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**LAKE OF THE WOODS**  
*School*

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# Writing Guide

**a tool for students and staff**

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with assistance from the

**Lake of the Woods High School English Department**

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*Special thanks  
to  
The Writing Lab & OWL  
at  
Purdue University*

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>

# Writing Process

*Where do I start? When is it finished?*



## 5 Terrific Tips

1. Choose a topic you enjoy if possible.
2. Save every draft!
3. Be concise. It's better to get to the point than to ramble and be repetitive.
4. Read your paper aloud. Remember: **YOU** are the main revisor and editor of your paper.
5. Ask yourself: **Am I turning in my best work?**

# Papers, essays, reports in MLA

*What should your paper look like?*

Follow rules of the Modern Language Association when writing a paper. Use the MLA website or The Owl at Purdue website for even further advice.

## BASIC DOCUMENT GUIDELINES

1. 1 inch margins on all sides
2. Size 12 font (Times New Roman, Palatino, or something similar)
3. Double space
4. Black ink on white 8.5 x 11 paper
5. Indent (tab) all paragraphs 1/2 inch (no extra spaces between paragraphs)
6. Create a header on each page of your paper
7. Put a heading in upper left corner with your name, teacher's name, class, and date - double space
8. Place title after heading and center it. Do **not** underline, bold, or put in all caps!
9. Begin text one double-space after the title

## HEADER INSTRUCTIONS

1. Create a header on top right corner with your last name & page number
2. Go to **View** - Select **Header & Footer**, hit tab twice, type your last name, and space once.
3. Click the Insert page # icon--first icon in the little Header/Footer toolbar
4. The teacher *may* have you omit page numbers on 1<sup>st</sup> page. Then go to Insert - page numbers - uncheck the "Show number on 1<sup>st</sup> page" box

## REMINDERS

1. Only space once after periods
2. Italicize, do **not** underline, titles of large works (books, movies, magazines, newspapers, etc.)
3. Use quotations around smaller works like short stories, poems, or articles
4. Create a title page only if teacher requests it. Follow his or her instructions for requirements
5. Do NOT return twice after paragraphs!

Baker 1

Louise Baker  
Mr. Taylor  
Geography 8  
December 2, 2009

### Landform & Cultures: Baker Family Trip

On most long car trips in the Baker family, our minivan hums along the highway in total silence thanks to Ipods, portable DVD players, and cell phone texting, which separates each of us into our own little worlds. On our trip last August, however, the Baker clan helped me with my geography assignment, filling the vehicle with shouts of cave, swamp, cliff, lefse, and polka band. It made the car ride fly by as we all realized that this flat land of 10,000 lakes is filled with amazing geographical scenery and signs of diverse cultures.

The most famous landforms of Minnesota are, of course, the 10,000+ lakes and the endless amounts of plains. Our trip began at our home near the mouth of the Rainy River where it dumps into the Lake of the Woods. As we drove east toward International Falls, we watched the wide Rainy River wind its way along the border between Canada and the United States. We slowed to watch the Rapid River, a tributary of the Rainy, spill over the rocks creating quite an awesome sight. Along our journey east we would see many rivers and lakes, including Rainy Lake, Black Bay, Lake Kabetogama, Grand Lake, and Loon Lake, to name just a few.

Baker 2

The other fascinating landform that I saw for the first time was a natural waterfall. For some reason I believed I needed to travel to the mountains or the rainforest to see these. But in Northern Minnesota alone, we saw three different falls including Loon Falls, Basswood Falls, and my favorite, Gooseberry Falls along Lake Superior, one of the Great Lakes.

The next landform, noticed by my mom while reading the map, was a long narrow island in Duluth. Overlooking Lake Superior, Duluth is a city on a huge hill, but at the bottom of the hill sits a long stretch of land filled with houses, shops, restaurants, hotels, and a tourist-attracting aerial lift bridge that allows great ships to pass through to a bay. They call this area Park Point and it also includes a sandy beach that attracts a few thick-skinned swimmers due to the lake's cold temperatures. As explained in *Hiking Minnesota*, it is an island now, although this point was a peninsula before 1870, when locals dug out the passageway for ships and created an island (Pukite 19).

Our next adventure in Duluth showed us great cliffs, tiny streams, and crashing waves, as the Baker family journeyed north on an old train along the Northshore of Lake Superior to Two Harbors. My brother, who is deathly afraid of heights, kept his eyes closed for this part of the trip. I watched in awe of the beauty.

