

WTW Style Manual for Academic Papers

This is a new manual that W. T. Woodson High School has adopted based on the latest revisions made to the MLA Style Guide. This document is designed as a tool to assist students in writing the many varieties of academic papers required for high school and as a single source of reference for academic writing assignments across the curriculum at Woodson High School.

Since we recognize that college and the world outside of school will have a variety of requirements for technical and academic writing, we encourage students to learn how to read this document as a style manual, for that skill will allow them to be successful meeting the standards for American Psychological Association, Modern Language Association, Chicago, or any of the other style manuals required by colleges and universities.

To access Woodson's mobile library site for the style manual, library catalog and databases go to; <http://m.wtwlibrary.wix.com/wtwlib>

Part I: Format of the Academic Paper

Paper and typeface

- Use only 8 1/2 –by-11 inch paper.
- Choose Calibri or Times New Roman 12-point font.
- Print on one side of the paper in black ink.
- Always keep an electronic copy of your paper. We suggest saving all work on jump drives or on your email account so that you can access them as you need them at school.

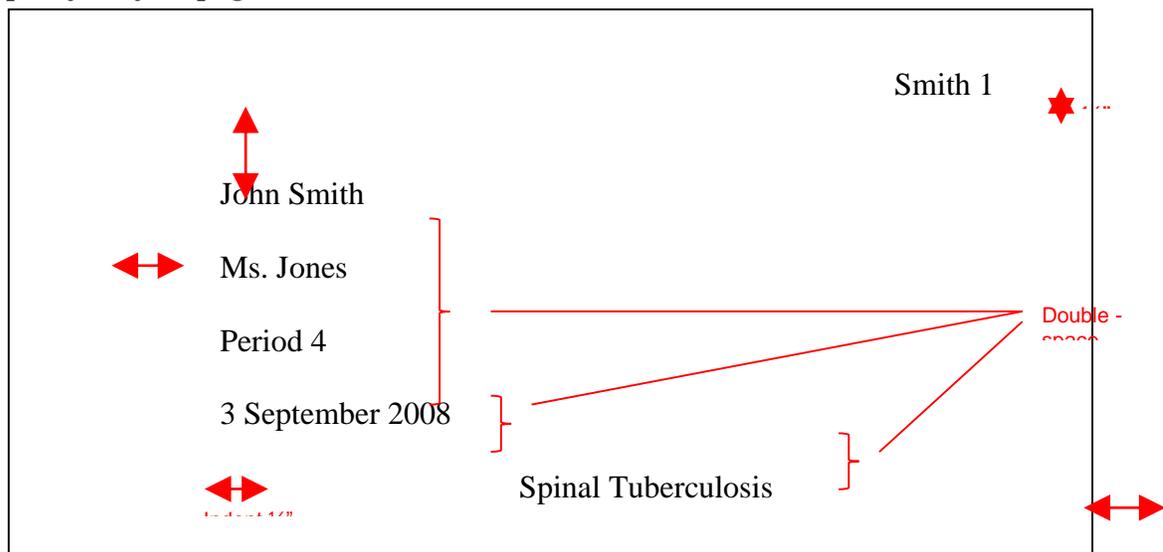
Margins and Spacing

- Set your margins at 1” at the top, bottom, and sides of the paper.
- Paragraphs are indicated by indenting 1/2”. Hit TAB one time to indent a paragraph. **Do not put additional spacing between paragraphs.**
- The body of the paper is left-justified, not center- or fully-justified.
- All parts of your essay must be **double-spaced**.
- The Works Cited or Bibliography pages should be created **directly from Noodle Tools** with no changes made additionally.

Heading, Header, and Title

- **Heading:** Create a heading, rather than a cover sheet. Begin 1” from the top of the first page next to the left margin. Be sure to include
 - your name
 - your teacher’s name
 - class period
 - the date you submit the paper.
- **Header:** This is your name and page numbers which are automatically generated on each page by Word. Under the “Insert” tab in Word, you will find “Header” and “Page Number” drop down tabs which will let you include your last name and the page number in the Header.
- **Title:** Just below the heading, centered on first page in regular font, include a title for your paper. **Do not make the title a bigger font. Do not underline or italicize the title.**

Example of the first page



Part II: Using Sources

Many academic papers, including literary analysis or research papers, include textual quotations from sources. An essay should smoothly integrate quotations and properly credit the source of that quoted text.

