

Williams Valley Junior Senior High School Research Paper Guidelines

Created by Mrs. David

This is a general guide to help you complete a research paper. Your teacher may assign different ways to accomplish the steps in the research process. Be sure you understand the expectations of your teacher.

Information in this guide was gathered from the 6th and 7th editions of *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, the 5th edition of *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* and *Writer's Inc.*

Selecting a topic

It is important that you:

- Pick a topic that meets the requirements of your teacher.
- Pick a topic that is of interest to you. If you are not interested in the topic, you will have a difficult time making deadlines.
- Pick one that has adequate sources. If there are not enough sources, you will have difficulty completing the assignment. Be able to broaden a topic if you find that there are not enough resources.
- Be able to narrow the topic if needed. Sometimes there is TOO much information available.

Prepare a Working Bibliography

This is a list of sources that you MAY use in your final paper. It is a way to make sure that you will be able to find enough information for your paper. You may not end up using all of the sources, but it is better to have too many than not enough. Along the way you may find other sources that are relevant; this is OK, just add them to your bibliography.

Each assignment will require different types and amounts of resources. Be sure to follow the requirements of your teacher, using the citation style they desire.

Where to find needed information for bibliographies:

- Book – the title, author, publication city and publisher are usually on the title page. The copyright date is usually on the back of the title page.
- Encyclopedia – if there is an author of the article it will be on the first page of the article or at the end of the article. Some encyclopedia articles have no listed author. You will also need the title of the article and encyclopedia and the most current copyright date of the encyclopedia, found on the back of the title page. For APA citations you need page number(s), publisher and place of publication.
- Newspaper and Magazine articles – you need the author and title of the article, date of the newspaper/magazine and page(s) the article appeared on. For MLA citations you need the city and state of publication for newspapers.
- Scholarly Journals – title of article and journal, author, date and pages of article, and volume and issue number are all needed. Most volume and issue numbers can be found on the title page of the journal.

- On-line encyclopedia – author and title of article, title, owner and subscriber of encyclopedia, date visited, and full Internet address are needed. On many on-line encyclopedias some of this information is provided at the end of the article.
- Web site – author and title of page, date page created or updated, sponsoring organization, date visited, and full Internet address are needed. Sometimes it can be difficult to find an author or date of last update.
- Power Library database – information needed varies from database to database, but generally you need the author, title and date of the article, title of magazine or book, volume and issue of journals and magazine, name, owner and subscriber of database, and date accessed.

Evaluating Sources

Authority – Who wrote the material? Are they an expert in this field or just some person who decided to write something on the topic? Can you find out information about the author? This is especially critical when evaluating Internet sources. Just because it is on the Internet does not mean that the author is an expert.

Accuracy – Is the information true? Do your other sources have similar information? When using Internet sources, you need to remember that anyone can put anything they want on the Internet. Just because it appears in print (book, internet, magazine article) does not mean it is true.

Currency – How current is the book, article, or Internet site. Some topics, especially science, can change overnight. Make sure you have the most current information available. Finding dates on Internet sites can be difficult. Make sure that the site has authority and accuracy if you cannot find a date of publication.

The following Internet sources can be used from home with the listed user name and password.

Resource	Home Access	Password
World Book Online	www.worldbookonline.com	User name: wvvikings Password: vikings
Power Library	Dauphin County Library card holders: www.dcls.org Tower-Porter Library card holders: www.iu29.org/towpl	Your personal library card
Facts on File	www.2facts.com	User name: wvvikings Password: vikings
SIRS Researcher	www.proquestk12.com	User name: PL3047H Password: 17980

Writing a Working Thesis

A thesis is a sentence that explains the content of the paper. Basically you are telling the reader what you will be telling them in the paper. A thesis is NOT a statement that starts with “This paper will be about . . .”

From skimming your sources you should be able to form some general ideas or opinions. Writing a thesis at this point will help guide you during your research and note taking. As you do

more research, your thesis will evolve. Do not be afraid to revise your thesis as you find further information.

Sample thesis statements:

- History - “Colonial writers such as Thomas Paine greatly influenced the political beginnings of the United States.”
- English
“Joseph Heller’s character development enhances the plot structure of *Catch 22*.”
“The speaker’s use of allusion and metaphor presents a vivid description of spring.”
- Psychology - “The psychological perception of the inherent evil in humanity can be compared in *Heart and Darkness* and *The Lord of the Flies*.”
- Science - “The lifestyles of barn owls include hunting for insects and animals, building nests, and raising their young.”

