**O’ZBEKISTON RESPUBLIKASI XALQ TA’LIMI VAZIRLIGI**

**NAVOIY DAVLAT PEDAGOGIKA INSTITUTI**



**INGLIZ TILI AMALIY KURSI:**

**YOZMA NUTQ AMALIYOTI KURSI**

**BO`YICHA**

**MAJMUA**

**IV KURS**

Bilim sohasi: 100000 - Gumanitar

Ta’lim sohasi 110000 - Pedagogika

Ta’lim yo’nalishi: 5111400 - Ingliz tili va adabiyoti

(Mutaxassislik)

**NAVOIY- 2017**

**O’ZBEKISTON RESPUBLIKASI XALQ TA’LIMI VAZIRLIGI**

**NAVOIY DAVLAT PEDAGOGIKA INSTITUTI**

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| --- | --- |
| “Ro’yxatga olindi”  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  «\_\_»\_\_\_\_\_\_\_2017 yil | **«Tasdiqlayman»**  O`quv ishlari bo`yicha  \_\_\_\_\_\_dots.A.J.Qo`shoqov  «\_\_\_\_» avgust 2017 yil |

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**NAVOIY-2017-2018**

Fanning ishchi o’quv dasturi o’quv, ishchi o’quv reja va o’quv dasturiga muvofiq ishlab chiqildi.

**Tuzuvchi:**

**S.F.Xo’janazarova** - Ingliz tili va adabiyoti kafedrasi katta o’qituvchisi

**Taqrizchi:**

**N.P. Iskanova** - Ingliz tili va adabiyoti kafedrasi katta o’qituvchisi

Fanning ishchi o’quv dasturi “Ingliz tili va adabiyoti” kafеdrasining 2017 yil 29- avgust №1-son yig’ilishida muhokamadan o’tgan va fakultеt kеngashida muhokama qilish uchun tavsiya etilgan.

**Kafеdra mudiri: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ k.o`q. S.Q. Xasanova**

Fanning ishchi o’quv dasturi Chet tillar fakultеtining 2017 yil 30- avgust yig’ilishida qo’llash

uchun tavsiya etilgan.

**Fakultеt kеngashi raisi: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Z.D. Erdanov**

**Kelishildi: O’quv uslubiy boshqarma boshlig’i:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ N.A.Xolmirzayev**

**INTEGRALLASHGAN TIL KO’NIKMALARI:**

**YOZMA NUTQ AMALIYOTI**

**FANINING IV-KURS TALABALARI UCHUN**

**2017/2018 o’quv yiliga mo’ljallangan**

**SILLABUSI**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1.Short information on the subject** | | | | | | | | |
| **The name and address of the institution:** | Navoi State Pedagogical Institute | | | | | Ibn Sino 45 | | |
| **Department:** | English language and literature | | | | | The Foreign Languages Faculty | | |
| **The field and direction of the education:** | **Scientific filed**: **100000-Humanitarian area**  **Educational field: 110000- pedagogy** | | | | | **Academic branch**: 5111400- Foreign language and literature ( on languages) | | |
| **Hours** | Auditorium hours | | | | | **Self study:** | |  |
| **lectures** | - | **Practical lessons** | 76 | |
| **The connection with the other subjects (prerequisites):** | **This course is intended to guide undergraduate students through the stages of writing a proposal for research papers and subsequent thesis in their content area course by providing assistance in writing effective research papers using process approach. Students work with topics already assigned in other content area courses. Compulsory, in Semester 7, Year 4** | | | | | | | |
| **1.1. Information about teacher** | | | | | | | | |
| **Information on the subject teacher:** | Senior Teacher : Hujanazarova Sanobar Fayzullayevna | | | | **e-mail:** | | [skhudjanazarova@yahoo.com](mailto:skhudjanazarova@yahoo.com) | |
| **Time and place of the subject:** |  | | | | **Duration of the subject:** | | 7th semester (76 practical hours) | |
| **Time of the individual work:** | Monday and Friday at 1.00 p.m | | | | | | | |
| **1.2. The subject meaning** | | | | | | | | |
| **The importance of the subject and its short explanation:** | Objectives  By the end of Year 4 students will be able  to construct and follow a well structured and achievable research paper plan;  **.**to compile a literature review reflecting studies that are relevant to the student’s research  paper theme;  **.** to write and revise drafts to achieve a clear and direct prose style through self- and peer-  reviewing;  **.** to incorporate data in different presentation modes (e.g. tables, graphs and etc.);  x to interpret data results, charts and tables in writing;  **.** to develop a well structured abstract for a research paper;  **.** to understand the importance and implications of ethical issues such as plagiarism and  intellectual property;  **.** to prepare for the final examination in writing;  **.** to use proper citation and referencing style.  Indicative Content  Writing a research paper  Analysis of a successful research paper  **.** Statement of intent  Introduction  **.** Literature r eview  **.** Dealing with ethical issues (plagiarism, copyright, asking for permission, etc.)  Presentation of data findings and analysis  **.** Referencing and citation  **.** Research conclusions  Preparation for the final exam  Review of Year 4 portfolio for strengths and weaknesses  **.** Mock examination task  Approaches to teaching and learning  Task-based practical work  Analyzing concerning their research topic  Learning outcomes  By the end of Year 4 students should have  **.** demonstrate acquisition of well developed research paper structure  **.** ability of critical analysis and reflection on source materials | | | | | | | |
| **The communication order through e-mail** | The communication between teacher and student can be set through e-mail. However, the assessment problems on the subject can’t be discussed. The assessment procedures can only be set and discussed in the campus of the Institute at a special required time and room during the lesson. The time of the using e-mail: from 15.00 to 18.00 | | | | | | | |

**MODULE: WRITING**

**Introduction**

This course is intended to guide undergraduate students through the stages of writing a proposal for research papers and subsequent thesis in their content area course by providing assistance in writing effective research papers using process approach.  Students work with topics already assigned in other content area courses.

Compulsory in semester VII, 76 hours

**Objectives**

By the end of Year 4 students will be able:

* to construct and follow a well structured and achievable research paper plan
* to compile a literature review reflecting studies that are relevant to the student’s research paper theme
* to write and revise drafts to achieve a clear and direct prose style through self- and peer-reviewing.
* to incorporate data in different presentation modes (e.g. tables, graphs and etc.)
* to interpret data results, charts and tables in writing.
* to develop a well structured abstract for a research paper
* to understand the importance and implications of ethical issues such as plagiarism and intellectual property.
* to prepare for the final examination in writing.
* to use proper citation and referencing style.

**Indicative Content**

Writing a research paper

Analysis of a successful research paper

* Statement of intent
* Introduction
* Literature review
* Dealing with ethical issues (plagiarism, copyright, asking for permission, etc.)
* Presentation of data findings and analysis
* Referencing and citation
* Research conclusions

Preparation for the final exam

* + Review of Year 3 portfolio for strengths and weaknesses
  + Mock examination task

**Approaches to teaching and learning**

* Task-based practical work
* Analyzing concerning their research topic

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of Year 4 students should have

* demonstrate acquisition of well developed research paper structure
* ability of critical analysis and reflection on source materials

Note: Assessment on this course will be done by research paper supervisors

**Indicative bibliography**

Markmen, R., Markmen, P., Waddel, M. (2001)*10 Steps in Writing a Research Paper* NY: Barrons

Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Research-Paper>

**Assessment profile**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Continuous Assessment**   * Class work and homework- 4 / 5 * Discussions – 4 / 5 * Presentations – 4 / 5 * Participation- 3 / 5 | **35**  15  20 |
| **Mid-course Assessment**  Presentation of Problem and Proposal of the Research Paper: fluency – 4; accuracy- 4; vocabulary- 4; grammar-3  Presentation of the First draft:  fluency – 5; accuracy-5; vocabulary- 5; grammar- 5 | **35**  15  20 |
| **Final assessment**  Presentation of the Second draft | **30** |

**DASTUR BAJARILISHINING KALENDARLI REJASI**

(amaliyot mashgulotlari)

**Fakultet:** Chet tillar

**Bosqich:** 4

**Semestr:** 7

**Fanning nomi:** **INGLIZ TILI AMALIY KURSI: INGLIZ TILI YOZMA NUTQ KO`NIKMALARI KURSI**

**Amaliyotchi o`qituvchi:**S.F. Xo’janazarova

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| № | **Mavzu nomi va nazorat turlari** | **Ajratilgan soat** | **Rejada** | **Amalda** | **Nazorat**  **ball** | **Oqituvchi imzosi** |
|  | **Amaliy mashg`ulot** |
| 1 | **Introduction:** Definition of the Research Paper | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Reasons and Format of the Research paper | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | The Report paper and Thesis paper; Academic writing and General writing | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Steps of writing research paper | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | **Choosing a Topic** | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Narrowing a Topic | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | Layout the library | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | Organization of the library collections | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| **CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT** | | | | | | |
| 9 | Online resources | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | **Researches with search engines**: Usenet, Litserv, Telnet, and Gopher | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | What information and where to look for it. | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | Selecting the sources: Skimming | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 13 | Note taking | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 14 | Plagiarism and how to avoid it | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 15 | **The thesis:** Definition and Function | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 16 | Choosing an outline form | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| **MID-COURSE ASSESSMENT** | | | | | | |
| 17 | Preparing to write the rough draft | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 18 | Checklist and Writer’s block | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 19 | Using your notes in the paper: how to use quotations to explore and discover | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 20 | Writing with unity, coherence, and emphasis | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 21 | Using the proper tense, graphics and the abstract in the research paper | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 22 | **Revising Your Rough Draft: P**rinciples of Revision; Revising the opening paragraph | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 23 | Revising the sentences for variety and style | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 24 | Revising the words: Diction; Rules for writers. Not. | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| **CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT** | | | | | | |
| 25 | Format for “References” APA | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 26 | Finished form of the paper | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 27 | Writing the Abstract | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 28 | Finished form of the paper | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 29 | Peer review checklist | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 30 | Submitting your paper electronically | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 31 | **Traditional System of Documentation (CMS)**  Footnotes and endnotes | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| **MID-COURSE ASSESSMENT** | | | | | | |
| 32 | Electronic sources | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 33 | Finished form of the paper | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 34 | Peer review checklist | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 35 | Peer review checklist | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 36 | Submitting your paper electronically | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 37 | **Sample student paper:** Paper using author –date documentation (APA) | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 38 | Paper using author –date documentation (APA) | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| **YAKUNIY NAZORAT** max ball-30, min ball-18 | | | | | | |

**MUSTAQIL ISH MASHG`ULOTLARI (58 SOAT)**

**7-semestr**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **T/r** | **O`rganilayotgan**  **mavzu nomi** | **soat** | **Mavzuning maqsadi va vazifalari** | **Maqsadga erishish usullari, vositalari va uslublari** | **Adabiyot-lar, jadvallar ko`rgazma-li qurollar** |
| 1 | Drafts of the Research paper; Writing the Research paper: Steps and schedule;  Topics based on a single source.  Topics that are trivial | 4 | to construct and follow a well structured and achievable research paper plan | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012  Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 2 | Online full- text databases.  Newspaper racks;  Organization of the library collections: the library of congress classification system | 4 | to compile a literature review reflecting studies that are relevant to the student’s research paper theme | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |
| 3 | Using the computer in your research: computers and research paper;  Databases: Electronic journals.  Online public- access catalogs | 4 | to write and revise drafts to achieve a clear and direct prose style through self- and peer-reviewing. | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 4 | Researching with search engines: Usenet,Listserve, Telnet, and gopher | 4 | to incorporate data in different presentation modes (e.g. tables, graphs and etc.) | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |
| 5 | Evaluating internet sources: where was the info found, who wrote it, who publishes it? | 4 | to develop a well structured abstract for a research paper | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 6 | What are the writer’s source? What tone does the writer use?  What do the writers contemporaries have to say? What is the writer’s motive? | 4 | to understand the importance and implications of ethical issues such as plagiarism and intellectual property. | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |
| 7 | What is the context of the writer’s opinion?  Doing the research? Using interviews and surveys; Corresponding by e-mail; Attending lectures, concerts, or art exhibits | 4 | to understand the importance and implications of ethical issues such as plagiarism and intellectual property. | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 8 | Selecting your sources: Skimming  Primary and Secondary Sources, evaluating sources | 5 | to understand the importance and implications of ethical issues such as plagiarism and intellectual property. | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |
| 9 | Kinds of notes: the summary, the paraphrase, the quotation, the personal commit | 4 | to prepare for the final examination in writing. | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 10 | Plagiarism and how to avoid it. Thesis: Definition and function;rules for wordinfg the thesis;placing the thesis;choosing a title | 4 | to prepare for the final examination in writing. | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |
| 11 | Transforming the notes into a rough draft:A checklist  Using a spell- checker | 4 | to use proper citation and referencing style. | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 12 | Summaries and paraphrase; Direct and Indirect quotations; Using brief direct quotations; Using long quotations (from poetry); Punctuating quotations | 4 | to use proper citation and referencing style. | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |
| 13 | Unity  Coherence  Emphasis  Revising your draft: rereading your writing. Revising your  Paper from biggest to smallest elements | 4 | to use proper citation and referencing style. | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 14 | Revising the body paragraphs;  Check paragraph transitions; revise diction for accuracy and exactness; revise redundant expressions | 5 | to use proper citation and referencing style. | Searching appropriate materials for topic, discuss and sharing ideas on writing research paper | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |

**Yetakchi o`qituvchi:**  **k.o’q.** **S.F.Hujanazarova**

**Assessment profile**

Semester 8

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Continuous Assessment**   * Class work and homework * Discussions * Presentations * Participation | **35**  15  5  10  5 |
| **Mid-course Assessment**  Presentation of the Research Paper:  fluency –15 ; accuracy-10; vocabulary- 5;  grammar-5 | **35** |
| **Final assessment**  Final presentation of the Research Paper | **30%** |

**DASTUR BAJARILISHINING KALENDARLI REJASI**

(amaliyot mashgulotlari)

**Fakultet:** Chet tillar

**Bosqich:** 4

**Semestr:** 8

**Fanning nomi:** **INGLIZ TILI AMALIY KURSI: INGLIZ TILI YOZMA NUTQ KO`NIKMALARI KURSI**

**Amaliyotchi o`qituvchi:**S.F. Xo’janazarova

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| № | **Mavzu nomi va nazorat turlari** | **Ajratilgan soat** | **Rejada** | **Amalda** | **Nazorat**  **ball** | **Oqituvchi imzosi** |
|  | **Amaliy mashg`ulot** |
| 1 | Final draft; Peer review | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Changing a paper into presentation | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Changing a paper into presentation | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Types of Introduction, Conclusion | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Practice Presentation of your Research Paper | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Practice Presentation of your Research Paper | 2 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **YAKUNIY NAZORAT** max ball-30, min ball-18 | | | | | | |

