

W. F. West High School's Writing Style Guide

The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.
~Mark Twain



You can't wait for inspiration, you have to go after it with a club.
~Jack London

A synonym is a word you use when you can't spell the other one.
~Baltasar Gracián

The act of writing is the act of discovering what you believe.
~David Hare

Our admiration of fine writing will always be in proportion to its real difficulty and its apparent ease.
~Charles Caleb Colton

Do not put statements in the negative form. And don't start sentences with a conjunction. If you reread your work, you will find on rereading that a great deal of repetition can be avoided by re-reading and editing. Never use a long word when a diminutive one will do. Unqualified superlatives are the worst of all. De-accession euphemisms. If any word is improper at the end of a sentence, a linking verb is. Avoid trendy locutions that sound flaky. Last, but not least, avoid cliches like the plague.
~William Safire

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Writing is thinking. Learning to write in various formats teaches you to develop your thinking in different ways.

Thomas Jefferson, one of the founding fathers of our country and the primary author of a persuasive essay called the Declaration of Independence, said that a democracy must have citizens who know how to think and express their thinking clearly in order for that democracy to stand. For the first time in history, average citizens, Americans, were given the right to decide who were going to be their leaders and what their laws would be. Since the founding of our country we have extended the right to thoughtfully decide how to vote to all groups of citizens. As citizens of a democracy that gives us abundant freedoms, we need to know how to think for ourselves in order to make wise choices and decisions. Learning to write essays teaches you the skills to think clearly and support your thoughts effectively.

The state Academic Standards for Writing continues Jefferson's sentiment. Almost all of our students must show that they understand the thought processes needed to clearly and precisely explain and argue for what they believe. Whether you write another essay or not after high school, the skills learned are not wasted. You will have learned the processes needed to think.

You will be assigned short answer essay questions, essays, and research papers by teachers at all grade levels in English as well as other classes. Completing a research paper is part of your culminating project and is required for graduation. The state requires that you know how to write both expository and persuasive essays effectively.

Once you understand the processes and skills required to develop an essay or a research paper, any writing assignment becomes easier and you will also know the skills required to pass all state requirements. This guide was prepared to help you learn these skills.

Short Answers for Essay Test Questions

Most of your teachers, no matter which subject they teach, will require essay answers on unit tests. You may be asked to find and combine information, and draw conclusions about the information. The following essay with possible test and questions is an example of how you need to read and write your answers.

A Quiet Revolution

Throughout history, people have disagreed strongly with their governments over policies, laws, and actions. In some cases, when they disagree, people write letters to their representatives. In other cases, people stage violent revolutions, as the American colonists did in 1775 and the French peasants did in 1789. But in 1849, Henry David Thoreau wrote an essay called "Civil Disobedience," which gave a name to a form of protest that would influence world events forever more.

Civil disobedience is a revolution that does not call for battles or weapons or bloodshed. Instead, it is a form of protest that invites citizens to withdraw their cooperation with their government or to stand up against injustice. This means that those practicing civil disobedience might stop obeying the law they disagree with. It might mean demonstrating in a quiet but powerful way to protest the law or policy. Or, it could mean boycotting government-funded agencies so that they are not able to run.

Two of the most famous followers of Thoreau's ideas on civil disobedience are Mohandas K. Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Both men staged quiet protests against prejudice and intolerance that were allowed by law and felt throughout society. Gandhi successfully staged a protest against the poor treatment of immigrant Indians in South Africa.

As a result, laws were changed that gave Indians many more opportunities in that society. Gandhi later used the same approach against the British government in India. This helped end British control. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

staged nonviolent protests against laws that allowed African Americans to be banned from public places, education, or even sitting where they chose on city buses. His nonviolent actions led to the passage of new laws that opened educational and social opportunities to African Americans.

The actions of Mohandas Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., have proved that civil disobedience is a form of protest that works and can effect change. But civil disobedience requires a lot of patience. It means spending a lot of time quietly, passively resisting. This can be hard for people who want to see change happen quickly. Often people feel angry about the injustice or law they disagree with and want to see things change immediately. Civil disobedience takes discipline. It is hard work. However, many feel that it is worth the effort and time because it is done peacefully, without bloodshed. Also, they feel that the time it takes to effect the change helps those who are content with the laws as they were to understand and subscribe to the changes.

As a result of civil disobedience, laws can change and lives can be transformed. Little did Thoreau know back in 1849 that his words would influence an entire century of change. Undoubtedly, his essay will inspire other leaders in the years to come.

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- I. One essay question may ask: What is civil disobedience?
If the essay is part of your test, the best answer is to quote exactly how the essay has defined it because the quotation is the best choice of evidence. You would skim the essay for the definition then write it using quotation marks. Quotation marks show that you know you are using someone else's words and are not plagiarizing.

Best answer: Civil disobedience is "a form of protest that invites citizens to withdraw their cooperation with their government or to stand up against injustice." People who choose this form of protest do not use "battles, or weapons, or bloodshed," but it "takes discipline" and "is hard work."

2. Another essay question may ask you to combine your prior knowledge with information from the essay. You may not know about Gandhi's influence but you do know about King's. Notice the following is a two-part question. You must answer both parts of the question to receive full points.

Essay Question: How well did civil disobedience work? Choose either Gandhi or King, and using your own knowledge of him and his activities, give your opinion. Use at least three items from the essay as supporting evidence for your opinion.

One answer that combines prior knowledge with information from the essay:

A lot of people in a lot of cities demonstrated peacefully to change unfair laws. King was the organizer of the demonstrations and convinced people to not use violence. He was put in jail for disobeying the laws, but eventually they were changed because now we don't have a law that makes African Americans sit in the back of the bus. They can go to any school they choose, and they are not banned from any public places. So, although it took years, civil disobedience changed the laws in our country, and African Americans have the same rights as any other citizen now. This type of protest—civil disobedience—worked really well although it "takes discipline" and "is hard work."

(NOTE: The italicized words refer to the information in the essay and are supporting evidence.)

Both essay questions require different thinking skills. From simply finding the definition in an essay to incorporating your own thinking with supporting evidence from the essay to make a statement, you need to learn the skills required to show that you can think at an adult level for any short answer essay questions in any class.

II. Essays: Modes, Writing Variables, Planning and Writing an Essay

"The pen is mightier than the sword."

Edward Bulwer-Lytton, 1839

Many changes in society began with an essay written by someone who believes that the general thinking needs to change because of an injustice. Thoreau's essay, *Civil Disobedience*, is an example of this type of essay. Also, Thomas Jefferson wrote to Thomas Paine, author of *The Federalist's Papers*, saying, "go on doing with your pen what other times have done with the sword." Paine's essays inspired and stirred colonists to fight for their freedoms.