If you are having trouble with your thesis statement, try incorporating one of the following words into it: important, caused, influenced, analyzed, great, crucial, origin.

Taking notes

It will be easier to arrange your information if you use note cards. However, taking notes on paper is fine. If you use paper, it will be easier if do not put notes from multiple sources on the same page; use one page (or two or three – how ever many it takes) per source. When you start taking notes from a new source, get a new piece of paper.

You need to paraphrase or summarize the information you find. This helps to prevent plagiarism. DO NOT copy information word for word unless it is absolutely necessary, and then be sure to enclose it in quotation marks.

Summarizing – putting information into your own words in a much shorter form than the original source.

Paraphrasing – putting information into your own words but the section usually contains the same amount of words as the original. Usually you end up copying certain phrases; be sure to put them in quotation marks. You will need to use in-text citations or footnotes when including this information in your paper.

Quoting – at times there is no way to re-phrase a section of text or you want to retain the original words for effect. In these cases, you need to copy the small section word for word and put all of the information in quotation marks. You will need to use in-text citations or footnotes when including this information in your paper. If your quote runs for more than 40 words (APA) or four typed lines (MLA), check the specific style guide for guidelines.

Plagiarism – Merriam Webster’s defines plagiarize as “to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one’s own or to use (another’s production) without crediting the source.” Plagiarism occurs when you copy another’s writing, either intentionally or unintentionally, and include it in your paper without giving proper credit.

Plagiarism usually comes in two forms: “Using another person’s ideas, information, or expressions without acknowledging that person’s word constitutes intellectual theft. Passing off another person’s ideas, information, or expression as your own to get a better grade or gain some other advantage constitutes fraud” (Gibaldi 66).

Williams Valley classifies plagiarism as cheating. Those caught cheating (in this case plagiarizing) will receive a zero for the activity with no opportunity to make up the work. Students caught plagiarizing will also not be eligible for the honor roll during that marking period.

Copyright

Copyright issues come into play with images (title pages and PowerPoint) and sounds (PowerPoint). Whenever you use someone else's words, images, or sounds, you **MUST** give them credit. This does not mean that you may use as much of a song, poem, or collection of images as you want though. There are specific rules. If you are unsure of how much of an item that you can legally use, please ask a teacher.

When you include images on your title page (or another place in your paper), you need to list the source of your image(s) on your works cited page. When you create a PowerPoint presentation with images or music clips, you must include two things: 1) the first slide should state that the presentation contains copyrighted material 2) you must include a works cited slide(s) at the end with proper citations for your images or sounds/music clips.

Creating an Outline

Your outline should be based on the notes that you have taken. At this point it is still a working outline; after writing it you may realize that you are missing critical information in certain sections. If so, go back and take more notes from the same or different sources. Once your outline feels solid, you are ready to begin writing.

If using note cards, organize your cards into logical piles. This will help greatly in the creation of your outline. If your notes were taken on paper, using highlighters to highlight similar topics can be helpful.

Your outline should follow standard outlining format. If you have a Roman numeral I, you need a II. If you have an A, you need a B, etc.

Sample Outline

Title

- I. First Main Heading
 - A. First Subheading
 - 1. First related piece of information
 - 2. Second related piece of information
 - B. Second Subheading
 - 1. First related piece of information
 - 2. Second related piece of information
 - a) Related piece of information
 - b) Related piece of information
 - 3. Third related piece of information
- II. Second Main Heading
 - A. First Subheading
 - B. Second Subheading

Writing a Rough Draft

If you have taken good notes and created a solid outline, writing a rough draft should be easy. You just need to follow your outline and fill in specific information from your notes.

Make sure you have a solid thesis statement, an introduction, body and conclusion. The introduction you should NOT say "I am going to tell you about . . ." or "This paper is about . . ."

or anything similar to this. The conclusion should not say “In conclusion . . .” or “This paper was about . . .” or “I hope you enjoyed this paper.” or anything similar to this.

When you must include direct quotations, be sure to cite them in the paper using a parenthetical citation or footnote. Parenthetical citations/footnotes are also needed when you paraphrase, when you include ideas that are highly opinionated or controversial and for facts that are not widely known.

Your works cited page should be included with your rough draft. All entries should be in alphabetical order starting with the first element of each citation. Specific formatting can be found at the end of this guide.

