

MAKING THE GRADE:

A Guide to

ESSAY WRITING

Like a Pro



HOMEWORK
HELP GLOBAL 

Making The Grade: A Guide to Essay Writing Like a Pro

By Homework Help Global

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Introduction

Essays are going to be assigned to you during your time at school, whether you like it or not. You likely wrote one to get into your university or college, and you've probably already written a ton of them in high school. However, university and college level essays are a step up from your high school papers. Not only are they longer, but they're often more complex and your professors are expecting a lot more from you than your high school teachers ever did. That can be a really scary thing. Especially given the fact that most university professors don't provide you with an outline or clear instructions on how to write essays.

In this essay writing guide, we'll give you the tools you need to turn in a paper that will not only impress your professors, but yourself as well. Even if you don't consider yourself a writer, learning the right elements of an essay and how to properly write one can help you get better grades.

We're going to walk you through every step you need to take while you write your paper, from coming up with a great idea to knowing what to look for in the editing process. By the time you finish this book, you're going to feel so prepared and ready to take on any challenges.

Before You Get Started

There are a few things you need to remember before you start writing your essay. It's important to take the time to treat every single paper like it's worth 100% of your grade.

Firstly, don't start everything the night before your paper is due. You hear this all the time, but it's absolutely true. Leaving everything until the last minute leads to rushing and leaving out critical information. You may run into situations such as skimming through sources to get random snippets of information instead of the most vital components, that could turn your argument around. Additionally, your professors can tell which students have done this, and while you may not end up with a failing grade, you likely won't end up with the grade you truly could have received if you put the time and effort into it.

Secondly, stay disciplined and on track. Charles Dickens once said, "Procrastination is the thief of time." When it comes to writing your essay, time is definitely of the essence.

Give yourself the right amount of time to complete your essay, and get yourself in the zone. Good writing takes focus and practice. You know about your essays and assignments for the semester as soon as you get your syllabus during the first week of classes. While it may not have the detailed instructions, this will at least let you know when your paper is due, and gives you time to prepare for it step by step. Start thinking about topics, arguments, and sources as soon as possible and carve out a little bit of time

each day to work on it. The more you go back and revisit your writing, the more you can see areas for improvement.

Lastly, don't be too hard on yourself. If you don't get the grade you thought you deserved, talk to your professor. Read the comments that they leave when they mark your papers, and learn from your mistakes. Find out where you can improve for your next paper. Life is all about learning and growing, and the best way to do this is to try. As George R.R. Martin wrote in his award-winning book *A Game of Thrones*, "A bruise is a lesson... and each lesson makes us better."

A Little About Homework Help Global

Just before we dive into the ultimate guide to writing essays, we'd like to take a moment to share a little bit about us, and why we're an excellent source of information during your academic journey.

Homework Help Global is a worldwide custom essay writing company dedicated to helping students achieve their academic goals. We provide a variety of writing services including paper editing and proofreading, resume and cover letter building, online English tutoring services, powerpoint presentations, and much more.

We work with a network of writers across the globe who have studied at accredited institutions in highly respected locations. From Bachelor degrees to PhDs, our team of top writers has produced highly advanced, quality academic content in a variety of different industries and fields for many years. Together, we are experts in educational services.

Our company has been operating for eight years now, bringing together a network of clients and writers to perfectly match individual needs. We have helped a variety of clients over the years, across the continent and the world, with our main headquarters located in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. It's our goal to become a leading national and global company in essay writing, homework help, and other student-driven services.

The Homework Help Show is our podcast and YouTube channel where we provide free advice, tips, and other helpful content to help students in many aspects of their lives, from finding the motivation to study to helping create thesis statements. On these channels, our top writers talk to student influencers, give expert advice, and do what we can to help students succeed. Check us out on Instagram, YouTube, Anchor.fm, and more.

Let's Get Started!

Now that you know who we are, and why we're a great source of information for your academic experience, let's get started. In the next chapter, we'll begin by showing you exactly where to start when you sit down to write your essay. Take a deep breath and flip that page.



Chapter 1: Where to Start

We've all been there. You've got your essay instructions in front of you, a blank document is open on your computer, and you've got a fresh cup of coffee by your side. But you're not really sure where to go from here, and that's where the stress kicks in.

In this chapter, we're going to go over what you need to know and do before you start writing your essay. It all begins with choosing the right topic.

Choosing Your Topic

When it comes to writing an essay, no matter what type of essay you're writing, you need to start with a good topic. Sometimes this will be given to you by your professor in the essay instructions, and other times you'll have to come up with something on your own.

If you are fortunate enough to come up with your own topic, it should be something you're passionate about, or at least a topic that interests you. Do you really want to spend the next few weeks reading articles about a topic you could care less about? No, of course not. So, pick something you want to learn more about and you'll actually be interested in the research component.

When you're stuck choosing a topic, go back through your readings and class notes and look for a topic that interests you that was covered during a lecture or in your textbook. If you're still in doubt, don't be afraid to reach out and ask your professor or TA for advice or suggestions. Your professor has likely taught this class many times before, and has seen a variety of topics and ideas come through in students' essays. They're more likely to be enthusiastic about fresh new ideas instead of the same topics over and over again from past years, and will be able to give you some good places to start.

The right essay topic can't be too broad. For example, if you're asked to write a paper about a social issue, you can't just pick climate change or gun control and write a paper about that. It's impossible to make a strong thesis statement for a topic that's overly general and broad, and therefore it's hard to formulate a good argument. Here's another example: you can't possibly narrow down a paper on World War II to eight pages, but you can if you focus on a topic such as how aerial warfare changed the way that the war was fought.

You need to get down to the basis of the topic and formulate a research question from there. If your topic is too broad, you'll have a hard time writing and arguing about it. Instead, with a broad topic, your paper will just be filled with generic information that doesn't actually make a point about anything except for giving your reader regurgitated information from various sources.

How to Narrow Down a Broad Topic

Figuring out how to narrow down your broad topic can be difficult. However, this is an important step to take when you're getting your paper ready for writing. You can't possibly do all of your research effectively until you know the specific topic you're working with.

Do a little bit of initial research about your topic. It doesn't have to be the same collection of research or sources you're going to use in the paper itself, but you should get an idea of what experts, scholars, and researchers have written about your topic. Even if you just do a bit of searching on Google or Google Scholar, you'll start to get an idea of the different arguments that are out there to give you an idea of what direction you want to go with your paper.

It doesn't hurt to check out some blogs, too. Of course, you're not going to be using someone's blog as a scholarly source in your paper, but it's a good idea to check out the opinions other people have formed about the topic. What arguments are those people making that you could research further?

Here are some questions you should ask yourself when you're trying to break down a topic to come up with a narrow thesis statement:

- **Why should your audience care about this topic? Why do YOU care about this topic?** If you don't care about your topic, why should anyone else care about it? You need to be able to prove there's value in talking about this subject. If you don't see that value, you may want to consider finding a new topic altogether.
- **What is your opinion on this topic, and how would you argue this in a conversation with a friend?** If you can formulate an opinion about the topic, it'll be easier to find research that lines up with your arguments.
- **What comes to mind when you think about your topic?** Even the smallest keywords could help you make meaningful connections or help you start to think about why you would want to talk about this in the first place.
- **What smaller questions could you ask about this topic?** These could form potential research questions that translate to supporting arguments.
- **What are others saying about this topic?** As stated above, you can do some initial Google research to see if there are articles published on this topic and figure out what conclusions others have made. Don't copy word for word what those people have said, but see if you can find some good viewpoints that could be a good starting point.
- **What specific words can I add that would make this more focused?** For example, if you can add words such as "the evolution of" or "the effects of," you can break down your topic more effectively.
- **What kind of questions should my audience have?** You want to get your audience thinking and leave them with something to take away.

