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*Useful Information about Academic Writing*¹

Table of Contents

Introduction	
Standard Expository Outline	2
Sample Introduction: Literary Analysis	3
Thesis Statements	4
Introduction to Modern Language Association (MLA) Style	5
Sample Entries: MLA List of Works Cited	
Individual Publications (i.e., books)	6
Anthologies (i.e., works collected in books)	7
Introductions and Prefaces	8
Journal Articles (print and web)	9-10
Websites	11-12
Movies (and Television)	13
Introducing and Integrating Quotations	
Direct and Indirect Citations	14-15
Citing Various Literary Works (verse and prose)	16-18
Citing Line Numbers in Common Literature	19
Citing Movies and Television	20
Matthew Johnson's Evaluation Criteria for Literary Criticism and Papers with Research	
	21
Superficial Advice	
	22-24
General Review: Sentence Writing	
Basic, Compound, and Complex Sentences	25
Sentence Examples	26
Active Voice and Effective Transitions	27
Review of the Writing Process	
	28

¹ I am constantly updating and revising this document. Please inform me if you notice any inconsistencies or typographical errors. The information contained in this packet agrees with the *MLA Handbook*, 7th edition. If you would like any additional information, I would be happy to loan you a writing handbook. By the way, the Modern Language Association published the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook* in Spring 2009, so I may have missed some of the formatting changes (from the 6th ed.). As I already mentioned, let me know when you (inevitably) find errors!

Expository Writing

exposition: *n.* 1: a setting forth of the meaning or purpose (as of a writing)
 2a: discourse or an example of it designed to convey information or explain what
 is difficult to understand²

Essay writing dominates the liberal arts curriculum.... It's the favorite assignment of instructors in the humanities, a common assignment of instructors in the social sciences, and less common among instructors in the scientific and technical fields. You'll also find essay assignments to be frequent among instructors in business, law, education, and all fields that value critical analysis, logical reasoning, and independent thinking. In short, the essay is a pervasive, powerful, and demanding form of writing to master.

Toby Fulwiler³

Major Parts of an Expository Essay

See sample on next page for basic formatting.

- | | | | |
|------|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| [1.] | Heading (and page numbers) | | |
| [2.] | Title | | |
| [3.] | Introduction | } | |
| | with thesis statement | } | one to two paragraphs |
| | | } | |
| [4.] | Body of evidence | } | |
| | with quotations/paraphrase | } | as many paragraphs as it takes |
| | | } | |
| [5.] | Conclusion | } | |
| | So what? ...your final | } | |
| | thoughts with emphasis | } | one to two paragraphs— |
| | on the significance of thesis... | } | or as many as it takes |
| | So, you've said all this stuff, | } | |
| | now why does it matter? | } | |
| [6.] | Works Cited page | | |

² "Exposition," *Merriam-Webster's 11th Collegiate Dictionary*, 2004 ed.

³ See Toby Fulwiler, *College Writing: A Personal Approach to Academic Writing* (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1991) 78.

Your Name

***Sample Introduction to a Literary Essay
Formatted for Submission in MLA Style***Prof. Anderson *(professor's name)*English ??? *(course name)*Day Month Year *(due date)*Women and Poe: *(title)*Idealization and Misogyny *(subtitle)*

As cultural artifacts from the mid-nineteenth century, Edgar Allan Poe's stories and poems give twenty-first century readers insight into the complicated nature of idealized womanhood in his historical moment. Poe's female characters, in particular, are fanciful manifestations of feminine beauty and perfection. These representative women deserve male reverence because they are either silently deferential to their male counterparts or because they are dead and cannot talk back. By looking carefully at the treatment of women in "Annabel Lee" (1849), "The Fall of the House of Usher" (1839, 1845), and "The Black Cat" (1843, 1845), this essay explores the subtle combination of female idealization, hatred, and power in Poe's texts. In terms of outward description, the male narrators seem to admire the female characters they describe; however, when we consider what actually happens to the women, the narrators exhibit disturbingly misogynist tendencies. According to the perverse universe Poe creates in his texts, women are best left buried beneath their men: if they are uncovered, their power cannot be so easily suppressed.

Begin paragraph two....

Topic--Women and Poe's texts

This hypothetical paper explores female idealization, male misogyny, and power relations in Poe's texts. Through close textual analysis, most of the paper demonstrates that idealization and misogyny exist in Poe's writings and discusses male/female power relations in the texts. Because Poe's works are a part of mid-nineteenth century American culture, the final section addresses cultural ideas about American womanhood as they are reflected in these representative stories and poems.

Some General Comments about Thesis Statements

A thesis statement delivers your main idea to your reader and gives your major reasons for what your essay is about to say. In other words, it indicates what you intend to prove throughout the rest of your discussion. In general, your essay should create an argument: you are moving from your thesis through your evidence to a logical conclusion. Therefore, a thesis must be more than a simple statement of topic. For example, if your thought-process begins with the idea that two texts discuss similar issues, then your introduction must explain what the issues are that the texts have in common, and it must present your thesis—the organizing force that will flow through the rest of your essay. Sometimes a thesis can be developed from a topic by simply adding a “because” clause. Many times professors emphasize that the thesis should be stated in one sentence at the end of the introduction; however, a sophisticated thesis will require more than one sentence. Here are a few (truly basic) examples.

Topic: Parents can have both positive and negative effects on their children. The parent/child relationship is a significant one.

Thesis: Derek’s experience in Kaye’s *American History X* indicates that parental influence is significant because children depend upon their parents for social guidance and early education. Without positive role models, unknowing or undereducated children run the risk of hurting themselves when they look to others for leadership.

Topic: Douglass’s *Narrative* and Sayles’s *Matewan* both show oppression, violence, and racial tension.

Thesis: Douglass’s *Narrative* and Sayles’s *Matewan* both show the problems that come from oppression, violence, and racial tension. Whether the workers are slaves in the early nineteenth century or miners in the early twentieth century, these texts teach their audiences that, when people are overpowered by oppression, they will fight back.

Topic: Douglass’s *Narrative* and Sayles’s *Matewan* both deal with the problematic idea of the American dream.

Thesis: Douglass’s *Narrative* and Sayles’s *Matewan* show how workers have endured exploitation and been abused by absolute power, and both texts demonstrate that it is possible to overcome such adversity. *Matewan*’s story ends in death and Douglass’s *Narrative* in freedom; however, through viewing the film’s tragedy the audience finds hope, whereas in Douglass’s freedom he and his readers uncover a new level of despair. These two endings—and their relative closure or lack thereof—push their audiences to understand the mixed nature of the American dream.

Topic: Whitman and Douglass love freedom and democracy. They both teach us to be non-conformists.

Thesis: Although Whitman and Douglass describe two different visions of the mid-nineteenth century United States, we must recognize that both of these authors love the idea of America when it represents freedom and democracy. Ultimately, they are in favor of non-conformity. These writers see the problems the nineteenth-century United States must face, and they push their audiences to change rather than to retain the status quo.