Proofread the rough draft. If you have typed it, don’t rely on spell check or grammar check. They are both good tools, but will not catch all of your mistakes. A perfect example – the computer does not know if you want to use the word *to*, *too*, or *two*.

Editing the Rough Draft

After your rough draft has been reviewed by your teacher, do not be surprised if you need to make revisions. You may have failed to include important information, wandered off topic, used run on sentences, or any number of other things that need improvement. You may need to return to your sources to conduct more research.

Writing the Final Paper

If no specific guidelines are given, the standard typed format is: Times New Roman, 12 point, double-spaced, 1 inch margins.

In order to be successful, your final paper should be finished a few days before the due date. This way you can step away from it before editing it. Having a parent, teacher, or friend who is good in grammar and punctuation read over the paper is a good way to find errors. After having spent so much time with the paper yourself, you sometimes do not see errors.

Make all needed corrections, make sure your works cited page is correct and complete (including crediting any images you may have used on your title page) and turn the paper in on time!

Evaluation of Product and Process

This portion of the process gives you time to reflect on the actual process and the final product. It is more than an opinion page; it requires you to think about the steps you took and if you could have improved on any of them. Things that could be addressed include:

- Why I liked or disliked this topic
- Things I did very well during this project
- Things I could have improved during this project

Presentation

If your paper requires some type of oral presentation, be sure to keep a copy for yourself. Some things to keep in mind:

- PRACTICE your presentation.
- Do not read your paper word for word – use note cards with key points written down to keep you on track.
- Dress for the presentation.

- You are the expert on this topic – be prepared for questions from your classmates or teacher.
- If a visual is required, be sure that it is appropriate to the topic, neat and well planned.

Citation Examples

Your teacher will likely require either MLA or APA style citations. Following are basic examples. If you need further information, be sure to look in the latest style guide.

MLA – Parenthetical citations Visit http://www.mla.org/handbook_faq for more help.

After a direct quote or paraphrased idea you must give credit to your source. The basic format is (Author's last name page #).

Example : Ancient writers attributed the invention of the monochord to Pythagoras, who lived in the sixth century BC (Marcuse 197).

Of course there will be variations, especially when you are using Internet based sources where there is no page number available. Write your parenthetical citation to easily direct the reader to your list of sources.

Example – an article from EBSCO. Page numbers are listed, but you don't know from what page your paraphrased idea comes from.

After Hurricane Katrina, the Environmental Protection Agency spent \$134 million to assess damage to water systems and to restore service in the effected areas (Romano).

MLA – Works Cited page – 7th edition

Double space all lines (to save space, all citations have been single spaced in this guide).

Indent the second and following lines ½ inch.

Only list the first three authors of a book or article (see 5.5.4 for more than 3 authors).

In your citations, write the names of months as follows: Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., May, June, July, Aug. Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.

All dates are written Day Month Year.

It is not necessary to identify a state, province or country after a city name when citing place of publication.

If the city of publication is not included in the name of a locally published newspaper, add the city in square brackets after the name. Ex.: *Upper Dauphin Sentinel* [Millersburg]. Do not add the city for nationally published newspapers.

Titles of works published independently, such as books, magazines, newspapers and databases should be underlined or typed in italics.

Titles of works published within larger works, such as articles, essays, chapters of books, songs, and short poems should be placed in quotations marks.

All citations should be in alphabetical order of the first element.

Capitalizing rules are strict in MLA. Please see section 3.6.1 for information.

Book, single author

Last Name, First Name. *Title*. City of Publication: Publisher, Copyright Year. Print.

Brise, Genevieve. *The Louvre: an Architectural History*. New York: Vendome, 1995. Print.

Book, multiple authors

Last Name, First Name, First Name Last Name, and First Name Last Name. *Title*. City of Publication: Publisher, Copyright Year. Print.

Gardner, Robert and David Webster. *Science Project Ideas about Animal Behavior*. Springfield: Enslow, 1997. Print.

Book, Edited

Last Name, First Name. *Title*. Ed. First Name Last Name. City of Publication: Publisher, Copyright Year. Print.

Melville, Herman. *Moby Dick*. Ed. James Small. Boston: Houghton, 1973. Print.

Book, Second or Subsequent Edition

Last Name, First Name. *Title*. 2nd ed. City of Publication: Publisher, Copyright Year. Print.

Benenson, Bob. *Elections A to Z*. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2008. Print.