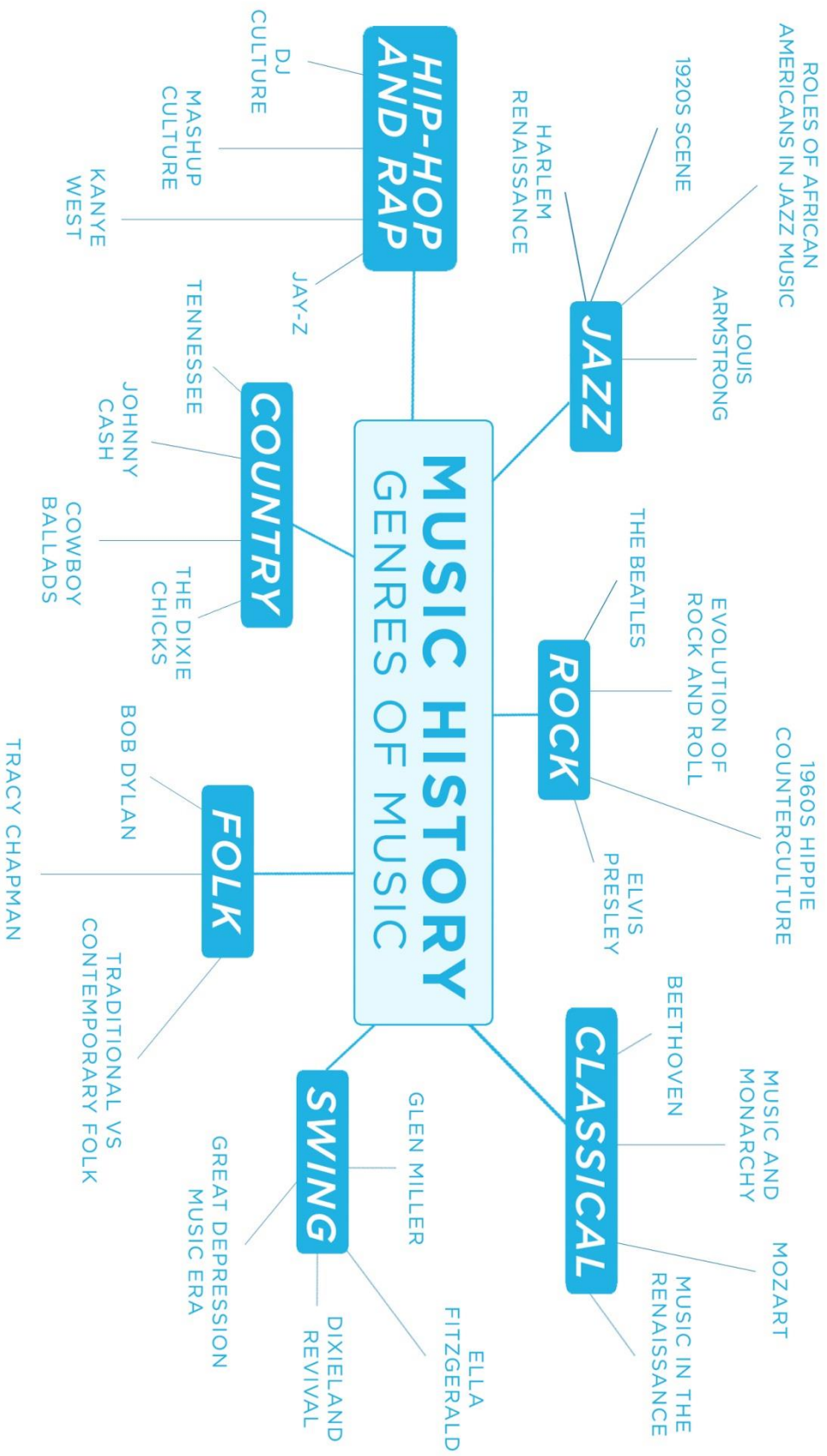
Brainstorming

There are plenty of ways you can start brainstorming about your topic in order to get an idea of what type of arguments you want to include in your essay. Start with your central topic, even if it's really broad. Then branch out and see how many topics and words you can come up with on your own before you do any research. After that, do a quick Google search (even Wikipedia will do at this stage), and see what other terms and ideas you can find.

Once everything is out on paper in your mind map, it'll be easier to start making connections between the ideas that came to your mind and the research you've found. Think about those connections, why those specific keywords came to your mind, and what questions you could ask about them that could formulate some type of argument.

Let's say you're writing a paper about music history. Start by breaking down the genres of music and everything that comes to mind about each of those genres, even if they're just abstract thoughts or basic keywords connected to the theme. Then, figure out how you can work those keywords into something that forms an argument or research topic.

Here's what a shortened mindmap of music history could possibly look like:



Music History

Genres of Music

Jazz Rock Classical Swing Folk Country Hip-Hop and Rap

Jazz music: 1920s scene, Louis Armstrong, stylistic origins from ragtime, Harlem Renaissance, New Orleans, roles of African Americans in jazz music, brass instruments, trumpets

Rock music: heavy metal, classic rock, The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, Metallica, 1960s hippie counterculture, guitars, evolution of rock and roll, Elvis Presley, Beatlemania, British invasion

Classical music: Mozart, Beethoven, musicians in the king's court, music and monarchy, writing music without sound recording technology, music in the Renaissance, Medieval instruments

Swing music: Post World War II music scene, Great Depression music era, big band, Duke Ellington, Glen Miller, jazz evolution into swing, Dixieland revival, Ella Fitzgerald, vocalists

Folk music: Bob Dylan, 20th century folk revival, traditional vs contemporary folk, class-based divisions, traditions, modern folk, oral music history, Tracy Chapman, Appalachians

Country music: Johnny Cash, pop country, Tennessee, blue-collar America, honky tonk, Patsy Cline, John Denver, outlaw country, the Dixie Chicks, cowboy ballads, country rap

Hip-Hop and rap music: R&B origins, Jay-Z, Kanye West, mashup culture, DJ culture, stereotypes, gangster rap, racial divisions, the Bronx, MC culture, beatboxing

From here, you can take a look at how you formed the beginning of a narrowed down topic and potential argument. For example, you could choose jazz music in the 1920s and focus on how Louis Armstrong changed the music style to impact future generations. Or, you could choose to focus on how jazz music was connected with race or cultural divisions. For any of these genres, you could think about how early versions have transcended into influencing modern generations, such as how The Beatles transformed rock music and influenced other important bands.



Chapter 2: Types of Essays

In this chapter, we're going to go over some of the different types of essays you may end up writing, either for this paper or for any of your classes throughout your academic career. It's important to understand the different types of essays because you need to understand how to structure them and what type of information to look for.

You've got your topic ready to go, but you need to know where to go next. Sometimes the specific type of paper will be given to you by your professor, and other times you'll have a bit more freedom to choose the format that works for you. Regardless of how you get to this point, it's important to make sure you're going in the right direction from here. You can't make a good outline if you're not sure how to structure it.

There are 6 main types of papers that fall under the essay umbrella that we're going to discuss here.

Argumentative Essays

An argumentative essay is exactly how it sounds. In this essay, you're arguing a specific viewpoint on your topic, and trying to convince the reader that they should agree with you. This paper will need to touch on both sides of an argument with enough evidence to show why your side is the right side.

