



COMMUNICATE & CITE

Writing Your Paper

Now that you have done your research and created an outline, you are ready to write your paper. It is time to gather all of your information and present it in your voice, with your style. You may want to think of yourself as a well prepared attorney or actor in this situation, working to persuade your audience to be open to and interested in the information you are going to present. What is most important is to remember is that writing is a communicative process.

Who is your audience? For most research papers, the audience is your teacher. Teachers will usually give you very specific information about what content they expect to see in your papers. That content aspect of a paper is actually addressed in the research and outline phases mentioned in the previous sections. This communication section is to remind you that another human being will not only read your paper but also grade it, based on how well he or she feels that you have communicated your ideas.

Research papers follow a pretty standard format: a strong opening statement (as shown above) with some more general information in the introductory paragraph to show where the paper is going or how it is constructed. The following paragraphs and pages are the “meat” (you’ve all heard the writing sandwich analogy in your English classes) of your paper where you support your opening statement with research. Finally, you will come to a conclusion, but let’s hold off on that for a moment.

Many of you have heard the expression from the computer / technology world, “Garbage in; garbage out.” This is a good motto to think about both as you are researching and writing. Find interesting information that supports your thesis

statement with interesting and new information. If you aren't interested in the ideas you find, why should your teacher be? Look back at your note cards and find the most interesting or strongest resources and include only those in your paper or at least get them as close to the beginning of your paper as possible. One of your primary thoughts in this writing phase of the research paper should be, "Am I keeping my audience interested? Does this make sense to an outside reader?"

As you use your quotations and other source material, make sure not to make the two most common mistakes of high school research paper writers. The first mistake involves using extensive quotes. If you see that a quote you are using is taking up to half a page or a full page or more, you are "over-quoting." You cannot use whole pages of someone else's material to fill out the ten-page requirement of your research paper. You need to find the pertinent information in a long passage and use only that quotation. The second mistake is letting quotations and source material stand on their own. Most often you need to explain why a quotation you are using proves or supports your thesis. It is also a convention of research writing that a quotation is explained or summarized to emphasize its importance. (Please see the sample term paper at the end of this document for examples.)

Teachers expect research papers – and all writing – to flow smoothly from paragraph to paragraph and from topic to topic. Make sure that as you end one paragraph, you pick up on a theme and continue it in the next. There are also certain introductory phrases and markers that reassure the reader that the flow is continuous. Phrases such as, "a second reason that ..." after you already explained the first reason, or "Dr. X, another scientist who studied this information..." remind the reader that you are presenting sequential information that will lead to a final conclusion.

Use of certain adverbs and adjectives can also help persuade a reader that you are very sure of your information and that the reader can believe what you are writing. Phrases such as "it is clear from the quote above..." or "the following fact makes a compelling case for..." provide subtle cues to the reader that, at a minimum, you have a strong belief in the importance and reliability of your information. The "meat" of a research paper consists of layers and layers of well introduced and explained quotations that continue to prove your main topic statement in a coherent and smooth manner.

When you have presented all of your compelling evidence, it is time to "sandwich" your research paper with a closing paragraph. A good closing paragraph is one of the most difficult writing assignments. Many of you learned in elementary school that a closing paragraph restates the opening paragraph and makes writing circular. While the basic convention of the research paper is to refer back to the opening paragraph, a simple restatement of the topic sentence will not suffice. A good closing paragraph not only revisits the topic, but also includes important information from the body of the paper to show why or how the statement was proven. It includes core information that communicates to the reader what he or she has learned from the paper. Remember, that is a key goal, to constantly communicate with your reader through voice, style, and content. If you can do that, you will assuredly write an outstanding paper.

Preparing Parenthetical (In-text) Citations

The Arlington Public Schools uses the MLA style of documentation and written formatting in all classes, with the exception of a few upper-level psychology courses at Arlington High School. Instructions for using this style are included in this book.

Parenthetical citations must be used whenever you include a direct quote, a statistic, a close paraphrase, or another piece of unique information in your writing. Using parenthetical citations to document your sources helps your readers identify them easily. The following guidelines will help you to cite your sources properly.

Basic citation. Place the citation at the end of the sentence containing the material you are documenting. The citation should appear after the last word of the sentence but before the end punctuation mark.

Example: Humans could not survive on Venus. Night and day, the surface temperature on Venus is nearly 900° F (Colozzo 16).