Essays are powerful tools. They have changed the course of our nation more than once. Writers who are committed to their topic and point-of-view influence their audience. When you are committed to your point-of-view, your essay or research paper becomes more than an assignment; you will discover what you believe and you may influence your readers.

An essay consists of your opinion on a topic with developed and elaborated thoughts, organized ideas in a specific format, and chosen words and sentence structure that best fit both the purpose and audience of your essay. Writers believe in what they are saying and are committed to what they write.

Modes of Writing

The four basic types of essays are narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive. Most high school essays are either expository or persuasive.

- 1) A narrative essay is usually a recalling of an event or certain experience and the writer purposely uses the pronoun "I." A narrative essay makes a definite point.
 - 2) A descriptive essay describes an object, person, idea, or event in detail by creating images that appeal to all the senses. This type of essay also makes a point or focuses on an idea.
 - 3) A persuasive or argumentative essay states an issue, chooses a side, and argues to persuade the audience of the writer's point of view. A persuasive essay also
 - addresses the opposite argument, stating why it is not the better view.
 - includes a call to action for the audience.
 - Present logical, very well supported with developed, examples and reliable evidence.
- ** This type of writing, if effective, shows strong thinking processes. The WASL requires that everyone must know how to write an effective, persuasive essay.
- 4) An expository essay usually explains or informs the audience of a process, situation, set of facts, or an idea.
 - Nonfiction books, magazine articles, scientific findings, historical information, business reports for coworkers, and customer reports are all examples of expository writing.
 - Expository essays include:
 - classification,
 - comparison and contrast,
 - cause and effect,
 - example, and
 - definition.

** This type of writing, if effective, shows strong thinking processes. The WASL requires that everyone must know how to write an effective expository essay.

Writing Variables

Before beginning any assignment, it will help you to focus and remain consistent in style if you consider the following variables.

Audience: For whom am I writing? A letter written to your ten-year-old sister will be much different in vocabulary, subject, content, format, and sentence complexity than one written to your senator.

Topic: About what subject should I write? If possible, choose a subject that interests you. Research your subject well.

Purpose: Why am I writing? Have a clear purpose in mind before starting your paper. Are you writing to entertain, to instruct, to inform, to explain, or to persuade? Keeping your purpose in mind as you write will result in a paper that is focused and consistent.

Voice: What point of view or "voice" will I use? Writers sometimes write from the point of view of another person rather than from their own point of view. Writing in a voice other than your own can add variety and help you see your subject in a new way. Make sure your "voice" remains consistent.

Format: What form will my writing take? Different forms of writing, such as letters, diaries, reports, essays, research papers, etc., have specific requirements. Decide on the form your writing will take, and then make sure you know the requirements for that form of writing.

Planning and Writing an Essay; an Overview of the Steps

- 1) Select a general subject area that interests you, or use the subject given by your teacher.
- 2) Make a list of your thoughts and ideas about the subject.
- 3) Use your list to help focus on a specific topic within the subject area.
- 4) Decide what you want to say about the topic, and write an introductory statement that reflects this purpose.
- 5) Make a list of details to support your statement.
- 6) Arrange the list of details into an outline.
- 7) Do any reading and research necessary to provide additional support for specific areas of your outline.
- 8) Write a first draft.
- 9) Revise your first draft, making sure that:
 - a) The introduction includes a clear statement of purpose.
 - b) Each paragraph begins with some link to the preceding paragraph.
 - c) Every statement is supported and elaborated.
 - d) The concluding paragraph ties all of the important points together, leaving the reader with a clear understanding of the meaning of the essay or composition.
 - e) Words are used and spelled correctly.
 - f) Punctuation is correct.
- 10) Read your revised paper aloud to check how it sounds.
- 11) Proofread your revised paper two times: once for spelling, punctuation and word usage, and again for meaning and effectiveness.

-- Notes --

III. How Your Essays Will Be Graded: Read, learn and use the writing rubric as a guide when writing essays. See explanations of the writing process and six traits in sections IV & V.

Writing Score Form - W. F. West High School

Name _____ Assignment _____ Per. _____

Section One - Writing Process	
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; font-weight: bold;"> 1234 </div>
%	<p>Process - shows steps in development <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>prewrite, organize, first draft, peer edit, revision, final draft Few All</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Steps Steps</p>
Section Two - Six Traits of Excellent Writing	
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; font-weight: bold;"> 1234 </div>
%	<p>Idea Development Little Consistent</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Focus Focus</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Follows directions <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction <input type="checkbox"/> Anecdotes </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient main ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Elaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Effective conclusion </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Balance of support & elaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Narrow topic/clear position </div> </div>
%	<p>Organization Little Consistent</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Pattern Pattern</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Logical flow of ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Sense of completeness </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Clear, easy to understand <input type="checkbox"/> Makes the best case </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Transitions </div> </div>
%	<p>Voice Little Consistent</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Voice Voice</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Shows commitment <input type="checkbox"/> Figurative language </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Creates a persona <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate for audience and purpose </div> </div>
%	<p>Sentence Fluency Little Consistent</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Variety Variety</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Varied length <input type="checkbox"/> Varied structure </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Active sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Flows </div> </div>
%	<p>Word Choice Limited Effective</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Vocab. Language</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Specific words <input type="checkbox"/> Words fit tone </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Words best describe, identify or fit context <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate language for audience and purpose </div> </div>
%	<p>Conventions Many Few</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Errors Errors</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Correct spelling <input type="checkbox"/> Correct punctuation </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Follow rules of standard English <input type="checkbox"/> Complete sentences </div> </div>

Section Three - Your Grade	
Points	_____
Percent	_____ %
Letter	_____

IV. Steps in the Writing Process Explained and Defined

-- Notes --

Like changing the oil in a car or making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, writing is a step-by-step process. If you complete each step in the correct order, you will write a much more effective essay than if you don't.

Step One: Prewriting or Brainstorming

This process is the most important step in writing an essay. Prewriting means getting the ideas about the topic from your brain onto the paper. Take the time to prewrite or brainstorm; this step helps you elaborate or develop your ideas. The more thoroughly and specifically you complete this step, the easier it will be to put a well developed essay together. This is called idea development.

Do NOT judge your brainstorm; any ideas may lead to other, better ideas. Jot down every idea you think of while you are brainstorming.