**MUSTAQIL ISH MASHG`ULOTLARI (14 SOAT)**

**8-semestr**

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| **T/r** | **O`rganilayotgan mavzu nomi** | **soat** | **Mavzuning maqsadi va vazifalari** | **Maqsadga erishish usullari, vositalari va uslublari** | **Adabiyotlar, jadvallar ko`rgazmali qurollar** |
| 1 | Reviewing unity, coherence and emphasis | 6 | demonstrate acquisition of well developed research paper structure  ability of critical analysis and reflection on source materials | Presentation of data findings and analysis  Referencing and citation  Research conclusions | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012  Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 2 | Practice on peer reviewing | 6 | demonstrate acquisition of well developed research paper structure | Presentation of data findings and analysis | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |
| 3 | Submitting your Research Paper electronically | 6 | ability of critical analysis and reflection on source materials | Referencing and citation | Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 4 | Editing your Research paper | 6 | demonstrate acquisition of well developed research paper structure | Research conclusions | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |
| 5 | Working on Errors of your Research Paper | 6 | ability of critical analysis and reflection on source materials | Presentation of data findings and analysis | Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 6 | Working on Errors of your Research Paper | 6 | demonstrate acquisition of well developed research paper structure | Referencing and citation | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |
| 7 | Reviewing your citation in your research paper | 6 | ability of critical analysis and reflection on source materials | Research conclusions | Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 8 | Reviewing your citation in your research paper | 6 | demonstrate acquisition of well developed research paper structure | Presentation of data findings and analysis | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |
| 9 | Format for “Works Cited”  APA | 6 | ability of critical analysis and reflection on source materials | Referencing and citation | Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 10 | Changing into presentation: slide organization;  Designing your slide | 6 | demonstrate acquisition of well developed research paper structure | Research conclusions | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |
| 11 | Changing into presentation: slide organization;  Designing your slide | 6 | ability of critical analysis and reflection on source materials | Presentation of data findings and analysis | Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 12 | Types of introduction | 6 | demonstrate acquisition of well developed research paper structure | Referencing and citation | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |
| 13 | Types of Conclusion | 6 | ability of critical analysis and reflection on source materials | Research conclusions | Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press |
| 14 | Practice Presentation | 6 | demonstrate acquisition of well developed research paper structure | Presentation of data findings and analysis | *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition, Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 |

**Yetakchi o`qituvchi: k.o’qit.** **S.F.Hujanazarova**

**TAVSIYA ETILAYOTGAN ADABIYOTLAR RO’YXATI**

**ASOSIY ADABIYOTLAR**

Anthony C.Winkler, Jo Ray Metherell, USA, 2012 *Writing a Research Paper.* Eighth Edition,

Markmen, R., Markmen, P., Waddel, M. (2001)*10 Steps in Writing a Research Paper* NY: Barrons

Shuttleworth, M. (2005) *To Write A Research Paper* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

**INTERNET SAYTLARI**

* <http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Research-Paper>
* [www.encyclopedia.com](http://www.encyclopedia.com)
* [www.DeeDroughton.com](http://www.DeeDroughton.com)
* [www.kitoblog.com](http://www.kitoblog.com)
* www.Study.Do
* http: //wikipedia.org
* http: // info.britannica.co.uk

**# THEME: 1**

**DEFINITION OF THE RESEARCH PAPER**

Research comes from the Middle French word rechercher, meaning “to seek

out.” Writing a research paper requires you to seek out information about a

subject, take a stand on it, and back it up with the opinions, ideas, and views

of others. What results is a printed paper variously known as a term paper or

library paper, usually between five and fifteen pages long—most instructors

specify a minimum length—in which you present your views and findings on

the chosen subject.

**Format of the research paper**

The research paper is a formal work that must abide by the rules of scholarly

writing. These rules are simply an agreed-on way of doing things—much like

etiquette, table manners, or rules of the road. For instance, in literary articles

recently published you are likely to run across passages similar to this one:

Brashear considers Tennyson to be at his best when his poetry is infused with

“that tragic hour when the self fades away into darkness, fulfi lling all of the

poet’s despairing pessimism” (18).

The period always goes after the parenthetical

reference at the end of a sentence.

Formatting tip

This citation uses parenthetical documentation, a style favored by the MLA.

The author of the quotation is introduced briefl y; the quotation is cited; and a

page reference is supplied in parentheses. In the alphabetized bibliography of the

article appears this listing:

Brashear, William. The Living Will. The Hague: Mouton, 1969. Print.

Here is the MLA formula for citing a book:

Inverted name of writer. Title of Book.Place of publication: Name of publisher, Year of publication. Medium of publication.

MLA tip

This sort of standardization makes it easier to write a scholarly paper as well

as to read one. Part of your baptism of scholarship is to become familiar with the

major citation styles used by different disciplines—most of which are covered

in this book. Your instructor no doubt will tell you what documentation style to

use. Once you know that, you can concentrate on mastering that style and ignore

the others.

**# THEME: 2**

**REASONS FOR THE RESEARCH PAPER**

One obvious reason for the research paper is that writing it forces you to learn

lots about your chosen subject. Sifting through the pros and cons of opinions on

any subject is a priceless learning experience. Another reason is that writing the

paper teaches you the conventions of scholarly writing, among them the accepted

styles of documentation and the ethics of research.

A third reason is that you will become familiar with the library through the

“learning by doing” method. Even the simplest library is an intricate storehouse

of information, bristling with indexes, encyclopedias, and abstracts. How to seek

out from this maze of sources a single piece of information is a skill you learn by

actual doing. Writing a research paper may also mean interviewing experts about

your subject and blending their ideas with your own distinct point of view. In

short, you, like everyone else, can profit from knowing how to do research.

There are other benefits as well. Writing the research paper is an exercise in

logic, imagination, and common sense. As you chip away at the mass of data and

information available on your chosen topic, you learn

How to track down information

How to organize

How to use the Internet in your research

How to discriminate between useless and useful opinions

How to summarize

How to budget your time

How to conceive of and manage a research project from start to finish

**# THEME: 3**

**THE REPORT PAPER AND THE THESIS PAPER**

Papers assigned in colleges are one of two kinds: the report paper or the thesis

paper. The report paper summarizes and reports your fi ndings on a particular

subject. You neither judge nor evaluate the findings; you simply relate them in a

logical sequence. For instance, a paper that describes the opinions of experts in

the debate over global warming is a report paper. Likewise a paper that chronologically narrates the fi nal days of Hitler is a report paper.

Unlike the report paper, the thesis paper takes a defi nite stand on an issue.

A thesis is a proposition or point of view that you are willing to argue against or

defend. A paper that argues for the legalization of stem cell research is a thesis

paper. So is a paper that attempts to prove that air bags save lives. Here are several

more examples of topics that might be treated in report papers and thesis papers:

Report paper:How the Beatles got started as a rock group.

Thesis paper:The Beatles’ lyrics gave hope to a disenchanted youth during

the 1960s and 1970s.

Report paper:A summary of the theories of hypnosis.

Thesis paper:Hypnosis is simply another form of Pavlovian conditioning.

Report paper:The steps involved in passage of federal legislation.

Thesis paper:Lobbyists wield disproportionate infl uence on federal

legislation.

Instructors are more likely to assign a thesis paper than a report paper, for

obvious reasons: Writing a thesis paper requires you to exercise judgment, evaluate evidence, and construct a logical argument; writing a report paper does not.

**Drafts of the research paper**

Whether your paper is a report paper or a thesis paper, experience over the years

has shown that producing a good paper takes a minimum of three drafts. Many

writers, your authors among them, do many drafts, umpteen at least. Three drafts,

in other words, are the barest minimum.

Each draft is a separate stage in the progress of the paper. The first draft

should be rough and much scribbled over, and should show definite signs of

the wear and tear that inevitably come with composition. If your first draft

isn’t beat-up, you’re either a miraculous writer or one who does not understand a basic truth about writing: First drafts are supposed to be messy. They

are supposed to show signs of major rewriting and the back-and-forth movement of composing. In academic circles, that movement is called recursive,

meaning that the writer goes back and forth over the material in the process of

finding the right words to express ideas on paper. You might write a paragraph,

stop, go back to the fi rst sentence and change it, and then add the beginning of

a second paragraph before pausing to rewrite some more of the first paragraph.

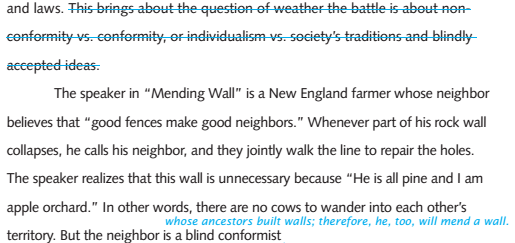
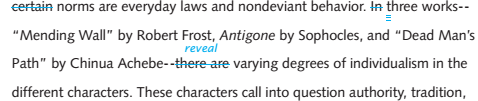
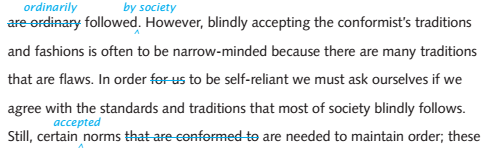
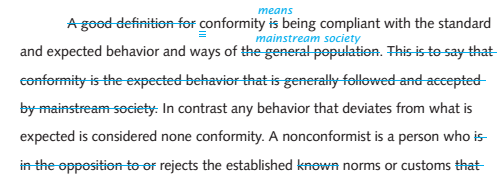
Writers do not write as the crow fl ies, in a straight line, but rather as the bee

does, buzzing back and forth, in fi ts and starts. If you fi nd yourself writing this

way, you’re not being amateurish or inept; you’re working exactly as writers

typically do.

Here is an example of a fi rst draft of an actual student paper:

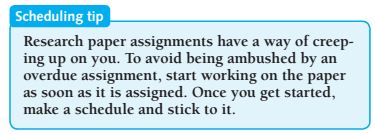
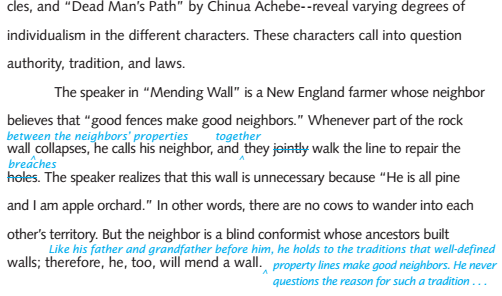
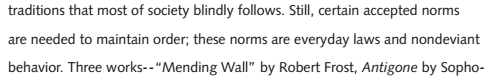
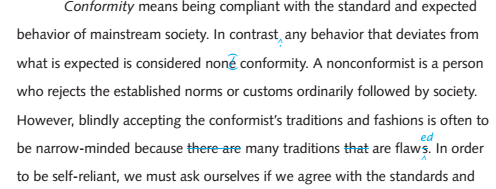


Typical of fi rst drafts, this one looks messy and scribbled over. Our point—

and it cannot be made too often—is that you should not feel discouraged if your

first drafts are messy. That’s the way they’re supposed to be. After you have corrected your first draft, it becomes your second draft. Here is the student’s second

draft as corrected:



Ordinarily, as the example shows, writers make fewer and smaller changes

in a second draft than in a fi rst. But writing is nothing if not unpredictable, and

many writers have found themselves in the odd position of totally rewriting a

paper because they were unhappy with a second draft. The point is that the process of writing is rarely smooth, often messy, and seldom predictable; and inevitably it’s recursive. Expect this kind of chaos when you write, and you won’t be

surprised.

The third and final draft is the one you submit. At this stage you’re likely to

think that your work is done. It may not be. Even the fi nal draft might be ripe for

change. If from this discussion you get the idea that the work of writing is never

really done, you would not be entirely wrong. Sooner or later, of course, every

scribbler must put down the pen and turn over the goods. Still, it is common for

writers, on rereading a work written many years earlier, to get the itch to write it

again. That’s why many professional writers make it a point never to reread their

published works.

Here is the fi nal draft as it was submitted to the instructor:

Conformitymeans being compliant with the standard and expected

behavior of mainstream society. In contrast, any behavior that deviates from

what is expected is considered nonconformity. A nonconformist is a person

who rejects the established norms or customs ordinarily followed by society.

However, blindly accepting the conformist’s traditions and fashions is often

to be narrow-minded because many traditions are flawed. In order to be selfreliant, we must ask ourselves if we agree with the standards and traditions

that most of society blindly follows. Still, certain accepted norms are needed

to maintain order; these norms are everyday laws and nondeviant behavior.

Three works--“Mending Wall” by Robert Frost, Antigoneby Sophocles, and

“Dead Man’s Path” by Chinua Achebe--reveal varying degrees of individualism in the different characters portrayed. These characters call into question

authority, tradition, and laws.

The speaker in “Mending Wall” is a New England farmer whose

neighbor believes that “good fences make good neighbors.” Whenever part

of the rock wall between the neighbors’ properties collapses, he calls his

neighbor, and together they walk the line to repair the breaches. The speaker

realizes that this wall is unnecessary because “He is all pine and I am apple

orchard.” In other words, there are no cows to wander into each other’s territory. But the neighbor is a blind conformist whose ancestors built walls; therefore, he, too, will mend a wall. Like his father and grandfather before him, he

holds to the tradition that well-defined property lines make good neighbors.

He never questions the reason for such a tradition. . . .

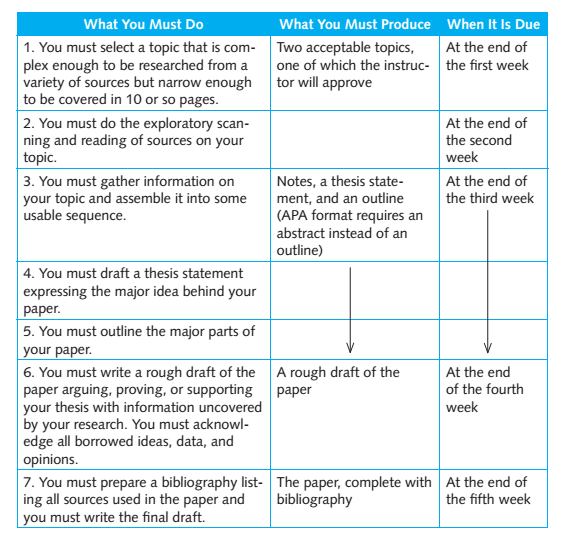
**# THEME: 4**

**WRITING THE RESEARCH PAPER: STEPS AND SCHEDULE**

It is impossible to produce a schedule that exactly matches every student’s

research-paper assignment. But generally there are seven distinct steps in the process, re quiring you to submit at least fi ve hand-ins over a period of five weeks.