There are two main components to an argumentative essay: solid evidence for your perspective and a rebuttal to opposing viewpoints. Pretend you're having a written debate with someone. You'll have to present the argument in a way that doesn't leave room for further questions or confusion. What do you need to do in order to prove them wrong? Show them the evidence and make sure that it's credible, believable, and strong.

Even though you're arguing your perspective on something, you still need to avoid using first-person pronouns. Instead of saying "I believe that..." your thesis statement should say "This paper will argue that..." or "This paper will provide conclusive evidence to prove that..." This is a much more formal and professional approach.

Here are some very basic examples of argumentative essay topics:

- Online courses in university are helpful and beneficial for post-secondary learning
- Voting should be mandatory for all citizens of legal age
- Animal testing should be completely banned from all industries
- The legal drinking age should be lowered
- Climate change is a growing problem caused by human activity
- The music industry is not fair to recording artists and bands

- Health care should be free for everyone
- The laws need to be changed to include more policing for cyberbullying
- Batman is not a real superhero
- Abraham Lincoln was the best American president

Expository Essays

An expository essay is very similar to an argumentative essay, but your job here is to explain something to your reader in a clear and concise way. Instead of arguing one perspective or side of an argument, you are adopting a more neutral and objective tone to present the facts and evidence. Assume that you're writing for an audience that doesn't really know that much about your topic and needs an explanation. Think of it as if you're presenting the solution to a problem that the audience doesn't really realize they have. Here's another way to think about expository essays: your friend has asked you a question about something and you need to provide them with a helpful answer that gives them everything they need to know.

Be sure to be descriptive in your expository essay and make sure you present enough information so the audience can form their own opinion. Expository essays take a lot of research, and you need to make sure that all of your information is coming from credible academic, primary, or scholarly sources.

Here are some examples of very basic expository essay topics:

- What qualities make a real leader?
- What are the negative effects of gender-based stereotypes in the media?
- Why is peer pressure a bad thing in high school?
- How do people with anxiety learn to cope in society?
- Why is it important for politicians to be transparent in their platforms and campaigns?
- How does a democracy work?
- What steps can civilians take to reduce their individual carbon footprint?

Compare and Contrast Essays

In simple terms, a compare and contrast essay points out the similarities and differences between two topics. You could compare and contrast two different people, books, journal articles, historical perspectives, or even types of governments. The options are seemingly endless. For example, you could compare and contrast how two of Shakespeare's tragic heroes embody a specific theme, such as Macbeth and Hamlet and their descent into madness.

Sometimes you'll have to use more than two topics, but it's most common to focus on two things. The more topics you have to compare and contrast, the less detail you can include about each specific one. If

you have to eliminate details, this could weaken your argument. If you're choosing how many topics to include, be conscious about your word count or page count and the requirements in the provided rubric.

When brainstorming for a compare and contrast essay, it's helpful to make a Venn diagram when you get started. This will give you a clear idea of where your topics overlap so you can find the similarities right away, and then expand your research further.

Here are some examples of compare and contrast essay topics you could test out if you're stuck coming up with something:

- The film and book versions of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*
- Leadership styles of different presidents
- Comparing themes in two different Shakespeare plays
- Literary devices used in Edgar Allan Poe's short stories
- How women are presented in historical fiction and modern fiction
- Marvel characters versus DC characters
- The death penalty versus restorative justice
- Democracy versus socialism

Research Papers

A research paper is similar to an expository essay because you're taking a neutral or objective approach to a specific topic. It could be about anything, from a specific event in history to a person, place, literary work, or object. You are going to be taking an in-depth look at that specific topic and presenting facts about it to give your audience an explanation.

As the title suggests, a research paper relies on a lot of research. You need to find a variety of credible sources with reliable information you can use in your explanation. Primary sources can be very helpful for research papers, especially if you're focusing on a historic topic. Ultimately, you want to show your audience why it's important that they know about this topic and why it's significant for their learning. If it's a historical event, what impact did this event have on history and why are we still talking about it now? Likewise, if you're talking about a person, why is it relevant to know who this person was or is?

If you're assigned a big research paper in class or as your thesis or dissertation, you may also be required to complete a research proposal and possibly an annotated bibliography beforehand. This is a great step to take even if you aren't required to do so because it gives you a clear idea of the topic you're going to use and how you will formulate a thesis statement. Narrowing down a thesis statement for a research paper can be pretty tough, but we'll talk more about that in the coming chapters. Skip ahead to chapter four if you're ready for that step.

Since you could write a research essay on a wide variety of topics, there are plenty of things to choose from. Here are a few examples to get you started:

- Aerial warfare in World War II
- The Women's Rights Movement
- Leonardo DaVinci, the Renaissance Man
- Climate Change and how it works
- The evolution of modern hip-hop music
- The invention of modern democracy
- Burial rituals in Ancient Egypt
- Medical advancements in the field of genetics
- Advertising in the 19th century
- The Civil Rights Movement
- Cultural food practices

Analytical Essays/Literary Analysis Essays

In an analytical essay, you are making an argument or a claim about your topic and then supporting those claims with evidence. While it sounds like an argumentative essay, it's a little bit different because you're still presenting it neutrally instead of persuading the reader to take a side.

Usually, an analytical essay is written about another text, such as a movie, book, journal article, television show, piece of artwork, or poem, but it could also apply to an idea or concept. The point is to dig beyond the surface of what you're reading or seeing to figure out what it all really means. When the analytical essay is done based on another piece of writing, it's usually referred to as a literary analysis.

When writing a literary analysis, you need to remember that this is not a summary. You need to do more than just reiterate what the author has written and make deeper connections to the source material. Find a theme to focus on and analyze how the author has presented that theme throughout the work. For example, you could write a literary analysis focusing on the theme of nature versus nurture in Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*.

Here are some more examples of topics you could use for an analytical essay:

- The ticking sound in Edgar Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart*
- Racial divisions in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- Negative stereotypes in classic Disney movies
- Family relationships in Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*
- The impact of divorce on young children and the family structure
- Double standards in media imagery
- Graffiti as more than just street vandalism
- Crime in Quentin Tarantino's 1994 film *Pulp Fiction*

- Romeo's impulsive nature in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*
- Women's roles in Victorian literature

Cause and Effect Essays

Also known as reason and result essays, a cause and effect essay explains the reasons why something happens, and the outcomes that occur when it happens. Naturally, you need to be writing about logical topics that are actually directly related with the evidence to back up your ideas. You can't just write about theoretical ideas that don't have any real proof.

There are generally two ways to approach a cause and effect essay: the focus-on-effects method, where you provide a more in-depth analysis of the effects or outcomes of the topic, or the focus-on-causes method, where the analysis focuses on the causes. Whichever method you choose, you still need to establish a clear relationship between the two. The research you find will explain or provide evidence as to why those effects occur and how you came to your conclusions. For example, if you are claiming that global warming is threatening the polar bear population in the Arctic, you need to provide concrete proof that global warming exists and that the polar bear population is decreasing. Don't just assume that your reader knows these things already.