Quoting Text

When you quote text from a source you should be sure to:

- Copy the chosen text exactly.
- If you have to change the text slightly, use brackets ([]) to indicate the change around the modified wording.
- If you omit text within a quote, use ellipses (...) to show where the text has been removed
- Put the text in quotation marks (“ ”).
- Cite with parenthetical citation at the end of the sentence where the text occurs.

Paraphrasing Text

- When the text is too long or complex to include in your writing, sometimes you use the ideas and concepts from the source without direct quotes.
- In this case, you should abbreviate the content in your own words, but you must still give credit to the source with a parenthetical citation.

Parenthetical Citation

- A parenthetical citation is meant to indicate which source is being quoted in an unobtrusive way so that the citation reference does not distract the reading from the flow and content of your writing. The reader will use the information in the parenthetical to identify the full reference information on either the Works Cited page or Bibliography.
- The words in the parenthetical citation should be the first word in the full bibliographical citation. This is most often the author’s name.
- The citation should come at the end of the sentence where the quote occurs, not necessarily directly after the quote.
- The punctuation for the sentence comes after the parenthetical citation.
- If the source includes a page number, then you should include that.
 - (Golding 186).
- If the source does not have a page number, then you do not have one; it is not the page number from a printout.
 - (Kennedy).
- If the source has no author, you would include the first word of the citation as it appears on the Works Cited page or Bibliography; if the first word is “a”, “an” or “the”, then include the following word as well.
 - (“The Election”).
- If you are citing a play, such as *Romeo and Juliet* by Shakespeare, the citation should not include a page number, but instead the act, scene, and line number in the following manner
 - (Shakespeare 1.2.16-17).
- If you are citing an epic poem, such as Homer’s *Odyssey*, then the citation needs to reference the book number and line number.
 - (Homer 18.126-131).
- If you are citing an epic poem, such as the *Odyssey*, from the textbook, then the citation needs to include the page number, not the act, scene, and line.
 - (Homer 664).
- If you are citing two works by the same author, then you would need to add the title of the work in the parenthetical as well to differentiate between the two sources.

- For more complex citations, please see your teacher and/or the librarians.

Sample Quote Integration and Parenthetical Citation

Jack's relief is obvious as "[t]he tears began to flow" when he realizes the horror of their actions on this island (Golding 186).

Long Quotations

A long prose quotation (more than four lines) requires special formatting. Indent 1" from the left margin and type the quotation **single-spaced, preceded by a colon, and without quotation marks.**

EXAMPLE

<p>At the conclusion of <i>Lord of the Flies</i>, Ralph and the other boys realize the horror of their actions:</p> <p>The tears began to flow and sobs shook him. He gave himself up to them now for the first time on the island; great, shuddering spasms of grief that seems to wrench his whole body. His voice rose under the black smoke before the burning wreckage of the island; and infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake and sob too (Golding 186).</p> <p>Jack's relief is obvious. Though at the beginning of the book he was thrilled to consider the possibilities of life without adults, by this time, he thoroughly</p>

Using Images – suggestion for making sure your images are well documented

- Go to Google Images
- Type in the description of the image you need
- Click on "search tools"
- Click on "usage rights"

Full Bibliographical Information

- A **Works Cited** list contains all the sources you actually used in the text of your paper.
- A **Bibliography** contains all the sources you consulted, regardless of whether you used the source or not.
- An **Annotated Bibliography** contains sources on a particular topic with your comments about the sources' effectiveness and usefulness.
- Ask your teacher which form he or she expects.

Using Noodle Tools to format the Bibliographic Information

All teachers will expect students to use Noodle Tools for proper formation according to the latest MLA formation expectations.

- Teachers may ask you to print your Works Cited page or Bibliography, but we recommend students submitting these documents directly to the teacher through the Noodle Tools program.

Students have the responsibility to input the relevant source information into Noodle Tools to create a proper bibliographic citation. Please see the matrix on the following page so that you know what source information is necessary according to the type of source you are using.

Information Matrix to Document Sources

Determine the type of source and then include the checked information in Noodle Tools

FIRST – Ask yourself what is your citation type: book, database or website?