The following are a few brainstorming techniques. Whichever technique you choose, be sure to elaborate, or thoroughly develop each idea as much as you can. If you do this, you will have the majority of the ideas you need to write your first draft.

1) Journal writing: Some people write a journal version of their essay, copying their ideas as they come to mind. Don't mistake this journal for a rough draft of your essay, however.

2) Listing: Some people list their ideas as they brainstorm.

3) Bubbling, clustering or spiderwebbing: This process works well to get to specifics. Write an idea or topic, circle it, then draw a line to a new connected idea, and repeat the process until you have a huge web of connected ideas.

4) Freewriting: Brainstorm by writing nonstop for bursts of three to five minutes. It can be very effective. Look for the most important sentence or nugget; then begin another free-write with that one sentence to further focus your thinking on the topic. Then chose a few of your best and most developed ideas to use as the foundation when you write your first draft.

5) Questioning: You can also rely on the five journalistic questions, who, what, when, where, why, and how to trigger more questions that will help expand your ideas.

If you have very few ideas on the topic, you may need to read more information on the topic before you can effectively write about it. For example, you cannot write an effective essay about Romeo and Juliet if you haven't read the play. Again, take time to fully develop this step; this is the foundation of your essay.

Step Two: Organizing

Organizing simply means to put your ideas in the most effective order to make your purpose clear to your reader. (See Trait 2 in Section V for a list of transitions. These words help connect ideas for your audience.)

Reread your brainstorm and choose which ideas best explain and elaborate.

- Choose which idea should come first,
- which idea should be second,
- which idea you think should be last to be most effective,
- which anecdote or thought would work as hook for the introductory paragraph, .
- and what thought you want to leave with your audience.
- Once you've made your selections, organize them in the way to best present them to your audience.

The standard essay includes:

- an introduction—introduce the audience to writer's topic and purpose;
- a body—development or elaboration of the topic to further explain the writer's point of view; and
- a conclusion—reminds the audience of the main points and purpose, and leaves the reader with something to think about.

Step Three: Writing

Now you have your blueprint. It's time to write the first draft or rough draft. If you've done a good job with your prewrite, this should be easy. Just expand on the ideas in your outline, and write them in organized sentences and paragraphs. (See page 11 for the Academic Essay Outline.)

Step Four: Revising

Don't confuse steps four and five. In step four, revising, you are improving your content or ideas. In step five, editing, you are correcting your conventions—spelling, punctuation, and grammar. To revise, ask questions like the following:

- What is this paper trying to say? Do I have a clear thesis—my opinion on the topic?
- Does it make sense to me? Will it make sense to the reader?
- Are the ideas presented in a logical manner?
- Does the paper give enough information? Are there gaps that need to be filled in?
- Are there any unnecessary parts that could be taken out?
- Should I add more details or elaborate to better explain the ideas?
- Are my sentences complete and do I use a variety of sentences?
- Do the words express exactly what I have in mind?
- Are there some words that I use too often? Could I use a thesaurus to find other words?

Step Five: Editing

This is the time when you need to read your essay with the most care and attention. That's why it's often a good idea to ask for some help when editing. Somebody who has never read the essay will be more likely to catch errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure. Don't rely entirely on your computer for editing. It can make mistakes. (See Section V for more information.)

Step Six: Final Draft/Publishing

Turn in your paper.

V. The Six Traits of Writing

-- Notes --

All teachers at W. F. West expect you to write clearly and effectively by following the essay rubric. In other words, your essay is easy to read, is fully elaborated, has few errors, and has a clear purpose or point for your audience.

1) **Idea Development** is the content, or what the writer chooses to say about the topic. Clear and effective writing focuses on the writer's purpose and awareness of audience.

- Idea development, also called elaboration, is divided into two parts: concrete details and commentary.
- Concrete details include: examples, statistics, quotations, and facts and these items are the evidence that support the writer's comments.
- Commentary explains, defines, analyzes, gives thoughtful and original insight, and draws logical conclusions.
- Elaboration also includes anecdotes, scenarios, and language that creates images and appeals to the senses. See Trait 3--Voice for an explanation.

The usual ratio of concrete details to comments for each paragraph varies with the type of class.

English = 1 concrete detail : 2 comments

History = 2 concrete details : 1 comment

Science = 3 concrete details : 0 comment

Math = usually the same as science, check with teacher

Read the prewriting section under the "Writing Process" section for more information on idea development.

2) **Organization** is how you put your ideas together. Divide the ideas into paragraphs, and connect the ideas with transitional words. Organization is like a skeleton; it holds the development of ideas together.

Using transitional words and phrases helps your reader move from one idea to the next. Use them to connect ideas and improve the flow of your paper.

Transitional Words

<u>Signal</u>	<u>Words</u>
Addition	also, too, in addition, moreover, and, besides, further, furthermore, equally important, next, then, finally
Example	for example, for instance, thus, as an illustration, namely, specifically
Contrast	but, yet, however, on the other hand, nevertheless, nonetheless, conversely, in contrast, on the contrary, still, at the same time.
Comparison	similarly, likewise, in like manner, in the same way, in comparison
Concession	of course, to be sure, certainly, naturally, granted
Result	therefore, thus, consequently, so, accordingly, due to this
Summary	as a result, hence in short, in brief, in summary, in conclusion, finally

Transitional Words Continued

Time sequence first, firstly, second, secondly, third, fourth, next, then, finally, afterwards, before, soon, later, during, meanwhile, subsequently, immediately, at length, eventually, in the future, currently

Place in the front, in the foreground, in the back, in the background, at the side, adjacent, nearby, in the distance, here, there

Read the organization section under "Writing Process" for more information.

3) Voice is the tone you choose to use. It can be serious, humorous, business-like, friendly, etc.

- The voice you choose should depend on your audience and your purpose.
- Voice connects the reader with the writer. It gives energy and individuality to writing.
- Voice shows you are committed to your writing. Voice makes the essay specifically yours. By using personal anecdotes, scenarios, metaphors, similes, and imagery you give your essay voice.
 - o Anecdotes: a short narrative inserted into an essay that develops an idea or argument.
 - o Scenario: a hypothetical situation or event that develops an idea or argument.
 - o Descriptions: a way to create vivid images for the reader. Use figurative language such as similes and metaphors for comparisons. Use words to create an image that appeals to your reader's senses.

4) Sentence Fluency has a rhythm; sentences vary in length, and are pleasing to the ear as well as the eye.

