

# **BABYLON JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL RESEARCH PAPER STYLE GUIDE**

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## **Statement of Purpose**

This guide provides information to teachers and students about how to write a research paper. It standardizes the practice of conducting research among the departments, and this parity is intended to aid students in mastering the skills needed to conduct research successfully. The Modern Language Association (MLA) style is commonly used by both secondary and post secondary institutions; as a result, it is to be adopted by all grades, with the exception of upper level courses whose fields use other research styles (i.e., AP Psychology students would use the APA research style). Ultimately, Babylon's students will be prepared to produce a quality research paper and carry these skills over to post-graduate studies.

## **Guidelines for Term Papers**

- Double space your paper and use Times New Roman 12 as your font.
- Include a heading or title page as directed by your teacher.
- Use current MLA format for parenthetical citations and works cited page.
- Follow the guidelines to prevent plagiarism.
- Adhere to the number of pages, citations, and sources required by your teacher.

## **Research Committee Members**

Suzanne Borruso  
 Lisa Drance  
 Jane Herbst  
 Mark Malaszczyk  
 Robert Neidig  
 Frank Procaccini  
 Christopher Ryan  
 Angela Schnepf

## Heading in MLA Style

- In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date. Again, be sure to use double-spaced text.
- Double-space again and center the title. Don't underline your title or put it in quotation marks; write the title in Title Case; do not use all capital letters.
- Use quotation marks and underlining or italics when referring to other works in your title, just as you would in your text, e.g.:
  - *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* as Morality Play
  - Human Weariness in "After Apple Picking"
- Double-space between the title and the first line of the text.
- Create a header in the upper right-hand corner that includes your last name, followed by a space with a page number; number all pages consecutively with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.), one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. (Note: Your instructor or other readers may ask that you omit last name/page number header on your first page. Always follow his or her guidelines.)

Here is a sample first page of an essay in MLA style:

<b>Pete Smith</b>	<b>Smith 1</b>
<b>Dr. B. Boilermaker</b>	
<b>English 101</b>	
<b>12 October 2005</b>	
<b>Building A Dream: Reasons to Expand</b>	
<b>Ross-Aide Stadium</b>	
<b>During the 2000 football season, the Purdue Boilermakers</b>	
<b>won the Big Ten Conference Title, earned their first trip to the</b>	
<b>Rose Bowl in thirty four-years, and played every game in front of</b>	
<b>a sold-out crowd. Looking ahead...</b>	

[Information presented here is from the Online Writing Lab and can be found at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/.](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/)]



## Plagiarism Policy and Procedures

With increasing reliance on the Internet, it is becoming easier for students to plagiarize papers. Plagiarism occurs when students use work from a source without properly identifying where they received the information. *It is still plagiarism whether the action is intentional or not.* The policy has two components: first is the prevention of plagiarism, second are the consequences of plagiarism.

### Prevention:

- I. Understanding What Plagiarism Is and Its Consequences
- II. Research Project Process
  - A. Topic/Thesis Statement
  - B. Bibliography
  - C. Outline
  - D. Rough draft
  - E. Turnitin.com
  - F. Final draft
- III. Helpful Hints to Avoid Plagiarism
  - A. Deciding if something is “common knowledge”
    1. Information found undocumented in five sources
    2. Information that your readers already know
    3. Information found in general reference sources
  - B. If something is not common knowledge
    1. Cite the information
    2. Ask for assistance

### Consequences:

- If a paper is suspected of being plagiarized, the teacher will notify the director.
- If the student grieves the judgment by the classroom teacher, the director will create a three-teacher committee to review the paper.
- This committee will determine if the paper has been plagiarized.
- If plagiarized, the paper will receive a zero.
  - It would be as if the student never did the paper.
  - A student cannot be penalized for more than what the paper was worth.

[This policy was constructed with information from the Online Writing Lab found at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/> .]

## Thesis Statement

### What is a Thesis Statement?

A thesis statement ...