Here are some basic examples of cause and effect essay topics:

- Smoking cigarettes leads to lung cancer
- The causes and effects of overpopulation
- Implementing healthy school policies will help reduce childhood obesity
- The opioid crisis leads to larger social consequences
- Positive impacts from introducing computer-based learning methods in the classroom
- Teaching young children digital literacy skills can increase their personal safety
- Negative body image from media misconceptions can lead to eating disorders in young women

A GUIDE TO THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ESSAYS



ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAYS

- Argue your perspective or viewpoint on your topic to get the reader to agree with you
- Provide points from both sides of the argument with conclusive evidence to show why one side is right
- Use strong and specific evidence to back up all claims

EXPOSITORY ESSAYS



- Explain a topic, idea, concept or subject to your audience in a clear and concise way
- Adapt a neutral, objective tone and present the facts about the subject so the reader can formulate their own opinion
- Rely heavily on credible research and scholarly sources



COMPARE AND CONTRAST ESSAYS

- Takes two topics and outlines the similarities and differences between them
- Try to focus on no more than two topics so you can strengthen your arguments with more supporting details with respect to the word count
- When brainstorming, start with a venn diagram to help show you where your two topics overlap



RESEARCH PAPERS

- Offer a neutral, objective explanation about a person, place, event, object, or piece of literature
- Rely heavily on credible research that provides a well-rounded investigation of facts, data, and primary sources if applicable
- Focus on why your subject matters and the significance of this topic

ANALYTICAL ESSAYS AND LITERARY ANALYSIS



- Make an argument or claim about a deeper theme within a topic and present evidence to support that claim
- Usually analyzes a text such as a book, journal article, film, poem, or artwork
- Dig deeper into the meaning behind the work and find a recurring theme to expand on



CAUSE AND EFFECT ESSAYS

- Explains how one thing leads to another thing (the reason and the result)
- Focus-on-Effects Method and Focus-on-Causes Method
- Use research and evidence to establish a clear connection or direct relationship between the two things



Chapter 3: The Essay Outline

Now that you have everything you need to get started, it's time to do the work. In this chapter, we're going to go over the first step of the writing process: your essay outline.

Every essay, no matter what kind you're writing, should start with a good outline. Sometimes a professor might ask you to turn in an outline as an extra part of your assignment, and other times they might just want to see your final paper. Even when this isn't required, you should always be in the habit of making one anyway. Most students tend to skip this process, especially the ones who tend to start their essays the day before they're due and want to finish the paper as fast as they possibly can. If this sounds like something you usually do, and you're wondering why your essays always get average grades, this could be why.

We can tell you from our own experience that once you get in the habit of writing your papers with structured outlines, you'll never want to avoid using one again.

Why an Outline is Important

An essay outline is a big help when it comes time to sit down and actually write your paper. Your outline tells you exactly what you need to write about, how you're going to structure your paper, and what information you'll need to find.

When you've narrowed down your topic and determined what your thesis statement is going to be (more about thesis statements in the next chapter), you'll be able to start building your arguments. In the outline, you can lay out the points you're going to make so you have an idea about how you're going to back it all up. Then, you can place everything in order and figure out exactly where your content will go.

Academic sources, such as scholarly journal articles, tend to be very specific. That can make things difficult when you're doing the research and pulling evidence for your essay. With an outline, you can narrow down your search when you're looking in databases or libraries so you get more accurate or relevant results faster. This is key to keeping you on track while you're writing, especially if you tend to find yourself getting sidetracked or lost in all of the information out there.

An outline also helps you see everything in one place without scrolling through all of your paragraphs. This gives you a good idea of how well your essay flows together and whether it transitions nicely, which in turn makes it easy to put it all together. Once the essay outline is done, all you have to do is fill in the gaps.

How to Structure an Outline

The structure of your essay will largely depend on what type of essay you're writing, but the majority of essays will follow the same 5-point format: introduction, body paragraph for each argument, and conclusion. Sometimes we call this the hamburger format, because on a burger, your toppings, meat, and cheese are in the middle (your body paragraphs that contain the bulk of your argument), held together in place by the top and bottom buns (your introduction and conclusion). You've probably heard that term in elementary school and high school. A university or college essay takes the same basis, but it's a little more complex than that because, of course, you're older and smarter now.

So, when you put it all together, a basic essay outline will look like this:

1. Introduction Paragraph
 - a. A catchy first sentence with a hook that captures your reader's attention
 - b. Background information and/or an introduction into your topic
 - c. Your thesis statement
2. Body Paragraph 1: First Argument or Point
 - a. A topic sentence that introduces the point you're going to make
 - b. Evidence to support your point
 - c. A transition sentence that leads into your next paragraph/argument
3. Body Paragraph 2: Second Argument or Point
 - a. A topic sentence that introduces the point you're going to make
 - b. Evidence to support your point
 - c. A transition sentence that leads into your next paragraph/argument
4. Body Paragraph 3: Third Argument or Point
 - a. A topic sentence that introduces the point you're going to make
 - b. Evidence to support your point
 - c. A transition sentence that leads into your conclusion
5. Conclusion Paragraph
 - a. Your thesis statement, reworded from your introduction
 - b. A summary of the arguments or points that you presented, further questions or thoughts, and/or a connection to a broader theme
 - c. A final line that will resonate with the reader

Naturally, the longer your essay is, the more paragraphs you'll need. If you're writing a 10-page essay, you're going to need more than five paragraphs. In that case, you can break up your arguments further into separate paragraphs, but make sure each paragraph contains a theme or detail. For example, if you're using different types of evidence to back up a point, you can showcase each piece of evidence in its own paragraph.

If you're writing a long research paper or expository essay, you will benefit from including a paragraph of background information before you get into your body paragraphs. Include some general statistics, summary of the time period, information about a theorist, or anything else that the reader might need to know. Likewise, for a literary analysis, you could include a paragraph with a plot summary to give your reader some background information. However, when you take this approach, remember that your information needs to be relevant to your topic and thesis statement. Don't just ramble on to fill up space. Professors notice this and will factor it into your mark.

Outlines For Different Types of Essays

A basic essay will follow the 5-point "hamburger" outline listed above, but some types of essays will require their own formatting. This happens because specific types of essays often require that you include sections for additional types of content. We're going to go over some specific types of essay outlines with you to give you a better idea of what you'll need. Expository essays, research papers, and analytical essays will generally follow the basic outline format, while argumentative essays, compare/contrast essays, and cause/effect essays will need some tweaking.

Argumentative Essay Outline

In an argumentative essay, you need to include a section for opposing viewpoints and counter arguments. This isn't always required, but it is an important way to strengthen your argument and show that you've acknowledged or considered other viewpoints before taking your own position. The number of paragraphs you'll need depends on the number of arguments and counter arguments you're presenting. If you are writing a shorter paper, you can put one or two counter arguments in the same paragraph, but for longer papers you can include more of them in their own paragraphs.

Here is a typical structure for a basic essay:

1. Introduction Paragraph
 - a. A catchy hook for your opening line
 - b. Background information or context to introduce your topic
 - c. The thesis statement
2. Body Paragraph 1: Argument 1
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Evidence
 - c. Transition to next point
3. Body Paragraph 2: Argument 2
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Evidence
 - c. Transition to next point

4. Body Paragraph 3: Argument 3
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Evidence
 - c. Transition to next point
5. Body Paragraph 4: Counter Arguments
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Counter argument 1
 - c. Rebuttal to counter argument 1
 - d. Counter argument 2
 - e. Rebuttal to counter argument 2
 - f. Transition to conclusion
6. Conclusion Paragraph
 - a. Restate thesis statement
 - b. Summarize arguments and counter arguments
 - c. Ending line

This particular structure is the most common way to organize your argumentative essay, but if you'd like, you can use a different method. You may choose to alternate arguments and counter argument paragraphs if there are many, or you could include a counter argument in each body paragraph that relates to your own argument. Using the latter structure, in your body paragraphs you would then present your argument, point out the evidence, state a counter argument someone might have to your point, and then refute that argument further.