<i>Introduction: Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Guidelines</i>
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MLA style refers primarily to three issues of professional formatting:

- (1.) the ***formatting for submission*** of your paper (see p. 3 of this document)
- (2.) the ***in-text citation format*** within your paper (see pp. 14-20)
- (3.) the format for the list of ***Works Cited*** at the end of your paper (see pp. 6-13)

MLA In-Text Citation Format

See pp. 14-20 for additional explanation and examples.

As he creates the “frame” for his “human being” (31), Frankenstein says that he “pursued nature to her hiding places” as he “dabbled among the unhallowed damps of the grave, or tortured the living animal to animate lifeless clay” (32). In “Possessing Nature: The Female in *Frankenstein*” (1988), Anne K. Mellor interprets this pursuit as a violent one when she explains, “at every level Victor Frankenstein is engaged upon a rape of nature, a violent penetration and usurpation of the female’s ‘hiding places,’ of the womb” (281).

Note: I have introduced each quotation and included the name of the speaker or author in that signal phrase. In this case, it is the first time I am citing the critic Anne K. Mellor in my paper; therefore, I have included the full information regarding the source. In subsequent citations I can simply refer to Mellor by using her last name. Look carefully at how I have included the page number at the end of each quotation. Be precise: place the page number reference after the end quotation mark and before the period. Do not use the author’s last name in the parenthetical page reference unless absolutely necessary (only if, for some reason, authorship is not clear from context).

Corresponding MLA Entries on a List of Works Cited

See pp. 6-13 for additional explanation and examples.

REPUBLISHED BOOK WITH AN EDITOR

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. 1818. Ed. J. Paul Hunter. New York: Norton, 1996. Print.

INTRODUCTION, PREFACE, FOREWORD, OR AFTERWORD

Hunter, J. Paul. Preface. *Frankenstein*. By Mary Shelley. New York: Norton, 1996. vii-xii. Print.

WORK IN AN ANTHOLOGY

Mellor, Anne K. “Possessing Nature: The Female in *Frankenstein*.” *Frankenstein: A Norton Critical Edition*. Ed. J. Paul Hunter. New York: Norton, 1996. 274-286. Print.

Individual Works (e.g., Books)

Works Cited Entries for Books and Republished Books

According to the *MLA Handbook*, “To cite a republished book—for example, a paperback version of a book originally published in a clothbound version—give the original publication date, followed by a period, before the publication information for the book you are citing” (171). Readers usually appreciate having the original date of publication for republished works of literature.

Lastname, Firstname.	—author’s last name and first, separated by comma
<i>Title of Book.</i>	—in <i>italics</i> (<i>italicize</i> titles; do not underline)
Original date of publication.	—if reprint
Ed. Editor's Name(s).	—if there is one
Edition.	—if labeled as a 2nd or subsequent edition
City of Publication: Publisher, Year.	—include state abbreviation if necessary
Medium of publication consulted.	—Print (actual book in your hand as opposed to an online copy of the book)
[OR] Medium of publication consulted.	—[OR] <i>Name of Database</i> . Web. Date of access. (PDF of a book posted in a library database or at a website—see Shelley examples below)

Works Cited

- Chabon, Michael. *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay*. New York: Picador, 2000. Print.
- Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage: An Episode of the American Civil War*. 1895. Ed. Fredson Bowers. Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1975. Print.
- Modern Language Association. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th ed. New York: Modern Language Association, 2009. Print.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*. 1831. Ed. Maurice Hindle. London and New York: Penguin Classics, 1992. Print.
- Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft. *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*. Boston: Cornhill Publishing Company, 1922. *Google Books*. Web. 30 Sep. 2009.
- Twain, Mark. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. 1885. Ed. Gerald Graff and James Phelan. 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2004. Print.

Anthologies

Works Cited Entries for a Work in an Anthology or Scholarly Collection

Anthologies are collections of works by multiple authors—e.g., the Norton anthologies; *or* collections of poetry, essays, short stories; *or* textbooks containing various works. According to section 5.5.6 of the *MLA Handbook*, “Often the works in anthologies have been published before. If you wish to inform your reader of the date when a previously published piece other than a scholarly article first appeared, you may follow the title of the piece with the year of original publication and a period” (158). As I mentioned on the previous page, readers appreciate having the original date of publication for republished works of literature.*

Lastname, Firstname.	—of the author of the work you have cited
Title of Work.	—the title of the work, either italicized or in quotation marks, depending on genre of work
Original date(s) of publication.	—if a republished work*
<i>Title of Collection.</i>	—the title of the anthology (italicized b/c it’s a book title)
Editor's name(s).	—the editor of the anthology
Number of edition.	—if the book is labeled as a 2nd or subsequent edition
Volume number.	—if a multivolume work (such as the Norton anthologies)
City of Publication: Publisher, Year.	—include state abbreviation if necessary
Inclusive pagination for the work.	—for the work you are citing—i.e., inclusive page numbers within the collection for the complete document
Medium of publication consulted.	—Print.
[OR]	
Medium of publication consulted. [see p. 6 for explanation]	— <i>Name of Database</i> . Web. Date of Access.

Works Cited

- Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*. 1899, 1902. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. Ed. Stephen Greenblatt. 8th ed. Vol. 2. New York: Norton, 2006. 1891-1947. Print.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel. “Young Goodman Brown.” 1835. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. Ed. Robert S. Levine and Arnold Krupat. 7th ed. Vol. B. New York: Norton, 2007. 1289-1298. Print.
- Trilling, Lionel. “A Certain Formal Aptness.” 1948. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: A Case Study in Critical Controversy*. Ed. Gerald Graff and James Phelan. 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2004. 283-284. Print.

*Note: the various Norton anthologies usually list the dates of composition and of publication at the end of each individual work. The date of composition is placed at the end of the work at the left margin. The date of original publication is placed at the end of the work at the right margin. *Usually the date of publication is the relevant date in terms of formatting a list of works cited.*

Introductions & Prefaces
 Works Cited Entries for an Introduction, a Preface, a Foreword, or an Afterword
 (or for other labeled sections—e.g., a Chronology)

Lastname, Firstname.	—of the writer of the introduction
“Title of Introduction.”	—or preface or whatever applies (if it has a special title)
Introduction.	—or preface, foreword, afterword (whichever it is)
<i>Title of Work.</i>	—the title of the book that is being introduced
By Firstname Lastname.	—the author (or editor) of the book that is being introduced; use By Lastname (if author’s own introduction)
City of Publication: Publisher, Year.	—include state abbreviation if necessary
Pages for the work.	—for the work you are citing—i.e., inclusive page numbers within the collection for the complete document
Medium of publication consulted. [OR]	—Print.
Medium of publication consulted. [see p. 6 for explanation]	— <i>Name of Database.</i> Web. Date of Access.

Works Cited

Cox, Keith. “*A Tale of Two Cities: An Indelible Vision of the French Revolution.*” Introduction.