With some variations, many instructors observe this schedule:



**# THEME: 5**

**HOW TO CHOOSE A TOPIC**

Writing a good research paper is not rocket science. It is not as diffi cult as calculus, and not as complex as physics. If you follow our advice and carefully observe

the particular steps we suggest, you’ll produce a good paper you enjoyed writing

and will probably learn something about your subject at the same time.

No single step is as important to the whole process of writing a research

paper as the choice of a topic. You’re like a traveler who is choosing where to go.

If it’s someplace you like, you’ll enjoy getting there. If it turns out to be a place

you don’t like, getting there will make you miserable. Ideally you should choose a

topic that interests you, that is complex enough to need several research sources,

and that will not bore—or talk down to—your reader.

Pick a topic you like, are curious about, are an expert on, or are genuinely

■ interested in. It can be anything from fighting obesity in children and teenagers to the effects of televising war. Whatever the topic, be it historical, controversial, or literary, your choice must satisfy two requirements: it must be

approved by your instructor; and, most of all, it must appeal to you.

If you are utterly at a loss for a topic and cannot for the life of you imagine

■ what you could write ten whole pages on, go to the library and browse. Pore

over books, magazines, and newspapers. Better yet, if your library has one,

use its online public-access catalog (OPAC), a modern version of the card

catalog, to search for ideas. An OPAC can locate any book in the library by

author, title, and subject. For example, let’s say you want to write a paper on

a topic about children. Here’s what you do:

1. Type the subject childreninto the OPAC terminal. The following subtopics

are displayed on the computer screen:

Childbirth (psychological aspects)

Child language

Childlessness

Child rearing—United States

Children employment

2. The list goes on and on. Explore ideas that you’re drawn to and eventually

you’ll end up with a suitable topic. One student who investigated the possibility of writing a research paper about children ended up with the topic

“Grammar and Communication among preschool children.” OPACs are

not only useful but also easy to use, with some of them summarizing the

contents of books while also indicating availability.

■ Your librarian can direct you to other electronic storage sources. CD-ROMs,

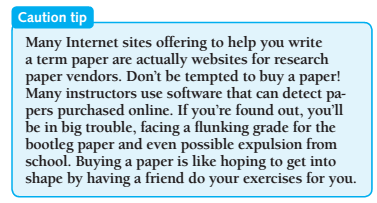
for example, can store vast amounts of information on any topic. The entire

works of Shakespeare could easily fit on a single CD-ROM. Any information

in a CD-ROM fi le can be printed out easily for further study.

■ If you still can’t fi nd a suitable topic, it’s time to fire up the computer and

search the Internet for ideas. (See Chapter 5 for advice on using the Internet.)



**# THEME: 6**

**NARROWING THE TOPIC**

No python knows the exact dimensions of its mouth, but any python instinctively

knows that it cannot swallow an elephant. Experiment with your topic: Pursue

one train of thought, and see where it leads. Does it yield an arguable thesis? Pare

down and whittle away until you have something manageable. Bear in mind the

length of your paper versus the size of your topic. Most research papers are about

ten pages long—some books have longer prefaces. Following are a few examples

of the narrowing you will have to do.



The first attempt at narrowing a subject usually is easier than the second,

which must yield a specific topic. Use trial and error until you have a topic you

like. Further narrowing may occur naturally after you are into the actual research.

Remember that whatever subject you choose must be approved by your instructor. So before you become too involved in narrowing the subject, be sure that its

basic concept has your instructor’s blessing.

**# THEME: 7**

**LAYOUT OF THE LIBRARY**

Basic architectural design differs from one library to the next, but certain

facilities are standard. All modern libraries are equipped with computers

available to students, photocopy machines, and a connection to the Internet,

whether through a dedicated telephone line or high speed cable modem. Most

modern libraries have phased out the use of card catalogs—drawers crammed

with 3 35 cards indexing the library’s collection—and have replaced them

with the computer.

**3a-1 The computer**

Gone from most libraries is the horse and buggy card catalog, its place taken by

the digital computer. In the blink of an eye, the computer can locate a subject,

and its related titles can be displayed. Students who have personal computers

can often gain remote access to their library’s central computer through an assigned password. In effect, this arrangement makes the holdings of a library

open to students twenty-four seven. Many freshmen students who were born

into a world of computers cannot even begin to imagine the astounding gain

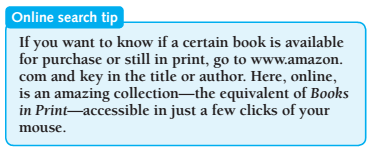
in efficiency these machines have made to the researcher. But since that is

the universal story whose tagline is a smug, “you don’t know how easy you

have it,” we’ll go ahead and say it here. After all, it is the natural observation

of one generation to another; we heard it from our parents; you will say it to

your own children.



In addition to cataloging and organizing the collection of a library, computers used in most libraries are also linked to useful databases. These computerized

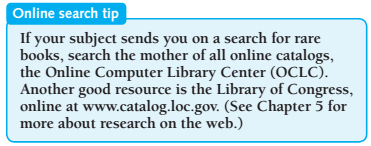
systems are known as public-access catalogs(PACs) or online public-access catalogs(OPACs); their databases list titles of articles and essays as well as full text

material to which the user has easy access, either to print out as a hard copy or to

read on the screen. (For more on databases, see 5c-1.)

Access to a growing number of college libraries is available online. For example, the library of the Georgia State University in Atlanta allows students, and

others, to search its online card catalog as well as several databases from any



**# THEME: 8**

**ORGANIZATION OF THE LIBRARY COLLECTIONS**

Even the great libraries of antiquity, like the ones in Nineveh in the sixth

century B.C. and in Alexandria in the third century B.C., searched constantly for

more efficient systems of organizing their collections. Clay tablets were grouped

by subject and stored on shelves; papyrus rolls were stacked in labeled jars.

Knowledge has grown so enormously, and classification systems have become so

complex, that today librarians are trained extensively in classifying books. The

two major classification systems now used by libraries are the Dewey Decimal

System and the Library of Congress Classification System.

**Computers and the research paper**

Most signifi cant inventions in human history are credited to one or two people with

whom their name is closely identifi ed—Edison with the light bulb or Ford with the

assembly line spring to mind as examples. But while the computer does have some

ancestral history traceable back to the laboratory, no unanimity exists about its

inventor. Some historians give credit to Scotsman John Napier (1550–1617), inventor of logarithms and of Napier’s bones, a working abacus; some to Charles Babbage

(1792–1871), the English inventor of the Difference Engine and the Analytical

Engine; and still others to Blaise Pascal (1623–1662), French mathematician and

inventor of the Pascaline, a mechanical calculator.

No matter what its origin, the computer is indispensable to the research paper

writer because of its two strong points: its ability to work as a word processor; and

its capacity to store vast quantities of information that is also instantly retrievable.

Most of us are familiar with the computer in its function as a word processor.

Formatting the research paper—from footnoting to the bibliography—is done by

word processing software. Because a computer can calculate far in advance of

printing how much space is needed on every specifi c page, the writer does not

have to count lines at the bottom of the page for footnotes nor manage the indentation of bibliographic entries.

In the bad old days, mistakes were often corrected by daubing a syrupy white

fluid known as “liquid paper” over the typo and then typing the correction on top

of the smudge giving the paper a untidy look. Nowadays mistakes are corrected

on the screen of the computer and the fi nished product is handled by the printer.

With the use of voice recognition software, such as Dragon NaturallySpeaking,

the writer who is not a good typist can even dictate the paper to the computer.

The capacity of the computer for storing a vast quantity of instantly retrievable material has also made it useful to the researcher. With the emergence of the

Internet and the widespread acceptance of search engines, the word “browsing”

has taken on a whole new meaning. Through the magic of electronics, a researcher

can now search the text of a thousand page book for any word or phrase and find

it instantly. Five hundred clerks manually combing through a text at the same time

could do no better.

The computer has also changed the process of research in other practical

ways:

In some quarters, computers have done away with note cards. Many students

prefer to make notes on their laptops, where they can use the cut-and-paste

function to easily and accurately transfer notes to the emerging paper. This

procedure eliminates the possibility of error in transcribing handwritten

notes from the cards onto the paper.

In some schools, instructors prefer the submission of papers by e-mail to

the traditional submission of hard copy. The upshot: You don’t have to be

physically present to turn in a paper; you can submit it from, say, a beach in

Jamaica.

**The Internet**

The Internet, or net, is a planetary brain without a skull. It consists of untold

millions of computers called hosts connected by a common protocol or way of

“talking” that enables them to communicate. In the early days, computers were

connected to a network through a modem and a telephone line. Today, much

faster connections are available through a high-speed cable modem or a digital

subscriber line (DSL). The introduction of Wi-Fi in 1997 added to the mix a

wireless technology connecting computers worldwide. More and more businesses

such as motels and restaurants offer free Wi-Fi connections to their patrons with

laptops, fueling what is already a stupendous growth.

4b-1 The World Wide Web

Although the terms Internetand World Wide Webare often used interchangeably,

they are not the same thing. The World Wide Web, or Web, is part of the Internet.

Also part of the net are Usenet (a bulletin board for special-interest discussion

groups), e-mail, and file transfer protocol (FTP). The web, as you will find out,

uses a specialized vocabulary. But it is not one that you need to understand to

use the web. For example, knowing that httpis webspeak forhypertext transfer

protocolor that URL refers to uniform resource locatorand is technobabble for an

address at the web, will not help you fi nd essays on the work of American poet

Charles Bukowski. But it might help you sound cool among a group of geeks.

Computers are idiot savants (“learned idiots”): They do exactly what you

tell them to do. That means you must reproduce Internet addresses without the

slightest deviation. A comma used in the wrong place will cause your search to

fail. The better way to transcribe a web address is to copy and paste the URL—

better still, to use a link. (A link is a reference to another site or document. It is

sometimes called a hot link because clicking on the link will take you directly to

the other document.)

**# THEME: 9**

**ONLINE RESOURCES**

The Internet is a treasure trove of data, facts, statistics, images, opinions, speculations, graphics, and viewpoints—everything that comes under the general

heading of information. The best sources of this readily available material are

databases, electronic journals, online public-access catalogs (OPACs), and blogs.

**A databaseis** a collection of data organized and stored electronically for easy

retrieval. Typically, databases are available through a fee-based membership,

which for many students will be too costly, or, more commonly, through a local

public or college library. One of the most attractive features of a database is that

it can be searched in several ways, usually by keyword, author, or title. A popular

database to which many libraries subscribe is InfoTracCollege Edition, which

indexes an incalculable number of articles and titles.

Some states maintain vast databases that can be accessed with a password

available at local libraries. One example is the Galileo system of Georgia (http://

www.galileo.usg.edu/scholar/dekalb-pl/subjects/). The databases in the Galileo

system are vast and varied. They include encyclopedias; business directories;

government publications; thousands of magazines and scholarly journals that

are fully indexed; the full text of many of these articles; dictionaries; corporate

reports; and more. This digital library of Georgia is linked to library catalogs

and even contains some full-text books—known as e-books. Galileo can also be

accessed for information found in Spanish databases. Ask your librarian about

the databases available in your library.

**Electronic journals**

Electronic journals are serial publications that can be accessed by a computer

through the Internet. Many libraries subscribe to electronic journals on a variety

of disciplines and subjects. One website, the Directory of Open Access Journals

(DOAJ, www.doaj.org) catalogs thousands of journals and alphabetized articles

covering a wide range of topics.

Most of the material you use in a research paper will probably exist in a

database. Many databases store the electronic equivalent of printed journals whose

content has been subject to peer review and is therefore trustworthy. (Peer review

means that the article has been gone over by a panel of experts in the author’s field

and judged publishable.) Some electronic journals, however, are strictly that: They

have no print equivalent. Depending on who publishes them, they vary widely in

trustworthiness and have to be individually evaluated. (For more on how to judge

an electronic source, see 4f.)

**# THEME: 10**

**RESEARCHING WITH SEARCH ENGINES**

A search engine is a program that searches the web for specifi c words related

to your topic. Search engines are supported by advertisers and cost nothing to

use. To search for a specifi c subject, type keywords into the search box of your

chosen search engine site and click on Search or Go. Articles (a, an, the) are not

keywords; neither are prepositions (of, in, to, for). And certain connectors—and,

or, not—have special meanings (see 4d-1). Most search engines—Yahoo!, Google,

and AltaVista, for example—are case insensitive. Entering keywords in upper- or

lowercase produces the same results. The results of the search, called hits, are

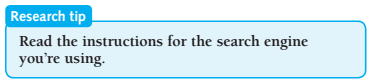
ranked by the frequency with which a keyword occurs in a document.

Search engines, in reply to your query or topic, will return the titles of the

essays, books, and other sources that deal with your topic. The hits will be highlighted, allowing you to click on them for more information. If the hit is a fulllength article stored in a database, clicking on the highlighted title will take you

right to the source. If it is simply the title of a book, you will be given enough

publication details to look up the volume in the library



**Finding a search engine**

Basically, there are three types of search engines: manual, robotic, and metasearch. Yahoo! uses a manual search engine. It searches directories and subcategories that have been compiled by humans. Google, on the other hand, is a

robotic search engine. At this writing it has indexed billions of pages, far more

than its competitors. At its heart is a “spider,” software designed to crawl the

web and scan its untold number of pages. A metasearch engine searches and

compiles the top listings of other search engines. MetaCrawler is an example

of a metasearch engine. By default it searches a few other search engines—you

can choose otherwise—among them Google, Yahoo! Search, MSN Search, Ask,

About, and LookSmart.

For a comprehensive listing and rankings of search engines, go to Windweaver,

www.windweaver.com/searchlinks.htm

Some search engines have a wide net and cover a broad range of topics. Others have a narrow focus and specialize in indexing literature and other material

from a specifi c subject area, say, education. If you wish to see what is available in

a particular subject area you’ve chosen to write about, use a search engine.