Scholarly Journal Article – paginated by volume

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume (Year): pages. Print.

Loper, Ann. "How do Mothers in Prison Differ from Non-Mothers?" *Journal of Child & Family Studies* 15 (2006): 83-95. Print.

Scholarly Journal Article – paginated by issue

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume.issue (Year): pages. Print.

Klimoski, Robert. "The ADA and the Hiring Process in Organizations." *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research* 45.2 (1993): 10-36. Print.

Magazine Article - monthly magazine

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine* Month Year: Page. Print.

Downey, Claire. "Louvre to Build New Islamic Art Gallery." *Architectural Record* Sept. 2005: 36. Print.

Magazine Article - weekly magazine

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine* Day Month Year: Page. Print.

McGinn, Daniel. "The Debt Crusader". *Newsweek* 20 Apr. 2009: 34-36. Print.

Newspaper Article

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Newspaper* [City] Day Month Year: Page. Print.

Porter, Michelle and Duane Good. "Mayor Says He's at Fault for Arrest in Michigan." *Upper Dauphin Sentinel* [Millersburg] 29 Nov. 2005: 1. Print.

General Encyclopedia (Compton's, New Book of Knowledge)

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Encyclopedia*. Copyright Year of Encyclopedia. Print.

Renner, Fred, Jr. "Air Pollution." *World Book Encyclopedia*. 2000. Print.

All other reference books

Last Name, First name. "Title of article." *Title of Book*. City of Publication: Publisher, Copyright year of book. Print.

"Ethan Allen." *Encyclopedia of World Biography*. Detroit: Gale, 1998. Print.

World Book Online

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *World Book Online Reference Center*. Web. Day Month Year accessed.

Wertheim, Albert. "Globe Theatre." *World Book Online Reference Center*. Web. 6 Mar. 2006.

Web Site (include the ULR when your teacher requires it)

Major changes include using N.p. when you cannot find a sponsor of the site and n.d. when you cannot find a date of publication.

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Page." *Sponsoring Organization*. Day Month Year of publication. Web. Day Month Year accessed.

Matthews, Kevin. "Globe Theater." *Great Buildings*. n.d. Web. 3 Mar. 2006. <http://www.greatbuildings.com/buildings/Globe_Theater.html>.

OR

Matthews, Kevin. "Globe Theater." *Great Buildings*. n.d. Web. 3 Mar. 2006.

"Multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis Fact Sheet." *American Lung Association*. Apr. 2007. Web. 23 Apr. 2009.

Power Library Databases – basic format for magazine or journal article

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine or Title of Journal* volume.issue (year): pages of article. *Title of Database*. Web. Day Month Year accessed.

Article from a magazine in MasterFile Premier:

Skipp, Catharine. "Streetwalker Stalker." *Newsweek* 147.13 (2006): 39. *MasterFILE Premier*. Web. 29 Mar. 2006.

Article from a newspaper in SIRS Researcher, no pages given:

Silverman, Adam and Sam Hemingway. "Dean Changes Campaign Leadership, Tightens Wallet." *Burlington Free Press* 28 Jan. 2004: N. pag. *SIRS Researcher*. Web. 4 May 2006.

Newspaper article from Newspaper Source, city not in title of newspaper:

Banks, Kieran. "Proud to Carry on the Family Tradition." *Advocate* [Perth] 22 Apr. 2009: 1.
Newspaper Source. Web. 23 Apr. 2009.

Article from a book in Oxford Reference Online

Wells, Stanley. "Shakespeare, William." *The Oxford Companion to Shakespeare*. Eds. Michael Dobson and Stanley Wells. Oxford University Press, 2001. *Oxford Reference Online*.
Web. 23 Apr. 2008.

APA – Parenthetical citations

After a direct quote or paraphrased idea you must give credit to your source. The basic format is (Author's last name, year, p. #).

Example: Ancient writers attributed the invention of the monochord to Pythagoras, who lived in the sixth century BC (Marcuse, 1975, p. 197).

Of course there will be variations, especially when you are using Internet based sources where there is no page number available. Write your parenthetical citation to easily direct the reader to your list of sources.

Example – an article from EBSCO. Page numbers are listed, but you don't know from what page your paraphrased idea comes from.

After Hurricane Katrina, the Environmental Protection Agency spent \$134 million to assess damage to water systems and to restore service in the effected areas (Romano, 2005).