Citation of an encyclopedia or a similar reference work. When citing an article in a reference work that is arranged alphabetically- an encyclopedia or a biographical dictionary, for example- give only the title or a shortened version of the title.

Example: A day on Mars is only 40 minutes longer than a day on Earth, but the Martian year is almost twice as long as a year on Earth- 687 days (“Planets Nearby”).

Citation of an anonymous work. When citing an anonymous work (one for which no author is identified), give the title or a shortened version of the title, followed by the page number, if appropriate. Make sure that the first word of the title is the word by which the work is alphabetized in the Works Cited list.

Example: “In spite of its giant size, Saturn doesn't weigh very much. In fact, as a whole, Saturn is lighter than water and would float in a bathtub if you had one big enough” (“Astronomy for Kids”).

Citation of a long quotation. When documenting a long quotation that is set off from the text, place the citation after the end punctuation.

Example: Jupiter's most prominent feature is its giant sandstorm called the Great Red Spot: It's nearly three times the size of the whole Earth. At different times, it has shrunk or grown, turned dull pink, or become bright red, but it has not changed position and has kept the same oval shape for centuries. (Krepelka)

Citation of a work by two or three authors. When citing a work by two or three authors, give the authors' last names and the page number.

Example: Venus has no small craters because the atmospheres is so dense that it stops smaller incoming meteors before you can hit the ground and make a crater (Sundstrom and Crafts, 84).

Citation of a work by more than three authors. When citing a work by more than three authors, give the last name of the first author followed by *et al.* and the page number, if appropriate. *Et al.* is an abbreviation of Latin *et alii* or *et aliae*, meaning “and others”.

Example: The *Olympus Mons* volcano on Mars is 350 miles across and 15 miles high- that's wider than the state of New Mexico and three times as tall as Mt. Everest (Feeney, et al. 51).

Citation of a quotation appearing in a source. When citing a statement that is quoted by your source, use the abbreviation *qtd. in.*

Example: Pluto's new classification is a dwarf planet. “We know of 44 dwarf planets so far,” said Mike Brown, of the California Institute of Technology. (qtd. in Pozdena 50)

Citation of a source without page numbers. For a source without page numbers—an interview, a piece of computer software, or a recording, for example—give the name of the author or interviewee. If there is no name, give the title or a shortened version of the title.

Example: Mercury has a large, partly molten core nearly three-quarters of its diameter, accounting for nearly 80% of its mass (“Planet of Extremes”).

WORKS CITED PAGE FORMAT GUIDE

Book written by one person

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.

Example: Henley, Patricia. The Hummingbird House. Denver: MacMurray, 1999.

Book written by two or three people

Author 1's last name, Author 1's first name *and* Author 2's first name and last name. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.

Example: Bentley, Nicholas and Michael Slater. The Dickens Index. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Book written by more than three people

Author 1's last name, Author 1's first name, *et al.* Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.

Example: Schirokauer, Conrad, et al. A Brief History of Chinese and Japanese Civilizations. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers, 1989.

Book with an editor

Editor's last name, Editor's first name, ed. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.

Example: Dubus, Andre, ed. Into the Silence: American Stories. Cambridge: Green Street, 1988.

Reference Book (Encyclopedia, Biographical Dictionary, etc.)

Author/Editor's last name, Author/Editor's first name. "Title of Entry." Title of Encyclopedia/Book. Edition (if known). Year of Publication.

Example: Sturgeon, Theodore. "Science Fiction." The Encyclopedia Americana. International Edition. 1995.

Magazine or Newspaper Article

Author's last name, Author's first name. "Title of Article." Title of Newspaper or Magazine. Date: Section/Issue.

Example: Di Rado, Alicia. "Trekking through College: Classes Explore Modern Society Using the World of Star Trek." Los Angeles Times 15 March 1995: A3.

Magazine or Newspaper Article on the Internet

Author's last name, Author's first name. "Title of Article." Name of Newspaper or Magazine.
Date of Publication: Page(s). Online Site Name. Date Accessed.
<http://www.complete_url_for_site.com>

Example: Bluestein, Greg. "New Solar Panels Attract More Light." The Boston Globe.
11 April 2007: B8. Boston.com. 12 April 2007.
<http://www.boston.com/news/science/articles/2007/04/11/new_solar_panel_design_traps_more_light/>

Article in an Online Database or Subscription Service

Author's last name, Author's first name. "Title of Article." Name of Print Version of Article. Date
of Publication, Edition: Page(s). Database Name. Service Name. Name of where or
through which service the article was accessed, City/Town where service was accessed.
Date of Access. <http://www.abbreviated_url_for_site...>