SECOND – Reference the chart below

SOURCE TYPE	Database or website source – if applicable	Publisher	Publication or copyright date	URL – if web and/or database source	Author and/or editor	Title of entire work	Title of article or passage within a larger work	Page numbers – if given	Publication city	Volume
Book (includes Kindle, Nook or other device)*	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	
Newspaper article or editorial	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X if listed	
Magazine article	X		X	X	X	X		X		
Journal	X		X	X	X	X		X		X and issue #
Poem or play from an anthology or textbook		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Reference source	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Original content	X	X	X	X	X					
Song lyrics			X	X	X	X				
Lecture or teacher notes			X	X	X	X				
Website or page from a website		X only if different from title of website	X	X	X	X	X			
Photo – born digital *if actual print photo, see teacher	X		X	X	X	X	X			
Film		X	X		X	X				
YouTube Video	X		X	X	X	X	X			
Interview in person			X		X					
Court case			X	X		X				

* If Kindle, Nook, or other device, click on “ebook file” tab and fill in type of device in first box.

Part III: Academic Honesty

Definition of Plagiarism

Most academic writing requires students to read and assimilate information from a variety of sources. A student must acknowledge and reference the sources he used or the student is committing plagiarism. Regardless of intent, sloppiness, carelessness, or confusion, not properly crediting another for ideas or language is plagiarism.

According to Dictionary.com, plagiarism is “the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own original work.” To avoid plagiarism, students must submit with each researched academic paper a Works Cited or Bibliography page, and they must provide internal documentation to credit the authors whose ideas or words they use.

Plagiarism.org provides details on what constitutes plagiarism. It cites all of the following as examples of plagiarism (emphasis added):

- Turning in someone else’s work as your own.
- Copying words **or ideas** from someone else without giving credit.
- Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks.
- Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation.
- **Changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit.**
- **Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work** whether you give credit or not. (“What is Plagiarism?”)

Remember, too, that all sources used in your paper must be cited. For example, if you interview an expert in the field of genetic engineering, that interview must appear on your Bibliography or Works Cited page, and internal documentation must follow all references to the information you received during that interview.

When documentation is not required

Documentation is not required when

- using a familiar proverb or saying (“A stitch in time saves nine”).
- repeating a well-known quotation (“I have a dream”).
- referring to common knowledge (“The Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776”).

However, when in doubt, cite your source.

Other Concerns

Reusing a research paper from one course in another is cheating. If you would like to do more research on a topic you have used before, be sure to check with your teacher.

Teachers sometimes assign students to work on projects in small groups; then you will put the names of all participants on the paper you submit. Any project that is assigned as an individual project (research paper, homework assignment, etc.) must be completed by each student separately. Using another’s paper as a source for your own is also cheating.

Ways to avoid plagiarism

- When you take notes, be sure you are quoting accurately and noting the sources as you work
- If you are not taking notes on direct quotes, paraphrase well in your notes by closing the original source and writing the information in your own words. Be sure to still keep good records of your sources of this paraphrased information.
- Don't copy and paste from an electronic source into your notes without acknowledging the source
- Never copy and paste into your final product directly without crediting the source.
- Ask your teacher for help or clarification as you work on your essay.

Consequences of plagiarism

In the real world, the consequences of plagiarism are very serious. People lose their reputations and careers when they plagiarize the ideas, stories, or style of others. In addition, legal consequences can ensue including significant monetary damages if the plagiarism results in damages to the source or original author.

Woodson takes plagiarism very seriously, and teachers use many tools to verify proper use of sources. The Woodson documents that you sign at the beginning of the year set out the consequences. When teachers discover instances of plagiarism in major or minor assignments, they call your home, write referrals to the Honor Council, and penalize the grades for the projects. Administrative consequences increase with each referral.

For further clarity on using sources, please see the following pages and the FCPS website on county policies on plagiarism.

Using Sources: Avoiding Plagiarism and Following Form

Original source:

Newspaper Article: “Peacock mantis shrimp’s swift, deadly punch inspires superstrong composite materials” By Meeri Kim, April 26, 2014 *The Washington Post* Page A17

In the end, the mantis shrimp’s design reigned supreme, with less denting and greater residual strength after impact. Potential applications for such a material could include aircraft and automotive panels, and athletic helmets and military body armor.

Proper quote incorporation:

Scientists are excited about studying this creature because if they can replicate the structure of its design, that level of strength could be used in “aircraft and automotive panels, and athletic helmets and military body armor” (Kim A17).

The text is copied exactly from the original, put inside quotation marks, and cited properly with a parenthetical.

Proper paraphrasing:

Scientists are excited about studying this creature because if they can replicate the structure of its design, that level of strength could be used in many industries where material strength is vital to safety, such as athletic and transportation industries, and even the military (Kim A17).