Culture was a bit more challenging to recognize and list as we traveled Minnesota. Luckily, Duluth was holding its annual Polish festival in

# Plagiarism and copyright violations

*Are you guilty? Learn how to avoid it!*

Plagiarism is passing off someone else's ideas or writings as yours. It does NOT have to be word-for-word copying. Plagiarism, whether accidental or deliberate, is a serious offense. A person can be expelled from college, fired from a job, or even sued and fined in court for copyright infringement. Elementary and junior high students should be learning how to properly give credit to sources, instead of learning how to copy and paste from the internet. Learning how to correctly use other works will help students avoid embarrassing accidental plagiarism.

## WHAT QUALIFIES AS PLAGIARISM?

- buying, borrowing, or stealing a paper
- having someone write a paper for you
- copying sections of text without quoting and citing (crediting) a source
- copying sections and changing a few words or phrases here and there

## HOW DO I AVOID PLAGIARISM?

- Use your own voice and your words.
- Give credit to your sources using the "citing sources" guidelines.

# Citing sources in writing assignments

*When do you cite sources?*

## WHAT KIND OF INFORMATION NEEDS A CITATION (CREDIT) IN YOUR PAPER?

- Somebody else's ideas and opinions, even if restated or paraphrased
- Facts and statistics that aren't common knowledge
- Direct quotations of text

## WHAT DOES THE CITATION LOOK LIKE WITHIN YOUR PAPER?

MLA format follows an author-page style of in-text citation. The author's last name and the page number(s) from which the quote or information is taken goes in parentheses right after the sentence or paragraph, and a complete reference goes on your Works Cited page.

The author's name may appear either in the sentence itself *or* in parentheses following the quote, but the page number(s) should always appear in the parentheses. For example:

### Quote

→ Dickens portrays Herbert as a kind, non-judgemental friend, ideal for Pip, who says, "he was so unassuming that I felt quite grateful to him for not being puffed up. It was a pleasant addition to his naturally pleasant ways," (737). ↗

### Quote

↗ Recycling not only reduces garbage in landfills but "costs less to operate than waste collection, landfilling, and incineration" (Jones 17). Therefore, it is obvious... ↘

### Fact/Statistic

↗ On average, a person creates 4.7 pounds of waste each day (Jones 18).

### Paraphrased Opinion

↗ Dean Smith of St. Olaf College says the custodians already have enough to do, and sorting garbage for students is not in their job description (Jones 15).

## WHAT IF MY SOURCE DOESN'T HAVE AN AUTHOR OR PAGE #, LIKE MANY INTERNET SOURCES?

When a source has no known author, put the title or a shortened title in parentheses instead. Place the title in quotation marks if it's a short work (articles) or italicize it if it's a longer work (book, TV show, website) and provide a page number if one is given.

↗ Recycling not only reduces garbage in landfills but "costs less to operate than waste collection, landfilling, and incineration" (*Recycle City*). ←

The parenthetical citation directs the reader to your Works Cited page where you'll list each of your sources alphabetically.

# Works Cited page in MLA: listing your sources

*What's the proper format?*

- Begin a Works Cited page on a separate page at the end of your research paper.

- Have the same 1-inch margins and last name, page # header as the rest of the paper.

- Label the page Works Cited and center it at the top. (Do not italicize, underline, or bold the words Works Cited.)

- List your sources alphabetically by the authors' last names or whatever is listed first in the citation. (Only list sources that you used.)

- Double space all citations, but do **not** skip spaces between entries.

- Indent the second, third, etc. lines of citations 5 spaces to create a hanging indent.

- Follow punctuation rules, separating items in a citation by periods and spaces and ending citations with periods.

- Watch capitalization, italicizing, and quotations.

- Be sure to include all necessary information from each source you used for your paper.

- **Remember:** Whatever is in your parenthetical citation in your paper refers to the citations on your Works Cited page.

- Do not underline major works. The newest rules for MLA require italics for major works and quotation marks for smaller works such as articles, poems, or song titles.

- For further info visit the Owl at Purdue website.

Beckel 6

Works Cited

"Dogma." *Dictionary.com*. Ask.com, 2009. Web. 29 Jan. 2010. <<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/dogma>>

Edwards, James. "The End of an Era." *Newsweek* 23 Nov. 2009: 64-68. Print.

Grady, Elizabeth. Personal Interview. 12 Jan. 2010.

Harris, Lesley. "Talk to Me: Engaging Reluctant Writers." *A Tutor's Guide: Helping Writers*. Ed. Ben Rafoth. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000. 24-34. Print.

*The Mirror Has Two Faces*. Dir. Barbra Streisand. Perf. Barbra Streisand, Jeff Bridges, Lauren Bacall, Mimi Rogers, Pierce Brosnan, George Segal. Tri-Star, 1996. Film.