- Writing for school assignments is more formal than most conversation; use complete sentences; don't use slang.
- Vary sentence length for emphasis. Make some short and to the point; others longer and detailed.
- Vary your sentence beginnings.
- Strong fluency uses parallel construction, alliteration and is easy to read.

5) Word Choice is choosing the words that best describe, identify, or fit context.

- Use words that will best help the reader understand your point. Strong writing should create pictures or images in your reader's mind.
- Be precise. The word "nice" may seem like the best word, but it has different meanings. Precise words create a better picture in the reader's mind.
- Sometimes teachers will expect you to use the vocabulary that they are teaching. Be prepared to use subject-specific words.
- Use strong verbs: "shrieked," not "cried"; "quaked," not "shook".
- Limit the use of the "to be" verbs to about one third of your paper's verbs.
- Use all words correctly; as a standard rule, do not use clichés or jargon.

6) Conventions are the mechanics or correctness of the writing: spelling, punctuation, capitalization, noun/pronoun agreement, verb tense agreements, grammar, and word usage. See pages 16-18 for more specific information.

- Editing conventions is usually the last step a writer does before the final draft.
- Read the editing section under "Writing Process" for more information.

VI. Outline for the Multi-paragraph Academic Essay

-- Notes --

The following is a generic outline for essays you will need to write for most English classes.

I. Thesis or introductory paragraph

- A. Hook or grabber—interesting statement or question that draws the reader into the subject
- B. A sentence or two of relevant background information on the topic.
- C. Thesis statement—one sentence that is the writer's (your) opinion on the topic. This tells the reader or audience the purpose of your essay and covers the points that the entire essay is trying to show.
- D. Roadmap—lists the body paragraph main ideas in one sentence.

II. Main idea one: the first body paragraph

- A. State the idea or topic sentence. Use the first one listed in your roadmap.
- B. Link the first sentence with the previous paragraph. Writers usually use transitions here. See organization under "Six Traits" for a list.
- C. Elaborate:
 - Support or develop the topic sentence with concrete details such as: relevant details, quotations, statistics, examples, anecdotes, scenarios, (relevant personal experiences), reasons, and facts.
 - Further develop or elaborate with your comments by giving your explanations, definitions, and logical conclusions based on the details for the paragraph. To show your audience your point, also use comparisons such as similes and metaphors.

III. Main idea two, plus any other body paragraph you include is the same format as Main idea one.

- A. Repeat A as listed above
- B. Repeat B as listed above
- C. Repeat C as listed above
- D. Your essay can have any number of body paragraphs needed to explain or persuade your audience of your purpose. Your teacher will usually give the number of body paragraphs required for the assignment.

IV. Conclusion or concluding paragraph

- A. Tie all the important points together, leaving your reader or audience with a clear understanding of the meaning or purpose of your essay.
- B. Add an overall conclusion or insight that shows what you may have discovered by thinking about the topic and writing the essay.

** Teachers may ask you to vary this format to fit the needs for specific assignments.

VII. English Style Format: Use the following format for all types of essays.

- Typed, size 12, double space.
- Tab once (indent) at the beginning of each paragraph.
- Return only once between paragraphs.
- For your essay's title, do not underline or use quotations.

Dear School Board Members,

I am a junior at W. F. West High School and I am writing as a representative of the student body about the dress code issue. Those people who support the idea of a dress code say it will solve some of the violence problems and inappropriate dress in our schools, but we believe students will resist the dress code because it limits our freedom of expression. We value our freedom to dress as we want, within reason, in order to express ourselves. Many of us already are required to wear uniforms four or five days a week, and uniforms for school would not allow us the opportunity to be individuals and to be able to show our individuality. Instead, I'm suggesting that you form a dress code committee which includes a few student body representatives to develop solutions for this issue.

thesis

main ideas list

addresses opposing view

Parents, teachers, and others in favor of uniforms believe it will solve problems of violence that exist in some of the nation's schools. In other schools there have been fights over jackets and other name brand clothing, but I have researched the records and I can find no record at our school of any violent incident involving a student's clothes. According to the information I found, every violent outbreak was not due to someone trying to take someone else's clothes. I understand the concern, but why create rules for something that is not happening at our schools? Furthermore, people with violent tempers will find ways to be violent even if everyone dresses the same. The school board members should look into programs that deal with anger management to solve the violence problem, rather than instituting a dress code.

fact/concrete detail

opinion and/or comment

Teens today feel we have few freedoms. We have to go to school, obey our parents, and many upperclassmen even hold a job which requires us to wear uniforms every day we work, for many of us, four to five days a week. Students who participate in sports also wear uniforms for every practice and every game. Students in band and choir also are required to wear uniforms for their performances. All the uniforms I've

fact/concrete detail

elaboration

listed show that we are part of a team, and learning to work as part of a team is very important, but so is the freedom to dress as we want when we are not part of a specific team. By taking this freedom away, you would be putting yet another restriction on us, and that restriction would feel like a straight jacket. Instead, let's work together to develop and implement acceptable guidelines for our dress.

simile

opinion/
commentary

1st call to
action

We have been told that school is our work, and the majority of us will be willing to meet dress guidelines that reflect a workplace. However, I speak for the student body when I say that we would like a voice in decisions that affect us. When I was discussing this issue with my mother, she told me that when she was in middle school, any girl who wore pants to school was immediately suspended and sent home for breaking the existing dress code. But, when styles changed to mini skirts when she was in high school, the school board formed a committee with a few student representatives. After much discussion from all committee members, the school board decided to change the rule and allow girls to wear pants to school and set a limit on the length of mini skirts girls could wear. Because students were involved in the decisions, they were more willing to follow the new guidelines and they believed that they did not have to give up their individuality. They saw the solution as a good compromise. I know that we, too, can reach decisions with which all of us can agree.

fact

anecdote to
support an
argument

Dressing all students alike may seem like the perfect solution for some of the problems in our schools. However, students see this solution as limiting our freedoms and stifling our individualism. Students need to be given responsibility to make important choices. Give us the responsibility to be part of a planning committee and help make the decisions that affect who we are and what we wear.

thesis
restatement

2nd call to
action

Sincerely,

John Green

Sample Comparison/Contrast
Expository Essay English format

Your Name
Instructor's Name
Course and Period Number
Date

Anaheim or Aloha

hook → Most families enjoy taking vacations during the summer. Deciding where to vacation is sometimes an overwhelming task. Two of the most popular vacation destinations are California and Hawaii. While both contain a variety of tourist attractions and places to stay, they are different in travel costs, types of attractions, and overall reputation.