Example: Norlander, Britt. "Ben Franklin's Workshop: Celebrating a Lifetime of
Invention." Science World. 16 Jan 2006, v62 i8: 12-16. Student Resource
Center. Infotrac. Ottoson Middle School Media Center, Arlington, MA. 19 May
2006. <<http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/SRC?NT=zz&locID=arli74305&...>>

Website

Author's last name, Author's first name. "Title of Webpage." Title of Main Website. Date page
was created or updated. Name of page's sponsor. Date accessed.
<http://www.complete_url.com>

Example: Lynch, Tim. "DSN Trials and Tribulations Review." Psi Phi: Bradley's
Science Fiction Club. 1996. Bradley University. 8 Oct 1997.
<<http://www.bradley.edu/campusorg/psiphi/DS9/ep/503r.html>>

Image from the Internet

Artist last name, Artist first name (if available). "Title of Image." Date of image. Online image.
Title of larger site. Date of download. <http://electronic_address_of_image.jpg>

Example: Picasso, Pable. "Guernica". 1937. Online image. Art in the Picture. 12 April
2007. <http://www.artinthepicture.com/artists/Pablo_Picasso/guernica.jpeg>

Interview or Letter You Have Received

Interview's last name, Interview's first name. Personal (or telephone) interview (or letter to the
author). Date.

Example: Jackson, Pete. Personal interview. 12 April 2007.

Film

Title, Name of Screenwriter. Name of Director, Names of Main Actors/Actresses. Production
Company, Date.

Example: Glory, screenplay by Kevin Jarre. dir. Edward Zwick, perf. Matthew
Broderick, Morgan Freeman, and Denzel Washington, TriStar, 1989.

Television or Radio Program

"Episode Name." Series or Program Name. Writer. Director. Producer. Network. Station Viewed, City, Original Air Date.

Example: "A Desert Blooming." Living Wild. Writ. Marshall Reagan. Dir. Harry Gordon. Prod. Peter Argentine. PBS. WTTW, Chicago. 29 April 2002.

Sound Recording (digital file, compact disc, audiocassette, or record)

Artist, "Title of Track", Title of Album, type of recording, Manufacturer, Date.

Example: Woody Guthrie, "Do Re Me," Dust Bowl Ballads. CD. Rounder, 1988.

Musical Composition

Composer's last name, Composer's first name. Title of piece.

Example: Chopin, Frederic. Waltz in A-flat major, op. 42

Lecture

Speaker's last name, first name. Title or description. Sponsoring organization. Location. Date.

Example: Konstandakis, Melanie. Class lecture. Arlington High School. Arlington, MA. 5 Nov. 2005.

HELP! I'm stuck making my works cited page!

Q: Which author do I write first when there is more than one?

A: List the names in the order you appear on the title page.

Q: Do all of the author's names get reversed?

A: No. Only the first author's last name is written first. The rest are written normally.

Q: Where's the author's name in an encyclopedia?

A: Usually it's in very tiny print at the end of the article you're reading.

Q: The URL for this website is four lines long! What do I do?

A: Including the first line, ending with an ellipsis (...).

Q: How do I arrange all of these entries on the page?

A: In alphabetical order, skipping a line between each entry. Do *not* number them or separate sources by type. Works cited pages should be single-spaced.

Q: I've searched and searched but I can't find an author. What do I do?

A: Start with the title and keep the rest of the entry the same.

Q: How do I format the dates in website entries?

A: Like this: 20 Mar 2007. Abbreviate all months to the first three letters.

Q: How do I make the computer stop changing my <urls> into blue links?

A: Try pressing Ctrl+Z immediately after it happens. It should undo the computer's auto-formatting.

Q: The computer won't let me indent the second line. What do I do?

A: Place your cursor before the first letter on the second line, then press Enter once. This should allow you to then space inward.

Q: What's the difference between a bibliography and a works cited page?

A: A bibliography contains only books, a works cited page contains many kinds of sources. In the real world, though, the terms are used interchangeably.

Q: I can't find a lot of stuff for the citation from this website. Can I still use it?

A: Yes. Include as much as you can, and just leave out what you can't find. Someone should be able to go back and access the site based on your entry. Be wary, though- if you can't find a lot of the information, the site might not be very reliable.

Q: There are lots of dates and lots of cities of publication. Which one do I pick?

A: Use the most recent date and the city closest to where you are.