- makes an argument assertion about a topic; it states the conclusions that you have reached about your topic.
- makes a promise to the reader about the scope, purpose, and direction of your paper.
- is focused and specific enough to be proven within the boundaries of your paper.
- is generally located near the end of your introduction; sometimes the thesis will be expressed in several sentences or in an entire paragraph.
- identifies the relationships between the pieces of evidence that you are using to support your argument.

### Thesis Scenarios:

A thesis takes a stand rather than announcing a subject.

- **Announcement:** The thesis of this paper is the difficulty of solving our environmental problems.
- **Thesis:** Solving our environmental problems is more difficult than many environmentalists believe.

A thesis is the main idea, not the title. It must explain in some detail what you expect to write about.

- **Title:** Social Security and Old Age.
- **Thesis:** Continuing changes in the Social Security System makes it almost impossible to plan intelligently for one's retirement.

A thesis is narrow, rather than broad. If the thesis statement is sufficiently narrow, then it can be fully supported.

- **Broad:** The American Steel Industry has many problems.
- **Narrow:** The primary problem in the American steel industry is the lack of funds to renovate outdated plant and equipment.

### Example and Comment:

**Example:** Drive-in facilities, such as fast-food restaurants, banks, pharmacies, and dry cleaners, symbolize Americans' business ingenuity, a willingness to depersonalize relationships, and a tendency to sacrifice quality for convenience.

**Comment:** This statement is specific and fulfills all parts of the assignment. This version, like any good thesis, is not self evident; its points will have to be proven with evidence in the body of the paper. These points must be proven in the order in which they are presented.

[Information for thesis statements was taken from the following websites:

LEO (Literacy Education Online) <http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/catalogue.html> and

Writing Center (Princeton) [http://web.princeton.edu/sites/writing/Writing\\_Center/WCWritingRes.htm](http://web.princeton.edu/sites/writing/Writing_Center/WCWritingRes.htm)]

## Outline

### Why Create an Outline?

- Aids in the writing process
- Presents ideas in a logical form
- Shows relationships among ideas
- Constructs an ordered view

### How to Create an Outline:

- Brainstorm: List all the ideas that you want to include
- Organize: Group related ideas
- Order: Arrange material in subsections from general to specific
- Label: Create main headings and subheadings

### Four Components of an Outline:

1. **Parallelism:** Each heading and subheading should preserve parallel structure. If the first heading is a noun, then the following heading should be a noun.
2. **Coordination:** All the information contained in Heading 1 should have the same significance as the information contained in Heading 2. The same goes for subheadings.
3. **Subordination:** The information in the headings should be more general, while information in the subheadings should be more specific.
4. **Division:** Each heading should be divided into two or more parts.

### Example:

- The College Application Process
- I. Choose Desired Colleges
    - A. Visit and evaluate college campuses
    - B. Visit and evaluate college websites
      1. Look for interesting classes
      2. Note important statistics
        - a. Student/faculty ratio
        - b. Retention rate
  - II. Prepare Application
    - A. Write personal statement
      1. Choose interesting topic
        - a. Describe an influential person in your life
          - i. Favorite high school teacher
          - ii. Grandparent
      2. Include personal details
        - a. Volunteer work
        - b. Participation in varsity sports
    - B. Proofread and edit
  - III. Compile Resume
    - A. List relevant coursework
    - B. List work experience
    - C. List volunteer experience
      1. Tutor at foreign language summer camp
      2. Counselor for suicide prevention hotline

[Information for outlines came from the Online Writing Lab website found at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/> .]

## Evaluating Sources

Evaluating sources, both in print and on the Internet, means considering whether a material is valuable *and* reliable before deciding to use it as a source for your research paper or project. Most of the work on evaluating sources deals with a simple ABC format.



- **Accuracy:** Who wrote the information, and is there a purpose for the production of this information? Is there a way you can contact the author or institution to get further information on the topic?
- **Authority:** Is there an author, or is there only a webmaster listed? Does the author of the information have credentials to write about this subject? If an institution is given as the author, is it an institution you can rely on for this topic?