**Usenet, Listserv, telnet, and gopher**

What most of us use on the Internet is really the World Wide Web. But the web

is only one part of the Internet, although it is the most useful for the typical researcher. Other parts of the Internet are Usenet, electronic mailing lists, telnet,

and gopher. These are older technologies that are being rapidly replaced by the

more colorful and graphical web.

Usenet,created in 1979 by three graduate students from Duke, began as a

series of electronic bulletin boards on which anyone could post a question or

message and to which anyone else with a computer could reply. Eventually, separate bulletin boards—called discussion forums or newsgroups—evolved for separate

topics.

Listservand similar software manage the electronic mailing lists of discussion

groups. Once you subscribe to a mailing list, every message posted on it is automatically sent by e-mail to you and all other subscribers. One such service likens

itself to a call-in radio show on which exchanges are done entirely by e-mail.

Individual lists are devoted to specifi c topics or hobbies; and, as is the case among

Usenet discussion groups, some lists are moderated and others are not.

Telnetis a protocol for connecting computers on the Internet. Many large

databases use telnet as an access system. Today many sites that were formerly

restricted to telnet are now available on the web.

Gopheris an old-fashioned system of searching the Internet. Most gopher

files are now accessible on the web. For student-researchers , these terms hold

more historical value than practical value.

**# THEME: 11**

**WHAT INFORMATION TO LOOK FOR**

The sources you actually cite as supporting references in your paper typically consist of essays; book chapters; magazine, newspaper, or journal articles; treatises;

pamphlets; and tape or disk transcriptions. These materials may be in printed,

electronic, or photographic form. Exactly what kind of material you need to look

for depends on the topic, thesis, and even the point of view you use in the paper.

In the beginning of your search, your aim is to fi nd sources. By the end,

you are arguing with some sources and agreeing with others, while evaluating

them all for relevance and scholarly worth. Being able to tell the quality of one

source from another is a sign that you have mastered your topic well enough

to have formed your own opinions on it. But that stage comes later; for now,

your task is to locate sources on your topic—which is why you are headed for

the library.

Generally speaking, all sources can be grouped into three broad categories:

single-fact information, general information, and in-depth information.

**Single-fact information**

Single-fact information answers specifi c questions of fact: In what year was Osama

bin Laden born? Who assassinated Julius Caesar? What percentage of students

admitted to Harvard Medical School in 2005 were foreign born? How many cantons does Switzerland have? How did the early Ethiopians avoid malaria? What is a tsunami?

Answers to these and similar questions can be found in dictionaries, almanacs, encyclopedias, magazines, even telephone books. To get the answers to single-fact questions, you also can ask your reference librarian, who is highly trained in information management, storage, and retrieval. Many libraries even have a reference librarian available to answer queries over the telephone.

**General information**

General information provides an overview of a subject or a particular topic. For

example, if you were writing a paper on Zionism—the movement to create a

Jewish national state in Palestine—the Columbia Encyclopediawould be a good

source of general information to answer these broad questions: When did the

movement start? What brought it about? Who were its leaders? Where does

the movement stand today?

Encyclopedias and other general-information sources usually are found in

a reference room or section in most college libraries. (For guidelines about how

to select general-information sources, see 5d.) Some libraries subscribe to online

encyclopedia databases that make the search for information even easier. Others

have an encyclopedia available on CD-ROM.

In-depth information is found in sources that cover a topic in detail. For example, Admiral of the Ocean Seaby naval historian Samuel Eliot Morison provides

in-depth information about the voyages, life, and times of Christopher Columbus.

The Soul of a New Machineby Tracy Kidder gives an in-depth look at the process of building a new computer system. In-depth information is mainly found in

books because many topics are too complex to be detailed in any other form. But

essays and articles can also be useful sources of in-depth information, especially

about new or particularly focused topics. Use a search engine to fi nd relevant material on your research paper topic.

Research papers typically blend all three kinds of information—single-fact,

general, and in-depth—the proportion of each varying with the nature and complexity of a particular topic. The facts you need to back up what you’re contending will not line up neatly in formation and come marching to your attention like bullied sheep. Almost at any stage, it is likely that you’ll be trying to find everything from single-fact information to general information to in-depth information.

Research, particularly at the beginning of a paper, can be chaotic. The problem is,

at this early stage, you’re not sure what information you need. Perhaps you haven’t

even arrived at the fi nal wording of your thesis. Don’t despair. Fumbling around in

the early stages of writing is a necessary part of the learning process.

**Evaluating Internet sources**

The Internet is a vast public library that has no librarian. No one monitors the

accuracy of information posted on it. No one looks over others’ shoulders to

ensure that every contributor plays fair and tells the truth. It is possible for

anyone with a peeve to post anything on the Internet and try to pass it off as

fact. We found one website that claimed to be a global collection of national

anthems, but had the words of several anthems wrong. In short, there are umpteen sources on the Internet whose content is suspect. Given its unsupervised

nature, the unavoidable question is, How can you trust what you read on the

Internet?

The answer is, sometimes you can’t. When an Internet source is suspect, your

best choice is to drop it from your bibliography. This may seem a drastic step to

take, but it is better than to leave the reader wondering about the authenticity of

your sources.

1. If you can’t trace the source—whether primary or secondary—drop it from

your list of references.

2. If your source is an outdated statistic that was found in an unlikely place, cut it.

3. Stick to sources with stable hyperlinks or URLs. An Internet source that has

the moving record of a nomad is suspect.

4. Beware of sources identified with a <com> tag on the Internet. The com. tag

tells practically nothing about a source.

Many formulas for evaluating sources are available. Most are based on common sense. Your scrutiny of a suspect source should be based on asking yourself

the following questions about it.

**Where was the information found?**

Some websites are maintained by hobbyists with an ax to grind; some by worldrenowned universities; others by companies primarily interested in promoting

their products. The trick is to learn how to tell the good Internet sites from the

bad. The first step is to know who founded and maintains the site—information

that is part of the site’s domain name.

All Internet sites are classifi ed by their domain names, which reflect who

maintains them. Following are the most common domains:

Com A commercial organization

Edu An educational institution

Gov A nonmilitary government agency or department

Mil The military

Net A network administrator

Org A nonprofit organization (not educational or governmental)

**Who wrote it?**

The question of who wrote the material you are citing must also be factored into

your assessment of the material’s trustworthiness. Is the author identified? Are

the author’s credentials listed? Is the author qualifi ed to write on the topic? You

can verify the credentials and qualifications of an author by checking their biography sources either online or in the library.

The question of unknown authorship is one very good reason that many instructors will not allow Wikipediato be cited as a source of authority, although

it is very popular with students. Wikipedia bills itself as a free-authorship encyclopedia, which means that anyone can contribute to its content. In theory, this

is a fi ne, democratic idea; in reality, this policy opens the door to nearly limitless abuse and a staggering potential for misinformation. For formal research, no

writer would choose to stake a serious argument on such a suspect source. The

words of the prophets might well be written on the subway walls, as the song

goes; but in academia that idea is romantic twaddle that just doesn’t cut it.

**Who publishes it?**

Somewhere in most online magazines is a paragraph describing what they are

about. If a magazine you’re thinking of citing as a source declares that it was

“founded to wage war against the small-mindedness of the establishment and

the petty bureaucrats whose infl uence in society is vastly overdone,” you would

be smart to question its editorial evenhandedness. Such a combative statement

should make you wonder whether the editors of the magazine have an ax to grind

that would strongly bias their reporting.

**What are the writer’s sources?**

If a writer declares some incident is true without offering corroboration, the prudent researcher should ask, “Did it really happen?” In one online magazine we

came across an article in which the writer described a woman who was being

hounded by right-wing extremists. After investigating the writer’s background,

we were convinced that without corroboration, we could not take the story at

face value.

What tone does the writer use?

What we’re looking for in a writer’s tone is evidence of respect for the research

process and for the opinions of others. We’re especially wary of writers who

express their views in a belligerent tone.

**What do the writer’s contemporaries have to say?**

The majority is not always right; in fact it often is wrong. History has taught us that

lesson repeatedly. So don’t reject material just because a writer has a unique point of

view or takes an unpopular position that fl ies in the face of conventional wisdom.

But some writers stubbornly maintain positions that are wrong. For example,

we came across an Internet source that painted a rosy picture of friendly relations

between the Arawak and Carib Indians, the major tribes occupying the West Indies

at the arrival of Christopher Columbus. Yet, according to most historians, the

two tribes were constantly at war. Indeed the Caribs were known for eating their

Arawak captives—a consuming relationship, yes, but hardly friendly.

One of the problems with Internet material is that much of it is not subject

to peer review. As we pointed out in 4c-2, peer review is a healthy safeguard

against wrongheaded ideas. It is almost universally practiced by reputable electronic journals, most of which are published or maintained by sites with “.edu”

in their domain name. Seldom, however, is this useful fi lter applied to run-of-themill Internet sites. In the absence of peer review, you would be smart to question

the accuracy of an electronic source.

**What is the writer’s motive?**

A writer may hold a certain point of view or a particular opinion for motives that

have nothing to do with research. Sometimes those motives are clear; at other

times they are not. A writer who has been fi red by a prominent magazine, for

example, is hardly likely to be objective about his former employers. A whistleblower is not likely to draw rave reviews from the people he ratted on. Biographer

Marchette Chute decided that she could not trust John Smith’s story about being

rescued by Pocahontas. When Smith published the tale, he was broke and down

on his luck and hoping that the story of his sensational rescue would make his

book a best-seller. Most historians agree with Chute that Smith’s story of his rescue by Pocahontas is a myth.

Before you cite any source in a research paper, you should ask yourself

whether the writer’s content is dictated by some political or personal motives.

**What is the context of the writer’s opinion?**

Context refers to the environment in which an opinion is formed. Some subjects,

mainly in the sciences and social sciences, are sensitive to context; others are

not. The literary opinions of an eighteenth-century critic, for example, may seem old-fashioned to us but are not changed materially by the context of the twentyfirst century. On the other hand, the fiery proclamations made by one side or the

other about the Vietnam War while it was raging must be weighed in the context

of the stormy times. Even a relatively recent subject can be context sensitive. For

example, if you cite 1994 statistics on the life expectancy of AIDS patients, your

data would be wrong. Between 1994 and 1999, deaths from AIDS in the United

States declined by seventy percent because of the effi cacy of new drugs.

The bottom line is this: Evaluating Internet sources is basically an exercise in

editorial judgment. If you can’t identify the writer of source material, or the writer’s tone is angry, the material is suspect. That’s sound advice, of course, whether

the source is online or bound in gold leaf and roosting on your library shelf.

**# THEME: 12**

**SELECTING YOUR SOURCES: SKIMMING**

Seldom will you have the time to read every book or article written about your

subject. Instead you’ll do what the experienced researcher does—skim a source

to determine its usefulness. If an initial skimming indicates that the source is

helpful and to the point, you can read it carefully later. If the source appears to

be dated, irrelevant, or otherwise useless, then you should set it aside and follow

more promising leads. But don’t destroy the bibliography card of the discarded

source: you may change your mind and want to return to it later.

Skimming, like most skills, improves with practice. Here are some hints on

how to skim a piece of writing for major ideas:

In a book, glance at the preface. That’s where the author usually states what

the book is about. Likewise, the afterword often recounts the author’s major

ideas.

Look up your research subject in the index of the book. Frequently you can

tell from the number of pages devoted to the subject whether or not the book

is likely to be useful. For instance, if you are looking in an English history

book for information on Jack Sheppard, the eighteenth-century criminal, and

see from its index that it contains only one page about him, you probably

should move on to another source.

Subheadings also can tell you a lot about the major ideas in a book.

Read the fi rst and last two sentences in a paragraph to fi nd out what informa-

tion it contains. Generally the main idea of a paragraph is stated in its initial

sentences and summed up in its final sentences.

Glance at the opening paragraph of an article, essay, or book chapter. Often

the author’s thesis is stated in the fi rst paragraph or two.

The thesis of an article is often listed in a subheading under the title.

Source tip

Glance at concluding paragraphs in an article, essay, or book chapter. Often

these fi nal paragraphs sum up the discussion and restate major ideas.

Run your eye down the page, reading every fourth or fifth sentence, to get a

fair idea of what the material is about.

**Primary and secondary sources**

The judgments or conclusions in your paper must be backed by supporting

evidence, which consists mainly of two kinds: primaryand secondary

sources. Primary sourcesare original writings by an author, documents,

artifacts, laboratory experiments, or other data that provide firsthand

information. A literary paper about an author might quote letters, memoirs, an

autobiography, novels, short stories, plays, and personal notes by the author as

primary sources of evidence.

Secondary sourcesare writings, speeches, and other documents abouta primary

source. The opinions of critics are important secondary sources. An experiment

is a primary source; commentary on it by others is a secondary source. Making a

picky distinction between these two is not necessary. It is only necessary to know

that your papers should consist of both kinds of evidence.

**Evaluating sources**

All sources are not created equal. They vary in quality of scholarship, force of argument, and accuracy of detail. Some sources are scholarly, useful, and accurate;

others are worthless, silly, and misleading.

For example, a student writing a paper on human evolution would be grievously mistaken in taking the fossil remains of the Piltdown Man to be the missing

link—no matter how many library sources say so. In a brief burst of glory, the

Piltdown Man was hailed as the missing link in human evolution

**# THEME: 13**

**NOTE-TAKING**

Eventually the information you’ve uncovered through research must be turned

into notes. Many students nowadays use computers to organize and save notes

for later editing and incorporation into a rough draft, but dinosaurs that we are,

we still recommend 4 × 6 note cards, which can be added to, deleted, or reshuffled during the initial drafting. Bear in mind, as you read and take notes, that a

research paper should contain a variety of material taken from different sources.

It is not enough to write down your own ideas and speculations, ignoring everyone else’s opinions on the subject. Your own ideas should be derived from information uncovered on the subject through research, and a reader should be made

aware not only of your conclusions but also of your evidence and reasoning.

■Use 4 36 cards for note-taking. Large enough to accommodate fairly long notes,

4 36 cards are also unlikely to be confused with the smaller bibliography cards.

■Write in ink rather than pencil so that the cards can be shuffl ed without blur-

ring the notes.

Note can be put in any sequence simply by shuffl ing. If a note is so long that

two cards have to be used, staple them together.

Identify the source of the note in the upper left-hand corner of the card.

Because the bibliography card already lists complete information on the source,

use only the author’s last name or keywords from the title followed by a page

number. For example, use “Fülöp-Miller 10,” or “Holy Devil 10,” to identify a

note taken from page 10 of Rasputin, the Holy Devilby René Fülöp-Miller.

