

# Research and Style Manual (2021 revision)

## Introduction

A research project, whether it is a traditional paper, a video, or a multimedia presentation, is the end product of a thinking process which involves student-centered questioning.

Research is a life skill. We are always seeking information. What car or stereo should I buy? Which college should I choose? Which book should I read next? How can I sell this idea to my boss? How can I convince the school board to act on my proposal? Our ability to use information helps us reach conclusions, make our choices, and communicate more effectively.

Just as the careful car stereo buyer may "research" *Consumer Reports* and ask friends for comments about which model is the best, the careful student researches a topic in the process of thinking through his or her project. He or she consults as many varied, reliable sources as possible, makes notes, asks questions, consults additional sources, and develops a point of view based upon all of the information he or she has found. As students gather information to reach a conclusion or support a hypothesis, they develop lifelong skills of information literacy.

Information literacy is the ability to access, evaluate and use information from multiple formats -- books, newspapers, videos, subscription databases, or the Web. Information literacy is a set of competencies-- skills that will grow with students, even when current operating systems, search engines, or computer platforms are obsolete. Information problem solving skills are required across all disciplines.

# Research and Style Manual

## "Where Do I Start?"

The research process and the writing process are connected. Research is of little value unless you effectively communicate what you have learned. The same skills you use to write an expository paper are used to develop the research paper or project. Developing a clear and focused thesis, sketching an outline, drafting, revising, peer reviewing, and editing all are steps with which you are already familiar.

**The steps that you should take are as follows:**

1. Read about a broad topic with "peripheral vision," looking for subtopics and important terms.
2. Identify a focused topic or question you are interested in investigating.
3. Gather a working source list.
4. Gather information and evaluate the sources of information.
5. Take notes via a local or cloud-based tool or app.
6. Develop a clear and focused thesis.
7. Identify strong supporting points and rank them, making certain the research and logical reasoning support them.
8. Develop an outline, or construct, and complete a mind/concept map.
9. Prepare a rough draft.
10. Add research documentation to the draft.
11. Revise the draft.
12. Have a peer review your work.
13. Revise the draft.
14. Edit the draft.
15. Prepare, proofread, and submit the final copy.

## Collecting Sources

Gather a large list of books, articles, and Web-based information on your topic. Even if you are not sure the source will have what you want, keep accurate information on EVERY source in case you need it later. When using Web pages, you might want to print out the first page of the document, making sure the URL is printed on the page. Locate your sources through the online library catalog, in print and online reference works, online databases and journal indices, other bibliographies, and sources suggested by your teacher or library media specialist.

One of the most useful resources we have available outside of your school library is the online databases offered by local or state library systems or available from your school. Ask your library media specialist for information about access to these.

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## Source and Notes Information

Use a separate page or file for each source of information. Include on the page:

1. All of the publication information needed to include the work on your final WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED page. (This will save time because you will not have to look up the information again.)
2. All of the information on each page in proper MLA format. (Consult the examples on the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) site. There are citation examples for anything you need! It is a good idea to also include the URL of any online source you use..)
3. The call number of the book. (If a book is out or not in the library, you can find it at a later time without looking it up in the online card catalog again - another time saver.)
4. This source page will also include your notes from the source.

## Taking Notes

The easiest way to prepare your research project is to base it on notes which you make as you consult your sources. If you prepare your notes properly, you will find it much easier to organize your material later and to complete your project. Make your notes clear. Doing this from the beginning will save you time later. You shouldn't need to go back to find information you missed.

You will waste time, however, if you take notes on *every* fact on your topic. To avoid this, before you start your note-taking, complete a thesis page which may include:

1. A statement of what you tentatively plan to prove about your topic.
2. Four to five general questions which will help you focus your research.

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## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's work as your own. Plagiarism is theft of intellectual property. The most obvious form of plagiarism consists of stealing an author's exact words and failing to use quotation marks or to cite the author. However, other more subtle degrees of plagiarism exist. To avoid unintentional plagiarism, a writer must be aware of this fact. The following passage is quoted exactly from F. R. Leavis's book *The Great Tradition*. Various revisions of it will demonstrate the difference between plagiarism and proper paraphrasing.

### Original Text by Leavis:

Dickens, as everyone knows, is very capable of sentimentality. We have it in *Hard Times* (though not to any seriously damaging effect) in Stephen Blackpool, the good, victimized working man, whose perfect patience under infliction we are expected to find supremely edifying and irresistibly touching as the agonies are piled on for his martyrdom. But Sissy Jupe is another matter. A general description of her part in the fable might suggest the worst, but actually she has nothing in common with Little Nell: she shares in the strength of the Horse-riding. She is wholly convincing in the function Dickens assigns to her (235). -F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition*. New York: New York University Press, 1964.