- **Balance:** Does the information present both opinions about a topic, or only one? Does the information provide details to help you make up your own mind about the topic?
- **Bias:** What goal does the information seem to have? Are opinions strongly expressed by the author, and are they meant to sway your opinions on the topic?



- **Currency:** When was this information produced/last updated? Does your topic require current information, or will historical information on your topic suit your purposes? Are there dead links on websites?
- **Coverage:** Does the information have the scope or depth you need? Is the information cited correctly so that you can follow the author's research? Do the links (if any) follow the document's theme? If special software is required to view a website, how much is missed if you do not have that software (remember that BHS will not allow you to download software if you intend to use your site in a presentation)?

Therefore, if your source...

1. **has an author who is an expert in the field or comes from an institution which has a reputation for reliable information, and**
2. **has accurate information and is objective in presenting it, and**
3. **has current or up-to-date information (and links, if appropriate), and**
4. **has the amount and type of information you need (not limited by fees, browser technology, or software requirements if it is an Internet site),**

...then you have a source that may be of use in your research!

[Information on this subject was suggested by

Kathleen Schrock's 2002 article at [http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/pdf/weval\\_02.pdf](http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/pdf/weval_02.pdf) ,  
 Cornell University's Olin & Uris Libraries at <http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/webcrit.html> ,  
 the QQuality Information ChecKlist (QUICK) at <http://www.quick.org.uk/menu.htm> ,  
 and Susan Beck's article at <http://lib.nmsu.edu/instruction/evalcrit.html> .]

## Documenting Sources

The MLA documentation style requires citation of sources in the text of your paper, followed by a Works Cited at the end of your paper. In general, the author's name and the page numbers belong in parentheses, following your use of a quotation, fact, idea, or paraphrase from a source. These parenthetical citations lead your readers to the complete documentation in the Works Cited page at the end of the paper. The following guidelines indicate the appropriate MLA style for various sources (note where commas and periods belong):

- 1. If you cite the author in the text,** indicate only the page number in parentheses:

Wordsworth stated that Romantic poetry was marked by a “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” (263).

- 2. If you do not cite the author in the text,** indicate the author's last name as well as the page number in the parentheses (notice there is no comma between these items):

Romantic poetry is characterized by the “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” (Wordsworth 263).

- 3. If the author is unknown,** use a short version of the title in the parentheses:

It is interesting to note that while the Communist Party in Russia sponsored rock concerts, Communist leaders were concerned about the effect the Beatles had on the Russian people (A Day in the Life 68).

- 4. If the source is unpublished,** cite the name or title used in your Works Cited:

Some individuals who retell urban legends make a point of learning every recent rumor or tale (Brunvand).

- 5. If the source is from the Internet or the Web,** use the author, or if there is no author, use the title:

An anonymous Wordsworth critic once argued that his poems were too emotional (“Wordsworth Is A Loser”).

- 6. If your Works Cited contains more than one work by an author,** cite the author, a short title, and page numbers:

Lightenor has argued that computers are not useful tools for small children (“Too Soon” 38), though he has acknowledged that early exposure to computer games does lead to better small motor skill development in a child's second and third year (“Hand-Eye Development” 17).

**7. If a source has two authors**, cite both authors' names in the text or in the parentheses:

Ravitch and Weisman argue that high schools are pressured to act as “social service centers, and they don’t do that well” (259).

**or**

High schools are pressured to act as “social service centers, and they don’t do that well” (Ravitch and Weisman 259).

**8. If a source has three or more authors**, give the name of the author listed first in the Works Cited followed by the abbreviation et al., which means “and others”:

Teachers should intertwine the study of culture, politics, literature, history, and religion in the teaching of language (Berryman et al. 97).

**9. If a source has several volumes**, precede the page number with the volume number and a colon, as indicated:

As a painter Andrea was “faultless” (Freedberg 1:98).

**10. If you are citing a quotation or information from a source that itself cites another source**, use the abbreviation qtd. in for “quoted in” to indicate that you have used an indirect source for your information or quotation. (If possible, however, find the original source.)

The philosopher Alain states that “admiration is not pleasure but a kind of attention...” (qtd. in Magny 66).

