

South Pasadena High School

Style Guide  
for  
Research Papers

Edited by  
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## Business Letter Format

1401 Fremont Avenue  
South Pasadena, CA 91030  
September 4, 2006

Return address. Do not include your name; include today's date.

*4 white spaces*

Mr. Christopher Student  
1234 Sunnyside Avenue  
Happyville, CA 91030

Inside address. Use a two-letter abbreviation for the state.

*1 white space*

Dear Mr. Student:

Salutation, followed by a colon.

*1 white space*

This style handbook has been designed to provide a guide to basic research and formatting techniques. Not all of your questions will be answered, but there are many online and library resources available to assist you. No matter what, do not forget your most valuable resources: your teachers and librarians!

*1 white space between paragraphs*

This is an example of a block format for a typical business letter. Please note the following items:

- Type the letter in 12 point Times New Roman font.
- Omit the return address if you are writing on letterhead.
- Use four white spaces between the date and the inside address.
- One white space goes above and below the salutation.
- Do not indent paragraphs; place a white space above and below each paragraph.
- Leave 3 or 4 white spaces below the complimentary close for your signature.

Salutations can be confusing. In sending a letter to Pat Smith, it might be impossible to know if you are writing Patrick or Patricia. In that case, you could write "Dear Sir or Madam". You could also address the letter as "Dear Pat Smith".

Sincerely yours,

Complimentary close.

*3 or 4 white spaces (room for your signature)*

Ann Dallavalle  
Library Media Teacher Specialist

Include your position title if you have one.

## Plagiarism

### **Academic Honesty: What is Plagiarism?**

This resource was written by Purdue OWL.

Last full revision by Karl Stolley.

Last edited by Karl Stolley on May 12th 2006 at 6:22PM

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>

**In order to avoid plagiarizing the content of this University of Purdue document, please follow the above hyperlink. All your questions about plagiarism will be answered.**

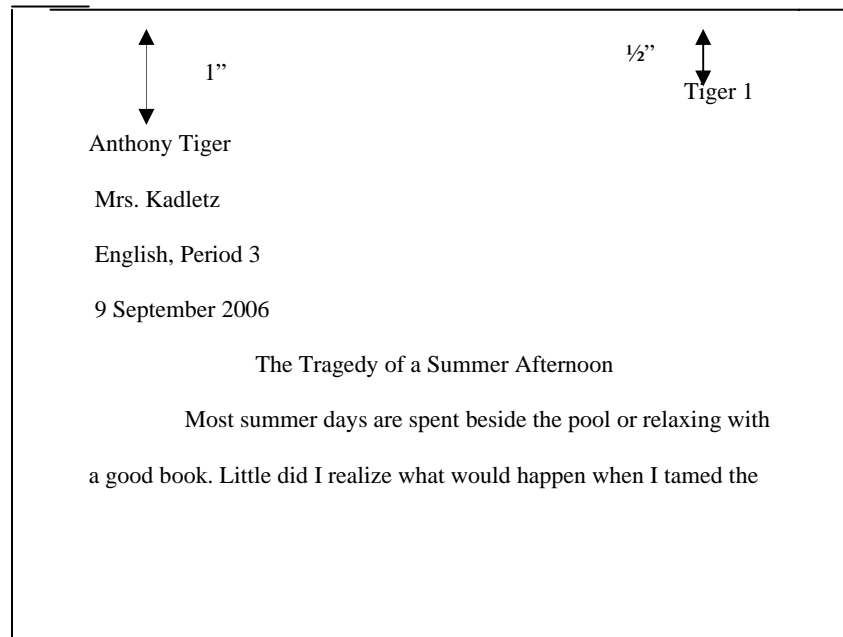
## Word Processing Guidelines

### I. General Guidelines

- A. Use 8-1/2 x 11 inch standard white paper.
- B. Set margins to one inch on top, bottom and both sides of text.
- C. Double space the entire paper, including quotations and list of works cited.
- D. Do not justify the lines of the paper at the right margin.
- E. Use 12 point Times New Roman font.

### II. Heading and Title

- A. Research papers do not need a title page.
- B. Beginning at left margin, one inch from the top, type your name, teacher's name, class and period, and date on separate lines, double-spaced. Your instructor might provide different items he/she requires for the heading.



- C. After the date, double space. Center the title.
- D. Do not underline the title, do not use italics, do not use all capital letters, do not use bold typeface. Follow standard rules for capitalization and underline words normally underlined in text.

Exploring the Character of Iago in Othello  
 How to Minimize Cheating in the Classroom  
A Tale of Two Cities: Fact or Fabrication?

- E. Each page has a header with your name and page number. See below for more information.

### III. Pages, Page Numbering, Dates and Numbers

- A. Do not end a page with a hyphenated word.
- B. Do not begin or end a page with a single line. Adjusting the page to avoid dangling sentences might affect the top or bottom margin slightly.
- C. Every page, including page one, has last name and page number in the header. Your teacher might change the requirements for page one.
- D. Header is in the upper right corner, one-half inch from the top edge of the paper, right justified.
- E. Create page numbers and names using the header feature on most word processing programs. (It is often under “view” on the toolbar.)
- F. Be consistent in writing dates. MLA format generally uses the day-month-year style. Spell out months in text; abbreviate them in the works cited list. May, June and July are not abbreviated.
- G. Spell out numbers if they can be written in one or two words; otherwise, use numerals. For example, *one, twenty-seven, two hundred, two thousand, 291* (MLA 3.5.2).
- H. Do not begin a sentence with a numeral.