*The Purdue OWL Family of Sites*. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2009. Web. 23 April 2010. <<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>>

Zindel, Paul. *The Pigman*. Toronto: Bantam Books, 1968. Print.

## **BOOKS: WHAT DO I NEED ON MY WORKS CITED PAGE?**

- \* Author(s)
- \* Title (italicized)
- \* Place of publishing
- \* Publishing company
- \* Year of publication
- \* Medium (A book is "Print" as opposed to "Web")

### **Citation:**

Last name, First name. *Title of Book*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Medium of Publication.

### **Example:**

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992. Print.

**NOTE:** If several cities are listed for publishing place, use the first city listed. The date is the most recent year given.

## WEBSITES: WHAT DO I NEED ON MY WORKS CITED PAGE?

Not every Web page will provide all of the following information! Collect as much of this info as possible for your citations.

- \* Author or Editors (if none are given on home page--skip this)
- \* Article/Section name in quotations (if any)
- \* **Title of Website italicized** (this *may* include .com or .net)
- \* Version number (if any)
- \* **Publisher info** (may be a company, university, or individual)
- \* **Date published**, posted, or updated
- \* Page numbers (if any)
- \* **Web** (type of source)
- \* **Date YOU accessed the site** (because websites can change daily)
- \* **URL address**

**NOTE:** Do not use the entire URL address. A shortened version is fine, as long as, a person can find the info using your citation and URL.

Remember to use "n.p." if no publisher name is available and "n.d." if no publishing date is given.

**Citation: Type it in this order, skipping info not given on the site:**

Editor or author. "Article name." *Name of Site*. Version number. Name of publishing organization or sponsor, date created. Web. Date of access. <URL>

### **Examples:**

Cooper, Helene and Johnston, David. "Obama Tells Prison to Take Detainees." *The New York Times*. The New York Times Company, 15 Dec. 2009. Web. 12 Jan. 2010. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/16/us/16gitmo.html>>

"William Shakespeare." *Wikipedia*. The Wikipedia Foundation Inc., 13 Dec. 2009. Web. 13 Jan. 2010. <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shakespeare>>

## PERSONAL INTERVIEWS: DO I CITE THIS ON MY WORKS CITED PAGE?

- \* Person interviewed
- \* The words: Personal interview
- \* Date of the interview

**Citation:** His/her Name. Personal Interview. day month year.

Nohner, Mark. Personal interview. 2 Nov. 2009.

**NOTE:** A personal interview is when YOU interview someone for information.

## MOVIES OR FILMS: HOW ARE DVDs DIFFERENT FROM MOVIES IN A THEATER?

- \* Title
- \* Director (add performers if relevant)
- \* Film Studio or distributor
- \* Year of release
- \* Film, if seen in theater or DVD or videocassette if appropriate (type of source)

The only difference is the source type at the very end: DVD, video, film, etc.

**Citation:** Title. Dir. Name. Perf. Name, Name, and Name. Film Studio or Company, Year. Source type.

### **Examples:**

*The Wizard of Oz*. Dir. Victor Fleming. Perf. Judy Garland. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1939. Videocassette.

*The Twilight Saga: New Moon*. Dir. Chris Wietz. Perf. Kristen Stewart, Taylor Lautner. Summit Entertainment, 2009. Film.

# Works Cited page in MLA: listing your sources

More examples

## MAGAZINES: WHAT DO I UNDERLINE? ANSWER: NOTHING

- \* Author(s)
- \* Title of Article
- \* Name of Magazine
- \* Date of Publication
- \* Pages article is on
- \* Medium (A magazine is "Print" unless it's an online version)

**NOTE:**  
Put the date in "day month year" order with no commas. Abbreviate the month.

**Citation:** Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine* Day Month Year: pages. Medium of Publication.

### **Examples:**

Olson, Heidi. "Switching Sides." *Newsweek* 21 Feb. 2008: 30-32. Print.

Pratt, Stephen. "World Summit Debates Checking, Concussions." *Sports Illustrated* 24 Aug. 2010: 20-24. Print.

## NEWSPAPERS: PRINT IS A BIT DIFFERENT THAN ONLINE.

- \* Author(s)
- \* Title of Article
- \* Name of Newspaper
- \* Date of Publication
- \* Section & Page article is on (and Edition if there is a late/early edition)
- \* Medium (A newspaper is "Print" unless it's an online version)

**NOTE:** Large newspapers such as the Star-Tribune have a late and early edition that are somewhat different. Only list the edition if that is the case. Our local papers have 1 edition.

**Citation:** Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Newspaper* Day Month Year Edition: pages. Medium of Publication.

