

Monticello Central School District High School Writing Program

Aligned with the
NYS Learning Standards & Performance
Indicators



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Monticello High School Writing Handbook

(as adapted from Pittsford Sutherland HS)

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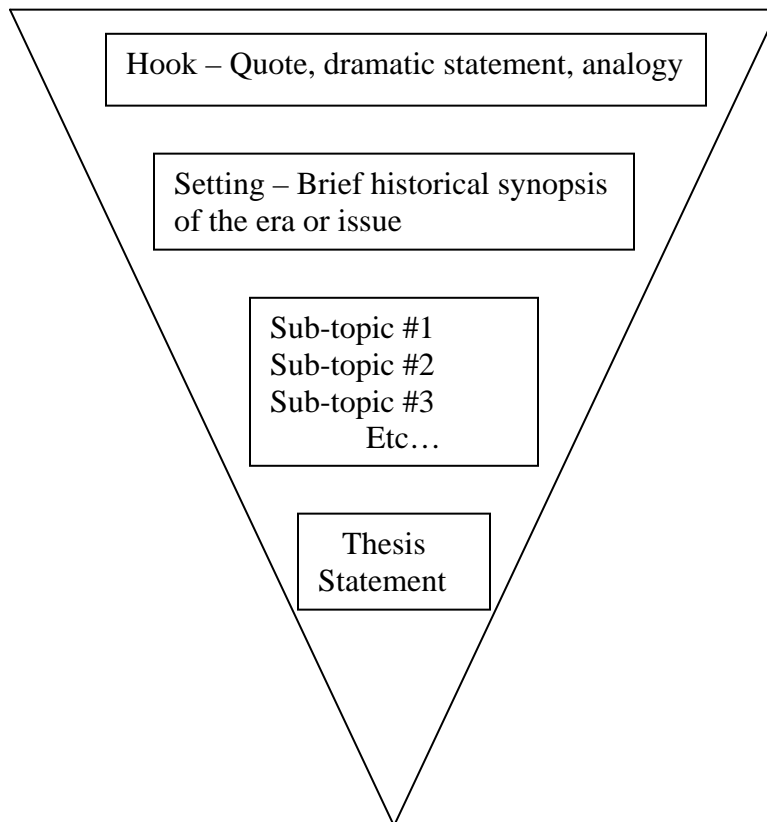
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General Guidelines

- All papers are written in the basic format of an introductory paragraph, several body paragraphs and a conclusion.
- Papers are written in formal language.
 - Slang, abbreviations, text lingo (i.e. lol, idk) and contractions should not be used.
 - All numbers under three digits should be spelled out. i.e.: Ninety-nine.
 - Personal language: such as I, you, our, we etc. should not be used, unless you are specifically asked to give your opinion.
 - Never refer to the reader directly. Avoid sentences like, “I think you will find my paper very interesting because...”
- Do not rely too heavily on spell check to find mistakes.
 - Words like – were, where, we’re – or – their, there, they’re – will pass the spell check but may be used incorrectly.
 - Proofreading a paper several times, or allowing someone else to, is the best way to avoid mistakes.
- Different types of writing require different skills from the writer. While a research paper only requires information, a position paper asks the writer to use information in support of an argument.
 - It is always important to be confident of what is required and address that task throughout an entire essay or paper.

I. Introductory Paragraph

- The basic format for an introductory paragraph is the inverted triangle.
 - The introduction begins with a broad statement that should grab the reader's attention.
 - The second sentence is called the setting, and demonstrates a general knowledge of the topic.
 - The middle of the introduction consists of the sub-topics of the paper which introduce the information within the paper.
 - In a position paper, this is where the arguments being made within the paper are introduced.
 - The final sentence is the thesis statement, which summarizes the paper as a whole.
 - In a position paper, the thesis statement is the main argument being made in the paper