### IV. Works Cited Page

- A. The Works Cited page appears at the end of the research paper.
- B. Begin the Works Cited page on a separate sheet, but continue the page numbering from the text. For example, if your text ends on page 6, your Works Cited page will begin on page 7.
- C. Use a one-inch top margin and center the heading, Works Cited. Do not bold or underline this heading.
- D. Double space the entries and between entries.
- E. Begin each entry at the left margin. The second line should be indented ½ inch. This is called a “hanging indent” and can be created automatically using the features of your word processing program.
- F. Alphabetize entries by author’s last name or by title if there isn’t an author. *A, An* and *The* are ignored at the beginning of titles when alphabetizing.

- G. List in your Works Cited only the entries which were actually cited within your text. If your list contains items you used for research but did not cite within the text, you can retitle your list of references Works Consulted.
- H. According to MLA format, titles of books, periodicals, films, etc. are underlined; however, some teachers prefer titles to be italicized. Be consistent throughout the paper.
- I. Dates are written in MLA format, day month year, with the longer months abbreviated. For example: 7 Feb. 1996.

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.

- J. Do not include the state where an item is published unless the city is unknown or obscure. When listing a state, use the two letter postal abbreviation; i.e. two capital letters without a period.

## **V. Miscellaneous**

- A. Use spell and grammar check features of the word processing program.
- B. Edit and proofread your paper. Have a friend proofread your paper. Spell check does not always find all the mistakes you might have made.
- C. Use the Print Preview feature before you print. Is the formatting the same on each page? Do page breaks occur in the right places?

## MLA FORMAT: Brief Guide

- Title your list Works Cited.
- Arrange all works in one alphabetical list by author (or title if no author).
- Double-space the entire list. (The examples below are single-spaced.)
- Type the first line of each entry at the left margin; indent all following lines five spaces or one tab.
- Do not include volume and issue numbers for magazine and newspaper articles (only for journal articles).
- Include city of publication for books only.

### One Author

Angelou, Maya. I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings. New York: Random House, 1969.

### Two or Three Authors

Atwan, Robert, Donald McQuade, and John W. Wright. Edsels, Luckies, and Frigidaires: Advertising the American Way. New York: Dell, 1979.

### Four or More Authors

*Name first author and add "et al."*

Daconta, Michael C., et al. Java 1.2 and JavaScript for C and C++ Programmers. New York: Wiley, 1998.

### Book with an Editor

Fitzgerald, Terence J., ed. Police in Society. New York: H.W. Wilson, 2000.

### Encyclopedia Article (no author)

"Glacier." New Encyclopaedia Britannica. 15th ed. 1997.

(You can omit page numbers when articles are in alphabetical order.)

### Encyclopedia Article (with an author)

Ebenstein, William. "Monarchy." Encyclopedia Americana. 2002 ed.

(You can omit page numbers when articles are in alphabetical order.)

### Encyclopedia Article (online database)

"Glacier." Encyclopaedia Britannica Online School Edition. 2005. South Pasadena High School Lib., South Pasadena, CA. 3 Nov. 2005 <<http://school.eb.com>>.

*place of access*

*date of access*

### Journal Article

Jones, Harriet. "Free Information." History Today 50 (2000): 18-19.

*page numbers*

*volume number*

## Magazine Article

King, Stephen. "Will We Close the Door on Books?" Time 19 June 2000: 92. → page number  
} issue date

## Daily Newspaper

La Ganga, Maria L., and Mark Z. Barabak. "Bush Seeking Out Non-GOP Voters." Los Angeles Times 17 Aug. 2000, final ed.:A20.

## CQ Researcher (online database)

Hatch, David. "Drug Company Ethics." The CQ Researcher Online 13.22 (2003).  
} volume #.issue # (year)
 South Pasadena High School Lib., South Pasadena, CA. 23 Oct 2005,  
} date of access
 <http://www.cqel.com/cqresearcher>.

## SIRS Knowledge Source (online database)

*Use the same format as newspaper or magazine article, but add SIRS Researcher.*  
 South Pasadena High School Lib., South Pasadena, CA. 17 Oct. 2005 )  
place of access →
} date of access
 <http://sks.sirs.com>.

## Gale Virtual Reference Library (online database)

*Use the same format as for books, but add Gale Virtual Reference Library.* South Pasadena High School Lib., South Pasadena, CA. 17 Oct. 2005  
 <http://galenet.galegroup.com>.

## Gale General Reference Center (online database from public library)

Sample, Herbert A. "Identity Theft Is among Fastest Growing White-Collar Crimes, FBI Says." Knight-Ridder/Tribune Business News. 12 Nov. 2001.  
General Reference Center Gold Gale Group Databases. South Pasadena Public Lib., South Pasadena, CA. 25 Oct. 2005  
 <http://www.infotrac.galegroup.com>.

place of access

## Newsbank (online database from public library)

*Use the same format as Journal or Magazine article but add: Newsbank.* South Pasadena Public Lib., South Pasadena, CA. 7 Oct. 2005,  
} date of access
 <http://infoweb.newsbank.com>.