Jot down in the upper right-hand corner of the card a general heading for

the information the card contains. These headings make it easy to organize

the notes by shuffl ing the cards. (Write the heading in pencil so that it can

be changed.)

**Using the computer to take notes**

For note-taking, some students prefer to use their laptops instead of cards. If

that’s okay with your instructor, then by all means go ahead. You can use two

approaches: (1) You can download material and print it out, highlighting the

passages you fi nd particularly useful. (2) You can keep electronic sources in your

computer, organizing them by folders and files, and later use the copy-and-paste

function to transfer quotations into your rough draft. Some neatnik students

like this system because it spares them from having cards scattered all over their

desks, with the attendant risk of losing some.

**Using a copy machine to take notes**

Many students nowadays don’t use note cards at all, preferring to simply photocopy pages from books or magazines. The popularity of this latest note-taking system is easily seen in the long lines at the library copy machines. Copying no doubt

is easier than laboriously scribbling down information about a book or a quotation

from one, but in some ways it is also more confusing and harder than using note

cards. Most students who prefer copying to using note cards do not use bibliography cards unless an instructor requires them. Many instructors, in fact, do; but a

few instructors do not, which means that if you do not carefully note from where

you copied a source, you are likely to end up with an orphaned page.

**Kinds of notes**

The notes you gather from your research must blend into the body of your paper to provide documentation in support of your thesis. These notes are of four

kinds: the summary, the paraphrase, the quotation, and the personal comment.

**The summary**

A summaryis a condensation of signifi cant facts from an original piece of writing.

A chapter is condensed into a page, a page into a paragraph, or a paragraph into a

sentence, with the condensation in each case retaining the essential facts of the original.

Consider the summary in Figure 5-5 of an eight-page description of Rasputin.

Common sense should govern your use of the summary. Some facts need to

be quoted in detail, but others do not and can be just as effectively summarized.

For instance, the summary shown in Figure 5-5 was for a paper on Rasputin

that dealt mainly with the historical truth about the man, not with his physical

appearance. So it was enough for the student to summarize certain of Rasputin’s

features that made him both repulsive and attractive. In another context, say, in a

paper on the physical disfigurement of famous people, it might have been necessary for the student to quote generously from the eight-page description.

**The paraphrase**

The paraphraserestates a passage in approximately the same number of words as

the original, using the syntax and vocabulary of the paraphraser. It is the most

common form of note writing in research papers.

Paraphrasing achieves two purposes: fi rst, it shows that you have mastered

the material well enough to be able to rephrase it; second, it gives your paper an

even, consistent style because both original material and source material are cast

in your own words. Here is a short passage from The Fall of the Russian Monarchy

by Bernard Pares. The passage has been paraphrased in Figure 5-6.

Meanwhile Rasputin, as he appears to have done earlier, disappeared into the

wilds of Russia. Here too he was true to an historical type. Always, throughout Russian history, there had been stranniki or wanderers who, without any

ecclesiastical commission, lived in asceticism, depriving themselves of the most

elementary of human needs, but gladly entertained by the poor wherever they

passed. Some of them went barefoot even throughout the winter and wore chains

on their legs. This self-denial gave them a freedom to address as peasant equals

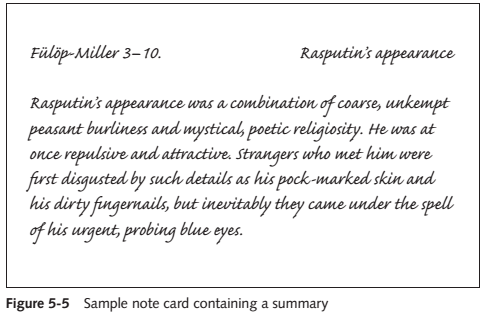
even the Tsars themselves, and there are many instances of their bold rebukes

scattered over Russian history.

**The quotation**

A quotationreproduces an author’s words exactly as they were spoken or written,

preserving even peculiarities of spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Use of an



occasional quotation is justifi ed where the authority of the writer is being evoked

or where the original material is so splendidly expressed as to be altogether ruined

by summary or paraphrase. If the quotation contains a misspelled word or other

error, reproduce it faithfully, adding [sic] beside it to indicate that the error is not

yours but the source’s.

Student papers tend to overuse quoted material (so much so that many teachers automatically regard excessive quotations as a sign of padding). A good rule

of thumb is to limit quoted material to no more than 10 percent of the total paper.

Another good rule of thumb is to quote only when the authority of the writer is

needed or when the material simply cannot be paraphrased or summarized.

Figure 5-7 shows a note card with a quotation. To place quotations on note

cards, follow these rules:

■ Put quotation marks around the quotation.

■ Introduce the quotation or place it in proper context.

■ Copy quotations exactly as they are written.

Occasionally a summary or paraphrase is combined with a quotation on a

note card, the key phrases or words from the original source used to add literary

flavor or authenticity to the note. Following is an original passage from The Fall

of the Russian Monarchy.The note card in Figure 5-8 combines a paraphrase with

a quotation from this source.

Nothing is more untrue than the easy explanation that was so often given, that

he became the tool of others. He was far too clever to sell himself to anyone.

He did not ask for presents and had no need; he had only to accept all that was

showered upon him, and that he did briefl y and almost casually, in many cases at

once passing on the largess to the poor; his position was that of one who plundered the rich for the poor and was glad to do it.

**The personal comment**

Personal commentsare ideas, conjectures, or conclusions that occur to you during

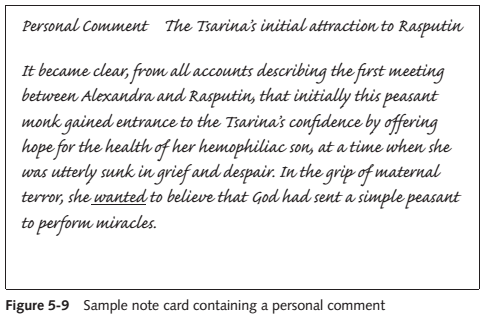
the research. These notes generally are used to explain a fuzzy statement, stress

a particular point, draw a conclusion, clarify an issue, identify an inconsistency,

or introduce a new idea. Jot down the ideas as they dawn on you. If the personal

comment deals with material on another card, staple the two cards together. An

example of a personal comment is shown in Figure 5-9.



**# THEME: 14**

**PLAGIARISM AND HOW TO AVOID IT**

Plagiarismis the act of passing off another’s words and ideas as your own. In

a cosmic sense, the process of learning is made up of countless tiny crimes of

plagiarism because we all borrow freely from one another. No generation speaks

a language of its own invention; few people actually create the proverbs and sayings they utter daily. The mother who tells her child, “A thing of beauty is a joy

forever,” is plagiarizing from the poet John Keats; the father who warns his son,

“Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned,” has plagiarized from the playwright

William Congreve. A teacher who encourages students to turn in their research

papers early by telling them that “the early bird gets the worm” is plagiarizing

from Benjamin Franklin. Innumerable other examples can be given to show how

we freely and openly borrow ideas and expressions from one another.

Blatant plagiarism, however, involves the deliberate stealing of someone

else’s words and ideas, generally with the motive of earning undeserved rewards.

A student who copies a friend’s paper is guilty of blatant plagiarism. Likewise, a

student who steals an idea from a book, rewords it, and then passes it off as an

original thought has committed an act of plagiarism.

Under the conventions of writing research papers, you must acknowledge

the source of any idea or statement not truly your own. This acknowledgment

is made in a note specifying the source and author of the borrowed material.

All summaries, paraphrases, or quotations must be documented; only personal

comments can remain undocumented. In sum, to avoid plagiarism you must do

the following:

■ Provide a note for any idea borrowed from another.

■ Place quoted material in quotation marks.

the text or in a note.

Not every assertion can be documented, nor is it necessary to document what

is common knowledge. For instance, it is commonly known that the early settlers

of America fought wars with the Native Americans—an assertion that any student

could safely make without documentation. Similarly, a student could write, “For

centuries it was universally accepted in most parts of the world that inequalities

of social status were ordained by God. Thus, both the earl in his castle and the

peasant in his hut believed that God wanted them there.” Since the tremendous

gap between the rich and powerful and the poor and powerless of past ages is

well known, this statement would not be considered plagiarism. As a rule, a piece

of information that shows up in five or more sources can be considered general knowledge. Proverbs and sayings of unknown origins also are considered

general knowledge and do not have to be documented.

The following, however, must be accompanied by a citation specifying author

and source:

■ Any idea derived from a known source

■ Any fact or data borrowed from the work of another

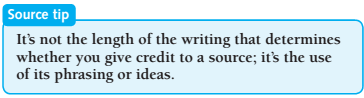
■ Any especially clever or apt expression, whether or not it says something

new, that is taken from someone else

■ Any material lifted verbatim from the work of another

■ Any information that is paraphrased or summarized and then used in a

research paper



Plagiarism in student papers is often an honest mistake. Most of the time, a

student—in the crush of writing to meet a tight deadline—simply forgets to cite

a source. Sometimes the student makes the mistake of thinking that the material

is common knowledge and needs no documentation. To illustrate plagiarism in

different degrees, we have reproduced a passage from a book, followed by three

student samples, two of which are plagiarized.

……. *Alexander III died on 20 October, 1894, and was succeeded by his son*

*Nicholas. The new emperor was more intelligent and more sensitive*

*than his father. Both those who knew him well, and those who*

*had brief and superficial contact with him, testify to his exceptional* *personal charm. The charm was, however, apparently associated with*

*weakness and irresolution. Nicholas appeared to agree with the last*

*person he had talked to, and no one could tell what he would do next.*

*When Alexander III died on October 20, 1894, he was succeeded by*

*his son Nicholas, who was more intelligent and more sensitive than his*

*father. People who knew him well and also some who knew him only*

*superfi cially testify that he was exceptionally charming as a person.*

*This charm, however, was associated with weakness and an inability to*

*make decisions. Nicholas always seemed to agree with the last person*

*he had talked to, and no one could predict what he would do next.*

The preceding is an example of outright plagiarism. No documentation of any

sort is given. The writer simply repeats the passage almost verbatim, in effect taking credit for writing it.

Though documented with a footnote, the passage below is still plagiarism

because the student has changed only a word or two of the original, without doing a paraphrase: student version B. (Plagiarized).

*When Alexander III died on October 20, 1894, he was succeeded by*

*his son Nicholas, who was more intelligent and more sensitive than his*

*father. People who knew him well, and also some who knew him only*

*superfi cially, testify that he was exceptionally charming as a person.*

*This charm, however, was associated with weakness and an inability to*

*make decisions. Nicholas always seemed to agree with the last person*

*he had talked to, and no one could predict what he would do next.*3

3. Hugh Seton-Watson, The Russian Empire, 1801-1917, vol. 3 of The Oxford History

of Modern Europe(Oxford: Oxford UP, 1957), 547.

And here is an acceptable use of the material. The original is paraphrased

properly and its source documented with a footnote: student version B.(not plagiarized)

*Emperor Nicholas II, who came to the throne of Russia following the*

*death of his father, Alexander III, was apparently a man of exceptional*

*personal charm and deep sensitivity. Ample testimony has come to*

*us from both intimate as well as casual acquaintances, indicating that*

*indeed he possessed a magnetic personality. However, the general*

*consensus is that he was also a man who lacked the ability to make*

*hard decisions, preferring to agree with the last person he had seen,*

*and thus making it impossible to predict what he would do next*3.

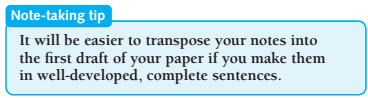
Hugh Seton-Watson, The Russian Empire, 1801-1917, vol. 3 of The Oxford History of Modern Europe(Oxford: Oxford UP, 1957), 547.

One last caution. Students who would never think to borrow material from

a printed source often take freely from electronic sources. That is plagiarism. We

admit that it can be diffi cult citing sources on the web. Many sites don’t name

authors; others don’t number pages; still others have finger-busting Internet addresses. But all systems of citation now have conventional ways of documenting material from electronic sources. See 9b, 10b, and 10d



**# THEME: 15**

**THE THESIS: DEFINITION AND FUNCTION**

The thesis is a statement that summarizes the central idea of the paper. By

convenience and custom, the thesis is usually the last sentence of the opening paragraph, as it is in the following example:

The Bilingual Child

Several million children in the United States are admitted to public school

every year without having the fluency in English required to succeed in the early

grades. These children speak Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, Armenian,

Arabic, or some other language in their homes and neighborhoods. Because

of their lack of language preparedness, some of them have had to repeat first

grade--occasionally more than once. As a consequence, bilingual programs were

created in many public school systems. Students forced into these programs had

much of their schoolwork translated for them by teachers familiar with their home

culture and language. *Contrary to the hopes of bilingual-education advocates,*

*the latest research indicates that bilingual programs confuse children and slow*

*them down in achieving the goal of learning English*.

The italicized sentence is the thesis—the central idea that the writer intends to

argue. After readers have read through this fi rst paragraph, the aim of the paper is

abundantly clear to them; they know what to anticipate.

The thesis serves at least three functions. First, it establishes a boundary

around your subject that discourages you from wandering aimlessly. Often we are

tempted to stray from the point when we write. We begin by intending to write a

paper about Rasputin’s place in history, and then stumble onto some fascinating

fact about Russian monasteries and want somehow to work it in. With a clear

thesis before us, however, we are less likely to be sidetracked. Formulated before

the actual writing begins, the thesis commits us to argue one point, discuss one

subject, clarify one issue. So committed, we will not leapfrog from topic to topic,

nor free-associate from one minor point to another.

Second, the well-rounded thesis can chart an orderly course for the paper,

making it easier to write. Consider this thesis:

*Two defects in the design of the Titaniccontributed to its sinking: its steering*

*was sluggish and unresponsive, even for a ship of its immense size, and its*

*traverse bulkheads, which should have made it virtually unsinkable, did not*

*extend all the way up to its deck.*

*The course before you is as plain as day: First, the sluggish steering of the*

Titanic must be discussed and clarified with appropriate facts and details; second,

the design of the ship’s traverse bulkheads must be dealt with and the defect thoroughly explained. Your job is easier because the thesis conveniently divides your

paper into two parts, establishing not only the topics to be discussed but also

their sequence. It is better and easier by far to write about this thesis than to write

randomly about the sinking of the Titanic.

Third, the thesis gives the reader an idea of what to expect, making the paper

easier to read. Textbooks have elaborate chapter headings and section head notes

just for this purpose. Newspaper stories are headlined and captioned for a

similar reason. It is easier to read virtually anything if we have an anticipation

that narrows and focuses our attention. A paper without a thesis creates no such

anticipation and so is more difficult to follow.