**or, if not a direct quote:**

Alain’s words seem to dissociate admiration from pleasure (in Magny 66).

**11. If you cite two or more authors as sources for a fact, idea, or plan**, separate the citations with a semicolon, as follows:

This controversy has been addressed more than once (Dabundo 27; Magny 68).

**12. If a fact or idea appears in two locations within the same source**, cite both pages and separate with a comma:

Dabundo deals with this problem (22, 31).

**13. If you cite an interview**, give the name in the text:

Parsons talked about the need for physical education teachers to understand the relationship between physical activity and fitness.

**14. If you cite a source with a corporate author**, give the name of the corporation with appropriate abbreviations:

Many different types of organizations in the United States are involved in mediation and dispute resolution (Natl. Inst. For Dispute Resolution).

**15. If you cite an electronic source that uses paragraph numbers**, indicate as follows:

The semiconductor workplace is highly toxic (Ross, par. 35).

**16. If you cite an electronic source that uses chapter and section numbers**, document as follows:

“Once we start using a tool extensively, it also starts using us” (Rawlins, ch. 1, sec. 1).

**17. If you cite from a classic prose work**, give the page number of the edition, add a semicolon, and then give other identifying information such as chapter or book number:

F. Scott Fitzgerald’s character, Nick Carraway, explains what he believes makes Jay Gatsby so great: “it was an extraordinary gift for hope, a romantic readiness such as I have never found in any other person and which it is not likely I shall ever find again” (6; ch. 1).

**18. If you cite a quote of more than four lines**, use a colon to introduce the quotation, indent the quotation one inch from the left margin, double-space the quotation, do **not** use quotation marks, and place the parenthetical citation (author and page number) **after** the period that closes the block quotation:

Blanche DuBois, the last relic of the decayed southern plantation, Belle Reve, enters the Vieux Carre section of New Orleans: her first line seems to give a clue to the theme of the play, that life is equated with passion, and its opposite is death. Actual trolley names provide Williams with appropriate symbols. (Falk 80)

[The above examples are from the following websites:

[http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocMLACitation\\_Format.html](http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocMLACitation_Format.html)

[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r\\_mla.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_mla.html) ]

## Works Cited Documentation

When creating your Works Cited page, remember to:

- Begin the Works Cited on a new page and center the heading at the top of the page using both upper and lower cases.
- Alphabetize each entry by the first letter (Last name, First name).
- Italicize all titles of books, magazines, films, etc.
- Put quotation marks around the titles of poems, short stories, and articles.
- **INDENT** the 2<sup>nd</sup> line, the 3<sup>rd</sup> line, and all subsequent lines of each citation.
- Double-space **ALL** entries.
- Number the Works Cited pages consecutively (i.e., if the last page of your paper is page 3, the Works Cited begin with page 4).

### FORMAT and EXAMPLES:

#### Book (One Author):

Author's last name, First name. *Title of Book*. Place of publication: Publisher, Year of publication.

Henley, Patricia. *The Hummingbird House*. Denver: MacMurray, 1999.

#### Book (Two Authors):

Author's last name, First name, and 2nd Author's first name and last name. *Title of Book*. Place of publication: Publisher, Year of publication.

Gillespie, Paula, and Neal Lerner. *The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring*. Boston: Allyn, 2000.

#### Book (Three or More Authors):

If there are more than three authors, you may list only the first author followed by the phrase et al. (the abbreviation for the Latin phrase "and others"; no period after "et") in place of the other authors' names,

**or** you may list all the authors in the order in which their names appear on the title page.

Author's last name, First name, et al. *Title of Book*. Place of publication: Publisher, Year of publication.

Wysocki, Anne Francis, et al. *Writing New Media: Theory and Applications for Expanding the Teaching of Composition*. Logan, UT: Utah State UP, 2004.

**Article in a Periodical:**

Author's last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Periodical Name*. Periodical Date, Edition:  
Section.

Poniewozik, James. "TV Makes a Too-Close Call." *Time*. 20 Nov. 2000: 70-71.