Samuels, Allison. "Hits Until the End of Time." Newsweek 23 Apr. 2001: 56.  
Newsbank. South Pasadena Public Lib., South Pasadena, CA. 7 Oct. 2005  
 <http://infoweb.newsbank.com>.

## Web Site

Author's last name, First Name (if known). Title of Web Page. Date published or last update (if known). Name of organization sponsoring the web site. Date you accessed the page <electronic address (URL)>.

Crystal, Ellie. Olmec Civilization. 23 September 2003. Ellie Crystal's Metalphysical and Science Website. 25 September 2003  
<<http://www.crystalinks.com/olmec.html>>.

### ***For more information, consult:***

*Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Sixth Edition. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2003.*

## Sample Works Cited Page

### Works Cited

Angelou, Maya. I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings. New York: Random House, 1969.

Atwan, Robert, Donald McQuade, and John W. Wright. Edsels, Luckies, and Frigidaires: Advertising the American Way. New York: Dell, 1979.

Ebenstein, William. "Monarchy." Encyclopedia Americana. 2002 ed.

Hatch, David. "Drug Company Ethics." The CQ Researcher Online 13.22 (2003). South Pasadena High School Lib., South Pasadena, CA. 23 Oct 2005  
<<http://www.cqel.com/cqresearcher>>.

Sample, Herbert A. "Identity Theft Is among Fastest Growing White-Collar Crimes, FBI Says." Knight-Ridder/Tribune Business News. 12 Nov. 2001. General Reference Center Gold Gale Group Databases. South Pasadena Public Lib., South Pasadena, CA. 25 Oct. 2005 <<http://www.infotrac.galegroup.com>>.

Samuels, Allison. "Hits Until the End of Time." Newsweek 23 Apr. 2001: 56. Newsbank. South Pasadena Public Lib., South Pasadena, CA. 7 Oct. 2005  
<<http://infoweb.newsbank.com>>.

Crystal, Ellie. Olmec Civilization. 23 September 2003. Ellie Crystal's Metalphysical and Science Website. 25 September 2003 <<http://www.crystalinks.com/olmec.html>>.

## Narrowing a Topic and Shaping a Thesis

### An overview of the narrowing process

We'll be using the analogy of photography many times here because good photography and good research writing share many qualities that can help you understand the concept of "narrowing."

1. **Get closer.**  
Pictures of groups of people are often frustrating because the photographers have been afraid of cutting something out. They move far enough back to include everyone's shoes, with the result that we have to struggle to see the faces. Remember that as you narrow your topic. Get closer. Lose the shoes!
2. **Consider multiple possibilities.**  
Good photographers looking for "the great picture" will take the time to look at many possibilities. They don't drive to Disneyland, for instance, jump out of the car, "point and click" from the parking lot, and go home. They walk around, they look at different parts of the park from different points of view and at different times of day. They watch for interesting people. You want to do the same with your topic.
3. **Include people.**  
We'll bet that when people show you pictures of their trips, you look first and longest at those with people in them. People interest people. Since people will be reading your paper, include people for them to read about. Zoom in on people.
4. **Find the new, the unusual.**  
A picture taken from 100 yards away of Sleeping Beauty's Castle is of little value because one just like it sits in nearly everyone's closet or garage. You may want your own, but it's unlikely to interest anyone else. Your research paper is the same. Consider unusual points of view or combinations of aspects of a topic. As an example, sports and transportation seem a strange mixture, but how *do* professional basketball players move around during the season? How do they fit in standard airline seats? in hotel beds? Who plans what they eat on the road? Are some cities more popular than others among players? Do different cities affect their play differently? Look for ideas others overlook.

## **Where to look for help with ideas**

Your own brain, journals, dreams, imagination, interests, and curiosity are far and away the best source for ideas. Strangely, nearly all writing textbooks, both high school and college, suggest starting by reading in a library. In our experience, starting that way has most often led to trouble. While browsing in a library or using the Internet may occasionally trigger a good idea of your own, more often it has blinded students to their own good ideas. Finding ideas in the work of others leads to papers no one needs because they've already been written. People, though, can provide profitable thought. Talk with your adults, relatives, teachers and friends. Find people whose work brings them in contact with your general topic and talk with them. Once you have several ideas you like, it will be time to check a library, electronic source, or the Internet to help refine and narrow your ideas.

## Narrowing a Topic: One Approach

Here's a suggestion for narrowing a topic for the documented paper. This is *a* way, not *the* way, but these three steps save time.

1. Limit your topic *temporally* (*i.e.*, to a specific time).

Taking one step at a time, limit yourself to one era, one century, one decade, one year, one month, week, day... For some papers, a time as broad as "the Middle Ages" might be sufficient narrowing; for others, you might need to narrow down to one hour. Some topics may have temporal limitations built in.

2. Limit your topic *spatially* or geographically (*i.e.*, to a specific place).

Move one step at a time, limiting yourself to: one solar system, one planet, one continent, one nation, one state or province, one area or county, one city, one neighborhood, one street, one building, one room. Here, too, you will have to judge where to stop. A paper on space exploration might not be limited even to our solar system, but a paper on architecture could be narrowed to one floor of one building. Some topics may have spatial limitations built in.

3. Limit your topic by *aspect* to one specific area of study. Some aspects to consider are:

♣ artistic	♣ historical	♣ religious
♣ business	♣ ethical/moral	♣ scientific
♣ educational	♣ philosophic	♣ social
♣ entertainment	♣ physiological	♣ technological
♣ health & recreation	♣ political	♣ transportation

These aspects do not exclude each other, and you will usually want to combine two or more of them, as in a paper on the business aspect of the arts or the artistic aspect of public transportation.