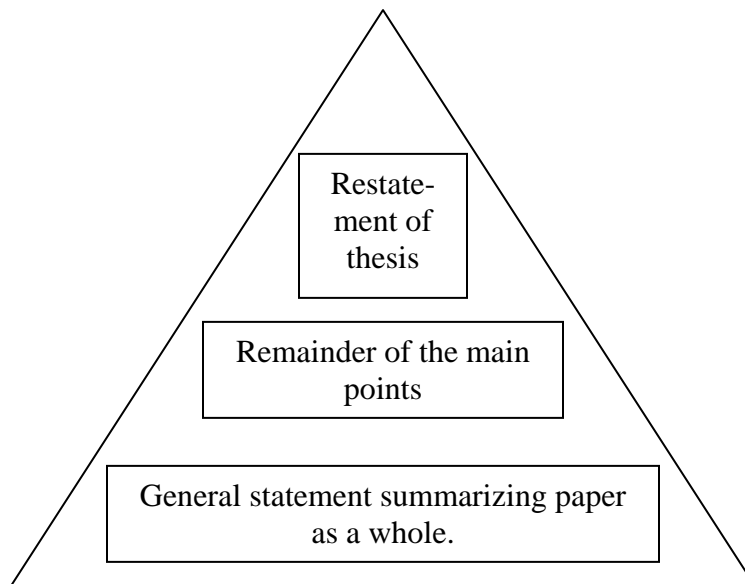


II. Body Paragraphs

- Depending on the type of paper being written; the content of body paragraphs will vary, but the goal is always the same.
- The body of the paper should follow the order of sub-topics or arguments given in the introduction.
 - In this way, each argument or branch is developed into a separate section of the paper.
- The purpose of the body paragraphs is to present all of the information that applies to the paper.
- Body paragraphs contain all of the facts, quotes, ideas and analysis that the rest of the paper is built around.
- Each sub-topic or argument may have more than one paragraph. This depends largely on the length of the assignment.

III. Conclusions

- The conclusion of a paper offers closure to the topic by re-emphasizing the main points without re-stating them.
 - There should be no new information given in a conclusion.
- If an introductory paragraph is written as a reverse triangle, consider the conclusion as being written like an upright triangle.
 - The conclusion starts narrow with a re-statement of the thesis, followed by a reminder of the main points, and ends with a general statement that summarizes the paper as a whole.



MLA Format

please note there are classes that require use of APA format which differs from the information below

I. Format Basics

- Twelve point, Times New Roman or other appropriate font.
 - No **bold**, *italic*, or underline ***anywhere*** other than italicizing the title of a book, movie or periodical.
- Double space the entire paper.
- Indent each paragraph one 'tab'.
- Margins must be one inch on the top, bottom and both sides.
- The page number must appear on each page, except for the first page.
 - The following are instructions on how to insert page numbers into a paper:
 - Select insert on the tool bar
 - Select 'page numbers'
 - Choose the appropriate position and alignment (bottom of the page, center)
 - Uncheck the box, 'show number of first page'
 - Click 'ok'
- The heading for the paper should be two lines on each side of the paper. On the left must be your name and underneath it the class name-period. On the right should be the date the assignment is due and underneath it the teacher's name.
- The title of the paper is centered on the page and should not be bold, underlined, or italicized.
 - The following is an example of how the first page of a paper should look.

Derek Jeter

October 4, 2009

English 11—period 3-4

Mr. Maranzana

The Greatest Team in Sports

Notice that the title is supposed to be one double-space down from the heading and the first line of the introduction is supposed to be one double-space down from the title. Also, the first line of the paragraph is indented.

II. Parenthetical Notation

- Also known as citations, this is what a writer uses in order to avoid plagiarism by showing the source of a piece of information and giving credit to its author.
- A parenthetical notation is inserted at the end of a sentence following the use of specific information that is not the writer's own.
 - Direct quotes, specific facts, statistics, and ideas or analysis are all things that must be given a citation.
- A parenthetical notation, or citation, includes the author's last name followed by the page number the information came from.
- Using other people's work is important in writing any type of paper, but material that requires a citation should be used to support the ideas within the paper instead of becoming the paper itself.
 - It is best to use citations sparingly; if every other sentence in a paper is a citation, the paper will lack originality.
 - When using a citation, be sure to introduce it first and then provide analysis on how that piece of information contributes to the overall paper.
- Example of a parenthetical citation:

Four out of five students say that English is their favorite subject (O'Neil 21).

- Every citation must match a source on the works cited page.

