with a colon. Then set off each line of the quotation by indenting one inch (typically, use the Tab button twice). Next, do not surround the quotation with quotation marks. Because it is indented in this manner, your teacher will know it is a quotation. Finally, place the parenthetical citation outside of the punctuation, unlike normal quotation format. Keep it double-spaced like the rest of your essay. You use a block quotation when the quote will take up more than four lines of **your writing** or when quoting more than three lines of poetry. When using a block quote with poetry, the three or more lines appear exactly as it is in the original text.

Example:

In The Great Gatsby, by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Nick eventually moves away from Gatsby's house, saddened by the end of the summer:

I spent my Saturday nights in New York because those gleaming, dazzling parties of his were with me so vividly that I could still hear the music and laughter, faint and incessant, from his garden, and the cars going up and down his drive. One night I did hear a material car there, and saw its lights stop at his front steps. But I didn't investigate. Probably it was some final guest who had been away at the ends of the earth and didn't know that the party was over. (181)

Quotations From Plays or Poetry

Taking excerpts of poetry is somewhat different from other materials because the quotation needs to reflect the line breaks poems contain. Adding a slash, surrounded by a space, helps to show where the lines break in a poem, as shown below. Then, when using parenthetical citation, include the part number (if there is one) first, and then the line numbers. In plays, the parenthetical citation shows the act number, scene, and line number(s).

Example:

Homer looks for his men and finally finds them in Circe's palace, “mild / in her soft spell, fed on her drug of evil” (10.209-11).

Wordsworth uses the simile, “I wondered lonely as a cloud,” to show his isolation (1).

The motif of light and dark frequently appears in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, such as when Romeo first catches a glimpse of Juliet: “O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright! / It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night / as a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear” (I. v. 42-45).

The Basics of Parenthetical / In-Line Citation

In MLA style, you refer to the works of others, your sources, in your text by using what is known as parenthetical, or in-line, citation. MLA format follows the author-page method of in-line citation. This means that the author's last name and the page number(s) from which the quotation or paraphrase is taken must appear in the text, and a complete reference should appear on your Works Cited page. The author's name may appear either in the sentence itself or in parentheses following the quotation or paraphrase, but the page number(s) should always appear in the parentheses, *not* in the text of your sentence. Place the parenthetical citation in front of the nearest punctuation, typically the period at the end of the sentence.

Examples:

George believes that ranchers are “the loneliest guys in the world” (Steinbeck 3).

In Steinbeck’s novel, George believes that ranchers are “the loneliest guys in the world” (3).

Common Student Concerns

There is no author for my source!

When a source has no known author, use a shortened title of the work instead of an author’s name. If your source is an article, use quotation marks around the title; if your source is a longer work, such as a book, use italics for the title.

Example:

An anonymous Steinbeck critic argues that Steinbeck’s novels are too unrealistic (“Steinbeck Is a Dreamer” 205).

I need to cite more than one work at a time! What do I do?

Separate multiple citations in the same parenthetical reference using a semi-colon. Place either the first source referenced first or, if neither is directly quoted, in alphabetical order.

Example:

Loneliness is portrayed among migrants of all kinds (Cisneros 3; Steinbeck 21).

More than one of my sources was written by the same person. How will my teacher know which source I’m referring to?

If you cite more than one work by a particular author, include a shortened title for the particular work from which you are quoting to distinguish it from the others. Also, if the author's name is not mentioned in the sentence, you would format your citation with the author's name followed by a comma, followed by a shortened title of the work, followed by page numbers.

Example:

Steinbeck shows Depression-era hardships both of single men (*Mice and Men* 51), as well as of migrant families (*Grapes of Wrath* 28).

Lenny hopes to live off “the fat of the land” (Steinbeck, *Mice and Men* 63).

More than one person wrote the article I’m using for my essay! What now?

For a source with three or fewer authors, list the authors' last names in the text or in the parenthetical citation. For a source with more than three authors, use the Works Cited entry as a guide for your citation. Provide the **first** author's last name followed by **et al.**

Example of Three or Fewer Authors:

Roberts, Porter, and Curtis believe that Steinbeck supported migrant rights because of his family background (107).

Some experts believe that Steinbeck supported migrant rights because of his family background (Roberts, Porter, and Curtis 107).

Example of More Than Three Authors:

On the other hand, Cardona et al. believe that Steinbeck supported migrant rights because of his wife’s family background (4).

On the other hand, Steinbeck may have supported migrant rights because of his wife’s family background (Cardona et al. 4).

My sources come from the internet! What do I do about that?