## Turning a topic to a limited topic and to a thesis

Ask yourself three questions; the answers will help you check on your focus.

1. What are you going to write about? (The answer is your **topic**).
2. What aspect of that topic are you going to write about? (The answer is a **narrow topic** -- maybe not narrow enough, but you're on your way.)
3. What are you going to show about that topic? (The answer is a **thesis**, or at least the start of one.)

### Some suggestions for theses

- A good thesis is arguable; that is, people could reasonably disagree with it.
- It avoids very recent events or developments on which information would not be readily available.
- It offers you a challenge but should not require specialized knowledge you cannot acquire in the time available.
- It should not be currently controversial; good topics for position papers rarely make good material for reference papers.
- It should not be a topic you could adequately develop using only one or two sources.
- It should not be a thesis other students are likely to choose; make it personal.
- It should avoid biography and should not be a purely historical account.

## Samples of Narrowing

These samples, all from actual student work, follow the suggestions above. Each step in the narrowing process represents a decision to take one path out of many possibilities. The Chicago example shows in bold the option selected at each step and includes some of the possibilities *not* chosen; the others list only those selected.

1. Topic: **Chicago**

*Narrowed by aspect:*

**art**, science, health and recreation, entertainment, transportation, religion, technology.

*Narrowed further by aspect:*

painting, sculpture, posters, commercial art, advertising art, public art, **architecture**.

*Narrowed still further by aspect:*

construction, landscaping, decor, financing, engineering, public areas, bidding, **history**.

*Narrowed by place:*

Austin, Beverly, Old Town, **the Loop**, New Town, Chinatown, Hyde Park, Oak Park, Uptown.

*Narrowed further by space:*

shops, businesses, apartments, museums, hospitals, theaters, **hotels**, universities, churches.

*Narrowed still further by place:*

Drake, **Palmer House**, Conrad Hilton, Whitehall, Tremont, Astor Towers.

*Working Thesis:* The history of the Palmer House reflects the history of the city of Chicago, and the building serves as a microcosm in which we can trace the forces that have shaped America's "second city."

1. *Topic:* Death

*Place:* America > California (and later) > Los Angeles County

*Time:* 20th century > after World War II > now

*Aspect:* Ethical, social

*Working Thesis:* Dying in Los Angeles County can be ugly and degrading; the establishment of a system of special sanctuaries for the terminally ill would give us a chance to die comfortably and with dignity.

2. *Topic:* Sports > high school sports

*Place:* America > California

*Time:* now

*Aspect:* health, finance

*Working Thesis:* Increasing litigation over injuries in high school football in California and judgments against helmet manufacturers are driving the companies out of the business. This force will effectively end high school football here unless...

Some for you to try: narrow these topics by time, by place, and by aspect (*for numbers 4, 5, use your topic*):

1	Music	
2	Animals	
3	South Pasadena	
4		
5		

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## Workout: Narrowing a Topic

Use this page to narrow your own first choice of a topic five times. Make each narrowing as different as you can from the others so you can see how many possibilities you have to choose from. At this point your “thesis statement” may be a “thesis question.”

*Place*

**1** *Time*  
*Aspect 1*  
*Aspect 2*  
*Aspect 3*  
*Thesis*

*Place*

**2** *Time*  
*Aspect 1*  
*Aspect 2*  
*Thesis*

*Place*

**3** *Time*  
*Aspect 1*  
*Aspect 2*  
*Thesis*

*Place*

**4** *Time*  
*Aspect 1*  
*Aspect 2*  
*Thesis*

*Place*

**5** *Time*  
*Aspect 1*  
*Aspect 2*  
*Thesis*

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## The Persuasive Essay Thesis

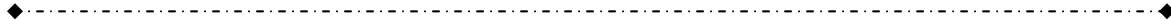
For a persuasive essay, remember you are *not* writing a “report.” You are writing an essay based on an arguable **IDEA**, not based on an accepted **FACT**.

### *Your thesis should...*

- . . . assert a conclusion (which you will justify in the body of your paper).  
*Such as:* Today’s movie plots and themes can, without exception, be traced back to the plays of Shakespeare. (*The words “without exception” make this statement strongly arguable*)  
*But not:* Eating healthy foods contributes to a healthy heart.
- . . . claim that a problem exists about which readers are unaware.  
*Such as:* The banality of contemporary situation comedies on television is contributing to the low test scores of school children.  
*But not:* Most Americans are unaware that it is dangerous to use a cell phone while pumping gasoline.
- . . . draw a historical (or other) parallel.  
*Such as:* Both the Black Plague that ravaged Europe during the Middle Ages and the current AIDS epidemic have contributed to an atmosphere of distrust in one’s fellow man.  
*But not:* Cleopatra of Egypt and Queen Victoria of England were both strong female leaders.
- . . . offer a solution to a problem.  
*Such as:* Cheating by high school students can be stopped by eliminating written work and evaluating student progress strictly by oral examination.  
*But not:* The problem of world over-population can be solved if people will limit the number of children they produce.
- . . . point out a cause-and-effect relationship.  
*Such as:* The American Civil Rights Movement was the catalyst for the rise in the divorce rate in the last four decades.  
*But not:* The bombing of Pearl Harbor forced the United States to enter WWII.
- . . . predict consequences.  
*Such as:* If the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not limit the amount of sodium in prepared foods, the incidence of heart attacks will continue to rise in America. (*Placing blame on the FDA makes this statement strongly arguable*)  
*But not:* Smoking cigarettes can cause lung cancer.
- . . . offer your evaluation of an idea; is it good? bad? dangerous? necessary?  
*Such as:* George W. Bush claims that the fight on terrorism is an essential and unavoidable factor of homeland security, but in reality it is no more than a self-serving political statement.  
*But not:* Plagiarizing an essay is not a good idea, because the perpetrator almost always gets caught.