thesis: topic & opinion

main ideas list → One of the first considerations in planning a vacation is travel cost. Travel and lodging costs make up a majority of overall vacation expenses. Once in California or Hawaii, hotels and motels will cost about the same amount. Getting there, however, can make or break a vacation budget. Most travelers from Washington get to California by air or by land. Airlines offer low fares to many destinations in California because so many people take those flights. Often by shopping around, a family can fly round trip to California for a fraction of what it will cost them to stay there once they arrive. Families can save a great deal of money, however, by taking their lodging with them. By this I mean driving a trailer or motor home.

opinion/comment

fact/concrete detail → While the travel time is longer than flying, it is also less expensive because there are no hotel costs. Campground fees are very little compared to hotel costs. While there are two choices from Washington to California, there is only one choice to Hawaii. Because it is in the Pacific, a family must fly. Airfares are much higher because there is only one way to get there and airline companies know that if people want to go to Hawaii, they will pay for it.

comment

2nd main idea or topic sentence → Another important consideration in planning the family vacation is the type of attractions available. California is well known for its attractions. Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, Universal Studios, and Hollywood draw people from all over the world. There attractions are appropriate for children and adults, so the whole family can have fun on vacation. In Hawaii, there are fewer well known attractions. Pearl Harbor of-

fact/concrete detail

fact/concrete detail

fact/
concrete
detail

fers tours, Hanauma Bay offers excellent snorkeling, and the outdoor markets offer shopping. There are other attractions as well, but these attractions are most suitable for teenagers and adults, as they are not designed specifically to entertain the guests. Most people who vacation in Hawaii are there for the sun and the beach, not for the entertainment.

comments

3rd main
idea or topic
sentence

A third consideration when planning a vacation is the reputation of the proposed vacation destination. Parts of California are crowded and noisy, with high crime rates. Traffic is slow, no matter what time of day or night a family is driving. On one trip to California, my family was trapped on the freeway in rush hour traffic for almost two hours. It was really hot, and our car was heating up so we had to turn off the air conditioning. With sweat streaming down our faces and arms, we were sticking to the seats like ants on super glue in less than fifteen minutes. At the same time, we did not witness any crimes; however, the local paper reported assaults and violence everyday. This is true for south central Los Angeles, but, according to their papers, it is also happening in Anaheim, the location of Disneyland. Hawaii, on the other hand, has the reputation of relaxing beaches, warm water, and friendly natives. Any crime, noise, or crowding problems seems to be kept hidden from proposed travelers.

anecdote
to develop
voice and
supporting
evidence

rewording
thesis

Washingtonians flock to California and Hawaii during vacation times. Each state offers something different for vacationing families. Cost, variety of attractions, and reputation are all factors when making a decision. No matter which of the two states a family chooses, they will probably find lots of other vacationers as well as some added experiences they hadn't planned.

summary of
main ideas

closing
statement

VIII. Conventions: Common Rules for Writing

Brief Punctuation Guide: These guidelines cover the punctuation required in most writing. For more complicated situations, a formal style book may be needed.

1. **Periods** conclude sentences which do not ask questions or express strong emotion.

Use also in abbreviations:

Dr. Mrs. Ave. P. M. W. F. West

Exception: No periods are necessary if the abbreviation is accepted in place of the full name. FBI FCC U of W WSU

Periods do not follow periods. If a sentence ends with an abbreviation, use only one period.

He lived in Washington D. C.

2. **Exclamation point:** One and only one follows a word or sentence which expresses strong emotion. Wow! That is fantastic! My, oh my!

3. **Question marks** follow a direct question.

What is the answer?

A period follows an indirect question.

He wondered what the answer was.

4. **Semicolons** function like a period. Use them when two sentences are closely related.

The storm caused extensive damage; it destroyed an entire village.

Semicolons separate word groups with contain commas.

The following people were present: John Smith, the doctor; Paul Brown, the dentist; and Elmer Wilson, the psychiatrist.

Semicolons separate sentences joined by subordinating conjunctions.

The rain would not stop; consequently, the game was postponed.

5. **Quotation marks** enclose the exact words of the speaker in a direct quotation.

Marvin said, "I am trying to do my best."

"I am trying to do my best," Marvin said.

"I am trying," Marvin said, "to do my best."

Quotation marks are not used in indirect quotations.

Marvin said he was trying his best.

Periods and commas are placed inside quotation marks.

Question marks and exclamation points are placed outside of the quotation marks when the entire sentence, not just the quotation, is a question or exclamation.

Did you say, "I need some money"?

For titles of any short writes not your own, use quotation marks or italicize.

For titles of any long writes not your own, underline or italicize.

Comma Rules: These rules will help with most situations. A comma should be used when it is necessary for sentence clarity.

-- Notes --

1. Leave it out when in doubt.
I'm not sure where a comma should go in this sentence.
2. Series: After every part but the last.
He ordered a burger, fries, water, pie, and ice cream.
3. Date: Before and after every part but the first.
It was on August 11, 1997, that his life changed dramatically.
4. Address: Before and after every part but the first.
The house at 760 Washington Avenue, Chehalis, Washington, is sold.
5. Quotation: If the speaker begins the sentence the comma precedes the quotation.
John said, "I am your friend."
If the quotation begins the sentence the comma follows the quotation.
"I am your friend," John said.
6. Appositive: Before and after the noun.
The cat, a long-haired male, chased the ping-pong ball.
Jessica Lauren, our new state senator, lives in Doty.
7. Nonrestrictive clauses: Before and after the noun.
Lou Gehrig, who was a great baseball player, died young.
8. Restrictive clause: Do not use a comma.
The man who was sitting in back of the theater fell asleep.
9. Consecutive adjectives: Between those modifying the same word.
The old, mangy, snaggle-toothed dog loved chasing mailmen.
10. Interrupters: Set off, before and after the noun.
The answer, of course, is 2130 consecutive games.
11. Introductory clauses: After, but not before the following clause.
Because we were late, we couldn't find a seat.
We couldn't find a seat because we were late.
12. Compound sentences: Before the coordinating conjunction or after the conjunctive adverb.
The night was very cold, and we had no wood for a fire.
The night was cold; furthermore, we had no wood for a fire.
13. Words of direct address: Before and after the name.
The best method, Martha, is to study for several nights.

Common Spelling Errors:

The following lists the words most often misspelled by our students. Check this list if you are unsure of the correct spelling or usage.

Contraction: Two words are combined to form one word; an apostrophe is used in place of the missing letter(s).