### **Examples:**

Stalberg, Sheryl Sue and Gary Harris. "Stem Cell Ruling Will Be Appealed." *USA Today* 24 Aug. 2010: A4. Print.

Thompson, Amy. "Favre Puts Vikes on Top." *StarTribune* 9 Oct. 2009 Early Ed.: B2. Print.

## ONE STORY, POEM, ETC. IN AN ANTHOLOGY BOOK OR COLLECTION:

- \* Author of the selected work
- \* Title of work in quotations
- \* Title of the collection
- \* Editors' names
- \* City or country of publication
- \* Publishing company
- \* Year of publication
- \* Page range of entry
- \* Medium (A book is "Print")

**Citation:** Last name, First name. "Title of Work." Title of Collection. Ed. Editor's Name(s). Place of Publication: Publisher, Year. Page range of entry. Medium of Publication.

**Example:** Hurst, James. "The Scarlet Ibis." *Adventures in Reading*. Orlando: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1989. 154-163. Print.

# Formatting quotes from sources in MLA

*What does this look like?*

When you directly quote the works of others in your paper, you will format quotations differently depending on their length. Below are some basic guidelines for incorporating quotations into your paper. Please note that all pages in MLA should be double-spaced.

## **Short Quotations: In-line style**

To use short quotations (fewer than 4 typed lines of text or 3 lines of a poem or song) in your paper, just put quotation marks around the exact words taken from your source, working the quote into your sentence appropriately. Provide the author and specific page number (for poems, provide line #s) in parentheses, and include a complete reference on your Works Cited page.

Note: Punctuation such as periods, commas, and semicolons should go **after** the parenthetical citation. Question marks or exclamation points go inside the quotations if they are a part of the quoted passage but **after** the citation if they are a part of your text.

### **Examples:**

Miss Havisham repeatedly asks Pip, "What have I done?" (Dickens 798), as she finally realizes her mistakes.

Finally realizing her mistakes, Miss Havisham repeatedly asks Pip, "What have I done?" (Dickens 798).

Is it possible that Miss Havisham finally realizes the cruel results of her actions when she tells Pip, "Take the pencil and write under my name, 'I forgive her'" (Dickens 801)?

Mark breaks in short quotes of poetry with a slash, /, for the end of each line of verse. (Space in front of and after the slash.)

## **Long Quotations: Block style**

For quotations longer than 4 lines of typed text: place quotations in a free-standing block of text and **omit quotation marks**. Start the quote on a new line, with the entire quote indented one inch from the left margin; maintain double-spacing. (Only indent the first line of the quote by a half inch if you are citing multiple paragraphs.) Your parenthetical citation should come after the closing punctuation mark.

## **Adding or Omitting Words In Quotations**

If you add a word or words in a quotation, you should put brackets around the words to indicate that they are not part of the original text.

Jan Harold Brunvand, in an essay on urban legends, states: "some individuals [who retell urban legends] make a point of learning every rumor or tale" (78).

If you omit a word or words from a quotation, you should indicate the deleted words by using ellipsis marks, which are three periods ( . . . ) preceded and followed by a space.

### **For example:**

In an essay on urban legends, Jan Harold Brunvand notes that "some individuals make a point of learning every recent rumor or tale . . . and in a short time a lively exchange of details occurs" (78).

## **Block Quote example 2**

Peterson 6

Nelly Dean treats Heathcliff poorly and dehumanizes him throughout her narration:

They entirely refused to have it in bed with them, or even in their room, and I had no more sense, so, I put it on the landing of the stairs, hoping it would be gone on the morrow. By chance, or else attracted by hearing his voice, it crept to Mr. Earnshaw's door, and there he found it on quitting his chamber. Inquiries were made as to how it got there; I was obliged to confess, and in recompense for my cowardice and inhumanity was sent out of the house. (Bronte 78)

Clearly Nelly fails to understand how...

# Commas and complete sentences

Are you ready to edit? Check these rules when in doubt.

## TOP 6 COMMA RULES

### 1. Words in a series

Use commas to separate three or more words, phrases, or clauses in a series.

Ex. The Constitution establishes the **legislative, executive, and judicial** branches of government.

Amy looked **in her car, under her bed, and behind the couch.**

### 2. Compound Sentences

Use commas in compound sentences before the coordinating conjunction: and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet.

Ex. The championship volleyball game was over, **but** the celebrating crowd refused to leave.

Today was her brother's birthday, **so** Jessi took David out to dinner.

### 3. Introductory Elements

Use commas after introductory words and phrases such as yes, no, well, in my opinion, or for example. Also use a comma after an introductory clause starting with if, as, when, although, since, because, or other subordinating conjunction.