A Tale of Two Cities. By Charles Dickens. New York: Pocket Books, 2004. ix-xv. Print.

Davidson, Cathy N. Preface. *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America.* By

Davidson. New York: Oxford UP, 1986. 3-14. Print.

Graff, Gerald, and James Phelan. Preface. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: A Case Study in*

Critical Controversy. By Mark Twain. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2004. iii-vii. Print.

Hindle, Maurice. Introduction. *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus.* By Mary Shelley.

London and New York: Penguin Classics, 1992. vii-xliii. Print.

Journal Articles

Works Cited Entries for Scholarly Journal Articles

Print Journal Articles

Author (s).

“Article Title.”

Title of Journal v.i (YYYY): pages.

Medium of publication consulted. (in this case, Print)

I have copy/pasted the following explanation directly from the *MLA Handbook*, section 5.4.2: “In general, after the title of the article, give the journal title (italicized), the volume number, a period, the issue number, the year of publication (in parentheses), a colon, the inclusive page numbers, a period, the medium of publication consulted, and a period” (138). Here is their example:

Piper, Andrew. “Rethinking the Print Object: Goethe and the Book of Everything.” *PMLA* 121.1 (2006): 124-38. Print.

Digital Copies of Print Journal Articles from Online Databases

When you are using an online edition of the article, you are using a different medium of publication, so you have to adjust accordingly. Here is the Modern Language Association’s new explanation:

To cite a work from a periodical in an online database, such as an article, a review, an editorial, or a letter to the editor, begin the entry by following the recommendations [see directly above] for citing works in print periodicals, but drop the medium of original publication (Print). A periodical article on the Web may not include page numbers. If possible, give the inclusive page numbers or, when pagination is not continuous, the first page number and a plus sign; if pagination is not available, use *N. pag.* Conclude the entry with the following items:

1. Title of the database (italicized)
2. Medium of publication consulted (Web)
3. Date of access (day, month, and year).

As I am sure you can see, this formatting can get a little tricky. See next page for a series of examples copy/pasted directly from the *MLA Handbook*, section 5.6.4 (192-193).

Journal Articles, contd.

Chan, Evans. "Postmodernism and Hong Kong Cinema." *Postmodern Culture* 10.3 (2000): N. pag. *Project Muse*. Web. 5 June 2008.

Evangelista, Stefano. Rev. of *Victorian and Edwardian Responses to the Italian Renaissance*, ed. John E. Law and Lene Østermark-Johansen. *Victorian Studies* 46.4 (2006): 729-31. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 12 Mar. 2007.

France, Anatole. "Pour la Paix, pour la Liberté." *New Age* 5 Sept. 1907: 297-98. *The Modernist Journals Project*. Web. 5 June 2008.

Lal, Ananda. Letter. *TDR* 51.3 (2007): 17-18. *Project Muse*. Web. 30 Nov. 2007.

Miller, Steven, and Sara Guyer, eds. *Literature and the Right to Marriage*. Spec. issue of *Diacritics* 35.4 (2005): 1-124. *Project Muse*. Web. 5 June 2008.

Tolson, Nancy. "Making Books Available: The Role of Early Libraries, Librarians, and Booksellers in the Promotion of African American Children's Literature." *African American Review* 32.1 (1998): 9-16. *JSTOR*. Web. 5 June 2008.

Bonus Information about Magazine and Newspaper Articles

Magazine and newspaper articles found in online databases follow the same pattern in terms of adding the medium of publication. Use the appropriate format (for a magazine or newspaper article) and then add the database information. Go to the Online Writing Lab (sponsored by Purdue University) for information about how to format periodical articles: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/08/>.

Author (s).

"Article Title."

Rev. of Performance Title, by Author/Director/Artist.

Name of Magazine DD Month YYYY: pages.

Title of Database.

Medium of publication consulted.

Date of access.

—if the article happens to be a review

—name (in italics) day month year: inclusive pages

—title (in italics)

—Web

—day month year

Updike, John. "Down the River." Review of *The Annotated Uncle Tom's Cabin*, by Harriet

Beecher Stowe, ed. Henry Louis Gates. *New Yorker* 6 Nov. 2006: 116-119. *Academic*

Search Premier. Web. 1 Dec. 2007.

Websites
Works Cited Only on the Web
*(i.e., works that have **never** existed as print editions)*

1. Author. —if no author is listed, then begin with the article title
2. “Article Title.” —as always, article titles are indicated by quotation marks
3. *Name of Website.* —italicized (begin here if you are citing an entire website)
4. Site’s Publisher, date of publication. —give the name of the site’s owner or sponsor, and then use a comma to connect the posting or copyright date for the web article (if no date is available, use the abbreviation *n.d.*)
5. Medium of publication —Web
6. Date of Access —date that you were online at the site

Works Cited

Author. “Article Title.” *Name of Website.* Site’s Publisher, date of publication. Web. Date of access.

Cullen, Dave. “The Depressive and the Psychopath: At Last We Know Why the Columbine Killers Did It.” *Slate.* Washington Post / Newsweek Interactive Co., 20 Apr. 2004. Web. 5 May 2009.

“de Kooning, Willem.” *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online.* Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2008. Web. 15 May 2008.

Illinois State Board of Education. *The New Illinois Learning Standards for English Language Arts Incorporating the Common Core.* State of Illinois, 2011. Web. 8 Nov. 2011. <http://www.isbe.net/common_core>. **

Modugno, Joseph R. “Introduction to ‘The Duston Family.’” *Hawthorne in Salem.* North Shore Community College, Danvers, MA, 2010. Web. 30 Sep. 2010.

O’Connor, Beth. “Censorship in the Classroom: Understanding Controversial Issues.” *Read Write Think.* International Reading Association / National Council of Teachers of English, 2010. Web. 11 Feb. 2010.

“Official Sherman Alexie Biography.” *ShermanAlexie.com.* FallsApart Productions, 2010. Web. 11 Feb. 2010.

** In the ISBE example, I’ve cited a corporate author and an entire website (or major subsection of the ISBE main site); therefore, I do not have a separate article title in quotation marks. The optional placement of the URL is appropriate, though not required, in such cases.

Websites, contd.
 Works on the Web Cited with Print Publication Data
 (i.e., print works that have been **republished** on the web)

When available, give all of the original source information for the document (original publication information for the article, novel, short story, poem...). To be considered reliable, academic websites should have all of the original publication information for the electronic version of the text that is posted, but sometimes they do not (see the Emerson entry below, where there is a publication date, but no publisher or location; or see the Whitman entry, where there is a date and location, but no publisher). Format whatever print bibliographical data you have according to the appropriate MLA style for the original document. For example, note that the online text of Hawthorne's story comes from the nineteenth-century magazine in which it was originally published in 1836; therefore, I used the MLA **magazine format** to give the original publication information. In the Whittier example, the online text of his essay comes from his 1831 collection, *Legends of New England*, so I used the MLA **anthology format** to give the original publication information.