Homonym: Words that sound alike but are spelled differently and different meanings.

their--shows possession	there--is a place they're--contraction for they are
its--shows possession	it's--contraction for it is
your--shows possession	you're--contraction for you are
to--going somewhere	too--also, in addition, degree two--the number

Other Common Spelling Errors: The list is alphabetical by row.

These words are either difficult to spell or exceptions to the common spelling rules.

a lot (two words)	absence	accidentally	acknowledge
adequate	advice	advise	ancient
argument	athlete	awkward	beginning
believe	benefit	bookkeeper	business
calendar	ceiling	Centralia	character
committed	committee	congratulate	deceive
definite	describe	diesel	disease
eighth	environment	equipment	executive
existence	expelled	experience	familiar
February	forty	friend	frontier
grammar	grieve	guarantee	guidance
hygiene	leisure	library	license
maintenance	mileage	necessary	ninety
ninth	occurrence	perform	personal
pleasant	prairie	preference	prejudice
preparation	privilege	professor	receipt
receive	recommend	referred	restaurant
rhythm	sandwiches	schedule	scissors
separate	similar	sophomore	succeed
surprise	synthetic	technique	tomorrow
truly	vein	Wednesday	weird
yield			

Other common misspellings:

weather—the climate; what nature is doing
whether—to introduce an alternative

affect—used to show action, emotion
effect—the result of a cause

which—particular one or ones; a circumstance
witch—a woman believed to possess magical powers

IX. Research Terms, Information and Instructions: A General Guide to Research

-- Notes --

Use this guide and the following pages in your *Elements of Literature* English Anthology as a resource and study guide for all steps of the research paper unless your teacher gives you different directions.

Grade	Research Handbook	Writing a Research Paper
9th	Pp 983-989	Pp 868-872
10th	Pp 1011-1018	Pp 448-452
Am. Lit.	Pp 1207-1214	Pp 515-518
World Lit.	Pp 1207-1214	Pp 773-777

Other Reference Sources

Style guides: These guides are helpful for finding how-to information about works cited, footnotes and margins. Many even have grammar and punctuation sections for reference or review. The following are examples of some published style guides.

MLA—published by the Modern Language Association; used for all English papers world-wide.

APA—published by the American Psychological Association

Strunk & White: Elements of Style

General Steps to Research

1. **Select your topic:** (your teacher may assign one to you)
 - a) Make sure that your topic is genuinely researchable.
 - b) Look over a topics book.
 - c) Read an encyclopedia article for background information and help form research questions.
 - d) Skim indexes, bibliographies, source lists.
2. **Narrow your topic:**
 - a) Write baseline notes. Write what you know about the topic now.
 - b) Think about where you received your information. Are you biased?
 - c) Read further background information in an encyclopedia.
 - d) Use the reporter's questions: who, what, when, where, why, how to begin your narrowed questions.
 - e) State your purposes for writing on this topic. These may change as you research.
 - f) Write a tentative thesis. Research may lead you to revise your thesis, but stating it now will focus your direction when researching. Begin your thesis this way:

I expect to discover/prove/explain/demonstrate/show that [make an assertion about your subject].

3. Selecting Sources

- a) **Primary:** these include interviews, eyewitness accounts, personal papers, personal communication, court records, new stories, surveys, experiments, statistics from studies or recording.
- b) **Secondary:** These include essays that explain, interpret and support opinions.
Secondary sources use primary sources to fulfill their purposes.

If you have chosen a controversial topic, look for sources to represent all sides. You will not recognize bias if you only review sources that agree with one side of an issue.

- c) **Possible sources:**
Before you choose to use a source, you must evaluate the writers' qualifications or level of expertise. Know if your source is reliable and valid.

*For the most reliable and valid online sources search the following internet domains first:

.edu .gov .org

.com is a commercial site and generally not as reliable. .net means the information is from anyone, not necessarily an expert.

- d) **Reliable source:** Timberland Regional Library databases.
www.trlib.org
These databases are counted as non-internet sources. You need to have a library card to access the data bases. Their databases include:

Facts.com

U. S. and world news from 1940 to the present. News stories, analysis, maps, photos, etc.

ProQuest

Index to magazines and newspapers. Search by topic, by combining topics in an "advanced search," or by specific magazine or newspaper.

Biography Resource Center

Search by full name, last name, or start of last name and find information about people from ancient times to present. Search also by occupation, nationality, ethnicity, or gender.

CultureGrams

The "World Edition" gives in-depth information about 187 countries and "State Edition" gives in-depth information about the 50 states. Also includes a photo gallery and recipe sections.

Daily Life Through History

Covers ancient times to the present, find out what regular people were eating, drinking, wearing, living in, and what trends in politics, religion, economics, and culture impacted their everyday lives.

Opposing Viewpoints

Pro and con arguments about many issues and controversies from abortion to welfare reform.

AP Photo Archive

Over 70,000 photos from the Associated Press archives. Pinpoint photo search by filling in search boxes for "What," "Where," and "When" with subject, location, and time period.

Literature Resource Center

One-stop shop for biography, literary criticism, and related articles about world authors and their work.

Great Reads

Portal to books and pulls together such sites as library-created booklists, book reviews by teens, and links to databases and web sites about books. "What's New" lists new books, recorded books, CD, DVDs, and more.

WOIS

This Washington state guide to education and occupations includes assessment tests for determining skills and interests, detailed descriptions of occupations, and information about training programs.

New Book of Popular Science

Check the Sciclopedia for background information about science topics; then look at science, news, biographies, what's going on in the sky today, and more.

Learning Express

Practice tests for many standard academic and licensing exams, including SAT, college entrance, math skills, law enforcement, nursing, real estate, the military, and U.S. citizenship.

Auto Repair Reference Center

Toss in your car's year, model, and make, and you'll find information on such topics as repair procedures, recalls, writing diagrams, specs, and maintenance intervals.

Health and Wellness Resource Center

Index to health-related articles in magazines and newspapers, plus sections about medical terms, alternative medicine, health news, medical dictionaries, links to other sites, and more.