The content of the text is included in the writer’s sentence, but the wording is uniquely the writer’s; it does not mimic or mirror the original language. Also, the content is properly cited with a parenthetical.

** Please note – without the citation crediting the author, this would be plagiarism because the idea clearly came from the source, not the writer.

Poor paraphrasing – a form of plagiarism:

Scientists are excited about studying this creature because if they can replicate the structure of its design, that level of strength could be used in aircraft bodies, automotive panels, athletic gear like helmets and body armor for the military (Kim A17).

Even though this is cited, the wording is too close to the original. The writer follows the same order and flow of the original text, taking specific words from the original without quoting it, but merely adding a word or phrase. This is a form of plagiarism.

** Hint – if you are paraphrasing, you should be able to close the source text and write the content without looking back. Otherwise, quote the source directly.

Poor paraphrasing without citation – a form of plagiarism:

Scientists are excited about studying this creature because if they can replicate the structure of its design, that level of strength could potentially be applied for materials used in aircraft and automotive as well as military and athletic industries.

This is plagiarism because the idea comes directly from the source, it is a mirror of the source’s original language and syntax, and it is not cited.

Improper use of source – plagiarism:

Scientists are excited about studying this creature because if they can replicate the structure of its design, that level of strength could be used in aircraft and automotive panels, and athletic helmets and military body armor.

The text is copied exactly from the original but without quotation marks or parenthetical citation, so the writer is misrepresenting this language unfairly as his own. Sometimes people do this intentionally; other times, people do this because they are not using good scholarship. Regardless, this is plagiarism. Students committing citation errors infrequently or unsubstantially in a paper indicate a need for more instruction; when a student's errors are more severe with greater depth and frequency, the teacher would refer that student to the Honor Council.

What is the difference between academic error and plagiarism?

Overall, the answer lies in frequency and depth. If a writer makes a mistake, forgetting to close the source text with quotation marks or misses one parenthetical citation in a three page essay for example, but the writer has proven these citation skills throughout the rest of the paper, this is academic error. Teachers will use their academic, professional judgment to make this distinction

Part V: Evaluating Sources

You are always responsible for evaluating your sources for scholarly and academic work. Sources that are from a database or have been published and printed such as books and magazines are inherently valid because they have been through the revision and editing process on a formal level and someone has spent money on this endeavor. Therefore, as a student you can rely on those sources to be already vetted.

Sources you get from the internet are often not vetted or validated by any legitimate source because anyone can post anything on the internet. Here is a way for you to vet the source yourself before you rely on it for your research.

CRAP Test

Currency – How recent is your information? Is the currency of your information crucial to the topic?

Reliability – Fact or opinion? Balanced or biased? Incomplete? Thorough?

Authority – Are their credentials for the writer? A publisher or sponsor of the site?

Purpose/Point of View – What is the intent – to sell, to convince? Who is the intended audience? Does the domain clarify the purpose or viewpoint?

Part V: Glossary

Acknowledgement and response – This is the formal terminology for recognizing the most obvious counter argument to your claim (the acknowledgement) and answering your opponent’s concerns (the response). This is a great addition to a conclusion, but you may also acknowledge and respond briefly at any point in your paper if you feel that is appropriate.

Analysis – see “commentary”

Claim – This is an academic word for the main point of an essay. Some writers, teachers, and schools call this a “thesis”; others call it an “assertion”. Regardless of the term, they all mean the same thing: the central idea on which you are writing your essay. A strong claim has a “what” or topic and a “so what” which adds significance and clarifies the thinking on the “what” topic. A claim is not a fact. One way to make sure you have a strong claim is to use the DR. SIS method of analysis. Please see that explanation below.

Commentary – This is the term for completely original sentences which explain the link between evidence in your paper to the claim. Commentary represents the logic of your thinking. You might think of commentary as the mortar which holds the bricks of evidence together. A strong essay has more commentary, more explanation of your thinking, than anything else.

Database – This source is an electronic reference which has been created by professionals and vetted by editors. It is paid for by some organization, likely your school. Often, you need a user name and password to access this content. Ours are provided on BlackBoard in the Library site. This is a reliable scholarly source that is preferable to open, online sources.

DR. SIS – This method of analyzing your claim helps you to be sure your claim is a strong statement of the argument you want to make in your essay. The acronym stands for the following ideas:

D – Debatable – not a statement of fact, something worthy of argument without an obvious right or wrong

R – Reasonable – represents the whole piece, not just an aberration; a “reasonable” man would be able to see the position you are taking

S – Specific – not vague wording or a sweeping generalization; often this is about word choice; to be specific the claim needs clarity in the language.