## Outline Worksheet

**NOTE:** Do you like using the Inspiration program? You can use it to create an outline from a graphic mindmap.



**Thesis Statement** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**I. Introduction** (Must be a long paragraph – will state purpose of paper, thesis, and subtopics)

**II. Subtopic 1** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

A. Subpoint 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. Subpoint 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

C. Subpoint 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**III. Subtopic 2** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

A. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Subtopic 3** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

A. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

**V. Subtopic 4** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

A. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

**VI Closing** (Must be a long paragraph, restating thesis and subtopics, and reiterating important Points.)



Anthony Tiger  
Mrs. Kadletz  
English, Period 3  
9 September 2006

Heading begins 1" from top;  
Times New Roman 12pt font.

Name and page number is on every  
page, 1/2" from the top. Some instructors  
omit the first page number. Check with  
your teacher.

### Working Outline

Narrowed Topic: Frankenstein, Dracula and Wolfman movies of the 1930s and 1940s

Thesis: The purpose of this paper is to prove Hollywood movies made in the 1930s and 1940s about the "Big Three" of horror, Frankenstein, Dracula, and the Wolfman, set the standards for every suspense film that has followed.

#### I. Introduction

#### II. Stark black-and-white cinematography of the Frankenstein movies

##### A. High contrast effects

1. Special lighting
2. Character make-up

##### B. Set design

1. Architecture
2. Large spaces versus small spaces

#### III. Dream-like quality of Dracula movies

##### A. Isolated settings

1. Castles
2. Cemeteries

##### B. Filtered-lens cinematography

1. Fog effects
2. Diffused back-lighting effects

Subtopic

Detail

**Working Outline Sample**

- IV. Sophisticated and sharp appearance of Wolfman movies
  - A. Urbane sets
    - 1. Manor houses
    - 2. English villages
  - B. Urbane costuming
    - 1. Lon Chaney, Jr.'s sophisticated wardrobe
    - 2. Well planned and detailed costume of minor characters
      - a. The gypsy fortuneteller
      - b. The local nobility
  - C. Controlled atmospheric conditions
    - 1. Fog effects
    - 2. Rain
- V. Characters
  - A. Based on literature
  - B. Characters created to complement main characters
- VI. Music
  - A. Music themes
  - B. Music scores
  - C. Instrumentation
- VII. Serious sequels
  - A. Imaginative and fresh story continuations
  - B. Introduction of new characters

## VIII. Comedic and satiric sequels

- A. Spoofs on original films
- B. Original ideas steeped in horror tradition

## IX. Conclusion

## Note Cards

I. There are two types of note cards:

- A. **Works Cited Card:** These are the master cards for all your notes. You will use them to create your works cited list.
- B. **Note Cards:** Used to take notes from the sources on your works cited cards. There are three types of notes you might use:
  - 1. Summary notes: general ideas from the source, in your own words.
  - 2. Paraphrased notes: detailed notes on specific ideas or information. The material is restated in your own words; might include partial quotation.
  - 3. Quoted notes: specific excerpts from the material. Quotations are written down word-for-word, comma for comma, within quotation marks. Also called verbatim notes.

II. Format for **works cited** cards.

- A. Number each source in the upper right hand corner. This number will correspond to your note cards.
- B. In the bottom right corner, include the location for this item, e.g. library name, database, library call number. This will help you locate the source again.
- C. Write down all the information you will need for the final works cited list. Include authors, title, publisher, publication city, and publication date. Online sources need other documentation; see MLA Format for more information.
- D. For a print source, on the back of the card, include the page numbers from the index you might want to use. As you take notes, you can cross out the pages you have used.