III. Works Cited Page

- The works cited page is a list of all of the sources that have received a citation within the paper.
 - If a source is used for gathering information but does not have a citation within the paper, it does not appear on the works cited page.
- The works cited page is the very last page of the paper and is completely separate from the last page of written text.
- Do not include a heading like the one that appears on the first page of the paper.
 - The proper heading for a works cited page is simply – Works Cited – centered on the top of the page.
 - The title should not be bold, or underlined, or italicized.
- The entries on a works cited page should be in alphabetical order, with spaces between the lines of an entry and between each entry.
- After the first line of an entry, each successive line must be indented one ‘tab’.

IV. Works Cited Formats

Notes:

1. If no author is given, use the title as the first item in the entry.
2. If some of the required information is not given—for example the city or name of the publisher, then skip it.
3. All publishers’ names should be shortened.
4. All months are abbreviated except May, June, and July.

Book – One Author

Author (last name, first). Title. City of publication: Publisher, Date.

Ex. Lauber, Patricia. Living with Dinosaurs. New York: Bradbury, 1991.

-Citation in Text: (Lauber 1)

Book – Two Authors

First author (last name, first) and second author (first name last name). Title. City of publication: Publisher, Date.

Ex. Arvetis, Chris and Carole Palmer. What Is a Dinosaur? Chicago: Children's, 1988.

-Citation in Text: (Arvetis and Palmer 2)

Magazines

Author (last name, first). "Title of Article." Title of Magazine Day (if given) Month Year: page numbers.

Ex. Jaroff, Leon. "A Double Whammy?" Time 9 Jan. 1995: 59.

-Citation in Text: (Jaroff 59)

Newspaper

Author (last name first). "Title of Article." Title of Newspaper Day Month Year: section page.

Ex. Emerson, Joan. "Scientists Engaged in Monster Argument Over Dinosaurs." Democrat & Chronicle 23 Jan. 1988:C4.

-Citation in Text: (Emerson 4)

CD-ROM (Encyclopedias or other single works)

Author (last name, first). "Title of Article." Title of CD-ROM. CD-ROM. City of publication (if given): Publisher, Date.

Ex. Dodson, Peter. "Allosaurus." World Book Multimedia Encyclopedia. CD-ROM. Chicago: World Book, 1998.

-Citation in Text: (Dodson 3)

C-D ROM – Full Text Articles - (MAS, SIRS, NewsFile, etc.)

Author (last name, first). “Title of Article.” Name of Original Source Day (if given)

Month Year: page numbers (if given). Title of CD-ROM. CD-ROM.

Publisher of CD-ROM, Date of CD-ROM.

Ex. Perlman, David. “Meat-Eating Dinosaur Debuts.” San Francisco Chronicle 13

Nov. 1998: A3. NewsBank NewsFile. CD-ROM. Newsbank, Mar. 1999.

-Citation in Text: (Perlman)

Databases – Online Services

Author (last name, first). “Subject or Title of the Document (if given).” Name of

Original Source (if given) Day Month Year: Page numbers (if given). Title of

Database used (if known). Name of Database Service. Library where retrieved.

Date accessed.

Ex. "Deadly Meddling." Economist 03 Nov. 2001: 82-83. Mas Ultra - School Edition.

Ebsco Host. Monticello HS Library. 20 Nov. 2009.

-Citation in Text: (“Deadly Meddling” 83)

E-mail, Listserve, or Letter

Author (last name, first). “Subject or Title of the Document (if given).” Description

of the document that includes the recipient. Day Month Year of document.

Ex. Smith, Eric. “Feedback on Dinosaur Research.” E-mail to the author. 13 Sept. 1999.

-Citation in Text: (Smith 1)

Film

Title. Film. Director (Dir. first name last name, if listed). Distributor, Year.

Ex. Jurassic Park. Film. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Amblin Entertainment, 1993.

-Citation in Text: (“Jurassic Park”)

Any Audio-Visual Materials Except Films

Title. Type of medium. Distributor, Year. Other information. (length, number, etc.)

Ex. Great Dinosaur Hunt. Video. Vestron Video, 1990. 60 min.

-Citation in Text: (“Great Dinosaur”)

General Encyclopedias (For Specialized encyclopedias, see reference book format)

Author (last name, first). “Title of Article.” Name of Encyclopedia. Edition
(copyright date + ed.).