**Internet Sources:**

*Name of Site*. Date of Posting or Revision. Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sometimes found in copyright statements). Date you accessed the site <URL in angular brackets>.

*The Purdue OWL Family of Sites*. 26 Aug. 2005. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue University. 23 Apr. 2006 <<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/09/>>.

**An Article or Publication in Print and Electronic Form:**

Author. "Title of Article." *Periodical Name* Volume Number Publication Date: page number – page number. Database name. Service name. Library Name, City, State. Date of access <URL>.

Fox, Justin. "Who Wants to Be an Internet Billionaire?" *Fortune* 8 Nov. 1999: 40-48.

ABI/INFORM Global. ProQuest Direct. Cornell University Library, Ithaca, NY. 15 Nov. 1999 <<http://proquest.umi.com/pdqweb>>.

**An Article in a Web Magazine**

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Online Publication*. Date of Publication. Date of Access <electronic address>.

Bernstein, Mark. "10 Tips on Writing The Living Web." *A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites*. No. 149 (16 Aug. 2002). 4 May 2006 <<http://alistapart.com/articles/writeliving>>.

[The websites below offered the information provided on the MLA Works Cited Documentation page and also provide additional examples:

<http://liu.edu/cwis/CWP/library/workshop/citmla.htm>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>

[http://www.library.cornell.edu/newhelp/res\\_strategy/citing/mla.html#database](http://www.library.cornell.edu/newhelp/res_strategy/citing/mla.html#database) ]

## Recommended Online Resources

### *Writing Resources:*

#### **The Owl at Purdue University**

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>

This is the most comprehensive, user-friendly website that provides information regarding all aspects of the research process. Make sure to scroll down to the bottom of the page to select topics from the list provided.

#### **The Writing Center: The University of Wisconsin-Madison**

<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/Documentation.html>

The most frequently used components of the research paper are broken down into easy-to-read charts.

#### **LEO: Literacy Education Online: The Write Place Catalogue**

<http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/catalogue.html>

This website provides information about all aspects of writing. Click on “research” for related subtopics.

#### **Studyguide.org**

<http://studyguide.org/MLAdocumentation.htm>

When you have a resource that may be considered obscure (e.g., email, video laserdisc, Power Point online, etc.), consult this website. There’s also a comprehensive list of parenthetical citation examples.

#### **C. W. Post**

<http://liu.edu/cwis/CWP/library/workshop/citmla.htm>

For visual learners, this website uses colors to distinguish the different components of a cited resource.

#### **Writing Center at Princeton University**

[http://web.princeton.edu/sites/writing/Writing\\_Center/WCWritingRes.htm](http://web.princeton.edu/sites/writing/Writing_Center/WCWritingRes.htm)

In addition to providing a list of writing resources, of particular note is the online version of classic writing texts (e.g., *Strunk and White’s Elements of Style*, *Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary and Thesaurus*) and an additional list of well-regarded resources.

#### **A Research Guide for Students**

<http://www.aresearchguide.com/12biblio.html>

This website provides the “how-to’s” for writing a works cited page (i.e., bibliography). Make sure to scroll down the page for examples. Also, at the top of the page, there are links that provide information regarding other components of the research paper.

***Preventing Plagiarism Resources:*****Citation Machine**

<http://citationmachine.net>

You can find this website on your “Favorites” menu here at BHS. Using Citation Machine allows students to expedite the tedious process of formatting resources into a works cited page. A variety of templates are provided where students plug in the needed information and the “machine” accordingly formats the information.

**Indiana State University**

<http://panther.indstate.edu/tutorials/plagiarism/>

You’ll find a tutorial on plagiarism at this website, as indicated in the address. Examples of plagiarism are provided and tips on how to avoid plagiarism, along with other helpful information.

**Turnitin**

<http://turnitin.com>

This website provides a service for teachers and students to check papers for plagiarism. By having students submit their drafts to the service, they are able to revise their papers accordingly before handing in their final draft. (Teachers will supply students with the assignment number for submission.)