Compare and Contrast Essay Outline

When writing a compare and contrast essay, you could choose from a few different options to structure your paper. You could choose to present all of the similarities together at once, and then list the differences, you could go point by point, or you could go subject by subject. No matter which method you choose, you always need to make sure you tie the subjects together and focus on the examination of your chosen theme or topic. If necessary, add an additional body paragraph with a brief plot summary of both subjects before you get into your points if you don't already do this in your introduction paragraph.

Here is a typical structure if you decide to do the similarities first, and then differences:

1. Introduction Paragraph
2. Body Paragraph 1: Comparisons
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Argument from subject 1
 - c. Similar argument from subject 2
 - d. Continue this pattern for additional similar arguments between subjects
 - e. Transition sentence to next paragraph

3. Body Paragraph 2: Contrasts
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Argument from subject 1
 - c. Contrasting argument from subject 2
 - d. Continue this pattern for all additional different arguments between subjects
 - e. Transition sentence to next paragraph
4. Body Paragraph 3: Further Analysis
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Analysis of comparisons
 - c. Analysis of contrasts
 - d. Transition sentence to conclusion
5. Conclusion Paragraph
 - a. Restate thesis statement
 - b. Summarize arguments
 - c. End on a high note

Here is an example of a compare and contrast essay that goes point by point:

1. Introduction Paragraph
 - a. Catchy opening hook
 - b. Background information or introduction of topic
 - c. Thesis statement
2. Body Paragraph 1: Point or Argument 1
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Position of subject 1
 - c. Position of subject 2
 - d. Analysis
 - e. Transition sentence to next paragraph
3. Body Paragraph 2: Point or Argument 2
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Position of subject 1
 - c. Position of subject 2
 - d. Analysis
 - e. Transition sentence to next paragraph
4. Body Paragraph 3: Point or Argument 3
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Position of subject 1
 - c. Position of subject 2
 - d. Analysis
 - e. Transition sentence to next paragraph
5. Conclusion Paragraph
 - a. Restate thesis statement

- b. Summarize arguments
- c. End with a resonating line

Lastly, here is an example of the subject by subject structure:

1. Introduction Paragraph
 - a. Catchy opening hook
 - b. Background information or introduction of topic
 - c. Thesis statement
2. Body Paragraph 1: Subject 1
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Arguments and points in subject 1
 - c. Transition sentence to next paragraph
3. Body Paragraph 2: Subject 2
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Arguments and points in subject 2
 - c. Transition sentence to next paragraph
4. Body Paragraph 3: Analysis
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Connect arguments from subject 1 to arguments from subject 2
 - c. Transition sentence to conclusion
5. Conclusion Paragraph
 - a. Restate thesis statement
 - b. Summarize arguments and subjects
 - c. End with a nice, relevant line

Cause and Effect Essay Outline

Cause and effect essays have a variety of potential structures based on the direction you choose to take. As we said in the previous chapter, you could focus on how one cause has multiple effects (Focus-on-Effects), how multiple causes lead to one effect (Focus-on-Causes), or put the emphasis equally on both.

If you use the Focus-on-Effects method, your essay outline should look something like this:

1. Introduction Paragraph
 - a. Catchy opening hook
 - b. Background information or introduction of the topic
 - c. Thesis statement
2. Body Paragraph 1: Information on the Cause (Optional)
3. Body Paragraph 2: Effect 1
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Points and evidence

- c. Transition sentence to next paragraph
- 4. Body Paragraph 3: Effect 2
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Points and evidence
 - c. Transition sentence to next paragraph
- 5. Body Paragraph 4: Effect 3
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Points and evidence
 - c. Transition sentence to next paragraph
- 6. Conclusion Paragraph
 - a. Restate thesis statement
 - b. Summarize arguments and subjects
 - c. End with a nice, relevant line

If you use the Focus-on-Causes method, your essay outline will resemble this structure:

- 1. Introduction Paragraph
 - a. Catchy opening hook
 - b. Background information or introduction of topic
 - c. Thesis statement
- 2. Body Paragraph 1: Information on the Effect (Optional)
- 3. Body Paragraph 2: Cause 1
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Points and evidence
 - c. Transition sentence to next paragraph
- 4. Body Paragraph 3: Cause 2
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Points and evidence
 - c. Transition sentence to next paragraph
- 5. Body Paragraph 4: Cause 3
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Points and evidence
 - c. Transition sentence to next paragraph
- 6. Conclusion Paragraph
 - a. Restate thesis statement
 - b. Summarize arguments and subjects
 - c. End with a nice, relevant line

Lastly, if you choose to focus on both causes and effects as a chain of reactions, your essay structure may take the following form:

- 1. Introduction Paragraph

- a. Catchy opening hook
 - b. Background information or introduction of topic
 - c. Thesis statement
2. Body Paragraph 1: Cause and Effect 1
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Points and evidence about the cause
 - c. Points and evidence about the effect
 - d. Transition sentence to next paragraph
3. Body Paragraph 2: Cause and Effect 2
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Points and evidence about the cause
 - c. Points and evidence about the effect
 - d. Transition sentence to next paragraph
4. Body Paragraph 3: Cause and Effect 3
 - a. Topic sentence
 - b. Points and evidence about the cause
 - c. Points and evidence about the effect
 - d. Transition sentence to next paragraph
5. Conclusion Paragraph
 - a. Restate thesis statement
 - b. Summarize arguments and subjects
 - c. End with a nice, relevant line



SAMPLE OUTLINE FOR A BASIC ESSAY

We've taken a sample topic and created an example outline for you so you can see the plans we outlined above in action. For this purpose, our sample topic is going to be artificial sweeteners and their link to obesity.

1. INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH

a. Hook: In the United States alone, 36.5% of adults and 17% of children are classified as obese, with the numbers climbing at an alarming rate.

b. Background information: Why obesity is now considered an epidemic in the United States, the health risks of obesity, etc.

c. Thesis statement: Despite the fact that they are presented as a calorie-free alternative to sugar, artificial sweeteners can contribute to obesity because they impact insulin sensitivity, trigger metabolic confusion, and can impair brain function.



2. BODY PARAGRAPH #1

Insulin Sensitivity

a. Topic sentence: Artificial sweeteners lead to an increase in insulin sensitivity, which can lead to diabetes or make diabetes symptoms worse.

b. The link between diabetes and obesity.

c. Aspartame and its connection to insulin regulation.

d. How sweeteners can trigger diabetes symptoms.

e. Transition from insulin sensitivity to metabolic confusion.



3. BODY PARAGRAPH #2

Metabolic Confusion

- a. Topic sentence:** The consumption of artificial sweeteners can negatively impact the body's regulation of weight by triggering metabolic confusion and slowing down one's ability to burn calories.
- b.** Since they are designed to replace sugar, artificial sweeteners can trick the body into thinking it is satisfying a sugar craving when it is not.
- c.** Leads to an excess of cravings for carbohydrates, which can result in overeating.
- d.** Sweeteners can also stimulate feelings of hunger or appetite and impact the body's consumption of food.
- e.** Transition from metabolic confusion to brain function impairment (connect the brain's regulation of the body's functions).



4. BODY PARAGRAPH #3

Brain Function Impairment

- a. Topic sentence:** Studies have indicated that artificial sweeteners can have a damaging impact on brain function, which in turn affects the body's ability to regulate itself and moderate metabolism, control food cravings, and convert energy for physical activity.
- b.** Link between aspartame and early onset Alzheimer's.
- c.** The impact of cognitive function on weight management.
- d.** Neurophysiological symptoms that have been linked to sweeteners.
- e.** Transition to conclusion paragraph.



5. CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH

a. Restate thesis: By impacting insulin regulation, triggering metabolic confusion, and impairing cognitive function, artificial sweeteners have been pinpointed as a cause of obesity in American adults.

b. Summary of arguments and evidence

c. Present potential solutions: limiting products made with artificial sweeteners being sold in school cafeterias, switching to natural sweeteners.



Chapter 4: Making a Thesis Statement

Now that you've planned out your essay and you know exactly what points you want to make, it's time to develop a really great thesis statement. Coming up with a really good thesis statement is often one of the hardest parts of writing an essay, so in this chapter we're going to break it down for you and show you everything you need to know to get it right.

Your thesis statement is a roadmap to your essay. It's the heart and soul of your paper, and if you don't choose strong arguments you'll have a really hard time with the rest of the writing and research. Not only that, but most of the time if you take a look at the rubric your professor gives you for your essay, you'll find that the thesis statement alone is worth a big chunk of your mark.

Essentially, the thesis statement sets the tone of your paper and tells your reader exactly what you're going to be talking about or arguing for the rest of the essay. It also showcases how your paper is going to be organized, which helps everything flow seamlessly. You're going to be graded on how well your paper flows, and the thesis statement is the glue that holds everything together.

Every thesis statement should have two main elements: an argument or position and an answer to a research question. Generally, the argument itself will be the answer to that research question. From there, you need to break it down and determine exactly which arguments you're going to be making and what claims are going to back up your answer.

Avoiding General Statements

Anyone can make a general statement about something, and this should not be what comprises your thesis statement. It's very easy to say that climate change is bad. In fact, most people would likely also believe this already. A real argument provides an analysis with credible facts explaining why climate change is bad, if or how it can be slowed down/reversed, or the factors that cause climate change.

Even if you're tasked with writing a research paper where you'll generally be providing objective information about that subject, you still need to form a statement that creates some type of point or argument. For example, if you need to write a biographical research essay about Abraham Lincoln, you could focus your thesis statement on why his election to President of the United States was a turning point in modern American history. Then, pinpoint the reasons he contributed to the growth of the country or the major challenges he overcame.

Even if you don't need to take a debatable stance on your subject, your thesis statement should provide an idea of what your essay will tell the reader. For example, if you are writing an essay describing how something works, you could briefly summarize the information you're going to present.

For longer essays, you'll need a thesis statement that is versatile enough to apply to every supporting argument and point you're going to make. That being said, if you are going to fill twenty pages with arguments, you're not going to have the room in one or two sentences to explain all of those ideas. If you can, you probably have one big run-on sentence that will lose you some major grammar points. Instead, think of an overarching point that connects multiple arguments together, and then make sure those body paragraphs are arranged in order within your paper.

How to Break Down a Topic to Make a Thesis Statement

To make your thesis statement, you'll need to make sure your topic is broken down enough so you know what you are going to be focusing on. It should have enough information to tell your reader what information you're going to discuss in the paper and why they should care.

A thesis statement needs to be something that is debatable. Think about your topic and your particular position, opinion, or stance about it. What would someone who disagrees with you say to disprove your position, or what alternative viewpoints would someone present that might contrast with your ideas? If you can't think of an answer to these questions, your topic is too broad.

When you're trying to narrow down your thesis statement, try to think about the five Ws: who, what, where, when, and why. If you can answer these questions about your specific topic, this will help you narrow down your argument. Try to answer as many of them in your thesis statement as possible without forcing it.

This is why it's important to try to choose a topic you're passionate about if you can. The more you care about something, the easier it is for you to explain exactly why someone else should care, too.

Questions to Ask Yourself That Will Help Formulate a Thesis

Ask yourself some of the following questions if you're stuck trying to figure out what to write for your thesis statement:

- What do I want the reader to know?
- What question am I answering?
- If my topic is a widely known subject, what information am I presenting that someone may not already know? Alternatively, what new information can I present?
- Is there a controversial opinion out there about this topic? If so, why does that person think the way they do, and what evidence are they using?
- What arguments could someone make to refute my position on my topic?

A Few Things to Remember

Here are some final tips and pieces of advice to follow when you're getting ready to create and finalize your thesis statement:

- The order you list your arguments in your thesis statement should be the order they appear within your essay. You can order them in chronological order, from least to most significant, or however else it makes sense for your topic.
- Try to be as specific as possible, and avoid using vague words that could be misconstrued.
- Avoid using sentence starters such as "My paper will argue that..." or "In my paper, I will argue that..."
- Avoid using jargon or technical terms that are very niche-specific. Unless you're writing a very specific type of paper for a very knowledgeable audience, assume that your reader doesn't know all of those terms and try to explain it for a broader audience.
- Always be ready to answer "so what?" about your topic.

50 THESIS STATEMENT IDEAS



Here are some example thesis statements you can use to formulate your own argument. Feel free to take the structure of these arguments and apply them to your own specific topic.

1. The childhood obesity epidemic is a crisis in the United States, but with the introduction of healthier lunches in schools and an updated nutritional education system, children may learn how to make healthier food choices to lower this obesity rate.
2. Scientists have now determined that humans are to blame for global warming. As a result, the best solutions to combat global warming and reduce the threat to the environment include state-sponsored legislature, changes to personal consumption, and a clean power initiative by the world's leaders.
3. With a death toll of approximately 200 million people in Europe, the Black Death of the fourteenth century had substantial economic, environmental, and societal repercussions.
4. Based on the official definition, physical size, and the lack of geographical connection, Oceania should not be officially recognized as a continent.
5. Animal testing is unethical and no longer necessary in scientific research and development because of the availability of effective non-animal alternatives such as in vitro methods, silico models, and computer modeling technology.

6. While the Atlantic Slave Trade is widely considered to be the leading cause of the American Civil War, historians also suggest that political and cultural differences between the North and South were contributing factors to the conflict.
7. Municipal governments can and should contribute to taking action against climate change on the local level by increasing funding for recycling programs, offering educational seminars for residents, and implementing composting networks throughout the city.
8. School uniforms are beneficial for students because they eliminate class-based bias, create a stronger sense of unity among peers, and represent the school in a more polished way.
9. Cyberbullying in schools is an increasing and alarming issue due to the rise of social media and smartphone technology, but it is difficult to enforce because of the nature of the Internet. Schools could reduce instances of cyberbullying by not allowing smartphones in class, restricting Internet access during school hours, and holding educational digital literacy seminars for students.
10. Beauty pageants should be banned because they are an outdated method of perpetuating the ideal standard of beauty, which can lead to mental health issues, eating disorders, and sexual victimization.
11. Illegal drug use is detrimental to society because it leads to chronic illness and death, gang violence, and sexual abuse. Therefore, the federal government should be diverting more funding to the War on Drugs.

12. University and college tuition should be free to all students because it would encourage more students to enroll in post-secondary education, strengthen the country's workforce and economy, and help lift vulnerable populations out of poverty.
13. In Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, the real villain is Dr. Frankenstein because he pushes the limits by trying to play God and subsequently abandons his own creation, causing the creature to become a monster due to lack of nurture and environmental conditioning.
14. There are many benefits to incorporating more walking into an individual's everyday routine, including weight management, higher energy levels, and increased metabolism.
15. Overpopulation is a contributing factor to the climate change crisis because it leads to overconsumption of natural resources, increased pollution, and habitat loss for some of the planet's animal species.
16. While there are many theories explaining why dinosaurs went extinct but their ancestors still live today, the most widely accepted theory is the meteor theory due to the evidence from three major discoveries: the layer of iridium in the 1980s, the Chicxulub Crater in the 1990s, and the 2018 study on forest collapse in the Cretaceous period.
17. Democracy is the best form of government because it promotes equality among citizens, encourages political participation, and allows the government to adapt to the changing modern world.
18. In order to avoid election splitting, encourage citizen interest in politics, and increase voter turnout, voting should be mandatory for anyone over the age of 18 in the United States.