Ex. Dowling, Herndon G. “Dinosaur.” Encyclopedia Americana. 1996 ed.

-Citation in Text: (Dowling 6)

Internet Sources

Author (last name, first). “Title of Text (if within a larger work).” Title of Site,
Database or Project. Date of electronic publication posting. Name of
institution or organization sponsoring Web site. Date when researcher
accessed the source. Electronic address or URL in angle brackets.

Ex. Monastersky, Richard. “Getting Under a Dinosaur’s Skin.” Science News 16 Jan.
1999:38. InfoTracSearchBank. 10 May 1999. <<http://web2.searchbank.com/>>.

-Citation in Text: (Monastersky)

Interview

Person interviewed (last name, first). Type of interview. (telephone or personal) Day
Month Year.

Ex. Cimbalò, John. Personal interview. 11 Dec. 1996.

-Citation in Text: (Cimbalò)

Newsbank Microfiche

Author (last name, first). "Title of Article." Title of Newspaper Day Month Year.
NewsBank: Category (Year): fiche #, grid coordinates.

Ex. Verrengia, Joseph B. "Early Triassic Dinosaur Prints Found." Rocky Mountain
News 6 May 1994. NewsBank: SCI (1994): fiche 1, grid A1.

-Citation in Text: (Verrengia)

Pamphlet

Treat as you would a book.

Reference Book or Specialized Encyclopedia

Author (last name, first). "Title of Article." Name of Book. Editor (Ed. first name
last name). Vol. number (if multi-volume work). City of publication:
Publisher, Date.

Ex. Ostron, John H. "Dinosaur." McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science. Ed. Sybil P.
Parker. Vol. 5. New York: McGraw, 1987.

-Citation in Text: (Ostron)

Television

Title of Program. Network. Local station, City. Day Month Year.

Ex. Bird Dinosaurs. PBS. WXXI, Rochester. 24 Oct. 1994.

-Citation in Text: ("Bird Dinosaurs")

Vertical File

Use pamphlet, magazine or newspaper format depending on what you find in the vertical file.

V. In Text/Parentetical Citation Formats

Basic Format:

The basic format for MLA in-text citation is as follows:

(Author's last name Page number)

– There is nothing between the author's name and the page number and they are separated by one space.

Ex. One author claims that, “no one is concerned with this issue” (Jones 45).

- If the author's last name appears in the citation, then only a page number is required.

Ex. “Howard Jones argues that ‘no one is concerned with this issue’” (45).

Multiple Authors

Multiple authors are cited in a similar way, although both names are included, and joined by the word ‘and’.

Ex. (Cortez and Jones 56).

- For more than three authors, use the first author's last name, followed by the abbreviation ‘et al.’

Ex. (Cortez et al. 378)

Different authors with the same last name

When citing authors with the same last name, include enough information so as to be able to differentiate between the authors.

Ex. (H. Jones 48); (R. Jones 36)

More than one work by the same author

When citing two or more works by the same author, use one or more words from the title to differentiate between the two works.

Ex. (Jones, *Man* 475); (Jones, “Destruction” 34)

-When using the title, follow the same format that is used on the works cited page; in this case, italics for ‘man’ and quotations for ‘destruction’.

No Author Available

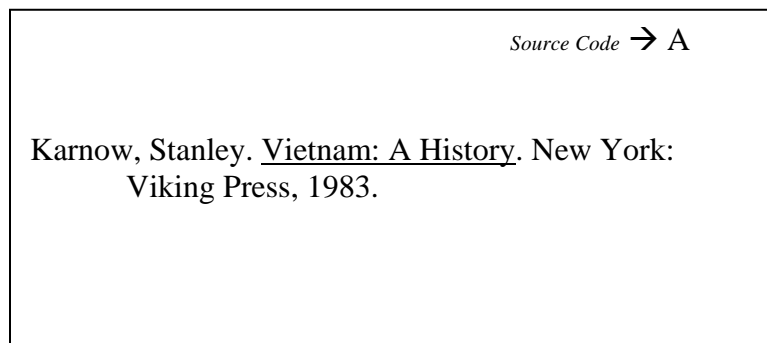
If no author is available, use a short form of the title; the shortest form that will accurately indicate the proper work.