Here is how the Modern Language Association explains this situation in the *MLA Handbook*, section 5.6.2 (187):

If the nonperiodical work you are citing also appeared in print, you may determine that it is important to include the bibliographic data for the print publication as part of your entry. A book that was scanned for access in a database, for example, is usually cited in this way.... Begin the entry with the relevant facts about print publication.... Instead of concluding with *Print* as the medium of publication, record the following information in sequence:

1. Title of the database or Web site (italicized)
2. Medium of publication consulted (Web)
3. Date of access (day, month, and year)

Works Cited

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "The American Scholar." 1837. *RWE.org - The Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Web. 10 Feb. 2008.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. "The Duston Family." *The American Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge* May 1836: 395-97. *Hawthorne in Salem*. Web. 30 Sep. 2010.

Whitman, Walt. *Leaves of Grass*. Brooklyn, 1855. *The Walt Whitman Archive*. Web. 12 Mar. 2007.

Whittier, John Greenleaf. "The Mother's Revenge." *Legends of New England (1831): A Facsimile Reproduction*. Gainesville, FL: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1965. 125-131. *American Verse Project*. Web. 1 Dec. 2007.

Movies (and Television)

Works Cited Entries for Films

- * *Title of Film.*
- Screenwriter. --*only if relevant*
- * Director. (Dir. = Directed by)
- Producer. (Prod. = Produced by) --*only if relevant*
- * Major Performers. (Perf. = Performed by)
- * Original release date.
- * Distributor/Studio, Year of Release.
- * Medium consulted. (Film, DVD, Videocassette)

Frankenstein. Dir. James Whale. Prod. Carl Laemmle. Perf. Colin Clive, Mae Clark, John Boles, and Boris Karloff. 1933. Universal, 2004. DVD.

Gods and Monsters. Dir. Bill Condon. Ian McKellen, Brendan Fraser, and Lynn Redgrave. 1998. Lions Gate, 2003. DVD.

It's a Wonderful Life. Dir. Frank Capra. Perf. James Stewart, Donna Reed, Lionel Barrymore, and Thomas Mitchell. 1946. Republic, 2001. DVD.

Matewan. Screenplay by John Sayles. Dir. John Sayles. Perf. Chris Cooper, Mary McDonnell, David Strathairn, and James Earl Jones. 1987. Cinecom Entertainment Group, 1987. Videocassette.

A Note about Television

If you plan to write about a television series recorded on DVD, you'll need to do some thinking about how to format such a source. There are too many variables for me to offer an easy standard.... Here is my initial attempt:

1. Title of the episode or segment, if appropriate (in quotation marks)
2. Title of the program or series (italicized)
3. Producer/Creator
4. Name of the network
5. Broadcast date
6. Medium of reception (e.g., Television)
7. Supplementary information (Distributor/Studio, Year of Release. Medium consulted.)

"Anasazi." *The X-Files.* Prod. Chris Carter. FOX. 19 May 1995. Television. 20th Century Fox, 2000. DVD.

Introducing and Integrating Quotations:

Direct Citations and Indirect Citations (Sources Quoted in Other Sources)

Here are two paragraphs from an article taken from an article posted at Time.com:

"I'm going to announce tomorrow that I'm not running for reelection and that I'm going to leave Congress," DeLay, who turns 59 on Saturday, said during a 90-minute interview on Monday. "I'm very much at peace with it." He notified President Bush in the afternoon. DeLay and his wife, Christine, said they had been prepared to fight, but that he decided last Wednesday, after months of prayer and contemplation, to spare his suburban Houston district the mudfest to come. "This had become a referendum on me," he said. "So it's better for me to step aside and let it be a referendum on ideas, Republican values and what's important for this district."

DeLay's fall has been stunningly swift, one of the most brutal and decisive in American history. He had to give up his title of Majority Leader, the No. 2 spot in the House Republican leadership, in September when a Texas grand jury indicted him on charges of trying to evade the state's election law. So he moved out of his palatial suite in the Capitol, where he once brandished a "No Whining" mug during feisty weekly sessions with reporters, and moved across the street to the Cannon House Office Building, home of many freshmen.

Here is the entry on the list of Works Cited for this article posted at the website:

Allen, Mike. "Tom DeLay Tells Why He's Quitting." *Time*. Time Inc., 3 April 2005. Web. 7 February 2006.

There are at least four ways to quote from this article.

In the following examples, I've quoted both Allen (the author) and DeLay (the subject of the article). The highlights in the article are the exact words that I have used in my examples. Note that there are no page numbers because the article does not have reliable pagination.

- (1.) COMMA: Use a comma and a capital letter because you are quoting a complete sentence.

Allen reports, "DeLay's fall has been stunningly swift, one of the most brutal and decisive in American history."

- (2.) THAT: Use the word *that* but no comma or capitalization because you have cut off the beginning of a sentence.

Allen reports that the Republican leader's "fall has been stunningly swift, one of the most brutal and decisive in American history."

- (3.) COLON: Introduce the quote with a complete sentence and use a *colon* because, in this case, the colon means *what follows directly supports what I just wrote*. In the next example, I have included Allen's name in a parenthetical citation because I have not included the author's name in my signal phrase.

According to an article posted at *Time's* website, the Republican leader's resignation is a significant cultural moment: "DeLay's fall has been stunningly swift, one of the most brutal and decisive in American history" (Allen).

- (4.) QUOTED IN: Use the expression *qtd. in* to indicate that you are quoting a source cited within another source. BONUS INFORMATION: Use an ellipsis (three dots) to indicate that you have deleted something from the original. In the following example, I cut out the end of the sentence (note that an ellipsis + a period = four dots).

Indicating his concerns about the upcoming 2006 elections, Delay explains, "This had become a referendum on me.... So it's better for me to step aside and let it be a referendum on ideas, Republican values and what's important for this district" (qtd. in Allen).

Here are the same four examples—this time with page numbers...

The previous examples were based on an electronic source without reliable page numbers. If I had a pdf copy or a photocopy of an article with its original pagination, then I would include the page number in parentheses at the end of the quotation. Here are the same examples with a page number. It's a fake number, by the way; this article was never actually published in the print edition of *Time* magazine.

- (1.) COMMA: Use a comma and a capital letter because you are quoting a complete sentence.

Allen reports, "DeLay's fall has been stunningly swift, one of the most brutal and decisive in American history" (23).

- (2.) THAT: Use the word *that* but no comma or capitalization because you have cut off the beginning of a sentence.

Allen reports that the Republican leader's "fall has been stunningly swift, one of the most brutal and decisive in American history" (23).

- (3.) COLON: Introduce the quote with a complete sentence and use a *colon* because, in this case, the colon means *what follows directly supports what I just wrote*. I included Allen's name in my parenthetical citation because I have not included him in my signal phrase. Note that the title of the magazine is italicized.

According to an article in *Time* magazine, the Republican leader's resignation is a significant cultural moment: "Delay's fall has been stunningly swift, one of the most brutal and decisive in American history" (Allen 23).