### Revision 1:

Charles Dickens, most agree, can be sentimental. We see it in *Hard Times*, (although it doesn't cause any great problems) in Blackpool, who is an honest worker with whom we sympathize because he suffers a lot. Sissy Jupe is different. Although she sounds like a sentimental character, she is very different from Little Nell. She takes part in riding horses, and Dickens makes her very convincing in that role.

### Comment on Revision 1:

Revision 1 demonstrates the work of someone who either intends to commit plagiarism or who doesn't realize what plagiarism is. Plagiarism cannot be avoided just by substituting a few words and transforming some sentences. This version is plagiarism because it copies Leavis's sequence of ideas, a type of fingerprint that will give away the guilty student writer. The student has not cited Leavis as the source and has not used the information meaningfully.

## **Revision 2:**

Sometimes Dickens is sentimental. Examples of his sentimental characters include Blackpool in *Hard Times* and Little Nell. Sissy Jupe is another character that might be considered sentimental at first glance, but she is different. She has greater depth and is more convincing as a character than the others.

## **Comment on Revision 2:**

Examples like Revision 2 typically result from sloppy note taking. The student writer was probably trying to get the bare essentials and intended to put them into his or her own words later. In composing the draft, however, the writer forgot how closely tied these words are to the original. Notice that Revision 2 is limited to the ideas in the original. This revision is plagiarism because the student copied Leavis's ideas without giving him credit and because there is no evidence of the student's own thought here. This version could be saved from plagiarism by citing Leavis as the source of the ideas.

## **Revision 3:**

Dickens' novel *Hard Times* rises above sentimentality. Some characters, for instance, Stephen Blackpool, do appear sentimental. Blackpool exceeds all reasonable expectation in tolerating a drunken woman who repeatedly robs him, runs off, and throws herself on his mercy when she needs help. Likewise, his patient, calm manner towards his bully of an employer (never once does he lose his temper) is unrealistic and calculated to squeeze sympathy from a reader. Sissy Jupe, however, is a more complete character. Instead of making her a mere victim, Dickens develops her role. He gives her a consistent strength and point of view. For example, when her teacher asks if a nation with fifty millions of money was a prosperous nation, she answers, "...I couldn't know whether it was a prosperous nation...unless I knew who had got the money, and whether any of it was mine" (Dickens 982).

## **Comment on Revision 3:**

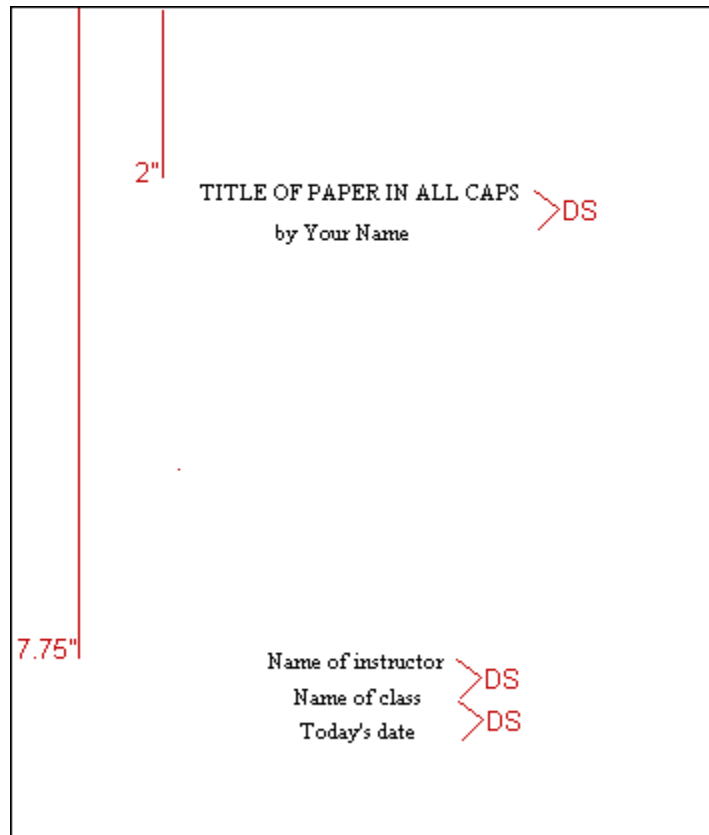
Revision 3 is an example of the proper use of a source. This student has picked up some ideas but has looked for other examples to support them. Notice that this version has its own topic sentence. This student, therefore, was independently following a plan and not simply taking another author's material.

# Research and Style Manual

## Setting Up Your Paper

The completed draft of your project should include the following:

1. A title page, containing the title, your name, the teacher's name, the specific class, and the date of submission.
2. The text of the paper. Number only the pages of the text, beginning with page 2, unless your teacher instructs you otherwise.
3. [Works Cited and Consulted](#) page set-up page.