- e) Other online sources:
Government documents—legislative and judicial information--scientific reports, statistics, cultural and historical information, bulletin boards, news group subscription services, businesses, and organizations.
- f) Other reference material:
biographical guides, abstracts, almanacs, yearbooks, atlases
- g) Books
- h) Essays in anthologies: scholars compile excellent essays on many topics.
- i) Newspaper and magazine articles
- j) Archival materials: rare books, diaries, letter collections, local historical material

- k) Audiovisual materials: maps, charts, photos, films, musical recording, tapes or recorded television and radio programs
 - l) Surveys and interviews
4. Evaluate your sources:
Before you decide to use each source you need to read it and evaluate for the following:
- a) Does the source have enough information?
 - b) Is the source current enough?
 - c) Does the source suit the purpose of your research?
 - d) Is the source written for a general audience, at a level you can understand?
 - e) What are the author's credentials? Is he/she an expert?
 - f) Is the source complete?
 - g) Is the source biased?
 - h) If the source is electronic, check to see if it is based on printed material. These are more or less permanent and the source's worth can be evaluated as a book could.
5. Read for research:
Decide whether you want to start with a larger source like a book, or a smaller source like a pamphlet, magazine article or internet source. Some students like to start with a larger, more difficult source to gain as much information as possible. Others like to start smaller and work up. Both ways work. Perhaps the decision should be based on how long you can keep the source. Sources with close deadlines for being returned should be used first. Internet sources, and copies of magazine articles can be done later.
6. Skim/scan the entire source first. This means quickly looking over the work seeing what important information might be in the source.
- a) Think about particular questions you have in mind.
 - b) Look at the table of contents, index, headings, and/or subheading within chapters.
 - c) Read the first paragraph of each chapter.
 - d) Look at all pictures, each caption.
 - e) Read each chart or graph, including captions.
 - f) Read the last paragraph of each chapter.
7. Use source logs or source cards
If you decide to use the source, you will need to copy all the citation information exactly. The Tech. Center has source logs with examples of how to write the source information, or you may use index cards; check with your teacher for which one to use. Be sure to complete this step. You will need all the information for your "Works Cited" or "Bibliography" page of the paper.
- a) You have chosen a source to use.
 - b) Stop and immediately get the correct source log and fill out all the information now. Doing this saves a lot of time and frustration later. Different sources require different information for the citation. Check each source log to make sure you have all the information that you can find.
 - c) If your information is from the internet, do not close the site until you have found all the information the source gives.
 - d) Number each of your source logs in the top right hand corner—first source is #1, second source is #2, etc.
 - e) Then as you write your notes from the same source, put the same number in the upper right hand corner of all your note cards from that source. Then you know which note cards belong to which source log or card. See the sample note cards' upper right hand corner.

8. Note taking:
The following information explains how to take notes so that you are not plagiarizing. Even if you do not intend to plagiarize, failure to give credit for the work is plagiarism. You will at least receive a failing grade on the paper or project if you plagiarize at W. F. West. At college level you will be given a failing grade for the entire class, not just the paper. Plagiarism is very serious.

So, how do you avoid plagiarism? You follow the processes of note taking and documentation you will have explained to you.

- a) For this process, you will need note cards. Three by five or four by six cards are best. For most high school papers, 50-100 cards will be plenty.
- b) Now you are ready to take notes. Most students work best during note taking if they have roadmap plans. Set up a scratch outline or a list of important questions: who, what, where, when, why, and how.
- c) Ask yourself what you want the reader to know. Reading an encyclopedia entry will give you an overview of the topic, information to generate your research questions, and a place to start your research.

9. Formatting note cards: Every note card should have the exact, same format. Include:

- a) a subject heading to identify the idea or topic of the note.

* The previous step is extremely important to complete as you write your note cards because when you begin to organize the ideas or topics into separate paragraphs you already have the cards categorized by topic. Be sure to complete this step. Usually when researching several different-sources on the same subject, many of the ideas or topics often appear in more than one of your sources. So as you begin your second source's note cards, always check to see if the source is talking about the same idea or topic as the first source. If it is, use the same subject heading for any other note cards with the same ideas. Then continue the same step for all your sources. Include:

- b) a reference number or citation for identifying the source of the note.
*This step refers to section 7 - e. Reread it if you've forgotten it.
- c) an introduction that provides a context for the note: who, what, when, where, why or how.
- d) the note itself: quotation, summary, paraphrase or a combination.
- e) a page number from the source of the information if applicable.
- f) If you are thinking of any comments, add them, reminding yourself how you intend to use this note card in the paper.

Example note card format:

<u>What mountain climbers need</u>	4
Interview w. Sir Edmund Hillary (first to climb Mr. Everest, 5/29/53)	
1. Strong motivation	
2. Technical skill	
3. Good planning	
4. Sense of humor	

*You are tracking your information two ways.

First, by using source card numbers in the upper right hand corner of your note cards you are quickly identifying where your information came from and you have a completed source log or card for each source.

Second, by writing a subject heading to identify topics and main ideas you can quickly identify the topic categories without having to read the entire note. When you have 40 or 50 note cards, this step really saves time. For this step you are categorizing by topics, not by sources. This makes organizing all the information for your paper simple. Take the time to do this step; you'll be glad you did.

10. **Note taking to avoid plagiarism:** Read the sample paragraph of information below.

"Generalizing about male and female styles of management is a tricky business, because stereotypes have traditionally been used to keep women down. Not too long ago it was a widely accepted truth that women were unstable, indecisive, temperamental and manipulative and weren't good team members because they'd never played football. In fighting off these prejudices many women tried to adopt masculine traits in the office."

From Hughley, Robert, and George Gelman. "Managing the Woman's Way." *Newsweek* 16 July 2005: 47.

*There are several ways you could use this information on your note cards.

1. **Direct quotation:**

- a. This is a word-for-word reproduction of an original source. Be careful to write the words exactly as they appear. You are quoting the author verbatim.

<p><u>Masc. and fem. Styles</u> 3 Article from Hughey and Gelman, "Managing the Woman's Way," <i>Newsweek</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">"Generalizing about male and female styles of management is a tricky business, because stereotypes have traditionally been used to keep women down. Not too long ago it was a widely accepted truth that women were unstable, indecisive, temperamental and manipulative and weren't good team members because they'd never played football. In fighting off these prejudices many women tried to adopt masculine traits in the office."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">p. 47</p>
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- b. The next example includes what is called a "tagline," meaning you have included the speaker's name. According to Dr. Jon Smith, "The best way to increase your life span is to eat well and exercise." You may also copy a direction quotation onto your note cards like this example; include titles, and page number of the quotation.

c. **Reasons to use quotations:**

1. To include a passage that sums up a key point in a condensed, emphatic way.
2. To quote an expert.
3. To use a powerful, dramatic passage.
4. To quote a passage that cannot be expressed in fewer words.
5. To quote a passage that might lose its meaning if summarized.

2. **Summarizing** condenses the work into your own words, but does not distort the original. Read the following note card example of summarizing the quotation.