19. There are many advantages and disadvantages to using statistics. While statistics provide evidence that is important for decision-making, this data is not always reflective of a whole population and leaves room for manipulation.
20. Modern CGI techniques have opened a world of new options for modern horror filmmakers, which has resulted in a surge in more violent and graphic movies that encourage desensitization to violence and sexualized treatment of women.
21. In William Shakespeare's Hamlet, the theme of friendship is explored in both negative and positive ways. Hamlet's friendship with Horatio embodies the true meaning of friendship, while his relationship with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern provides a negative depiction of friendship.
22. It is important to continue studying the Civil Rights Movement in the course of American history because it showcases the terrifying consequences of racism, the power of collective action, and the dawn of a new era in American legislation and rights.
23. Sergio Leone's 1964 film A Fistful of Dollars was one of the most important pieces in film history, particularly for the Spaghetti Western genre, because it inspired and ignited an entirely new movement of popular films and created an entirely new film craze that swept the world.
24. In William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, the theme of marriage is presented in three simultaneous ways: as a means to secure one's own wealth and power status, to embody a happy ending, and to legalize a romance.

25. Human trafficking is a global problem that is on the rise even in the world's developed nations. In order to save the lives of current and future human trafficking victims, potential solutions to the problem could include more global women's rights, increased education, and more funding for victim protection.
26. The consumption of fast food places severe consequences on the health of young children, and consumption should be limited in order to decrease the risk of diabetes, heart disease, and obesity.
27. Childhood bullying is a two-sided issue, in that children must learn how to cope if they are being bullied, while also learning not to bully other children. The best methods to teach this include children's literature, exemplary learning, and through artistic expression such as plays.
28. The Founding Fathers of America were important to shaping the country today because they developed the democratic state through the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.
29. The United States Constitution is important in advancing democracy because it provides individual freedoms for Americans, sets out a set of governance for everyone to follow, and it limits the control and powers of the government through a system of checks and balances.
30. In William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the titular character portrays the theme of evil and the impact that evil can have on a human being through his emotional response to evil, his actions after becoming evil, and his eventual downfall.

31. Despite common marketing messages that GMOs are harmful for humans, these developments can have a substantial impact on solving world hunger, helping the environment, and increasing economic productivity.
32. John Steinbeck's novel *The Moon is Down* is an effective tool for persuasive propaganda, and served this purpose during World War II, because of his use of rhetoric through the techniques of logos, pathos, and ethos.
33. In Sophocles' classic play *Oedipus the King*, the character Jocasta serves as a representation of the position of women in the patriarchal society of Ancient Greece, and can ultimately be seen as an accurate reflection of the values of society during this period in time.
34. The fur trade should be banned because it has a number of negative impacts on the world: the cruel and unethical treatment of animals, the harmful threat to the environment, and the lack of need given the rise in synthetic fibers.
35. Superhero comic books often portray images of overly masculine male figures that promote common masculine stereotypes: muscular body types, bravery, and aggression or violence, which in turn creates high standards for young men to live up to and negative ideas of what it means to be "a man."
36. Juvenile incarceration can often have more negative impacts on offenders and society than it has benefits. Three alternatives that should be considered include sanctioned family therapy, multisystemic therapy, and institutionalized group care.

37. The Renaissance was a pivotal time in Western history because it led to important developments in art, religion, and science that had a profound impact on the modern world.
38. When examined from a feminist sociological perspective, Disney's Cinderella (1950) sends negative messages that can disempower women by telling them that they need to be pretty to find a man, that they cannot get what they want on their own, and that their life goal should be to marry a man.
39. Big cities are better to live in than small towns because they provide residents with significant social development, have more entertainment and consumer options, and can lead to more substantial economic opportunities.
40. The Me Too movement is an important aspect of today's society because it empowers female survivors of sexual or domestic violence to find the courage to tell their story, to connect with other survivors for emotional support, and to seek justice against their attacker.
41. NCAA football players deserve to be paid for their contributions to their respective teams because this is considered their job, their lives are restricted by the requirements of their position, and other companies profit substantially from their talents.
42. The Beatles are widely known as one of the greatest bands in history, and this remains true today because their music is still widely streamed and purchased, their musical techniques are still used in various genres, and their songs and styles are featured prominently in popular culture.

49. World War II had a substantial impact on the role of women in society because women gained more independence in entering the workforce, running their households, and gaining prominence as equals in society.
50. The Industrial Revolution completely changed modern society because it provided economic growth, allowed populations to spread across the country, and increased immigration.



Chapter 5: Writing

Just when you thought you were done with all of the scary parts of writing your essay, now comes the big step: writing.

Don't be scared! If you followed through on what we've taught you so far, you will already have a narrowed-down topic, a solid thesis statement, and a structured essay outline ready to go. When all of those things come together, the writing part can actually be fun - as long as you're not pulling an all-nighter cramming it all in hours before the deadline, that is.

This chapter is going to help guide you through the writing process, from the beginning to the end of your essay. We're going to break down each section of the essay and give you some helpful information that will take your writing skills to the next level. Along the way, we'll give you our best tips and tricks from the top writers on our team that they put into practice on a regular basis.

Writing an Introduction That Hooks Your Reader

Let's start where your essay begins: the introduction. An introduction is an important part of your essay. It's the first impression your essay makes on the reader, and just like in real life, you don't always get a second chance to make a good impression. Make sure you do it well the first time.

So how do you make a good first impression on your reader? Your introduction should be catchy enough to grab their attention, with enough information to tell them what you're saying and why it matters. Essentially, you're convincing them to keep reading.

No matter what type of paper you're writing, your introduction should always begin with a hook. The first line of the introduction is the ultimate first impression, so you want to use something that will catch your reader's attention and make it impossible for them to put your paper down. Avoid using clichés, dictionary definitions, or quotes. All of these are overrated and, quite frankly, lazy writing. Your professor has likely already seen enough essays beginning with these things for one lifetime, and it will make it appear as though you haven't put any thought into your paper. The same goes for sweeping phrases such as "Throughout history,..." or "In today's society..." You want to write something original, and using an overrated phrase is just going to result in an eye-roll, boredom, or both.

Now, in some cases, there are exceptions. For example, you could get away with using a quote if it's from one of the authors you're going to quote in your paper, or if it explains a theory that's going to guide the rest of your paper. But be careful when doing this, as there's a fine line you shouldn't cross.

So, what should you use as your hook, then? Here are some great ideas:

- A startling or surprising statistic
- A relevant anecdote, narrative, or story
- A controversial statement or misconception about your topic
- A thought-provoking question
- A theoretical scenario
- An observation that brings something new to the table

Once you've settled on a catchy hook, it's time to fit the rest of your introduction together. This will depend on what type of paper you're writing. On many occasions, including some background context or a plot summary makes sense to give your reader the information they need to understand your arguments.

Sometimes it can be helpful to write your introduction after you've finished writing the essay. When you've already written all of your arguments and major points, it's a lot easier to understand what information needs to be included in the introduction. This also gives you a fresh idea about your topic and could lead to more inspiration.