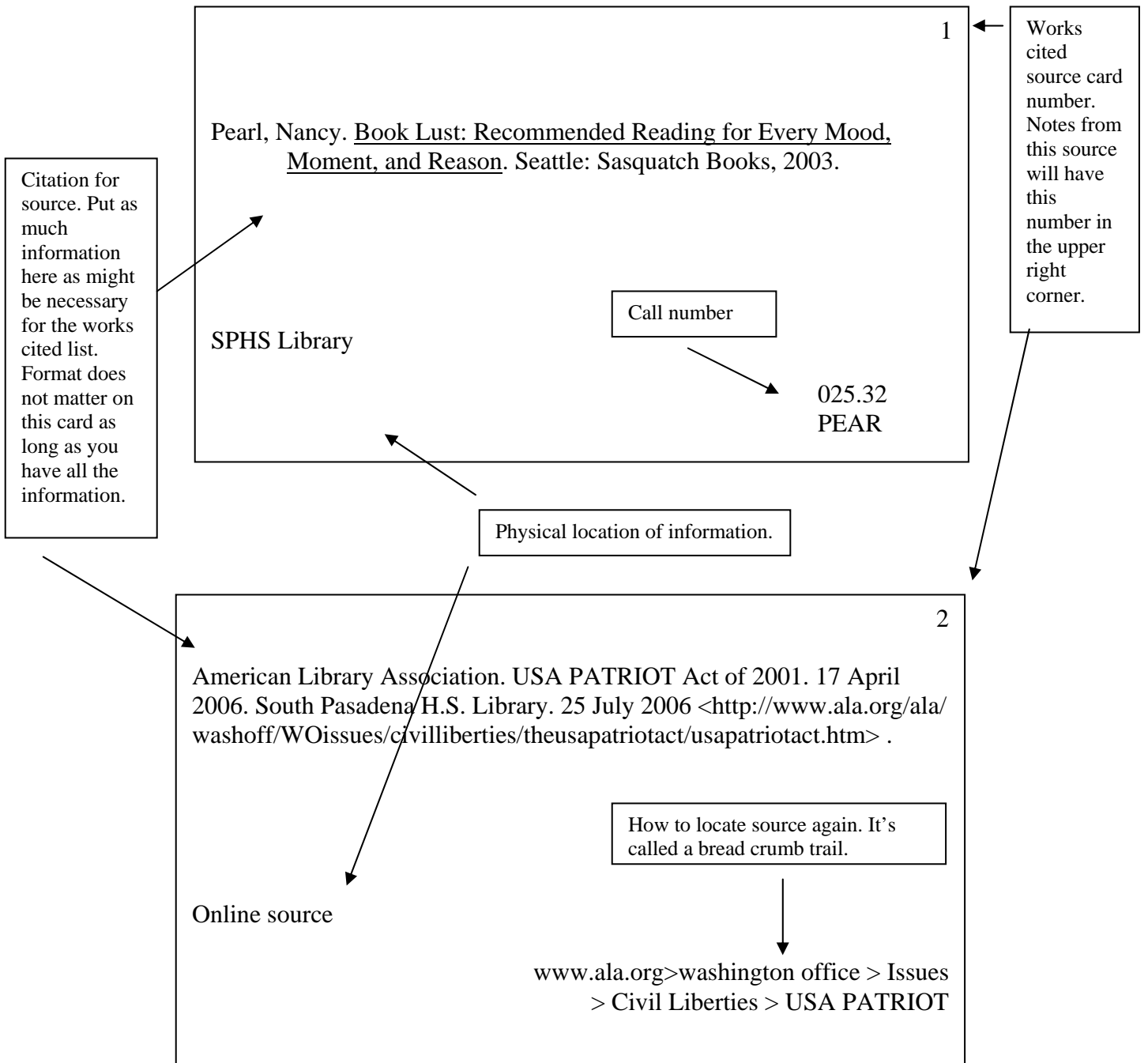
### III. Format for **note cards**.

- A. In the upper right corner, put the number that corresponds to the works cited card.
- B. Following the works cited number, write the pages, section number or other information that indicates where the information was found within the source.
- C. In the upper left corner, write the section of your outline supported by the notes.
- D. At the card top, write keywords that correspond to the outline section.

**See the samples on the following pages.**



## Sample Work Cited Cards



## Sample Note Cards:

### Correspond to Sample Working Outline and Works Cited Cards

The notes on this card correspond to this portion of the working outline.

II.A 1 (45)

Teen Fiction

“Coming-of-age novels describe a search for understanding, not only of oneself, but also of the often mysterious, contradictory, and sometimes frightening adult world. They help readers reflect on their own experiences and offer a (sometimes minimal) consolation that one’s feelings are not unique.”

This is a quoted note card. Don’t forget to include the page number!

These notes are from the #1 works cited card, on page 45.

II.A 1 (45)

Teen Fiction ←

Keywords from the outline.

Themes of coming-of-age novels

- Self-knowledge
- Growing up; beginning to see things as an adult and trying to make sense of adult world
- Universality of feelings (the same things happen to other teens too)

Summary note card. In the paper, this would require a parenthetical reference; these ideas belong to the author even though a quote is not used.

II.A

1 (45)

### Teen Fiction

Coming-of-age novels describe young people searching to know themselves, their world, and the “often mysterious, contradictory, and sometimes frightening adult world”. The reader is able to reflect upon the experiences of the main character(s) and realize that despite differences, everyone goes through similar processes on the way to maturity.

A paraphrased card. In the paper, this would require a parenthetical reference; these ideas belong to the author as does the quote. The page citation would occur after the word “maturity”.



## Note Taking Strategies

1. Formulate a list of questions in writing, or use your working outline as a guide for information you need. Do not go browsing for inspiration. Know what you are looking for.
2. Using the index, copy onto the back of each works cited card the page numbers listed in the index for your topic. As you take notes, cross the numbers off as you use those pages in the book.
3. On each note card, write the number of the source you are using (from the works cited card) in the upper right corner, followed by the page number(s) on which you found your information, in parentheses. The number in the upper left is the section of your outline with which the notes correspond. It is also helpful to write key words corresponding to the outline section at the card top.
4. The best way to take notes is to use a new 3x5 cards for each fact. However, that generates a lot of cards. Alternately, you can include on a single card only the facts relevant to the outline section number listed on the top left.
5. Avoid taking too much from a single source. Try to use *no more than two quotations from a source* in your final draft.
6. On your note cards, place quotation marks around every direct quotation. Where a paraphrase will do, simply condense the section into a few words. Use clear symbols and abbreviations. In your final paper, use direct quotes only when you have a reason you can explain for wanting those particular words in your paper.
7. Be critical of your sources. (1) Is the material is recent enough? (2) Is the author an authority on your topic? (3) Is the author unbiased? (4) Does the material appear in an unbiased periodical or from an unbiased publishing company? See also Evaluating Web Sites in this guide.
8. Put your initials and English period number on each card; if the cards are lost and found, they can be returned to you!