- (4.) QUOTED IN: Use the expression *qtd. in* to indicate that you are quoting a source from within another source. BONUS INFORMATION: Use an ellipsis (three dots) to indicate that you have deleted something from the original. In the following example, I cut out the end of the sentence (note that an ellipsis + a period = four dots).

Indicating his concerns about the upcoming 2006 elections, Delay explains, "This had become a referendum on me.... So it's better for me to step aside and let it be a referendum on ideas, Republican values and what's important for this district" (qtd. in Allen 23).

Integrating Quotations—Various Literary Works

Standard Quotation Integration: *If a quotation runs for one to four typed lines, incorporate it into the main body of your paragraph. Do not set it off from the margin. Use a slash [/] to indicate a line break. Retain all of the original's capitalization.*

[Example #1--quoting verse]

After his encounter with the Ghost, Hamlet exclaims: “The time is out of joint--O cursed spite, / That ever I was born to set it right!” (1.5.197-98). In this moment, Hamlet expresses the equivocalness which haunts him throughout the play. He recognizes that it is his responsibility to revenge his father’s “foul and most unnatural murder” (1.5.25), and yet he wishes that this duty “to set it right” were not his.

[Example #2--quoting prose--online source, no pagination]

As Gilman’s narrator degenerates, she begins to see “dim shapes” in the wallpaper. Eventually she explains what she thinks she sees: “Sometimes I think there are a great many women behind [the front pattern of the wallpaper], and sometimes only one, and she crawls around fast, and her crawling shakes it all over.” At this point, although the narrator sees herself in her singular situation, she simultaneously sees herself as one among many women.

Integrating Long Quotations: *If a quotation runs to more than four typed lines, set it off from your text by beginning a new line, indenting one inch from the left margin, and typing it double-spaced (without adding quotation marks). Make sure that you discuss the significance of the long quotation thoroughly. Otherwise it will look like you are "padding" your paper's length with long quotes.*

[Example #3--quoting four or more lines of verse]

After he catches Claudius in his “Mousetrap” (3.2.235), Hamlet passionately calls himself to action. He exclaims:

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
 When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
 Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood,

And do such bitter business as the day
 Would quake to look on. (3.2.387-91)

Hamlet, in this dark hour, rallies himself to do his vengeful duty; however, his excited state of mind inspires him to speak brutal language rather than to act out his brutal revenge.

This paragraph could go on to discuss the idea that Hamlet talks and thinks, but refuses to act. He makes another excuse and does not kill Claudius when he finds him alone immediately after this statement. Instead, he goes to Gertrude's chamber and abuses her with harsh-language. . . .

[Example #4--quoting four or more lines of prose]

The creature actually gains his creator's sympathy as he relates the story of his happy, if vicarious, stay with the DeLacey family and of his later disillusionment and despair.

Frankenstein explains:

I thought of the promise of virtues which he had displayed on the opening of his existence, and the subsequent blight of all kindly feeling by the loathing and scorn which his protectors had manifested towards him.... After a long pause of reflection, I concluded that the justice due both to him and my fellow creatures demanded of me that I should comply with his request. (100)

At this point in the narrative, Frankenstein realizes that he owes his creation some form of recompense for all of his suffering, and he acknowledges the creature's right to happiness and to "justice." Frankenstein begins to take on some responsibility for his creature's well-being and attempts to live up to the God-like role that he has disregarded since the moment when he "so negligently bestowed" the "spark" of life upon his creation (66).

Quoting in General: *As you consider the final example (see next page)--and as you integrate quotations as you write--think about the following aspects of quotation integration:*

- the difference between quoting verse and quoting prose
- spacing of indentations
- spacing before and after page number citations
- placement of periods (and punctuation in general)
- placement of and when to use quotation marks
- how to use and to space an ellipsis
- the different meanings of an ellipsis

[Example #5--a well-developed body paragraph with good quotation integration]

In addition to other changes in Rowlandson's perception, her outlook evolves in terms of the Puritan society to which she belongs. Before her capture, Rowlandson describes herself as living "in health and wealth, wanting nothing" (266). After exposure to the terrible consequences of the battle between the English and the Native American Indians—including witnessing severe beatings, suffering extreme hunger, and watching her own child die—she realizes the extent of the vanity abundant in her society. Rowlandson learns through her unfortunate experience that, at any given moment, she could once again be "in sickness, and wounds, and death, having nothing but sorrow and affliction." The small problems that once seemed so major, she now dismisses as "but a shadow, a blast, a bubble, and things of no continuance." At the end, as she has throughout the narrative, Rowlandson stresses that she and the other Puritans "must rely on God himself, and our whole dependence must be upon him" (266), but she places even more emphasis on this belief after she realizes that she has gained something through her afflictions. Overall, Rowlandson states her new perspective best: "If trouble from smaller matters begin to arise in me, I have something at hand to check myself with.... I have learned to look beyond present and smaller troubles, and to be quieted under them. As Moses said, 'Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord' (Exodus 14.13)" (266-267).

What is particularly interesting, however, is the fact that Rowlandson's narrative does not consistently support this conclusive philosophical stance....

At this point—and after all of the examples—do you understand how to integrate quotations into your own paragraphs? If you want additional help, see me for more information. I will lend you one of my style manuals. Accurate page number documentation is critical. Without it, you are committing plagiarism. By the way, here is the MLA works cited entry for Rowlandson's narrative:

Rowlandson, Mary. *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*. 1682. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. Ed. Wayne Franklin, Philip F. Gura, and Arnold Krupat. 7th ed. Vol. A. New York: Norton, 2007. 235-267. Print.

Citing Line Numbers in Common Literature

Here is what the *MLA Handbook* says about line numbers in literary works. See section 6.4.8:

In a reference to a commonly studied prose work, such as a novel or play, that is available in several editions, it is helpful to provide more information than just a page number from the edition used; a chapter number, for example, would help readers to locate a quotation in any copy of a novel. In such a reference, give the page number first, add a semicolon, and then give other identifying information, using appropriate abbreviations: “(130; ch. 9),” “(271; bk. 4, ch. 2).”

In *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Mary Wollstonecraft recollects many “women who, not led by degrees to proper studies, and not permitted to choose for themselves, have indeed been overgrown children” (185; ch. 13, sec. 2).

When you cite an unpaginated source, the chapter number or similar designation may be the only identifying information you can give.

Douglass notes that he had “no accurate knowledge” of his date of birth, “never having had any authentic record containing it” (ch. 1).