<p><u>Masc. and Fem. Styles</u> Newsweek article explaining how stereotyped women changed</p> <p>Rather than be labeled with the unflattering stereotypes that prevented their promotions, many women adopted masculine qualities.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>p. 47</p>
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- * You should summarize:
 1. background information
 2. commentaries, explanations and evaluations
 3. arguments or a line of thinking
 4. facts
 5. description, events, episodes and long speeches from literary works
 - * If you quote key words or phrases, use quotation marks within the summary.
3. **Paraphrasing** restates the passage in your own words. It is usually about the same length as the original and will include examples and explanations from the original.
- * Do not use word-for-word translations; that is plagiarism.

<p><u>Masc. and Fem. Styles</u> Newsweek article explaining how stereotyped women changed</p> <p>Because of the risk of stereotyping, which has served as a tool to keep women out of management, it is difficult to characterize a feminine management style. Women have been cited for their emotionality, instability, and lack of team spirit, among other qualities. Many women have defended themselves at work by using the qualities of men.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>p. 47</p>
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- * If you quote key words or phrases, use quotation marks within the paraphrase.
4. **Example of a combination note card of quoting, summarizing, and paraphrasing.**

<p><u>Masc. and fem. Styles</u> Hughey and Gelman's Newsweek article explaining how stereotyped women changed</p> <p>It is difficult to characterize a feminine style of management because stereotypes have traditionally been used to keep women down." Women have been cited as "unstable, indecisive, temperamental and manipulative: and have been accused of not being "good team members." Many women defended themselves at work by adopting the qualities of men.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>p 47</p>
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- * The most important points to remember when taking notes is to include the author(s), page number(s); then when you use the note card in your paper, you will know you must document or give credit for the information.
- * As you research, you will get better at taking notes, so do not become frustrated as you begin. Sometimes the sources do not yield very good notes, either. All of this is part of the research process.

11. **After you have skimmed a source and decided you will use it, start reading for research.**

- a) Look for facts, explanations, expert opinions, evaluations, or examples that illustrate ideas.
- b) Record whatever seems relevant and may answer any of your research questions. Almost all researchers write more note cards than they eventually need. Each time you research, you will get better at the skill. You will learn the topic as you go along, and your note taking will become more relevant.
- c) Read one paragraph at a time. Stop and decide if you've found information for a note to include in your paper.
- d) Then think under which heading this idea or topic should go. If it is the same topic as you have already used, then use the same heading on this note card. If it is a new topic, write a new heading on the note card.
- e) Generally speaking, the shorter the note the better. Put one piece of information on each card. Limiting yourself to one piece per card helps later when you organize your notes.
- f) Do not write on the backs of your cards. If the idea is larger or you are using a large quote, use two cards, labeling them Note 1 of 2 and Note 2 of 2.
- g) Continue reading and taking notes until you are finished with all your articles.

12. **Organizing your notes:**

Each separate topic, heading, or idea—not source—will be a separate body paragraph in your paper. You will next categorize your note cards by ideas, the note headings. If you have put your headings on each note card, you have organized your paper as you took notes.

- a) Read your note card headings and organize all your note cards by heading. Each stack is a different idea or topic; therefore each stack becomes a different paragraph or section of your paper.
- b) At this point you will be separating your cards, so the source log or card number on each card becomes very important because you will need to document your sources--give credit in your paper as well as on your "Works Cited" page to the authors and/or articles.

13. **Writing your paper:**

The following is just one method to combine the note cards with your comments to create your paper. Ask your teacher if you need to change what you do in this step. Science and Social Studies are just two subjects which have different commentary requirements.

- a) Reread your tentative thesis and your research questions. See section 2 - f. What do you need to change, add, or delete after completing the research? Did your research take you to more questions/answers than you had at the beginning? What does your information say? What do you want your audience to understand after they read your paper or what is the purpose of your paper? Work on revising your thesis to include just what you found in your sources' main topics or ideas.
- b) Write your revised thesis on a blank sheet of paper or on the computer.
- c) Which idea do you want to use first, second, third, etc. to make the points you want to make? Jot down each stack's heading as you decide to place them in your draft.
- d) Reread the first stack you will use. What comments do you need to make to explain, define, connect, draw conclusions, and bridge this idea or topic to the next? If you are using a computer to draft, you can begin typing your first draft using both the information from your notes, and your own comments. Remember to give credit or document any words, phrases, thoughts, or ideas that are not yours. This is the step where many students plagiarize. You must include the source information wherever you use it. You have the information either on your note cards or on your source logs or source cards. See the example essay for how to add the in-paper documentation. For the MLA style of research paper, this is called "parenthetical documentation."
- e) Continue step "d)" for each new paragraph.
- f) At this point all the rules and steps for an essay applies here. You will need an introductory paragraph, body paragraphs (steps d and e) that develop your thesis and make your points, and a concluding paragraph.
- g) Just as you do for an essay, once you have your ideas developed and organized, you need to address the following:
 - 1) Voice: Your audience is usually your teacher, not your best friend. Your tone needs to be formal and academic or business-like.
 - 2) Word choice: Choose words that are more formal. Your teacher may want you to purposely use discipline-specific words. For example, if you are researching osmosis, your teacher will expect you to use the words associated with that process.
 - 3) Transitions: Use transitions to connect thoughts and ideas. See the essay section for a list.
 - 4) Conventions: Make sure that your sentences are correct; check spelling, capitalization, subject-verb agreement, noun-pronoun agreement, etc.

14. Rules for documenting quotations:

For any quotation document or cite the author and page number of the source, or, if the name is not available, cite the name of the source and page number.

- a) If the quotation runs four (4) typed lines or less, incorporate the quotation into your paper, use quotation marks, and place your documentation inside the period.

Example:

Medieval Europe was a place both of "raids, pillages, slavery, and extortion" and of "traveling merchants, monetary exchange, towns if not cities, and active markets in grain" (Townsend 10).

- b) If the quotation runs more than four typed lines, skip a line, indent ten spaces, and type the quotation without using quotation marks: place the documentation outside the period.

See sample paper for example. However, most English teachers agree that quotations more than four typed lines are too long for any high school research paper. So do not use quotations longer than four typed lines. Paraphrase or summarize instead.

15. English paper format:

1. Typed, size 12 font, double space. Use a clear, formal font.
2. At the beginning of each paragraph, indent or tab once.
3. Return only once between paragraphs.
4. For your paper's title, do not underline or use quotations.
5. Type your heading and title on the first page. According to MLA format, do not use a cover or title page.
6. For the "Works Cited" page list alphabetically, and use reverse indentation. See sample page.

First Page of a Research Paper