## Preplanning: Getting Ready to Write

The best strategy is to plan out your paper. If possible, complete this step *before* you do any hunting around in libraries or other places. Once you begin to collect the ideas of others, you risk letting them take control of your project. The best way to avoid that problem is to have your own clear idea of where you want to go. Naturally this step doesn't come without some thought. Often your preliminary “thesis” will be more questions than answers. Your preliminary thesis itself may well be a question. But you must set some boundaries for your paper now.

Don't worry about feeling a little lost; that shows that you understand what's going on at this point and that you are preparing to produce some worthwhile, *original* work. If you know precisely what you're going to say and exactly what conclusions you're going to come to and specifically what organization you're going to use, you must be prepared to be flexible in case changes need to be made.

You're going to do some brainwork and then make four decisions now that will help set you on the right track. You may well decide later to take a different route, or to follow an intriguing road you come across. Think of this not as an unchangeable oath about where you will take us in your paper, but rather as a direction you're heading. Following are the four steps to take now that will help you establish your preliminary guidelines.

**Take an inventory of your brain.** On paper, write, draw, diagram, sketch – think in ink. Get down as many ideas and questions as you can. Get them all on paper; many will turn out to be of little value, but in this mine you need come up with only one diamond. Spend at least 30 minutes thinking and writing, alone, and in quiet. When you bog down later (and you will) return to this technique and rethink in ink.

1. Decide where you want to take us. Work out a thesis question or statement – a one-sentence declaration of the one great question you will answer. Know that you may not have the answer yourself at this point.
2. Decide on three or four main parts for your paper. Write down what they are *and* how they are related.
3. Discover what questions need answers. This will form the basis of your “research,” the search for answers.
4. Write down your ideas about where to get answers. Libraries make good places to hunt for what you may need. But don't neglect people. Write down the names of those who can give you answers or steer you to the most helpful places and sources. Avoid, as much as you possibly can, redoing work others have done before. Build on their work, don't repeat it.

When you finish this step, **take a break**. Put the topic out of your mind for a while. The break is an important part of the process of research.

<i>Broad Topic:</i>
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**Narrowed Topic:**

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**Thesis Statement:** The purpose of this paper will be to show that... (**or** to answer the question...)

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**Subtopics** (the main idea of each part of your paper)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

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**Questions** (to which you need answers; the questions may be about the topic or about the project itself.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

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**Tasks** (places you need to go, people you need to contact, and other useful resources)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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## Opening Sentences: Capturing the Reader

### *Try beginning your paper with:*

1. A straight-forward, matter-of-fact, statement of a subject. This can be rhetorically effective for critical papers, or as understatement for startling events.
2. An enigmatic (perplexing, mysterious) opening.
3. A question, possibly rhetorical.
4. An anecdote or a startling fact, like those often used as openers for after dinner speeches or assembly talks.
5. A quotation.
6. The creation of a mood or feeling for a locale, a device common to the short story or novel.
7. A statistic.
8. The withholding of key information until late in the paragraph, hence, evoking suspense in the reader.
9. Effective repetition.
10. A figure of speech.
11. The use of sound (onomatopoeia) to attract the reader's attention.
12. A strong contrast.
13. The reversal of a cliché.
14. A historical comparison.
15. An opinion.
16. An immediate physical description of the main character, holding the name till later.
17. An autobiographical account.

### *Some sample introductions:*

1. All our important ideas about the rights of individuals in a society grow directly from political writings of the Renaissance.
2. We don't agree on when the Renaissance began, on when it ended, on what brought it about, nor on what snuffed it out. People then didn't even know they were living in it. But it has more impact on our lives to day than any other period of history.
3. How could one person not just succeed but excel in every known area of human activity?
4. Fleas changed the world of the Renaissance more than all the people who lived in it combined.
5. "I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman," Queen Elizabeth I told a critic, "but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too."
6. The last leaves hung yellow on the small trees, and a late morning breeze that chilled lifted off the Thames. People waited in line at the Globe in small groups, men in wide hats and capes and dull white ice-cream cone collars and smelling powerfully of garlic and ale, the few women whispering in pumpkin-shaped skirts.
7. Between 1348 and 1350, the Black Death wiped out exactly half the population of Europe.
9. Love rang in the songs. Love filled the poetry and painting. Love gave theme and form to drama. Love returned to the churches.
10. Trying to distinguish the nature of the Renaissance is like trying to eat walnuts with your bare hands. You might find the tools to get at the meat, but you come away so scarred that you wonder if the work was worth it.
12. At no time in history had people been more free; at no time had they more resembled prisoners.
13. We look first to books to help us find the words and ideas to serve as a cover for the Renaissance. But you can't judge a cover by its book.
14. In the outburst of literature, music, art, philosophy, exploration, and political thought, the Renaissance and fifth century Athens stand nearly as identical twins.