In citing commonly studied verse plays and poems, omit page numbers altogether and cite by division (act, scene, canto, book, part) and line, with periods separating the various numbers—for example, “*Iliad* 9.19” refers to book 9, line 19, of Homer’s *Iliad*. If you are citing only line numbers, do not use the abbreviation *l.* or *ll.*, which can be confused with numerals. Instead, initially use the word *line* or *lines* and then, having established that the numbers designate lines, give the numbers alone. (226-27)

Therefore, from my point of view (me = Dr. Anderson), you do not have to cite the page number if you have standardized line numbers, though I prefer to do so in my own writing because it makes it easier for the reader/professor to find things quickly. If you want to give the page number and the line number, first give the page number in the anthology and then give the line numbers. The first time, use the word *line* or *lines* to indicate that the second number is a line number. After that, your reader understands that the second number is a line number. So, if you are citing verse from *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, the following examples are equally acceptable:

WITHOUT PAGE NUMBERS

Yeats writes, “Things fall apart; the center cannot hold; / Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world” (lines 3-4). He then observes, “Surely some revelation is at hand; / Surely the Second Coming is at hand” (9-10).

WITH PAGE NUMBERS

Yeats writes, “Things fall apart; the center cannot hold; / Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world” (2036; lines 3-4). He then observes, “Surely some revelation is at hand; / Surely the Second Coming is at hand” (2037; 9-10).

PLAYS: If you are citing a line from a play, simply use the page number if it does not have act, scene, and line divisions. Otherwise, cite the act, scene, and line in regular numbers. For example: The English ambassador’s mistimed report at the end of *Hamlet* becomes the launching point for Tom Stoppard’s play. Hamlet’s blunt report “That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead” (5.2.373) provides an opening for the postmodern playwright’s meditations on art and endings.

COMMON ABBREVIATIONS:

chapter (ch.); book (bk.); volume (vol.); part (pt.); section (sec.); paragraph (par.)

Integrating Quotations—Movies and Television

A movie title is like a book. *Italicize* the title when you are referring to the film. An episode of a television show is like a short story or poem contained in an anthology. The episode's individual title should be in "quotation marks" and the title of the television program should be *italicized*.

When writing about film or TV, direct quoting is sometimes difficult because you have to backtrack and use closed captioning to note exact dialogue. You'll just have to do that extra transcription work if you want to write about such texts.

When you are quoting or paraphrasing characters from a film or television program, you cannot have page numbers. Therefore, when you are quoting a character or the narrator, introduce the quotation with a specific signal phrase. Here are few brief examples.

Direct Quotation

Early in *Matewan*, Joe delivers an important speech to the coal miners. He accuses them of fighting among themselves rather than fighting against the company. Kenehan cuts them deeply when he points to Few Clothes Johnson and says, "You think this man is your enemy? Huh? This is a worker! Any union keeps this man out ain't a union, it's a goddam club."

For example, in the "Anasazi" episode at the end of the second season of *The X-Files*, Albert Hosteen indicates the mysterious nature of both the physical and psychological terrain of Mulder's ongoing search for the truth: "In the desert, things find a way to survive. Secrets are like this, too. They push their way up through the sands of deception so men can know them."

Paraphrase

Early in *Matewan*, Joe delivers an important speech to the coal miners. He accuses them of fighting among themselves rather than fighting against the company. Kenehan cuts them deeply when he points to Few Clothes Johnson and says that they will never form a powerful union if they exclude black workers from their membership. All the miners will have is a useless club.

In "The Homecoming" Marissa insists on accompanying Ryan when he briefly has to return to Chico. The juxtaposition of the Newport Beach girl with Ryan's old neighborhood allows us, as viewers, to consider the way that *The OC* treats issues of class and the gaps that exist between various socio-economic groups. Marissa comments that she never really thought about Ryan's life before he arrived in Orange County, and this acknowledgement seems to imply that she may have been so sheltered that she has never actually seen a working class neighborhood previous to this point.

Evaluation Criteria for Literary Criticism and Papers with Research

by Matthew S. S. Johnson, PhD

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- 1) Paper must present and develop a strong main claim or thesis that is an actual argument (that is, the main claim is NOT merely an opinion or a description). Think of the thesis in two parts: First, the claim itself. Second, commentary on the *significance* of that claim (this latter element could be addressed in the conclusion, rather than the introduction, of the essay). Some notion of why the claim is important, what we learn from it, or how it inspires us to think differently will serve these papers well.
- 2) Paper must provide evidence from outside sources that is than *used* and/or *interpreted* by the paper's author and clearly shown to develop and (ideally) complicate the overall argument/main claim. The source material can be used to support claims, certainly, but also can be used to complicate, counterargue, challenge, shape, illustrate, show by metaphor/example, prove, etc. Source material cannot stand on its own, but rather must be "dealt with" in some way. Research papers in particular are NOT "data dumps" nor are they mere "reports" of information. Literary criticism and research papers must be written with purpose, and that purpose must be communicated in some way in the paper.
- 3) Papers must be logically and effectively organized – well developed paragraphs and smooth transitions between them. General rule of thumb: if paragraphs can be taken out or put in multiple positions without changing the argument flow substantially or requiring major and careful revision, then the structure of the paper has not been considered carefully enough.
- 4) The essays must do MORE than merely summarize literary or other outside sources (research). The essays must do MORE than compare different texts (compare and contrast is fine, but it must, again, be done with *purpose*). The essays must move beyond the integrated source material – they must communicate the essay-author's own idea(s).
- 5) The prose must maintain good diction and proper mechanics (readability). The sentence structure must be varied.
- 6) The essays should have interesting and/or catchy titles that somehow relate to the paper's main claim or content in general.
- 7) The integrated source material and the works cited page must be in a proper documentation format (for example, MLA or APA).
- 8) Remember:
 - The research paper must present a plausible case that is based on careful argument-making (thesis development, main claim development) that uses evidence and support to some defined purpose.
 - The literary criticism paper must have some claim; it must do more than summarize. It can contain biographical elements of the authors involved, of course, but such information must be pertinent to the argument that the paper is making.

College Writing: Superficial Advice

- (1.) While writing, save frequently on your own memory device. Back up your documents by saving them elsewhere as well (in your Gmail inbox or wherever). (*Duh!*)
- (2.) **Use professional formatting guidelines.** English departments follow Modern Language Association (MLA) style. If you are an English major, you should own and know how to use the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. The newest version is the 7th edition (2009): <http://www.mla.org/store/CID24/PID363>.
- (3.) Always keep a writing manual next to your computer. All in-text citations in this document refer to the *MLA Handbook*. Purdue's OWL (Online Writing Lab) is another useful resource for questions about mechanics and professional style: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>.
- (4.) As I said in #2, use the professional style guidelines appropriate to your discipline (usually MLA or APA). To find out which style is appropriate, check in the major journal for your field. You should be able to tell from their information on submissions—or, bring in an article from a major journal in your field, and we can figure out the style preference. If your professor does not care, use the one you prefer. Modern Language Association style (MLA style) is required by English departments and generally considered the default style. **Here are the general document specifications:**
 - PROGRAM -- Microsoft Word (save as a .doc [Word 97-2003] for universal access)
 - FONT -- Times New Roman (or some other professional font)
 - SIZE -- 12 point
 - DOUBLE-SPACE -- for the body of your paper, set the computer on double-space with **first line** paragraph indentation at 0.5 inch (*never insert spaces manually*)
 - 1-INCH MARGINS -- top, bottom, left, right
 - PAGE NUMBERS -- top right corner with your last name
 - IDENTIFICATION -- label your paper with your name and course information (left margin, first page only)
 - TITLE -- Give your paper a descriptive title. (Don't be too cute....)
 - BIBLIOGRPAHY -- list of Works Cited -- for the bibliographic list, set the computer on double-space with **hanging** paragraph indentation at 0.5 inch (*never insert spaces manually*). Begin your list on a new page at the end of your paper.
 - HARD COPY -- to submit your paper, print out a clean copy; use black ink
- (5.) Epigraphs are fine (epigraph = an offset quotation at the beginning of a paper), but do not begin your introduction or end your conclusion with a quotation. Do not take sage excerpts from quotation websites. Unless you have read the original—or, at least, understand the original and its context—do not borrow a quotation. Such borrowing is inordinately lame... seriously, *totally* lame.