## Margins and Other Information

Font: Courier New **12**

Margin set-up for entire paper:

1" top, bottom, left and right margins

Center all information on the title page

Start title of paper 1/4 page from top

Title of the paper in ALL CAPS

Double space and type your name

Type name of instructor at 3/4 page

Double space and type name of class

Double space and type today's date

One staple in upper left-hand corner

## MLA QUICK START GUIDE

### GENERAL

- Type your paper on a computer and print it out on standard-size paper (8.5" x 11")
- Double-space your paper
- Set the margins of your document to 1" on all sides
- Create a header that numbers all pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin, starting on the first page of the text of your paper. (Note: Your instructor may ask that you omit the number on your first page. Always follow your teacher's guidelines.)
- Use *italicizing* throughout your essay or paper for highlighting the titles of longer works or for providing emphasis.
- If you have any notes, include them on a page before your *Works Cited and Consulted* page and format them using the same format as found on that page.

### FORMATTING THE FIRST PAGE OF A PAPER WITHOUT A TITLE PAGE

- Do not make a title page for your paper unless specifically requested to do so.
- If there is no title page, provide a double-spaced entry in the top left corner of the first page that includes your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date.
- Create a header that numbers all pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin, starting on the first page of the text of your paper. (Note: Your instructor may ask that you omit the number on your first page. Always follow their guidelines.)
- Center your title on the line below the header, and begin your paper immediately below the title.

Pete Purdue

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Dr. D. Smith

English 9A

11 November 2016

#### Building a Dream: Reasons to Expand the Nauset High School Stadium

During the 2015 season, the Nauset Warriors won the Division 1 Championship, earned their first trip to the Rose Bowl in thirty-four years, and played consistently to sold-out crowds. Looking to the future...

## **MAKING REFERENCE TO THE WORKS OF OTHERS IN YOUR TEXT**

In MLA style, referring to the works of others in your text must be done in two ways. When you make reference to someone else's idea, either through paraphrasing or quoting them directly, you

- provide the author's name (or the title of the work) and the page (or paragraph) number of the work in a parenthetical citation, and
- provide full citation information for the work in your *Works Cited and Consulted* list

MLA format follows the author-page method of citation. This means the author's last name and the page number(s) from which the quotation is taken must appear in the text and a complete reference must appear in your *Works Cited and Consulted* list.

The Purdue Online Writing Lab has overviews and examples for in-text citations on this page.

## **FORMATTING YOUR WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED PAGE**

- Label the page Works Cited and Consulted (do not underline, bold, italicize the words or put them in quotation marks)
- Double-space the entire page. Do not put extra spaces between the entries.
- The first line of an entry is flush with the left-hand margin of the page.
- Each subsequent line of an entry is indented 5 spaces.



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## In-Text Citation

In-text documentation is the newly recognized format for acknowledging borrowed information within your original text. No longer are footnotes or endnotes used, unless you need to clarify or add some information.

### Use in-text documentation to cite a source whenever you:

- use an original idea from one of your sources, whether you quote or paraphrase it
- summarize original ideas from one of your sources
- use factual information that is not common knowledge (Common knowledge is information that recurs in many sources. If you are not certain it is common knowledge, cite to be safe.)
- quote directly from a source
- use a date or fact that might be disputed

The purpose of this format is to give immediate source information without interrupting the flow of the paper. Usually parenthetical citations are placed at the end of a sentence, but they may be placed in the middle. The academic world takes in-text documentation seriously. *Inaccurate documentation is as serious as having no documentation at all.*

Again, the Purdue Owl site provides instruction on in-text citation creation [here](#).

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## Works Cited and Consulted for Grades 7-12

No research paper is complete without a list of the materials from which you have borrowed ideas, facts, opinions, or quotations. You created a running list of sources when you filled out your source cards. Now you must formalize the list to accompany your paper so that a reader can see your sources.

1. Go through your source information, discarding any sources you did not use.
2. The "Works Cited and Works Consulted" page should consist of all works that you specifically quoted, paraphrased, referred to in your text and all works you consulted but did not actually cite in your text.
3. Arrange information sources alphabetically according to the author's last name. If no author is indicated, alphabetize by the first prominent word in the title (ignore A, AN, THE). If the work is published by a society and no author is named, use the society as the author in order to alphabetize.
4. Generally the following publication information should be included and in this order (omit any category that is not applicable):

The entire Works Cited and Consulted page is double-spaced.

Head a new sheet of paper **WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED** in all capital letters and centered at the 1/4 page mark. Do not underline or italicize this title.

Copy the information from the alphabetized source information of all works used in your paper.

Double-space all lines on the **WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED** page.

The first line of each new entry starts at the left-hand margin.

Indent the second and all subsequent lines in each citation half an inch. This is called a hanging indent.

After the last entry, double-space and type your name.

Place the **WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED** page(s) immediately after the last page of the text.

The Purdue Writing Lab site includes examples for each type of source you are citing here and here.



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