**Rules for wording the thesis**

Properly worded, the thesis should (1) be clear, comprehensible, and direct;

(2) predict major divisions in the structure of the paper; and (3) commit you to

an unmistakable course, argument, or point of view. The thesis on Rasputin is

clear, implies a four-part division in the structure of the paper, and obligates the

writer to argue a single proposition: that Rasputin was judged harshly by history.

Likewise, the thesis on the Titanicdisaster is clear and direct, divides the paper

into two principal parts, and commits the writer to a single argument: that the

ocean liner sank because of defects in steering and in the bulkheads. What follows is a series of rules to guide you in properly wording your thesis.

The thesis should commit you to a single line of argument

■ . Consider this example: Poor:

*The Roman theater was inspired by the Greek theater, which it imitated,*

*and eventually the Romans produced great plays in their theatrons, such*

*as those by Plautus, who was the best Roman comic writer because of*

*his robustness and inventiveness.*

This thesis threatens to wrench the paper in two directions: It commits the student to cover both the origins of Roman theater and the theatrical career of

Plautus, one of Rome’s greatest comic playwrights. This dual thesis came about

because the student laboriously had accumulated two sets of notes—one on the

origins of Roman theater and another on the career of Plautus—and was determined to devise a thesis that would allow the use of both. The result is this curiously dual thesis that skews the paper in two contrary directions. Persuaded to

relinquish the notes on the origins of the Roman theater and to focus the paper

entirely on the career of Plautus, the student drafted the following thesis:

Better: *Because of his robust language and novel comic plots, Titus Maccius*

*Plautus can be considered the best Roman comic playwright, and his*

*plays are still successfully staged today.*

The paper now is committed to a single line of argument, and its focus therefore is vastly improved.

The thesis should not be worded vaguely. Vagueness, like figurative language,

may tantalize, but it does not inform. Moreover, a paper with a vague thesis

is a paper without direction and is all the more difficult to write. Consider

this thesis:

Poor: *Cigarette smoking wreaks havoc on the body.*

Doing a paper on a thesis like this truly puts any writer to the test. The thesis

suggests no direction, provides no structure, proposes no arguments. Contrast it with this improved version:

Better*: Cigarette smoking harms the body by constricting the blood vessels,*

*accelerating the heartbeat, paralyzing the cilia in the bronchial tubes,*

*and activating excessive gastric secretions in the stomach*

The thesis should be a single, concise, easily understood sentence.

It should function as an accurate thumbnail sketch of the paper and should be short enough to be expressed on a postcard. If your thesis is more than a single sentence, if it is wordy and hard to understand, your paper is likely to be wordy and hard to understand as well. A weak thesis generally leads to a weak paper; a strong thesis to a strong paper. This is not a universal truth, but more often than not it is true. The thesis that is long and knotty is likely to muddle you and send

your paper fl ying off in different directions. Meanwhile, the reader struggling

to fathom your paper’s thesis is even less likely to make sense of its contents.

Here is a muddled thesis:

Poor: *Despite the fact that extensive time consumed by television detracts*

*from homework, competes with schooling more generally, and*

*has contributed to the decline in the Scholastic Aptitude Test score*

*averages, television and related forms of communication give the*

*future of learning its largest promise, the most constructive approach*

*being less dependent on limiting the uses of these processes than on*

*the willingness of the community and the family to exercise the same*

*responsibility for what is taught and learned this way as they have*

*exercised with respect to older forms of education.*

The passage is difficult to unravel. A whole paper based on this thesis would

be equally unclear. Here is an improved version:

Better: *Although numerous studies acknowledge that the extensive time*

*spent by students watching television has contributed to a decline in*

*Scholastic Aptitude Test scores, leading educators are convinced that*

*television holds immense promise for the future of learning, provided*

*that the family and the community prudently monitor its use.*

To paraphrase an old saying, “Like thesis, like paper.” A muddled, incoherent

thesis will generate an equally muddled and incoherent paper.

**Placing the thesis**

Some variation in placement of the thesis does exist, but most instructors distinctly prefer the thesis as the final sentence of the initial paragraph. Following

are three examples of theses—the italic sentences—introduced in this customary

place.

*He is a vagabond in aristocratic clothing--shabby but grand. As*

*he scurries along in his cutaway and derby hat, aided by a cane, he is*

*obviously a tramp, but a tramp with the impeccable manners of a dandy.*

*He is willing to tackle any job but seldom does it properly. He often falls in*

*love, but usually the affair sours in the end. His only enemies are pompous*

*people in places of authority. The general public adores him because*

**Tthesis:**  *he is everyman of all times. Charlie Chaplin’s Tramp has remained an*

*international favorite because he is a character with whom the average*

*person can empathize.*

**Choosing a title**

No magic formula exists on how or when to title your paper. The title, however, should be clear, specific, and informative. If possible, include in it some key

words from the subject of your paper. Here are examples, good and bad:

Not informative: Razzle-Dazzle in Egypt

Informative: Tutankhamen’s Tomb and Its Dazzling Contents

Usually, your thesis is a good source for a title. Consider this example:

Thesis: The imposition of sharia law on non-Muslims living in Western societies inevitably leads to resentment and political unrest.

Title : Sharia Law in Non Muslim Societies

**The outline**

An outline is an ordered list of the topics covered in a paper. It is useful to both

writer and reader. The writer who writes from an outline is less likely to stray

from the point or to commit a structural error—overdeveloping one topic while

skimping on another, for example. The reader, in turn, benefits from the outline

in the form of a complete and detailed table of contents.

**Visual conventions of the outline**

The conventions of formal outlining require that main ideas be designated by

Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, and so on). Sub-ideas branching off from the main

ideas are designated by capital letters (A, B, C, D, and so on). Subdivisions of

these sub-ideas are designated by Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, and so on). And

minor ideas are designated by lowercase letters (a, b, c, d, and so on). Here is an

example of the proper form of an outline:

I. Main idea

A. Sub-idea

B. Sub-idea

1. Division of a sub-idea

2. Division of a sub-idea

a. Minor idea

b. Minor idea

II. Main idea

**Types of outlines**

The three main types of outlines are the topic outline, the sentence outline, and

the paragraph outline. Never mix or combine the different formats in a paper:

Use one type of outline exclusively.

**The topic outline**

The topic outline words each entry as a phrase, breaking down the subject into

major subheadings. Topic outlines are particularly useful for outlining relatively

simple subjects. Here is a topic outline of the paper on Rasputin:

*Rasputin’s Other Side*

*Thesis: After six decades of being judged a demoniacal libertine, Rasputin*

*now deserves to be viewed from another point of view--as a man who was*

*intensely religious, who passionately desired peace, and who was deeply*

*devoted to his family and friends.*

*I. The ambiguity of the real Rasputin*

*A. His birth*

*B. Popular historical view*

*1. His supporters*

*2. His detractors*

*II. Rasputin’s religious feelings*

*A. His vitality and exuberance*

*B. His simple peasant faith*

*III. Rasputin’s desire for peace in Russia*

*A. His concern for the Russian underdog*

*1. His loyalty to the peasantry*

*2. His opposition to anti-Semitism*

*B. His opposition to all wars*

*IV. Rasputin’s gentle, compassionate side*

*A. His kindness to the Romanovs*

*B. His love for family*

Notice that the thesis of the paper is a separate entry immediately after the title. It

is also customary to omit introduction and conclusion entries.

**# THEME: 16**

**CHOOSING AN OUTLINE FORM**

Which kind of outline should you use? If you are a beginning writer, and if your

research has uncovered much detail on your subject, don’t hesitate: Use a detailed

sentence outline. Develop it at least down to the third level—the level of Arabic

numerals. In doing so, you actually erect a kind of scaffolding for the essay. To

write the rough draft, you simply transcribe from the outline, fill in the blanks,

insert transitions and connectives—and you have a paper.

The main entries of a sentence outline should be the topic sentences of various paragraphs. Its details should be exactly the kind you intend to use to support the topic sentence. As an example, here is a sentence outline of the first

paragraph from a paper on Agatha Christie’s fi ctional sleuth, Hercule Poirot:

*I. Poirot’s unique personality and character set him apart from other fi ctional*

*detectives.*

*A. His physical appearance was unique.*

*1. He was fi ve feet four inches tall, had a black handlebar mustache, an*

*egg-shaped head, and catlike eyes that grew greener as the solution to*

*a crime drew near.*

*2. He wore a black coat, pin-striped pants, a bow tie, shiny black boots,*

*and, usually, a coat and muffler.*

Here is the paragraph as it appeared in the paper:

*Poirot’s unique personality and character set him apart from other fictional*

*detectives. One of the memorable features of his personality and character was*

*his physical appearance. He was “a diminutive five foot four inches tall and*

*slender.”7*

*His hair was an “unrepentant” black, neatly groomed with hair tonic.*

*His upper lip displayed his pride and joy and his more distinctive feature, a small*

*black handlebar mustache.8*

*He had catlike eyes that grew greener as the solution*

*to a crime drew near and a head the shape of an egg. Thus Poirot has been*

*referred to as a “mustachioed Humpty Dumpty.”9*

*This “extraordinary looking*

*little man, who carried himself with immense dignity,” almost always wore the*

*same outfit, consisting of a black jacket, striped pants, a bow tie, and, in all but*

*the hottest weather, an overcoat and muffler. He also wore patent leather boots*

*that almost always displayed a dazzling shine.10*

Notice the close correspondence between the outline and the developed

paragraph. First, the main entry of the outline is exactly the same as the topic

sentence of the paragraph. Second, sub-idea A is fl eshed out and used in the paragraph to introduce the details that follow. Third, the details in the outline are

used nearly word-for-word in the paragraph. Naturally there is more material in

the paragraph than in the outline, which is not surprising because the second is a

shorthand version of the first.

If you are going to be following an outline as you write, this kind is especially useful. Once drafted, it becomes a condensed version of the paper. Any

paragraph is easy to write when you know exactly what its main point must be

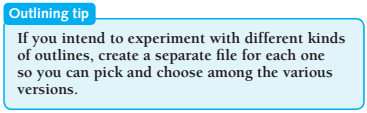
and what details it should contain. That kind of information is provided by the

detailed sentence outline.

Your computer will prove to be a useful tool for writing both your outline

and your essay. In fact, most word-processing programs offer an outlining feature

that has several formats with automatic numbering or lettering.



**# THEME: 17**

**PREPARING TO WRITE THE ROUGH DRAFT: A CHECKLIST**

The following is a practical checklist of things you should do before beginning to

write the rough draft:

1. Formulate a thesis. If you do not have one written down, you should at least

have a main idea for your paper. The thesis will emerge as you write.

2. Go over your notes, picking out only material relevant to your thesis. Bear in

mind that thousands of papers are ruined every year by writers who try to cram

in every single note, no matter whether or not it is pertinent. You must exercise

editorial judgment—based on your thesis—about which notes you use.

3. Organize your notes in the order of their appearance in the paper. If you took

our advice and used note cards, you can easily rearrange them. If you saved

the notes in your laptop, you can cut and paste them in sequence, complete

with bibliographic citations.

4. Write an outline or abstract of the paper, breaking down the thesis into an

ordered list of topics. Juggle the topics until they are arranged in the most

logical and emphatic order. If necessary, rephrase your thesis to give a more

defi nite structure to the paper.

Once you have formulated the thesis, sorted your notes, and drafted the outline or abstract, you are ready to begin writing the rough draft. Work from the

outline and your notes. Take advantage of the built-in dictionary and thesaurus that are available in your word-processing program or those that are easily

accessible online.

**# THEME: 18**

**WRITER’S BLOCK**

Writer’s block, in our view, is a misnamed condition. A writer is not a pipe through which water flows and which can be blocked by a pebble. All writer’s block means is that you haven’t found the right topic or you’re expressing a point of view or opinion in which you don’t truly believe. The writer who is enthusiastic about a topic and is eager to express an opinion on it never becomes blocked. Being blocked is a condition suffered mainly by writers who have no love for their topic.

Of course, it is possible for writers to judge their work so harshly that everything they write seems to them to be awful. The solution to this condition was proposed by the poet William Stafford who, when asked if he ever developed writer’s

block, replied, “Never. I just lower my standards.” So if you should come down with “writer’s block,” lower your standards enough to get something rough down on paper. Once you have that rough draft, you can always refi ne it through editing.

**Writing with a computer**

For the writer, the computer is a godsend; for the scholar it can be a nightmare.

Writing with a computer virtually eliminates holographic manuscripts—meaning

handwritten manuscripts showing the actual changes made by the writer. Few

documents are as revealing of the process of composition as a handwritten manuscript. But that is the scholar’s loss, not the writer’s.

**Overdoing it**

One danger of the trackless changes of a word processor is the temptation to

over-revise, to redo the paper over and over with little or no improvement in each

successive version. Indeed, an earlier draft sometimes proves to have the best

flow, a discovery often made after that draft has already been erased and lost. For

this reason, we encourage students to save the earlier draft just in case it turns

out to be better than a later one.

When writing the paper, do not use fancy fonts to dress up your work. These

are usually much harder to read than a plain font. Also, do not resort to extravagances such as excessive capitalization to underscore a point.

**Using a spell-checker**

Spell-checkers are dictionary smart but context dumb. They can catch the misspelling of a word, but none can tell you whether or not you have used a word

correctly. Here is a classic example:

Bee fore wee rote with checkers

Hour spelling was inn deck line.

But now when wee dew have a laps,

Wee are not maid too wine.

And now bee cause my spelling

Is checked with such grate flare,

Their are know faults in awl this peace,

Of nun eye am a wear.

If you run this poem through your spelling checker, it will not fl ag a single word,

proving again that there is no substitute for the human eye

**#19 THEME**

**USING YOUR NOTES IN THE PAPER**

Notes, meaning quotations and paraphrases or summaries as well as your own personal observations, must be embedded in the text where they belong and tied into the context of the discussion with a reference. Using notes properly is essential to the success of the paper. Properly tied into the text, the note represents the extent and nature of your research efforts. You’ll want to be sure that the progress of your paper is logical and that you haven’t left out some important material (see also 7f ).