- (6.) Whether in text or in your list of works cited, when mentioning titles of works, know when to use quotation marks and when to *italicize*. Always capitalize the major words in a title. See *MLA Handbook*, section 3.6, for more information about titles of works (86-92).

Italicize

—titles of long texts, i.e., works published independently—books (novels, anthologies, non-fiction, etc.), magazines, newspapers, long poems, plays, films, television programs, full-albums (CD titles), pamphlets

“Quotation Marks”

—titles of short texts, i.e., works within other texts—newspaper and magazine articles, articles or works in an anthology, essays, poems, short stories, individual songs, episodes of television programs, chapter titles

- (7.) Always give the full name of the author, the full name of the text, and the date of publication when you mention a text for the first time. And don't forget that, to form the possessive of *any* singular proper noun (as in an author's name), add an apostrophe and an *s*—even when the proper noun ends in *s*. See *MLA Handbook*, section 3.2.7, for more information about apostrophes (74-75), and see examples directly below.
- (8.) When writing about the author, use his or her last name and spell it correctly. For that matter, make sure you spell all of the titles of the texts and the names of the characters correctly.
- Mary Rowlandson = Rowlandson, as in Rowlandson's captivity narrative
 - Harriet Jacobs = Jacobs, as in Jacobs's slave narrative
 - Jeffrey Eugenides = Eugenides, as in Eugenides's novel
- (9.) While you are writing, continuously ask yourself the following questions:
- Why is this particular idea or quotation important? relevant? significant?
 - What is interesting or original about what I am saying?
 - What is my point? Am I supporting my thesis with evidence?
- (10.) Always use the present tense when discussing literature or writing. For example:
- In “Self-Reliance” Emerson *discusses* his ideas about personal independence. (discusses—not discussed)
 - In that climactic moment when Frankenstein *tears* up the female, he *infuriates* the creature to the point of criminal insanity. (tears & infuriates—not tore & infuriated)
- (11.) Remember the basic characteristics of an expository paragraph:
- topic sentence
 - fluency: ideas flow out of topic (stays on track)
 - clarity: clear and non-repetitive (no major redundancies)
 - focused: one major subject per paragraph
 - substantial: topic is fully explored
 - well-developed: decent length (at least 5 sentences per paragraph?! / 50-75 words?!)
- (12.) Remember the three basic rules of comma use: (1.) to separate clauses in a compound sentence, in this case, placed before a coordinating conjunction; (2.) to set off introductory elements; (3.) to separate words, phrases, and clauses in a series; (4.) to set off nonrestrictive elements. See *MLA Handbook*, section 3.2.2, for more information about commas (66-70).

- (13.) Use the MSWord grammar check feature, but be very, very, very careful. Look up sentence constructions you are unsure about in the *MLA Handbook*. Grammar check suggests too many semi-colons, for example, so be careful when you take the computer-generated suggestions.
- (14.) Run the spell-check—an make sure you personally check the spellings of the proper nouns in your paper. The spelling tool cannot recognize everything (esp. authors' names, characters' names, and geographical locations).
- (15.) Watch your vocabulary and word choice. Do not use your thesaurus indiscriminately—that is, ***do not use words that you cannot define***. Inflated vocabulary creates a weird tone. Accurate word choice is a crucial element in the creation of effective prose. The thesaurus tool is great, but the synonyms it offers you can really throw off your meaning. Have a dictionary on hand to supplement the thesaurus.
- (16.) Again, ***italicize*** titles of books, journals, magazines, newspapers, albums, plays, films, TV shows, websites. **DO NOT UNDERLINE**. The Modern Language Association has moved exclusively to italics to indicate such titles (see # 6 above).
- (17.) Again, **place quotation marks around the titles of short works: for example, newspaper and magazine articles, poems, short stories, songs, episodes of television shows, chapter titles in books** (see #6 above).
- (18.) Though it is appropriate to use quotation marks to draw attention to a particular word or phrase that is misused or used in a special sense, avoid the overuse of quotation marks to imply sarcasm or for emphasis. The punctuation just doesn't work that well to add force to your words. You could use italics for such emphasis if you think you need the gimmick. See *MLA Handbook*, section 3.2.8, for more information about quotation marks (75-76).
- (19.) Avoid using contractions in formal academic writing. See *MLA Handbook*, section 3.2.7, for more information about the use of apostrophes (74-75).
- (20.) Do not use *you* in a formal paper. Except in the case of instructions or directions, *you* is a very awkward word because it is vague as well as bossy and preachy.
- (21.) Do not use the terms *it* or *this* without reinforcing their referents—e.g., what is *it*?! *this* what?! In fact, think about clear pronoun reference in general. For that matter, avoid using the following awkward and vague expressions: ***There is.... There are.... This is because.... It is important because....***
- (22.) Do not use the (completely ineffective) expression ***I feel that...*** or any other equivocations (e.g., ***maybe; I'm not sure, but...***). Such statements weaken your writing and convey to your reader that you don't know what you are talking about. Along these lines, do not say ***of course*** or ***obviously***. Such expressions create an obnoxious tone.
- (23.) When in doubt, don't guess! Ask questions, check the *MLA Handbook*, or use [Purdue's OWL \(Online Writing Lab\)](#). Here are a couple of purchase links to the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed.

MLA: <http://www.mla.org/store/CID24/PID363>

Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/MLA-Handbook-Writers-Research-Papers/dp/1603290249>

General Review: Sentence Writing

See *MLA Handbook*, chapter 3, for more information about the mechanics of writing (63-113).

BASIC SENTENCE

i.e., one independent clause = the subject (noun) + the predicate (expresses what the subject does)

The boy lost his duck.

The narrator in Smith's story describes her complete desperation.

The narrator in Smith's story describes her complete desperation and her lonely hopelessness.

SENTENCE THAT COMBINES TWO INDEPENDENT CLAUSES

i.e., two independent clauses connected with a comma and a coordinating conjunction

The boy searched the neighborhood for a long while, and he eventually found his duck in the local swimming pool.