This can seem tricky because internet sources usually have no page numbers and websites often do not list authors. The answer is to cite the author's name whenever possible, or use the first information listed in Works Cited entry (see *Electronic*). If no page number is provided, leave that part of the citation blank. Keep in mind that the main purpose of a parenthetical citation is to point readers to the correct entry on the Works Cited page.

Examples:

Steinbeck was born in Salinas, California in 1927 (“John Steinbeck’s Biography”).

Steinbeck’s mother was a teacher; she taught him to love reading (Liukkonen).

Basic Works Cited Page Entries for Print Sources

The Works Cited compliments the parenthetical / in-line citations. The purpose of the brief parenthetical citation is to point the reader to the correct listing in the Works Cited. It is here in the Works Cited where the reader can find the complete bibliographic information so they could, in theory, go find the original source if they wanted. It is important to alphabetize the sources according to the last names of authors or, for anonymous articles, the first important word in titles. **You do not need to number the entries.** Double-space the entire Works Cited Page. When a citation is more than one line long, indent each successive line five spaces, (see “Example Works Cited Page”). Here are a few examples, but see the MLA handbook for all possible entries.

Work with One Author

When citing a work with one author, the author’s name is followed by a period. Next is the title of the book, followed by a period. Next, list the city of publication with a colon; list the name of the press company followed by a comma. Lastly, list the year of publication and end it with a period. The year of publication is the year your work was printed. In the example below, *Of Mice and Men* was first published in 1937, but the work referenced was published in 2003.

Example:

Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*. New York: Penguin Books, 2003.

Work With Two or More Authors

When citing a work with more than one author listed, use the main contributor’s last name, first name and place a period afterwards. Then, separate the first author’s entry with a comma, and list the secondary author(s) in first name / last name sequence, followed by a period. The remainder of the citation is as above.

Example:

Parker, Sandra M., and Mark Gubar. The Makings of a Great Ruler. New Haven: Yale UP, 1999.

Work with an Editor (ex. Anthology, Compilation)

When citing a work with an editor, list the editor’s name in the place of an author’s. Identify the name as that of an editor by placing a comma after the name followed by “ed.”

Example:

Stevens, Pete, ed. “How to Bake Chocolate Chip Cookies.” The Greatest ABC Cookbook. New York: Columbia UP, 1981. 146-149.

Two or More Works by One Author

When a Works Cited includes more than one work by an author, do not repeat the author's name after its first appearance. Instead, substitute three hyphens for the author's name in the second and subsequent entries and alphabetize the works by title.

Example:

Steinbeck, John. *Grapes of Wrath*. New York: Penguin Books, 2003.

- - -. *Of Mice and Men*. New York: Penguin Books, 2003.

Article in a Reference Work

When citing an article in a reference work, such as an encyclopedia or a dictionary entry, do not cite the editor. If the article is signed, include the author, otherwise start with the title of the article. If dictionaries are arranged alphabetically, do not give the volume or page number.

Example:

"Mandarin." *The Encyclopedia Americana*. 1994 ed.

"Noon." *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989.

Article in a Newspaper / Magazine

When citing a newspaper or magazine article, include the author, title of the article, name of the newspaper, the date published, and page number(s) (when pages are non-consecutive, list only the first page followed by a "+"). For newspapers, identify the section when necessary.

Example:

Lohr, Steve. "Now Playing: Babes in Cyberspace." *New York Times* 3 Apr. 1998: B3 +.

Murphy, Cullen. "Women in the Bible." *Atlantic Monthly* Aug. 1993:39-64.

Anonymous Work

When citing any work without an author, begin the citation with the next sequential piece of information, typically the title. For the parenthetical/in-line citation use an abbreviated form of the title (see *Parenthetical*). Here is a fictitious example for an anonymous magazine article.

Example:

"Steinbeck is a Dreamer: The American Dream in the Novels of Steinbeck." *Atlantic Monthly* Jun. 2009:39-64.

Electronic Sources and Basic Works Cited Page Entries

Electronic sources change more often than those in print, so electronic source citations require more information in order for readers to identify and locate the source. The format is similar to a citation for a print source, but electronic sources must give the date assigned to the document, typically when it posted or last updated, **as well as** the date you viewed the source. Even more important is the URL (uniform resource locator); this network address must be copied accurately, including identifying information (author's name and title) so that if the address changes, the reader can still find it with a network searching tool. If a URL must be divided between two lines, break it only after a slash and do not insert hyphens at breaks. Give the complete address enclosed in angle brackets: <<http://www.princeton.edu/~lancelot/>>

NOTE ON EVALUATION OF INTERNET SOURCES: The reliability and quality of internet sources varies. High-quality source material should be correct, updated, and logical. Students also need to evaluate the author's authority on the subject (e.g. knowledge, balanced viewpoint, and reliability). Always consider the domain name: .edu (educational institutions), .org (not-for-profit organizations), and .gov (government agencies) may be more trustworthy than .com (commercial enterprises).