Works cited:

Romano, A. (2005). The Cash Flow. *Newsweek*, 146, 28-29. Retrieved May 9, 2006, from MasterFILE Premier database.

APA – Works Cited Page – 5th edition

Double space all lines (to save space, all citations have been single spaced in this guide).

Indent the second and following lines 3 spaces.

Only list the first 6 authors of a book or article.

In titles of books and articles, begin only the first word of each title, subtitle and proper name with a capital letter. In the title of journals, begin all significant words with a capital letter.

Titles of books, magazines, newspapers and databases can be underlined or typed in italics.

Do not use quotation marks around the titles of periodical articles.

n.d. = no date (applies to Internet sites when you cannot find a date of creation or last update)

All citations should be in alphabetical order of the first element.

Book, single author

Last Name, First Initial. (Date of Publication). *Title*. Place of Publication: Publisher.

Brise, G. (1995). *The Louvre: An architectural history*. New York: Vendome.

Book, multiple authors

Last Name, First Initial. & Last Name, First Initial. (Date of Publication). *Title*. Place of Publication: Publisher.

Gardner, R. & Webster, D. (1997). *Science project ideas about animal behavior*. Springfield, NJ: Enslow.

Book, Edited

Last Name, First Initial. (Date of Publication). *Title* (First Initial. Last Name, Ed.). Place of Publication: Publisher.

Melville, Herman. (1973). *Moby Dick*. (J. Small, Ed.). Boston: Houghton.

Scholarly Journal Article – paginated by volume

Last Name, First Initial. (Year of Journal). Title of article. *Title of Journal*, volume, pages.

Mellers, B. (2000). Choice and the relative pleasure of consequences. *Psychological Bulletin*, 126, 910-924.

Scholarly Journal Article – paginated by issue

Last Name, First Initial. (Year of Journal). Title of article. *Title of Journal*, volume(issue), pages.

Klimoski, R. (1993). The ADA and the hiring process in organizations. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 45(2), 10-36.

Magazine Article – copy of magazine in hand

Last Name, First Initial. (Year, Month Day of Magazine). Title of article. *Title of Magazine*, Volume, page(s).

Downey, C. (2005, September). Louvre to build new Islamic art gallery. *Architectural Record*, 193, 36.

Newspaper Article – copy of newspaper in hand

Last Name, First Initial. (Year, Month Day of Newspaper). Title of article. *Title of Newspaper*, p. #.

Porter, M. & Good, D. (2005, November 29). Mayor says he's at fault for arrest in Michigan. *Upper Dauphin Sentinel*, p. 1.

Encyclopedia Article

Last Name, First Initial. (Date of Publication). Title of article. *Title of Encyclopedia* (pages). Place of Publication: Publisher.

Renner, F., Jr. (2000). Air pollution. *World Book Encyclopedia* (122-123). Danbury, CT: Grolier.

World Book Online

Last Name, First Initial. Title of article. Retrieved Month Day, Year, from World Book Online Reference Center.

Wertheim, A. Globe Theatre. Retrieved March 6, 2006, from World Book Online Reference Center.

Web Site

Last Name, First Initial. (Date of creation or update). *Title of page*. Retrieved Month Day, Year, from full Internet address.

Matthews, K. (n.d.) *Globe Theater*. Retrieved March 3, 2006, from http://www.greatbuildings.com/buildings/Globe_Theater.html.

Power Library Databases – basic format

Last Name, First Initial. (Year of article). Title of article. *Title of magazine / newspaper / book*, pages of article. Retrieved Month Day, Year, from Title of Database.

Article from a magazine in MasterFile Premier

Skipp, C. (2006). Streetwalker stalker. *Newsweek*, 147, 39. Retrieved March 29, 2006, from MasterFILE Premier database.

Article from a newspaper in SIRS Researcher, no pages given

Silverman, A. & Hemingway, S. (2004). Dean changes campaign leadership, tightens wallet. *Burlington Free Press*. Retrieved May 4, 2006, from SIRS Researcher database.

Article from a book in History Reference Center, no author or pages given

Recipes. *Africa: Facts & figures*. Retrieved May 4, 2006, from *History Reference Center* database.

Bibliography

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 6th ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2003.

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2009.

“Plagiarize.” *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*. 11th ed. 2004.

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. 5th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2001.

Sebranek, Patrick, Verne Meyer and Dave Kemper. *Writers INC: A Student Handbook for Writing & Learning*. Wilmington, MA: Write Source, 1996.

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