The narrator in Smith's story describes her complete desperation, but she also explains how she escapes from her terrible situation.

SENTENCE WITH A MODIFIER

i.e., one independent clause connected to one nonrestrictive modifying phrase or clause

The boy felt very guilty about the irresponsible loss of his duck, even though he had searched diligently for hours and hours.

Though he had searched diligently for hours and hours, the boy felt very guilty about the irresponsible loss of his duck.

The narrator describes her complete desperation, which gives Smith's story an air of overwhelming sadness.

AS YOUR SENTENCES BECOME MORE COMPLICATED, CONSIDER THESE OPTIONS FOR PUNCTUATION:

Too many commas, though accurately punctuated, can begin to look awkward.

The boy felt enormously guilty about the irresponsible loss of his duck, and, though he had searched diligently for hours and hours, he would never get over his utter failure as a pet owner.

Try using a dash to replace the first comma. See *MLA Handbook*, section 3.2.5 (71-72).

The boy felt enormously guilty about the irresponsible loss of his duck—and, though he had searched diligently for hours and hours, he would never get over his utter failure as a pet owner.

Try using a semi-colon. See *MLA Handbook*, section 3.2.3 (70).

The boy felt guilty about his dereliction of duty toward his duck; moreover, though he had searched diligently for hours and hours, he would never get over his utter failure as a pet owner.

Some Interesting Sentence Examples

- #1 **AND, BUT, OR, NOR, SO, YET** are coordinating conjunctions. When you connect two independent clauses (sentences that could stand alone), use a coordinating conjunction and a comma.

The pool players in Gwendolyn Brooks's poem think that they are fine, **but** she shows us that they will actually die young as a result of their bad habits.

Nicolette Toussaint explains that American mass culture has a stereotypical image of deafness, **and** she hopes that open communication will begin to solve that problem.

- #2 **BECAUSE** and **ALTHOUGH** are subordinating conjunctions. When you use **BECAUSE** or **ALTHOUGH** at the beginning of a sentence, use a comma at the end of the clause. If you use **BECAUSE** in the middle of your sentence, do not use a comma or a semi-colon to separate the clauses. (*Why not?* Well, it's just a special rule for **BECAUSE**—so, in this case, don't worry about the *why*....)

The narrator's story is inspiring **because** she manages to overcome her desperate loneliness and alienation. [*because* is an exception to the general rule]

Because the narrator manages to overcome her desperate loneliness and alienation, her story is inspiring.

Although Malcolm X conks his hair as a young man, later in life he recognizes the adverse effect of his unthinking conformity to a social norm.

Malcolm X decides to straighten his hair with harsh chemicals **because** he cannot withstand the demands of an entire social system. Like most of us, he succumbs to peer pressure.

Because he cannot withstand the oppressive nature of an entire social system, Malcolm X succumbs to the pressure and decides to conk his hair.

- #3 **HOWEVER** and **THEREFORE** are conjunctive adverbs—i.e., a conjunctive adverb operates like a transitional phrase and modifies an independent clause following another independent clause. Use a semi-colon and a comma with conjunctive adverbs to connect two the independent clauses of the compound sentence.

I think about and admire reading and writing in all of its various forms; **therefore**, I am well-versed in a broad range of genres. My taste for text is democratic.

Marcus Mabry left his impoverished home and its problems to go to college in California; **however**, he remains proud of his family in New Jersey and admires their perseverance in the face of daily struggles.

- #4 Consider using **ALTHOUGH** and **HOWEVER** to create interesting contrasts. As in #3 above, note the use of the semi-colon with **HOWEVER**.

Although Douglass writes about the barbarous and demoralizing effects of slavery in his *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, his final message is hopeful.

Douglass writes about the barbarous and demoralizing effects of slavery in his *Narrative*; **however**, his final message expresses a certain hope for future generations.

Douglass writes about the barbarous and demoralizing effects of slavery in his *Narrative*; his final message, **however**, expresses a hopeful outlook.

- #5 Always try to use the **ACTIVE VOICE** and to simplify sentence structures.

BAD... PASSIVE VOICE

Another point that **is explained by** Douglass **is about** the hypocrisy of the Christian slave-holders. The institution of slavery **is justified by** their misinterpretation of the Bible. [27 words?]

GOOD -- ACTIVE VOICE!

Douglass **points out** that the Christian slave-holders are hypocritical. They **misinterpret** the Bible to justify the institution of slavery. [19 words!]

BAD... PASSIVE VOICE

It is because of this problem of hypocrisy, which **is explained by** Douglass, that his *Narrative* **is complained about** as anti-Christian by some of its readers. [26 words?]

GOOD -- ACTIVE VOICE!

Because Douglass **emphasizes** the hypocritical nature of Southern Christianity, some readers **complain** that his *Narrative* is anti-Christian. [17 words!]

- #6 Remember to use **TRANSITIONS** to help your reader move with you from one idea in your writing to another idea. You can use these words as introductory elements with a comma; between sentence parts when set off with two commas; or as conjunctions with semi-colons.

to compare ideas:

similarly
comparatively
correspondingly
in comparison
in the same way
in a similar manner

to contrast ideas:

on the one hand / on the other hand
conversely
on the contrary
in contrast
in opposition
in a different manner
however

to add ideas:

in addition
furthermore
moreover
as well as
additionally
also

See OWL (Purdue's Online Writing Lab), for a handy list of sentence samples and transitional devices: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/print/general/gl_transition.html

Expository Writing: A Basic Review of the Process

The Writing Process

- Think: let your mind wander.
- Brainstorm on paper or on screen.
- Write a tentative thesis statement (or a beginning topic statement) and a list of ideas (i.e., outline, map, or plan)
- 1st Draft
- Think about your thesis: has it evolved?
- Revise your complete draft. Make sure you focus on a thesis statement.
- Seek advice
 - friends and peers in the class?
 - the Writing Center?
- 2nd Draft
- Edit and revise 2nd draft.
- Final Proofread
- Polished Draft to submit to Professor

The Editing & Proofing Process

1. Print out your draft.
2. Carefully read it aloud to yourself. Better yet, read it aloud with a friend.
3. Thoroughly check over those passages that are difficult to read. Look up the answers to any questions you may have.
4. Think about your structure. Are your sentences complete? Are your paragraphs logically divided? Do your ideas flow?
5. Rewrite awkward sections on screen; or, make corrections on the print-out, and then plug them into the computer.
6. Run the spell-check! Would grammar-check help you?
7. Read over your paper again and again.
8. Print out your polished draft. Read it one last time. If you notice a correction at the last possible minute (when too late to reprint), make the change on your polished copy with a pen or pencil. (Be very neat.)

Writing Center Resources at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

<http://www.siu.edu/IS/WRITING/index.html>

Writing Center Course Offerings

<http://www.siu.edu/IS/WRITING/courseofferings.htm>

English 100 Writing Lab

(1-credit, self-paced courses in grammar or rhetoric modules)

<http://www.siu.edu/IS/WRITING/ENG100.htm>