**Summaries and paraphrases**

A summary is a condensation of an idea. A paraphrase is a restatement of an idea

using approximately the same number of words as in the original. The sources of summaries and paraphrases must be given in the body of the paper, either in

running text or in parentheses. Here is an example of a paraphrase used without

mention of its source in the text:

*When the court life of Russia died out at the imperial palace of Tsarskoe Selo,*

*all kinds of political salons suddenly made their appearance in various sections*

*of St. Petersburg. Although these new salons became the breeding ground for*

*the same kinds of intrigues, plots, counterplots, and rivalries that had taken*

*place at the imperial palace, somehow their activities seemed dwarfed, and*

*their politics lacked the grandeur and dazzle that had accompanied the political*

*style at the palace (Fülöp-Miller 101).*

In this case, parenthetical documentation of the paraphrase is sufficient. However, if you want to state a paraphrase more emphatically, or to throw the weight of

an expert behind the summary, you should mention the source in the text:

*As Hugh Seton-Watson points out in the preface to his book on the Russian*

*empire, most people tend to forget that the Russian empire was multinational*

*and therefore peopled with many non-Russian citizens, most important of*

*whom were the Polish (ix).*

The summary here is more emphatic because it is coupled with the name of the

authority whose work is summarized.

**Direct and indirect quotations**

A direct quotation is the exact reproduction of someone else’s words. An indirect

quotation reports what someone said or wrote but not in the exact words of the

original. Direct quotations usually appear in quotation marks; indirect quotations

never do. Study the following examples:

Direct quotation: *J. K. Galbraith makes the following statement: “In the Affluent Society no useful distinction can be made between luxuries and necessaries.”*

Indirect quotation: *J. K. Galbraith suggests that in an affluent society, people don’t make any useful distinction between luxuries and necessities.*

Direct quotation: *After defining the gasidaas a “pre-Islamic ode,” Katharine Slater Gittes comments: “These wholly secular odes glorify the Bedouin life,*

*the life of the wanderer.”*

Direct quotation:

*According to Katharine Slater Gittes, the main purpose of the gasida,*

*a pre-Islamic ode, is to glorify the life of the Bedouin wanderer.*

Research paper writers typically use a mix of both direct and indirect quotations to avoid the choppy style that results from a string of direct quotations

alone. This blend maintains the continuity of the writer’s own style, giving the

text a smoother flow.

Direct quotations must be reproduced with the exact phrasing, spelling, and

punctuation of the original. Any modifi cation made in a quotation—no matter

how minor—must be indicated either in a note placed in square brackets within

the quotation or in parentheses at the end of the quotation:

*Milton was advocating freedom of speech when he said, “Give me the liberty*

*to know, to think, to believe, and to utter freely[emphasis added] according to*

*conscience, above all other liberties” (120).*

Quotations must blend logically into surrounding sentences so as not to produce an illogical or mixed construction. The following quotation is blended poorly:

*Chung-Tzu describes a sage as “suppose there is one who insists on morality in*

*all things, and who places love of truth above all other values” (58).*

Here is the same quotation properly integrated into the sentence:

*Chung-Tzu describes a sage as “one who insists on morality in all things, and*

*who places love of truth above all other values” (58).*

**Using brief direct quotations**

Brief quotations (four lines or less) can be introduced with a simple word or

phrase. Look for the highlighted phrases in these sentences:

*Betty Friedan admits that it will be quite a while before women know “how*

*much of the difference between women and men is culturally determined and*

*how much of it is real.”*

*“God is the perfect poet,” said Browning in “Paracelsus.”*

Vary your introductions to quotations. If you introduce one quotation with

“So-and-so says . . . ,” try something different for the next, perhaps “In the opinion of at least one critic . . . ,” or “A view widely shared by many in the field affi rms that . . .”

**Personal commentary**

In your research, you no doubt will arrive at your own ideas and opinions about the topic—that’s a part of learning and one of the reasons teachers assign research papers. A good paper is made up not only of other writers’ ideas, but also of your own, backed by solid evidence. Some of your own opinions appear as personal comments in your notes, but others occur to you as you write the first draft. For instance, one student, writing a paper arguing that the present grading system in universities does not help learning, incorporated this personal note into her paper:

*The University of California at Santa Cruz does not use GPAs, bell curves, or*

*class ranking to judge a student’s academic ability. Instead, it uses a pass/no*

*pass system accompanied by the instructor’s narrative comments on the student’s work. Yet, UCSC is often praised for its atmosphere of fostering learning*

*for learning’s sake and encouraging students to try new fi elds of knowledge*

*without risking a bad transcript.*

The student’s opinion was based on evidence gained after visiting a friend at the

university.

Without personal notes like these, your paper might seem wholly strung together from the ideas of others, with nothing of your own in it. Be sure that your

rough draft reveals your own points of view, your own beliefs, and your own

conclusions.

**# 20 THEME**

**WRITING WITH UNITY, COHERENCE, AND EMPHASIS**

The primary rule of writing the research paper is that your notes must be blended

smoothly into the natural fl ow of the paper. Paraphrases, summaries, indirect

quotations, and allusions must be edited for smoothness. Quotations, of course,

have to be used verbatim, must not be altered in any way, and yet must be made to

fit into the context of the paper. Transitions between ideas should be logical and

smooth. The paper should not seem a patchwork of unrelated snippets. In sum,

you must observe the rhetorical principles of unity, coherence, and emphasis.

**Unity**

The rhetorical principle of unity means that a paper should stick to its chosen thesis without rambling. If the thesis states that Japanese art infl uenced French impressionism, the paper should cover exactly that subject and nothing more. If the thesis proposes to contrast the lifestyles of inner-city residents and suburb dwellers, the paper should pursue just that comparison, ignoring all side issues, no matter how fascinating you fi nd them. To write a unifi ed paper might require you, as one English teacher put it, to “kill your babies.” Every writer has had to commit such editorial murder of a favorite image, word, phrase or sentence that simply didn’t fit.To observe the principle of unity, you simply have to follow the lead of your thesis. Properly drafted, the thesis predicts the content of the paper, controls its direction, and obligates you to a single purpose. You introduce only material relevant to your thesis, suppressing the urge to dabble in side issues or to stray from the point. Such single-mindedness will produce a unifi ed paper that is easy to read.

Coherence

If unity means “sticking to the point,” coherence means “sticking together.” To

make your writing coherent, you must think of the paragraph as expressing a

single idea to which the individual sentences contribute bits of meaning. Here are

four suggestions to help you write coherent paragraphs:

Repeat key words or use clear pronouns. Either repeat key words or make certain that the pronouns you use clearly hark back to them. In the passage that

follows, notice how the key word villainis either repeated or replaced by a

pronoun clearly referring to it:

*The villain in science fiction movies is always the personification of evil. One*

*way this concentration of evil is achieved is by surrounding the villain with*

*numerous henchmen. Without henchmen, the villain would appear much less*

*powerful. To accentuate his villainy, he surrounds himself with ruthless storm*

*troopers, evil robots, slime monsters, or whatever. With these associates by*

*the villain’s side, the eventual triumph of the hero over the villain takes place*

*against a backdrop of overwhelming odds.*

Repetition of the word villainand use of the pronouns he, himself, and his,

which refer to villain, provide a common thread connecting all five sentences.

Use parallel structures. The deliberate repetition of certain words, phrases, or

clauses in a paragraph can give sentences a cohering rhythm and harmony, as

the repetition of canand a verb does in this example:

*Fleas of various species can jump 150 times their own length, can survive months*

*without feeding, can accelerate 50 times faster than the space shuttle, can*

*withstand enormous pressure, and can remain frozen for a year and then revive.*

**Emphasis**

The rhetorical principle of emphasisrequires the expression of more important

ideas in main or independent clauses and of less important ideas in subordinate or

dependent clauses. In sum, emphatic writing attempts to rank ideas through grammatical structure. Here’s an example of a piece of writing that is not emphatic: Poor emphasis:

*The gifted child is a high achiever on a specifi c test, either the Otis*

*or Binet I.Q. test. These tests are usually administered at the end of*

*the second grade. They determine the placement of the child in third*

*grade. These tests are characterized by written as well as oral questions, so that the child has the opportunity to be creative.*

The grammatical treatment of ideas is altogether too democratic. A reader

simply cannot distinguish between important and unimportant ideas because

they are both expressed in a similar grammatical structure. Here is the same passage made emphatic: Improved emphasis:

*A child is considered gifted if the child has achieved a high score on*

*a specific test—the Otis or Binet I.Q. test, for example. Characterized*

*by written as well as oral questions so that the child has the opportunity to be creative, these tests are administered at the end of the*

*second grade to determine the proper placement of the child in third*

*grade.*

By placing subordinate ideas in subordinate clauses, the writer achieves a focus

that’s missing from the unemphatic version.

**# 21 THEME**

**USING THE PROPER TENSE**

MLA and CMS styles use the present tense to cite a work (e.g., “Leaver suggests”). APA style requires the past or present perfect tense to cite a work (e.g., “Gomez, Haggart, and Franz have noted”). Papers in the humanities usually are written in the present tense because their comments have universal significance that makes them true now or then. Here is an example:

*Cold Mountainis the grueling account of the journey of a Civil War soldier home*

*to his sweetheart, Ada. In this, his fi rst novel, the author reveals remarkable*

*insight into human loneliness and the changes wrought by war.*

Although the novel itself was published 1997, the comments about it are in the

present tense because they continue to be true today.

Papers in the social sciences and certain of the life sciences use the APA style.

They usually are written in the past or present perfect tense because most of the

time the writers are indicating the results of studies or experiments that took

place in the past. But exceptions do exist. Look at this student example:

*Benson (1997) reported that one in fi ve women was destined for breast cancer.*

*His study is considered accurate and has been the basis for extensive reevaluation of women’s disease prevention.*

As the example indicates, the APA style requires the past tense (reported, was) for

sources cited but the present tense (is) for generalizations and conditions that

remain true today. It requires the present perfect tense (has been) for experiments

or conditions that have been reported and are still valid.

**Using graphics in your research paper**

The ease with which graphics can be downloaded from the Internet or scanned

from books and periodicals has changed the look of the modern student research

paper. Students nowadays routinely include illustrations in their research papers.

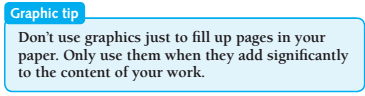
A paper on ancient Mesopotamian art might include an illustration of some typical pottery or cave drawing from that period. A paper on infant mortality, or on

shifts in the housing market, might feature a pie chart, a block table, or some

graph to emphasize a point. If you have the expertise, many computers allow the

creation of tables, line graphs, or pie charts on your own. Or you may prefer to

download such items from various electronic sources.



Here are some electronic sources for graphics you can download and use in

your paper:

**Artwork** Library of Congress Exhibitions,

lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits

**Population statistics** U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov

**Federal government** USA.gov (the U.S. government’s offi cial web portal),

**information**  www.usa.gov

**The latest in disease** National Institutes of Health, www.nih.gov

**control**

Here are some general rules to which you should pay attention:

1. Place your graphics as close as possible to their introduction. Don’t separate

text from artwork by pages.

2. Know the difference between fi gures and tables. A table presents information

systematically, usually by columns. Any illustration that is not a table is a

figure, such as a blueprint, chart, line drawing, map, or other artwork. Tables

use the heading “Table” at the top of the illustration; fi gures use the heading

“Fig.” at the bottom of the illustration. All figures as well as tables must be

numbered consecutively. (See the samples that follow.)

3. Provide the source (book, periodical, agency, or URL) for any illustrations

used. (See samples that follow.)

4. Full-color art is acceptable if you have a color printer, but the headings and

explanations should be in black print.

5. Always explain the table or fi gure before you show it in your text.

6. Make your explanations as brief and clear as possible.

(For how to document graphics, see Chapter 9, 10, or 11 for the documentation

system you are using.)

The following are some sample illustrations of what a student might

typically use.

**Writing the abstract**

An abstract—a summary of the major ideas contained in your research paper—is

for papers written in the APA style. Although the abstract replaces an outline, we

suggest for the sake of logical progression and balance in the paper that you write

from an outline, even if you are not required to submit one. Writing the abstract

in coherent paragraphs is relatively easy if you have outlined your paper. To produce a smooth abstract you need only link and condense the main ideas of the

outline with appropriate commentary.

In writing the abstract, use no more than one page (about 120 words). (Remember that the whole point of abstracting is to condense.) The abstract always

falls on page 2, the page after the title page. It should have a running head and

page number. Center the title “Abstract” (without quotation marks) one inch

from the top of the page.

The abstract should meet the following criteria:

1. Reflect accurately the purpose and content of your paper

2. Explain briefly the central issue or problem of your paper

3. Summarize your paper’s most important points

4. Mention the major sources used

5. State your conclusions clearly

6. Be coherent so that it is easy to read

7. Remain objective in its point of view

Here is an example from a student paper:

Vitamins 2

***Abstract***

*Until recently, the offi cial view on healthful eating was that anyone who ate*

*a normally balanced diet did not need vitamin supplements. However, recent*

*research by a team at Trinity College in England and at Brigham and Women’s*

*Hospital in Boston concludes that certain vitamins, especially the vitamins*

*A, B, C, D, and E (also called antioxidants), can help prevent such serious*

*diseases as heart failure, diabetes, depression, fl u, and eye problems. The*

*conclusion of this research is that although vitamins cannot substitute for good*

*eating habits, plenty of exercise, and not smoking, the fi ndings do strengthen*

*the argument for adding vitamins as a nutritional supplement.*

**#22 THEME**

**PRINCIPLES OF REVISION**

Revision is partly a psychological and partly a mechanical process. All writers who wish to write well must learn how to revise their work. Take the sentence you just read. It is not what we fi rst wrote, but what we ended up with after revision. Originally, we wrote this: “Every writer who wishes to write well must learn to revise his work.” The problem with that sentence is that its use of the pronoun “his,” by typecasting every writer as a man, is sexist. We could have changed this sentence to read “Every writer who wishes to write well must learn how to revise their work.” But that would have meant using a plural pronoun, “their,” to take the

place of a singular noun, “every writer.” If this were an informal paper, that usage

would be perfectly acceptable. However, a formal research paper is held to stricter

standards of grammar, and many instructors would regard such a construction as

wrong. This kind of adaptation of language and grammar to fit a particular audience is what we mean when we say that revision is partly psychological.

The process of revision is also partly mechanical. As you comb over the first

draft, you will no doubt find misstatements of opinions and errors of facts. Grammatical mistakes made in the heat of composing will suddenly become apparent. You’ll find instances of poor word usage. A better way of phrasing an idea will occur to you. Some paragraphs will seem tedious and overstuffed with details. Others will strike you the very opposite way—as too thin and requiring shoring up with more data. All these miscues and mistakes, big and little, will occur to you during the revision process. As veteran writers have said, “There is no writing; there is only rewriting.”