## Parenthetical Citations Giving Credit Where Credit Is Due

**Parenthetical Citation:** A reference within a research paper, following a quoted or paraphrased passage; the citation refers to the works cited section at the end of the paper.

Parenthetical citations are an integral part of any research paper. According to Sommers and Simon, the research paper “is not a patchwork quilt of fragmented material from other sources. It is a text, created by you, which calls upon sources as evidence for your ideas” (266).

Parenthetical citations are woven into the text, giving credit for words and ideas obtained from other sources. Remember the following guidelines from MLA 6.2:

- Text references always refer to items in the works cited list.

### **One Author:**

- Normally, list the author’s last name and the page number from which the quote or idea was taken. *Ex:* (Allaby 48)
- If the author is mentioned leading into the paraphrased or quoted information, only the page number is required at the end of the cited information. *Ex:* According to Allaby, hurricanes are called by different names in different parts of the world. Cyclone, typhoon, baguio, and willy-nilly are all names for the same weather occurrence: a hurricane (48).

### **Two or More Authors:**

- If two or three names begin the entry in the works cited list, use all the last names in the parenthetical citation, separated by commas. *Ex:* (Allaby, Parker, and Smith 17)
- If more than three authors begin the entry in the works cited list, use the first name followed by et al. *Ex:* (Allaby et al. 55-93)

### **No Author:**

- If the work is listed by title (no author), use the title, shortened or in full. *Ex:* (Drug Facts 15)

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**Punctuation:**

- The parenthetical reference “precedes the punctuation mark that concludes the sentence, clause, or phrase containing the borrowed material” (Gibaldi 241).

**Quotations:**

- A parenthetical reference directly after a quotation follows the closing quotation mark. The punctuation follows the closing parenthesis.
- If a quotation is **more than four lines** in your paper, indent the material. Use a colon to introduce the material and do not use quotation marks. The documentation comes at the end of the indentation after the final quotation punctuation. Double space the quotation.

*Ex:* The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle deals quickly with the Norman landing:

Then Count William came from Normandy to Pevensey on Michaelmas Eve [28 September], and as soon as they were able to move they built a castle at Hastings. King Harold was informed of this and he assembled a large army and came against him at the hoary apple-tree, and William came against him by surprise before his army was drawn up in battle array. (31)

## Parentheticals, Part 2 Examples and Hints

### 1. Do not quote at all. Paraphrase.

- a) Paraphrase the text in the midst of critical comment.

*Ex:* Frankenstein's character is not all good and bad. He both loves nature and seeks revenge, two values opposed in this novel (Kim 41).

- b) Paraphrase the text in the midst of a plot summary.

*Ex:* The time traveler walks to the top of a hill and sits down. Now he thinks of Huxley's curve (Kim 45).

### 2. Quote only key words or phrases.

*Ex:* McCrum calls Gullah an "echo of plantation talk" (110).

### 3. Use a direct quote and run it into your own sentence. Note that this method will often involve changes in the quote and you will need to use square brackets with it.

*Ex:* Charles Schultz said that he "would never [draw] any dog but Snoopy" (Darby 88).

### 4. Where you must have a direct quotation, vary the pattern: She says, writes, notes, claims, asks, reaffirms, agrees.

- a) Put the tag at the beginning of the sentence:

MacNeil writes, "The Vikings almost won the war" (22).

- b) Put the tag at the end of the sentence:

"The Vikings almost won the war," according to MacNeil (22).

- c) Put the tag inside the sentence:

"The Vikings," MacNeil notes, "almost won the war" (22).

*Try to vary your tags and their placement. One advantage of this type of integration is that it conveys both the source and the information in one sentence.*

## Evaluating Resources: Print and Online Considerations

Always consider the following factors before using any source for research:

1. **WHO** wrote the resource?
  - a. Is the author an expert in the field? What are his/her qualifications?
  - b. Is there a way to contact the author?
  - c. Has the author written other items about the same topic?
  - d. No author? Consider finding another source.
  
2. **WHO** published the resource or sponsors the website?
  - a. Is the publisher well known and respected?
  - b. Is the website generally considered an accurate source of information?
  - c. For websites, do other sites link to this page? (command *link:url* in a search engine)
  
3. **WHAT** is the content?
  - a. Does the author want to present facts in an unbiased and fair manner?
  - b. Does the author want to persuade the reader to accept a certain point of view?
  - c. Does the information appear to be correct based on what you already know?
  - d. Is there a bibliography or works cited page?
  - e. Is the information useful for your research topic?
  
4. **WHEN** was the source written?
  - a. Old information is not necessarily bad information, but it can make a difference depending upon the topic.
  - b. No date? Consider finding another source.
  
5. **KNOW** the higher level domains for websites:
  - a. .com = commercial
  - b. .org = non-profit organization (usually)
  - c. .k12 = U.S. schools, grades K-12
  - d. .edu = U.S. educational institution (usually post high school)
  - e. .gov = U.S. government site (postings rarely have an author)
  - f. .mil = U.S. military
  - g. .net = Internet service provider
  - h. plus others such as .name, .aero and .museum
  
6. **WEBSITE** structure:
  - a. Are links current?
  - b. Are links useful?
  - c. Is spelling correct on the page?
  - d. Are there photographs or sound files on the page? Is there any way to verify they have not been altered?