Ex. (“Thirty Reasons” 26) – Quotations around a short work, such as an article.

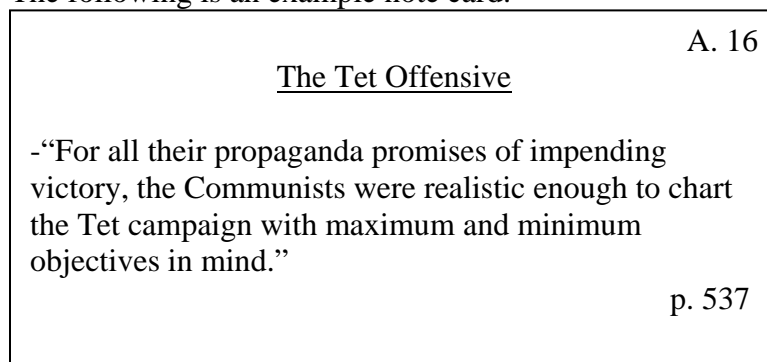
Ex. (*Belief* 567) – Use italics or underline a long work such, as a book.

VI. Note Card Format

- Complete a full works cited entry on a card prior to taking notes from any source.
 - The following is an example:



- The source code is used as an organizational tool to indicate which source each card came from.
- All notes on one card should be from the same source, page and topic.
- It is helpful to limit the notes per card to one quote or idea.
- Taking a note as quotes allows the writer to use the information in the paper as a quote or to paraphrase it without having to look it up again.
 - The following is an example note card:



- The card number appears next to the source code – in this case the 16th card from that source – and it is very important to include the page number where the information came from.

VII. Outline Format

- The heading for an outline is the same as the heading for a paper.
 - It must also have a header with the last name and page number.
 - The outline must have a title that will follow the same guidelines as on a paper.
 - The format is as follows:

Student's Name

Date

Class—period

Teacher's Name

Title

I. Thesis

A. Sub-topic #1

B. Sub-topic #2

C. Sub-topic #3

D. Sub-Topic #4

II. Sub-topic #1

A. Evidence 1a

1. Detail

a. More detail

i. Even more detail

B. Evidence 1b

1. Detail

2. Detail

3. Detail

C. Evidence 1c

1. Detail

2. Detail

3. Detail

III. Subtopic #2

The pattern repeats for each sub-topic.

VI. Conclusion – Restatement of the thesis

A. Interpretation of information

B. Overall evaluation or importance of the information presented

C. Trends in the future?

D. Historical impact?

- The amount of detail gone into in each subtopic will vary depending upon the amount of research completed, the length of the paper and other variables.
- This example is to be taken simply as a skeleton.

Research Papers

I. General

- The purpose of research papers is to present information on a certain topic.
 - The writer is not attempting to make an argument or prove anything in particular; simply give information.
 - Research papers deal with facts, so feelings and opinions should not be included.

II. Introductory Paragraph

- The basic format applies to research papers.

- The sub-topics will be the branches of the paper.
- The thesis statement will be summary of what the entire paper is about.

III. Body Paragraphs

- The sole purpose of the body paragraphs is to present the information found during research.
- The sentences should follow an organizational pattern that includes three things:
 - Claim – big idea that will be supported with specific evidence.
 - Evidence – document information and outside information; these are facts, specific pieces of information which will then be interpreted.
 - Interpretation – explanation or analysis of evidence and its relationship to the larger claim
 - A typical sentence order would be: Claim – Evidence (with citations) – Interpretation.

Position Papers

I. General

- The purpose of a position paper is to argue a certain point or position.
 - Every part of the paper should be working towards supporting the position that the author has taken.

II. Introductory Paragraph

- The basic format applies to position papers.
 - The sub-topics within the introduction are the main arguments within the paper.
 - The thesis statement will be a summary of the primary argument being made in the paper.

III. Body Paragraphs

- The purpose of the body paragraphs is to provide the information that will support the argument being made in the paper.

- It is very important to stay focused on the argument throughout the body paragraphs.
- The sentences follow an organizational pattern similar to that of resource papers; using a claim, evidence and interpretation.
 - It is especially important in a position paper to fully develop the interpretation of evidence and explain how that piece of evidence supports the overall argument being made.