**Rereading your writing**

“The last act of writing must be to become one’s own reader,” said John Ciardi,

the American poet. All revision is based on repeated rereading of the first draft.

Dedicated writers are fanatic about rereading their material. One novelist claimed

he revised every page 20 times; another boasted that he went over every line he

wrote at least 150 times. Our own efforts at revising fall somewhere between

those two numbers.

How often should you go over your rough draft as you revise it? Certainly,

the typical student cannot go over the material 30 times or 150 times or even

10 times. Nor can the busy instructor. But most writing teachers agree that the

research paper writer should go over the text a minimum of three times.

**Revising the paper from biggest to smallest elements**

Many instructors recommend that in their revision, students work from the

biggest elements to the smallest. This is, on the whole, good advice because it

makes the act of revision methodical. Bear in mind, however, that just because

you’re focusing on finding mountains is no excuse for ignoring mole hills. If, in

your first revision pass you discover a small fry, such as a misspelled word, by all

means correct it even though you’re after bigger fish.

**Revising the opening paragraph**

Check your opening paragraph to see whether your beginning is sprightly

enough to draw in your reader. Check the thesis to be sure that it is not muddled

or vague. Your thesis, which typically is the final sentence of the first paragraph,

should clearly explain what your paper proposes to argue, assert, or do. Here’s an

example of a muddled opening:

*Most women think that they will be victimized by men and that this is a normal state of affairs; therefore it is important that women fi ght back by standing up for themselves. They must refuse to play second fi ddle to men. On*

*the other hand, given the present distribution of power and privilege, women*

*are bound to be tinged by the historical leftovers of inequality. In order to get*

*along in the world, they will have to show a certain amount of admiration for*

*men and a willingness to accommodate them. My paper is an attempt to demonstrate that this is a backward tactic.*

**# 23 THEME**

**REVISING SENTENCES FOR VARIETY AND STYLE**

Varietyis easy to recognize and defi ne. It means a mixture that is not monotonous. Style, on the other hand, is not that easy to pinpoint. Its presence in a piece of writing is unmistakable but not showy. Like tact, style is conspicuous in its absence but subtle in its presence. A passage that monotonously uses the same

kind of sentence over and over again is not only boring, it is also without style.

Here is an example of what we mean:

Monotonous: *Poetry is regarded by many as the highest literary art form. Poetry is seen nowadays as an unpopular form. Poetry used to be read very*

*widely by the middle classes. Poetry no longer enjoys that distinction*

*and today is hardly read by anyone.*

Notice that the writer begins each sentence with the same word, poetry. Moreover,

every sentence is more or less the same length. Writers sometimes deliberately write several similar sentences in a row for emphasis. But this writer is being lazy, not emphatic, and the result of the repetition is monotony. The problem is easily fixed by simply combining some sentences or beginning some others with a different word:

***Varied*** *Poetry is regarded by many as the highest literary art form. Nowadays, however, it has become unpopular. Whereas poetry used to be*

*read very widely by the middle classes, today it hardly is ever read by*

*anyone.*

We do not like to begin more than two sentences in a row with the same word; and we do not like to end more than two sentences in a row with the same word, either. If we fi nd ourselves using many short sentences in a row, we deliberately interrupt the monotony by making the next sentence longer. Our aim is to write a

succession of sentences that do not appear cut from a cookie cutter. If you find

yourself using several sentences of the same kind in a row, go back over the material and change them for the sake of variety.

Here is a summary of ways to vary your sentences:

- Learn to juxtapose short and long sentences. Follow several short sentences

with a long one:

*The name “Christopher” meant nothing. Felice paid no attention. She ignored*

*the call. But because the speaker, who turned out to be an elderly gentleman,*

*was gracious in his comments about the tragedy of war, she listened.*

The fi rst three sentences are short; the last one is long.

Learn to subordinate. Most of us write compound sentences almost without ■

thinking. But subordinating one clause to another requires thoughtful effort.

It means that you must place lesser thoughts “sub,” or below, the main idea.

Coordinate*: I arrived at Yankee Stadium, and the first inning was already*

*underway.*

Subordinate: *The first inning was already under way when I arrived at Yankee*

*Stadium.*

**Revise sentences to use the active voice**

Verbs have two voices—active and passive. In the active voice the subject acts:

“Jim wrote those letters.” In the passive voice, the subject is acted upon: “Those

letters were written by Jim.” Whenever you can, use the active voice in your

writing. That the passive voice makes a writer seem objective is a myth. What

the passive voice does is make your writing sound textbookish and stilted. In

bureaucratic or political writing, the passive voice is often used to shield the person responsible for an action: “Two laws protecting illegal aliens were passed.” The person proposing those laws is hidden from the reader’s view.

Consider the following excerpt from a student’s paper on the Great Pyramid

at Giza:

Passive: *Who built the Great Pyramid? When? How? Throughout history students of archaeology have been baffl ed by these questions. All sorts of*

*mystical theories have been propounded by Egyptologists, but it has*

*been concluded by most experts today that the Great Pyramid was*

*built by Egyptian citizens using the simplest of tools and technology*

Notice the directness and vigor of the passage when it’s recast in the active voice:

Active: *Who built the Great Pyramid? When? How? Throughout history these*

*questions have baffl ed students of archaeology. Egyptologists have*

*propounded all sorts of mystical theories, but most experts today have*

*concluded that the Great Pyramid was built by Egyptian citizens using*

*the simplest of tools and technology.*

**# 24 THEME**

**REVISING WORDS: DICTION**

Word choice and usage comes under the heading of diction. Some people seem

to think that when it comes to word choice, bigger is always better. But using a

word just because it is big is a bad idea. You’re better off using words for their

exactness, appropriateness, and accuracy than for their size. The only time a bigger word is a better choice is when it is more accurate. In any case, the final decision to use this word over that should be based on the audience for whom you’re writing. If you’re doing a research paper for a history class, you could probably justify writing this sentence:

*The professor wrote a biography of the political leader that some critics called*

*a hagiography.*

Most readers would not know offhand the meaning of this word—it’s an uncommon word that means treating a subject like a saint. But in the context of the sentence it is a useful word with no exact single-word equivalent. You can use

a big word if it is suitable to your meaning and you have every expectation that

your audience will understand it. Otherwise, you should use several small words

to plug the gap made by the omission of your big word.

**Revise diction for accuracy and exactness**

The best writing is concise and to the point. It uses a vocabulary appropriate to

the subject. If you know your topic well, you will be exact in writing about it.

Your readers will know exactly what you mean because you will tell them without

being vague or fuzzy. You’ll use the right technical terms and pile on details when

necessary. Notice the difference between the following two paragraphs, taken from the fi rst and second drafts of a student paper on the origin of Indian castes:

Inexact: *The occupations of the four major castes were spelled out in the Laws*

*of Manu: The Brahmin were the highest, the Kshatriyas came second,*

*the Vaishyas followed, and the Sudras were at the bottom of the pile.*

The vagueness of this passage results partly from the writer’s mistaken assumption that readers would be familiar with the general divisions of Indian castes and partly from the writer’s not knowing the caste divisions well. When the instructor pointed out that more information was needed, the student produced this revision:

More exact: *The occupations of the four major castes were spelled out in the Laws of Manu: The Brahmin were to teach, interpret the Vedas (holy scriptures), and perform the required ritual sacrifices. The Kshatriyas were to be the warriors and social governors (even kings). The Vaishyas were to tend the livestock and to engage in commerce in order to create wealth for the country. As for the Sudras, they were to become the servants of the three higher castes--doing their bidding*

*without malice or resentment.*

**RULES FOR WRITERS. NOT.**

Here is a fun list of the sort of revisions writers most often make in their work.

You can use it to guide your hand in revising your paper and to be amused while

doing so.

1. Verbs has to agree with their subjects.

2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.

3. And don’t start a sentence with a conjunction.

4. It is wrong to ever split an infinitive.

5. Avoid clichés like the plague. (They’re old hat.)

6. Also, always avoid annoying alliteration.

7. Be more or less specific.

8. Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are (usually) unnecessary.

9. Also too, never, ever use repetitive redundancies.

10. No sentence fragments.

11. Contractions aren’t necessary and shouldn’t be used.

12. Foreign words and phrases are not apropos.

13. Do not be redundant; do not use more words than necessary; it’s highly

superfluous.

14. One should NEVER generalize.

15. Don’t use no double negatives.

16. Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc.

17. One-word sentences? Eliminate.

18. Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.

19. The passive voice should never be used.

20. Eliminate commas, that are, not necessary. Parenthetical words however

should be enclosed in commas.

21. Never use a big word when a diminutive one would suffice.

22. DO NOT use exclamation points and all caps to emphasize!!!

23. Use words correctly, irregardless of how others use them.

24. Understatement is always the absolute best way to put forth earth-shaking

ideas.

25. Use the apostrophe in it’s proper place and omit it when its not needed.

26. If you’ve heard it once, you’ve heard it a thousand times: Resist hyperbole;

not one writer in a million can use it correctly.

27. Puns are for children, not groan readers.

28. Go around the barn at high noon to avoid colloquialisms.

29. Even if a mixed metaphor sings, it should be derailed.

30. Who needs rhetorical questions?

31. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.

32. Do not put statements in the negative form.

33. A writer must not shift your point of view.

34. Place pronouns as close as possible, especially in long sentences of ten or

more words, to their antecedents.

35. Writing carefully, dangling participles must be avoided.

36. If any word is improper at the end of a sentence, a linking verb is.

37. Take the bull by the hand and avoid mixing metaphors.

38. Avoid trendy locutions that sound flaky.

39. Everyone should be careful to use a singular pronoun with singular nouns in

their writing.

40. Always pick on the correct idiom.

41. The adverb always follows the verb.

42. Be careful to use the homonym.

43. Proofread carefully to see if you any words out.

**# 25 THEME**

**PARENTHETICAL DOCUMENTATION: AUTHOR-DATE (APA)**

The American Psychological Association’s style—used by the social sciences, business, anthropology, and some of the life sciences—consists of parenthetical citations in the text, much like the style recommended by the MLA. However, unlike MLA, APA in-text citations mention the author (last name only) and the date of the cited publication, not the author and page number. Part of the reason for stressing the date over the page number is the nature of scientifi c research, which is time sensitive and can quickly become obsolete. Here is a typical APA in-text citation:

Pollock (1994) has shown that a disturbance in the mother’s initial contact with

the infant can affect her decision or capacity to breast-feed her infant.

Or

One study has shown that a disturbance in the mother’s initial contact with the

infant can affect her decision or capacity to breast-feed her infant (Pollock, 1994).

No page number is ever needed in the citation unless the source is used as a

direct quote. Here are two examples:

No page number:

The psychological response to defeat was often more dramatically expressed

by the women of the South than by the men, as Mary Chestnut documents in

her Civil War diary (Vann Woodward, 1981).

Page number necessary because of direct quote:

The psychological response to defeat was often more dramatically expressed

by the women of the South than by the men. Evidence of that comes from

Mary Chestnut, who in her diary tells the story of a woman who “raved

and dashed herself fi nally on the ground” when she heard about the fall of

New Orleans (Vann Woodward 1981, p. 640).

In the second example, a page number must be cited because the text contains a direct quote. Notice the abbreviation p.(pp.if more than one page is

cited). Your paper will then list the publication details of the source on a page

titled “References” (APAs term for a bibliography):

Vann Woodward, C. (1981). Mary Chestnut’s Civil War.New Haven:

Yale University Press.

APA also requires the “References” page to use a hanging indentation for its

entries as well as italics—not underlining—for book titles, the names of magazines, and the like. See the sample entries in 10b.

**EXAMPLES OF APA IN-TEXT CITATIONS TO BOOKS**

Here are some examples of the parenthetical documentation of the APA.

a. One work by a single author

The surname of the author and the year of publication are inserted in the text at

the appropriate point:

Leakey (2001) speculates that perhaps we have not yet found the perfect link

between humans and apes.

Or

In a recent study (Leakey, 2001), paleoanthropologists focused on Kenya Man,

a possible early hominid and ancestor of humankind.

Or

In a study published in 2001, Leakey described fi nding a skull in the Kenya

desert that turned out to be a candidate for humankind’s ancestor.

If the name of the author is given in the text, then cite only the year of publication in parentheses (fi rst example). Otherwise, show both the author and the

date of publication in parentheses (second example). If, however, both the year

and the author are cited in the text discussion, then no parenthetical citation is

necessary (third example).

**b. Subsequent references**

Subsequent references do not need to include the year so long as the study cannot

be confused with other studies in your paper:

In a more-recent study, Johnson (2002) found that children were more

susceptible. Johnson also found that . . .

**c. One work by two authors**

When a work has two authors, always mention both names each time the reference occurs in your text. In naming two authors, join their names by andin the text but by an ampersand in a parenthetical citation.

Much earlier, Grant and Change (1958) had discovered . . .

But

In a previous study of caged rats (Grant & Change, 1958), the surprising element

was . . .

d. One work by three to five authors

For works with three to fi ve authors, mention all authors and the year of publication

the fi rst time the reference occurs. In subsequent citations include only the surname

of the fi rst author followed by et al. (not underlined or in italic and no period after et)

and the year:

First citation:

Holland, Holt, Levi, and Beckett (1983) indicate that . . .

Subsequent citation:

Holland et al. (1983) also found . . .

An exception occurs when two separate references have the same first author and same date and so would shorten to the same reference. For example,

Muskavitch, Baran, and Parker (2002) and Muskavitch, Baran, and Petrossian

(2002) would both shorten to Muskavitch et al. (2002). In this case always cite both

references in full to avoid confusion. Also, multiple-author citations in footnotes,

tables, and figures should include the surnames of all authors in every citation.

e. Work by six or more authors

When a work has six or more authors, name only the surname of the first author

followed by et al. (not underlined or italicized, and no period after et) and the

year in the fi rst as well as in subsequent citations. In “References,” list the names

of all authors. Again, if two separate references would shorten to the same form,

list as many authors as are necessary to distinguish between the two references,

followed by et al. For instance:

Verska, Sage, Finley, Attarian, and McBride (2006)

and

Verska, Sage, Bradley, Attarian, and McBride (2006)

would be cited in the text this way:

Verska, Sage, Finley, et al. (2006)

and

Verska, Sage, Bradley, et al. (2006)

NOTE:A comma precedes et al.following more than one name, but not following

a single name.