Ex. **Yes**, I cleaned my room and washed the dishes.

In my opinion, pizza hotdish is the best school lunch.

If you eat before going on that ride, you might get sick.

### 4. Adjectives--2 in a row

Use commas to separate 2 or more coordinate adjectives in front of a noun.

If "and" makes sense between the 2 adjectives, then they are coordinate; use a comma.

Ex. He was a **beautiful, happy** child.

Janice gave a **factual, detailed** report to the police.

She often wore a **red hooded** sweatshirt. (not coordinate)

### 5. Interrupters

Commas set off clauses, phrases, and words not essential to the sentence meaning.

Ex. (clause) This restaurant, which is owned by my great uncle, has a beautiful view of the lake.

(phrase) The food, on the other hand, is rather bland and expensive.

(phrase) Mr. Smith, my favorite teacher, gave us too much homework.

(word) He promised us, however, to give no homework on Friday.

### 6. Quotations, dates, and geographical names

Use a comma to shift between the main sentence and a quotation. Also use commas to set off all geographical names and items in dates (except the month and day) and addresses (except the street number and name).

Ex. Tina yelled, "Get over here right now!"

"I was finally able," she explained, "to finish all of the rooms."

Birmingham, Alabama gets its name from Birmingham, England.

May 5, 1971, was a big day as Joe moved to 240 Elm Street, Duluth, MN.

## RUN-ONS

A run-on is two or more sentences fused together incorrectly. A run on can NOT be fixed with just a comma.

Ex. I took the bus, Ed drove his car.  
(Incorrect)

I took the bus, **but** Ed drove his car. (Correct)

We'll shop at the mall, **then** we'll eat in the food court. (Incorrect)

We'll shop at the mall, **and then** we'll eat in the food court.  
(Correct)

### Fix run-ons by

1. Separating into 2 sentences
2. Using a comma & conjunction
3. Using a semicolon ( ; )

## FRAGMENTS

A fragment is a group of words that looks like a sentence, but is incomplete, lacking a subject, verb, or a complete thought.

Ex. When the suspenseful game was finally over. (Incorrect)

When the suspenseful game was finally over, we went home to celebrate. (Correct)

The rainy, dreary day at home alone. (Incorrect)

We spent a rainy, dreary day at home alone. (Correct)

**Remember**  
to check sentences for a complete thought!

# Slide show presentations on Powerpoint

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*How do I make an effective slideshow?*

## 1. FIRST, carefully look over the requirements given to you by your teacher.

Plan how many slides you need and the basic info that will go on each slide. A rough sketch works nicely for this.

## 2. Use the “Rule of Sixes”

Don't overload slides. Only include the most important ideas on the slide. You can give the smaller details in your presentation. Effective presentations won't include more than 6 bullets per slide and no more than 6 words per line. You may have to break this rule occasionally, but it's a good guideline.

## 3. Choose fonts for readability

Don't pick fonts because they are cool. People need to be able to read it!

## 4. Do the floor test

To check for readability, print out your slides and place it on the floor at your feet. Is everything readable? Does each point stand out? If not, it won't work on the screen either...

## 5. Use a consistent format

Use the same fonts, font sizes, and a similar layout from slide to slide. Keep hierarchy in mind (what's most important) and use bigger, bolder fonts for headings, titles, etc.

## 6. Jazz it up

Don't be afraid to use color to benefit the slide. Don't use busy backgrounds to draw away from the content, but make the slide stand out if appropriate. Sounds and other effects are good, but keep it consistent and don't overdo it.

## 7. Get interactive

Use questions and answers as a format, delaying answers to get audience thinking, wondering, and answering.

## 8. Pictures

Remember, slide shows are visual, so pictures, graphics, illustrations, etc. are good. Be sure the quality is high before enlarging a pixelated, blurry image. Otherwise, your visual loses its purpose.

## 9. Credits

Your slide show is not an essay, but if you got your information from sources, your last slide should credit the sources, *like* a Works Cited page. You can call it “Sources” or “Credits” or “Works Cited,” but definitely list the web sites, books, etc. from which you got your info. **Also, don't forget that if you use the exact words of a source, put the info in quotes.** If you don't, you are guilty of plagiarism.

## 10. Purpose

Finally, remember that a Powerpoint presentation is a tool used by someone who is presenting information to a group. You should NOT read it word for word. Your audience can do that themselves! ***The Powerpoint should highlight, add to, and enhance what you are explaining to the class or group.***

**NOTE:** Don't forget to practice your presentation, making sure the slides work well with your information.