The following information is generally required for all internet sources, including basic web sites and pages, in this order from 1-8. When one piece of information is missing, just go on to the next numbered item:

1. Author's name
2. Title of the document
3. Title of the scholarly project, database, periodical, or professional or personal site
4. Name of the editor of the scholarly project or database
5. Date of electronic publication or last update
6. Name of the institution or organization sponsoring or associated with the site
7. Date when you accessed the source
8. Network address, or URL

Example:

Oakley, John H. "The Achilles Painter." The Perseus Project. Ed. Gregory Crane. Mar. 1997. Tufts U. 14 May 2009
<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/Secondary/Painter_Essays/Achilles_toc.html>.

Here are a few examples of the more common types of electronic sources and citations, for even more please refer to the MLA handbook.

An Online Scholarly Project or Information Database

The History Channel Online. 1998. History Channel. 19 June 2009 <<http://historychannel.com/>>.

Victorian Women Writers Project. Ed. Perry Willett. June 1998. Indiana U. 26 June 2009
<<http://www.indiana.edu/~letrs/vwwp/>>.

A Document Within a Scholarly Project or Information Database

“I Watched the Heavens.” Victorian Women Writers Project. Ed. Perry Willett. June 1998. Indiana U. 26 June 2009 <<http://www.indiana.edu/~letrs/vwwp/clive/heavens.html>>

An Online Book Within a Scholarly Project

Keats, John. *Poetical Works*. 1884. Project Bartleby. Ed. Steven van Leeuwen. May 1998. Columbia U. 5 May 1998 <<http://www.columbia.edu/acis/bartleby/keats/>>.

An Article in an Online Newspaper

“Endangered Species Act Upheld.” AP Online 22 June 1998. 22 June 1998 <<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/w/AP-Court-Endangered-Species.html>>.

An Article in a Magazine

Kinsley, Michael. “Now Is the Summer of Too Much Content.” Slate 20 June 1998. 25 June 2009 <<http://www.slate.com/98-06-20/Readme.asp>>.

A Review

Ebert, Roger. Rev. of *The Truman Show*, dir. Peter Weir. Chicago Sun-Times Online 5 June 1998. 16 June 2009 <<http://www.suntimes.com/output/ebert1/05show.htm>>.

An Anonymous Article

“Fleeting Consciousness.” US News Online 29 June 1998. 1 July 2009 <<http://www.usnews.com/usnews/issue/980629/29brai.htm>>.

An Editorial

“Controlling Deadly Trade.” Editorial. Christian Science Monitor: Electronic Edition 26 June 1998. 26 June 2009 <<http://www.csmonitor.com/durable/1998/06/26/f-pl6sl.htm>>.

An E-mail Communication

Boyle, Anthony T. “Re: Utopia.” E-mail to Daniel J. Cahill. 21 June 2009.

An Online Posting

Merriam, Joanne. “Spinoff: Monsterpeice Theatre.” Online posting. 30 Apr. 1994. Shakespeare: The Global Electronic Shakespeare Conf. 30 Oct. 2009 <<http://www.arts.ubc.ca/english/iemls/shak/shak-L.html>>.

Glossary

Analysis: Why is your evidence significant? How does it relate to and prove your topic sentence and your thesis?

Block Quote: Indent all quotations that take up more than **four** lines in your essay, and all poetry quotations that are more than **three** lines in the original poem, 1” inch from the left margin (typically, the Tab button twice).

Commentary: Opinion statements that relates directly to one or more factual details.

Context: The circumstances around an act or event. Think of it as background information.

Evidence: In the case of literary analysis this is usually quotes. In other types of essays it might take the form of details, examples, statistics and other specific information.

Explicit: Clear, obvious, or superficial. Your writing should be explicit, yet when doing analysis you should be writing about implicit ideas. Make the implicit explicit.

Foreshadow: To hint at, allude to, something that is to come later.

Hook: A way to grab the reader’s attention and get them to focus on the topic of your essay. While similar to a “lead-in,” a hook suggests something creative and catchy...get it?

Implicit: Ideas that are not directly stated but are present “in between the lines.” When doing analytical writing, your topic must be something implied in the text. Make the implicit explicit.

Information Database: a searchable database (collection) containing full text, or citations/information for locating, articles, abstracts, journals, books, etc.

Lead-In: A way to grab the reader’s attention and get them to focus on the topic of your essay. While similar to a “hook,” a lead-in can be more informational/factual and less creative.