I – Interesting – something you want to discuss and someone else would want to read, not frivolous or superficial

S – Supportable – an idea you can validate with multiple pieces of evidence

If you cannot justify your claim with Dr. Sis, then you should work on revising your claim.

Editing – One of the last activities before you turn in your paper is a close reading of the essay on a sentence level, after you have revised and are sure the logic and organization of your writing is solid. When you edit, you pay attention to grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Evidence – This is the support or proof which validates your claim. In a literary analysis essay, evidence is the text of the literature or perhaps literary criticism by a scholar. In a science paper, evidence might be statistics from an experiment or explanation from another scientist. In a history paper, evidence is the events of the past, primary source documents from another era, text

from a history textbook or a court case summary. While evidence comes in many forms, it is all information which you get from another source beyond your own thinking.

Format – This is how your essay looks on the paper including font, spacing, and margins.

In-text citation – see “parenthetical citation” reference

LRS Method – This stands for Little Red Schoolhouse which was the term UVA used for their writing methodology. Several teachers at Woodson were fortunate enough to have direct instruction from the UVA professors to better understand the college level expectations for freshman writers. We have adapted their methodology for high school students to better prepare our students. By no means is this the only way to write. It is simply one specific way to write which provides a logical format for thinking about complex topics. It is a tool we at Woodson teach our students to add to their other rhetorical strategies and styles.

Original source – An article written by unnamed editors in a database, such as Britannica, Grolier, ABC Clio, Cavendish, etc...

Paraphrased text – When you take ideas from a source but put those ideas in your own words, that is paraphrasing. When you have paraphrased text, you do not put those words in quotation marks, but you still must cite the sentence to give credit for the ideas to the original author.

Parenthetical citation – The credit that you give the source you are quoting within the actual text of your essay is called a parenthetical citation. Sometimes this is called “in-text citation”. This citation corresponds with the full bibliographic entry on the Works Cited page or Bibliography. If you are following MLA format used within this manual, then your citations should look like this:

The first time in each paragraph you cite the author’s last name and page number enclosed in parentheses. Ex (Steinbeck 24).

All other citations of the same source uninterrupted throughout the writing are the page numbers only enclosed in parentheses. EX (26).

Please be sure you are using parentheses, not brackets.

Punctuation goes outside the end parentheses.

Plagiarism - According to Dictionary.com, plagiarism is “the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own original work”, whether that is accidental or intentional.

Primary Source Document – an artifact from the era you are studying which comes in its original form without being filtered by another source. This might include a historical document, like a speech or piece of legislation or a letter.

Problem Statement Introduction (PSI Introduction from the LRS Methodology) – This is one way to write an introduction which shows the writer has a clear understanding of the topic on which he is writing. It follows the thinking below.

Background You start your introduction by writing some background about your topic. This informs the reader by establishing a framework for your topic. What is the general subject or topic of your essay?

Current Situation This is the way most people think about this topic. This is the standard opinion about this subject.

Shift You are going to shake the topic up, turn it on its head to have the reader think differently about the current situation. This sentence would be a great place to use a subordinating conjunction. (Although, however, even though, but etc.)

Significance The significance is a statement telling the reader that ignoring your solution or perspective will not be wise. To have a full understanding of your topic, the reader must consider your claim. It is often associated with the “So What” of your essay.

Claim This is the driving argument of your essay: the cornerstone. All of your writing should work to prove this assertion clearly and completely.

Revision – Technically, this word means “re-seeing”. When you revise, you pay attention to the structure of your essay as a whole, making sure the logic and flow are sound. This includes order, transitions, quotation incorporation and diction to name a few major aspects. You must ensure this step is completed before you worry about editing.

Style – This broad word refers to the way you write in general, including your tone and voice as well as sentence structure and diction. In an academic essay, you want your style to be comfortable but still formal and educated. In a blog post or journal entry, your style may be more casual and colloquial.

TAG – Title, Author and Genre - You should include this information the first time you introduce a literary work in your essay.

Textual evidence – When you include the text of a source in your essay in its exact form from the original source that is a textual quotation. It should be in quotation marks and include proper parenthetical citation, to give credit to the source.

Topic Sentence – This is the term for the opening sentence to each body paragraph of your academic essay. Think of it as a mini-claim, the driving concept on which the whole paragraph focuses.