THESE ARE ALL EXAMPLES OF PLAGARISM

- asking your parent or a friend to edit or rewrite your essay, making all the changes or corrections for you
- reading someone else's term paper and then writing your own using some of his ideas and copying part or all of his bibliography
- listing books in *your* bibliography that you haven't read
- taking a report or term paper you wrote for one class and rewriting it for another class
- taking a report or term paper you wrote for one class and handing it in for another class without rewriting it
- copying sentences or paragraphs from a source for your report without using quotation marks or parenthetical citations
- writing a report as a group and then each person writing a report that is just a little bit different to hand in
- copying a report or term paper from the Internet and editing it to be "yours"
- copying a report or term paper from the Internet and handing it in without any changes
- bribing someone to rewrite your papers for you
- paying another person, or an editing service, to write your term paper

Adapted from: Student Cheating and Plagiarism in the Internet Era: A Wake-Up Call by Ann Lathrop and Kathleen Foss. *Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 2000.*



PLAGIARISM occurs when a writer uses another person's material without giving them proper credit. Sometimes writers plagiarize on purpose, but it often happens because you simply don't understand what must be acknowledged. In either case, **PLAGIARISM IS ABSOLUTELY UNACCEPTABLE.**

The following are examples of plagiarism!

1. Quoting a source without using quotation marks – even if you do cite it.
2. Buying a paper online or downloading a paper from a free site.
3. Copying or using work done by another student.
4. Citing sources you didn't use.
5. Turning in the same paper for more than one class without the permission of both teachers.

THE ONLY TIMES WHEN YOU DO NOT NEED TO CITE ANOTHER AUTHOR ARE WHEN:

1. **COMMON KNOWLEDGE** – Information that most educated people would know
Example: *China is one of the largest countries in Asia.*
2. **FACTS FOUND IN MANY SOURCES** – Basic information that you can easily find in a number of sources.
Example: *Buddhism, Taoism, and Islam are the three most commonly practiced religions in China.*
3. **YOUR OWN CONCLUSIONS** – Your own original conclusions are thoughts that originate in your own mind!
Example: *China's religions are many, the food is delicious, and the culture is the cornerstone of your society.*

Plagiarism is a serious offense because it robs the original writer of recognition. If you are caught plagiarizing you will fail the assignment.

EXAMPLES OF PLAGIARISM

ORIGINAL PASSAGE:

China, representing one of the earliest civilizations in the world, has a recorded history of about 3,600 years. It possesses rich historical documents as well as ancient relics. Like other nations, China, in its development, passed through the stages of primitive society, slave society, and feudal society.

**This information appears on the following website:
<http://www.travelchinaguide.com/intro/history/>*

VERY OBVIOUS PLAGIARISM:

China, representing one of the earliest civilizations in the world, has a recorded history of about 3,600 years. It possesses rich historical documents as well as ancient relics. Like other nations, China, in its development, passed through the stages of primitive society, slave society, and feudal society.

**The author of these sentences has obviously simply COPIED AND PASTED this information from the website that you were researching – UNACCEPTABLE!*

A LITTLE LESS OBVIOUS, BUT STILL PLAGIARISM:

Being one of the earliest civilizations in the world, **China** has a **very long** recorded history. It possesses rich historical documents as well as ancient relics. Like other **countries**, China, in its **maturity**, passed through the stages of primitive society, slave society, and feudal society.

**The author has decided to change six of the words in the passage. This is still plagiarism and is UNACCEPTABLE!*

STILL PLAGIARISM:

China is one of the oldest civilizations in the world. **It** has a recorded history of about 3, 600 years. **Its** rich historical documents and ancient relics **are fascinating!** **Throughout its history,** **China** passed through the stages of primitive society, slave society, and feudal society.

**The author has changed the structure of a number of the sentences, but has stolen four EXACT phrases from the original passage. Yet again, UNACCEPTABLE!*

CORRECT USE OF THE ORIGINAL PASSAGE:



China has a long and intricate history, full of shifts in government and changing beliefs. Visitors can recognize evidence of these changes within the country's culture, artifacts, and people.

OR



China has a long and intricate history, full of shifts in government and changing beliefs. "It possesses rich historical documents as well as ancient relics" (Smith).

**The author has not stolen any phrasing from the original passage. When he/she did use the exact phrase from the website, it was cited correctly by noting the website author's last name in parentheses. You will list your sources on a WORKS CITED PAGE at the end of your paper.*