Paraphrase: A form of indirect quoting; when you “put it in your own words.” Even when paraphrasing the unique ideas or thoughts of another, you must cite your source.

Scholarly Project: Essentially, this is a website of professional origin that has an educational goal. The work presented is more trustworthy, as it is the work of scholars (often .edu websites).

Summary: A brief retelling of the original source. It is factual and does not include your ideas.

Text: A generic term for any subject for analysis or criticism (literature, film, music, news, etc.).

Thesis Statement: An opinion or argument that is proven with evidence (quotes, statistics, etc.).

Topic Sentence: The main idea of each body paragraph; what the paragraph will be about.

Essay Essentials



Introductory Paragraph



Hook

Title/Author (*Background Summary*)

Thesis (*An opinion or argument that is proven with evidence*)

Body Paragraphs

Topic Sentence

Evidence-**ICE** all Evidence: **Introduce, Cite, Explain**
Analysis

Concluding Sentence



Concluding Paragraph

Rephrase Thesis

Go Beyond Text to Show Significance

Do:

- Write in Present Tense
- Use Formal Diction
- Select Relevant Quotations
- Provide Relevant Context for the Evidence
- Use Transitional Words or Phrases for Clarity
- Include Proper Subject-Verb and Tense Agreement
- Proofread Your Work



Do Not:

- Refer to Yourself in an Essay ("I think, etc.)
- State the Obvious
- Use Contractions
- Repeat Yourself Needlessly



1 inch



Savannah Ellison

Mrs. Anderson

English 4

23 September 2007

0.5 inch



Ellison 1

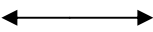
Entire Essay is Double-spaced
Size 12 font: Times New Roman, Helvetica or Arial
Note: Title is centered without quotations, and is not italicized or bolded

Metamorphosis

The nature of humans is to adapt to their environment. Unfortunately, some societies have produced unhealthy environments in which to live. In Ray Bradbury's science fiction novel Fahrenheit 451, Guy Montag's society is one such as these. Ray Bradbury makes it clear that this futuristic world is indeed toxic by allowing the reader to witness his protagonist's awakening. Montag's transformation takes him from a programmed follower of his society's expectations to an independent thinker shaping the world.

At the onset of the novel, Montag's values reflect those of the superficial, ignorant majority. To begin with, Montag does not reflect on his actions or think them through. For example, his attitude toward his job as a fireman clearly illustrates this fact: "It was a pleasure to burn" (3). Montag burns books without the least bit of awareness that his actions are destroying hundreds of years of culture. He does his work blindly, yet with the confidence that he is doing right. Secondly, Montag's superficiality and lack of consciousness extends to his relationship with his wife Mildred. The morning after Mildred overdoses on sleeping pills, Montag is unable to be honest with her. She asks him what happened and he confirms her fantasy that they had a party, rather than that she had attempted suicide. If Montag truly loved Mildred he would have attempted to communicate with her in such a time of need. This same lack

1 inch



1 inch



Works Cited

- "I Watched the Heavens." Victorian Women Writers Project. Ed. Perry Willett. June 1998. Indiana U. 26 June 2009
<<http://www.indiana.edu/~letrs/vwwp/clive/heavens.html>>
- Kinsley, Michael. "Now Is the Summer of Too Much Content." *Slate* 20 June 1998. 25 June 2009 <<http://www.slate.com/98-06-20/Readme.asp>>.
- Murphy, Cullen. "Women in the Bible." *Atlantic Monthly* Aug. 1993:39-64.
- "Noon." *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989.
- Parker, Sandra M., and Mark Gubar. *The Makings of a Great Ruler*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1999.
- "Steinbeck is a Dreamer: The American Dream in the Novels of Steinbeck." *Atlantic Monthly* Jun. 2009:39-64.
- Steinbeck, John. *Grapes of Wrath*. New York: Penguin Books, 2003.
- . *Of Mice and Men*. New York: Penguin Books, 2003.
- Stevens, Pete, ed. "How to Bake Chocolate Chip Cookies." *The Greatest ABC Cookbook*. New York: Columbia UP, 1981. 146-149.
- The History Channel Online. 1998. History Channel. 19 June 2009
<<http://historychannel.com/>>.

CAHSEE Writing Rubric

4 The essay —

- clearly addresses all parts of the writing task.
- provides a meaningful thesis, demonstrates a consistent tone and focus, and illustrates a purposeful control of organization.
- thoughtfully supports the thesis and main ideas with specific details and examples.
- provides a variety of sentence types and uses precise, descriptive language.
- demonstrates a clear sense of audience.
- contains few, if any, errors in the conventions of the English language. (Errors are generally first-draft in nature.)*

A Persuasive Composition:

- states and maintains a position, authoritatively defends that position with precise and relevant evidence and convincingly addresses the reader's concerns, biases, and expectations.

3 The essay —

- addresses all parts of the writing task.
- provides a thesis, demonstrates a consistent tone and focus, and illustrates a control of organization.
- supports the thesis and main ideas with details and examples.
- provides a variety of sentence types and uses some descriptive language.
- demonstrates a general sense of audience.
- may contain some errors in the conventions of the English language. (Errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the essay.)*

A Persuasive Composition:

- states and maintains a position, generally defends that position with precise and relevant evidence and addresses the reader's concerns, biases, and expectations.

2 The essay —

- addresses only parts of the writing task.
- may provide a thesis, demonstrates an inconsistent tone and focus and illustrates little, if any, control of organization.
- may support the thesis and main ideas with limited, if any, details and/or examples.
- provides few, if any, types of sentence types, and basic, predictable language.
- demonstrates little or no sense of audience.
- may contain several errors in the conventions of the English language. (Errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the essay.)*

A Persuasive Composition:

- defends a position with little evidence and may address the reader's concerns, biases, and expectations.

1 The essay may be too short to evaluate or —

- addresses only one part of the writing task.
- may provide a weak, if any, thesis; demonstrates little or no consistency of tone and focus; and illustrates little or no control of organization.
- fails to support ideas with details and/or examples.
- may provide no sentence variety and uses limited vocabulary.
- may demonstrate no sense of audience.
- may contain serious errors in the conventions of the English language. (Errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the essay.)*

A Persuasive Composition:

- fails to defend a position with any evidence and fails to address the reader's concerns, biases, and expectations.

* Conventions of the English language refer to grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and usage.

SAT Writing Rubric

- 6** – demonstrates clear and consistent mastery, although it may have a few minor errors a typical essay
- effectively and insightfully develops a point of view on the issue and demonstrates outstanding critical thinking, using clearly appropriate examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position
 - is well organized and clearly focused, demonstrating clear coherence and smooth progression of ideas
 - exhibits skillful use of language, using a varied, accurate, and apt vocabulary
 - demonstrates meaningful variety in sentence structure
 - is free of most errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics
- 5** – demonstrates reasonably consistent mastery, although it will have occasional errors or lapses in quality. A typical essay
- effectively develops a point of view on the issue and demonstrates strong critical thinking, generally using appropriate examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position
 - is well organized and focused, demonstrating coherence and progression of ideas
 - exhibits facility in the use of language, using appropriate vocabulary
 - demonstrates variety in sentence structure
 - is generally free of most errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics
- 4** – demonstrates adequate mastery, although it will have lapses in quality. A typical essay
- develops a point of view on the issue and demonstrates competent critical thinking, using adequate examples, reasons, and other evidence to support its position
 - is generally organized and focused, demonstrating some coherence and progression of ideas
 - exhibits adequate but inconsistent facility in the use of language, using generally appropriate vocabulary
 - demonstrates some variety in sentence structure
 - has some errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics
- 3** – demonstrates developing mastery, and is marked by ONE OR MORE of the following weaknesses:
- develops a point of view on the issue, demonstrating some critical thinking, but may do so inconsistently or use inadequate examples, reasons, or other evidence to support its position
 - is limited in its organization or focus, or may demonstrate some lapses in coherence or progression of ideas
 - displays developing facility in the use of language, but sometimes uses weak vocabulary or inappropriate word choice
 - lacks variety or demonstrates problems in sentence structure
 - contains an accumulation of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics
- 2** – demonstrates little mastery, and is flawed by ONE OR MORE of the following weaknesses:
- develops a point of view on the issue that is vague or seriously limited, and demonstrates weak critical thinking, providing inappropriate or insufficient examples, reasons, or other evidence to support its position
 - is poorly organized and/or focused, or demonstrates serious problems with coherence or progression of ideas
 - displays very little facility in the use of language, using very limited vocabulary or incorrect word choice
 - demonstrates frequent problems in sentence structure
 - contains errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics so serious that meaning is somewhat obscured
- 1** – demonstrates very little or no mastery, and is severely flawed by ONE OR MORE of the following weaknesses:
- develops no viable point of view on the issue, or provides little or no evidence to support its position
 - is disorganized or unfocused, resulting in a disjointed or incoherent essay
 - displays fundamental errors in vocabulary
 - demonstrates severe flaws in sentence structure
 - contains pervasive errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics that persistently interfere with meaning

Essays not written on the essay assignment will receive a score of zero.