Here are some more quick tips for writing your essay introduction:

- Only include relevant information to the arguments you're going to make.
- Keep it to the point and save the deep dive for your body paragraphs.
- The length should be relative to your paper. If you're writing a five page paper, your introduction should only be half a page. For larger papers, such as a 20 page essay, it's acceptable to write one or two pages for your introduction.
- Start broad, and then narrow down until you reach your thesis statement.
- Write with the assumption that your reader doesn't really know a lot about your topic.

Building Solid Body Paragraphs

Your body paragraphs are where your supporting arguments will live. Each supporting argument should be in its own paragraph, with its own topic sentence at the beginning that introduces the argument you're going to be making.

In each body paragraph, you want to follow the structure you used in your essay. Start broad, and then narrow down with evidence to support your points.

When including supporting information and evidence, there are two main techniques that you can use: induction and deduction. Induction relies on specific facts, details or data to support a general argument. Deduction begins with a general premise and narrows it down to a specific conclusion. Another way to look at it is this: induction is based on facts and logic, while deduction is based on reasoning. Arguments

that use deduction are more debatable because they tend to rely on assumptions instead of factual connections.

Here's an example of these techniques in action. Let's say you are writing an essay about Shakespeare's Macbeth and trying to argue that he is not a good leader. If you are using the induction technique, you would indicate how many people died while he was in power and how many people turned against him. These are both facts that prove he is not a good leader. On the other hand, if you are using deduction, you would point out that good leaders do not kill kings and that they show remorse when they do something wrong. Therefore, with deduction, you could reason that because Macbeth does not embody those characteristics, he is not a good leader.

Still feeling a little lost? Here's a very, very basic example. You are adopting a golden retriever named Fluffy. Using deduction, you would make the general assumption that all dogs make wonderful pets, and because Fluffy is a dog, he will make a good pet, too. This argument relies on the idea that everyone agrees that dogs are good pets, which is not necessarily true. On the other hand, with induction, you could say that golden retrievers have a low bite rate compared to other breeds, so Fluffy would be a safer dog to own than a Pitbull. This is a harder argument to debate.

Choose your arguments wisely and make sure you're backing them up with reliable evidence where appropriate and relevant. Make sure you contextualize your sources and indicate clearly why you are using that particular piece of evidence. Use as many quotations or citations as you need, but always be sure to explain everything you cite.

At the end of your body paragraphs, be sure to include a transition statement that leads into the next paragraph. This helps with the overall flow of your paper.

Some best practices for writing good body paragraphs:

- Never end a body paragraph with a citation.
- When using statistics, facts, or data, be sure to elaborate.
- Use at least one citation in each body paragraph.
- Remember the acronym PIE: point, illustration, explanation. Each time you bring up a point, provide an illustration and an explanation.

Pathos, Logos, and Ethos: Using Rhetoric to Win an Argument

Argumentative essays in particular need to be effective at convincing your audience to agree with your stance or perspective. That's where rhetoric comes in. Rhetoric is the art of using persuasive techniques to appeal to your specific audience.

Think about a politician making a speech. If that politician is campaigning to a working-class audience, they're probably going to talk about raising the minimum wage, universal healthcare, lowering the cost of living, or lowering taxes. These are all topics that appeal to this particular audience because working class populations tend to be in the lower to middle class financial bracket, so talking about better economic security appeals to them.

In order to properly use rhetoric, you need to know who your audience is and what they care about. This is how you can present arguments and supporting evidence that hits your point home and convinces them to believe your perspective.

There are three main types of tools you can use to create a persuasive argument:

- Pathos: Emotional appeal (evoking an emotional response)
- Logos: Logical appeal (facts, statistics, examples)
- Ethos: Ethical appeal (credibility, trust, authority)

Depending on the specific topic and subject you're writing about, you'll want to use one or all of these elements in your argument. For example, if you're writing a scientific paper, you'll want to rely on statistics and data for logical, factual arguments. If you're writing a paper about a controversial human rights issue, you'll probably want to use a combination of pathos and ethos to appeal to reason and emotion or to promote sympathy about your subject.

Structure and Flow

While marking your paper, your professor is going to look at the way your paper flows and how it's structured to maintain that flow throughout the entire piece. You can make sure that your paper flows by using effective topic and transition sentences and organizing your paragraphs in a logical way. For example, if you're writing a historical research paper, you'll want to organize your paragraphs chronologically in the order that they happened. When making an argument, you want to put your second strongest point first, your weakest point in the middle, and your strongest point at the end to leave your readers with a strong finish.

Writing an essay outline will help you keep on top of structure and flow. No one wants to read a paper that's mismatched and jumps back and forth between subjects or arguments. If your reader can't really follow what you're saying, you're going to lose their interest very quickly. Keep all of your points together and make sure the evidence is in the right place.

Effective Transitions

One of the key elements you'll need to use to make sure your paper flows properly and effectively is through effective transitions at the beginning of each paragraph. Your reader wants to know why one thing is leading to another, and you want to make connections to each of your points to help your paper flow.

Here are some good transition words to use:

- In addition to/additionally
- Subsequently
- Another
- Furthermore
- Previously
- Moreover
- Firstly
- Secondly
- Lastly
- Consequently
- As a result

Bringing it Home with The Conclusion

In the conclusion, you'll wrap up and summarize your arguments. This paragraph should be structured the opposite way your introduction is: start narrow, and then broaden out your ideas and summaries. Begin by restating your thesis in different words than you used in your introduction paragraph. Keep the order of the arguments, but rephrase them in a new way. Then, go on to summarize your arguments. Include the main points from each of your body paragraphs and a brief overarching idea about each one. Don't ramble on and just rehash everything you said in your body paragraphs. Pick the most important things you said and put them into context.

Sometimes it's a good idea to make a broader connection in your conclusion. Talk about why this topic matters, why we are talking about it today, or how it connects to the other material in the course you're taking. The point is to make a lasting impression on your audience and give them something they can keep thinking about after they're done reading.

Do not introduce new information in your conclusion. You should only be discussing the ideas and arguments you've already presented. If you really feel that this new information is relevant and important, consider putting it in a body paragraph.

Creating a Good Title

Your essay is going to need a good, catchy title. It helps to leave this part until the end, when you've done all the research and the writing and examined key concepts, keywords, or theories. Once all of the writing is done, you have a final idea of what it's really all about and you can use this to think of something that would really stand out from the rest. Perhaps you came across something in your research that made you rethink your entire perspective. Maybe you learned a new keyword that you'd never heard before. Even if you have a working title at first, you're likely going to find something better by the time you're done writing.

Think about your essay sitting in a pile on your professor's desk. Which title is really going to stand out from your classmates' papers and make your professor want to read it first? The one with a generic statement about their thesis, or the one that presents an interesting idea? Don't be afraid to get a little creative with your title. It still has to be academic, but that doesn't mean you can't have some fun with it.

Ultimately, your title should be something original, unique, and catchy, but it should also relate directly to your thesis. This sounds complicated, but it's a very important element of your essay. It's the first thing someone is going to see, even before your catchy introduction. If you think about it in terms of a job interview, your first impression at the interview is your introduction, but your title is the resume that got you noticed in the first place.

If you're having trouble coming up with a good title, it helps to write out a list of options to choose from. Sometimes the more you write a title out, the stronger your ideas become. If you still can't decide, give your list to a classmate or a friend and see which one they like the best. Ask them which title would make them want to keep reading.

Here are some more helpful tips for developing a good title for your essay:

- Take your thesis and see if you can narrow it down into three or four words.
- Write using the active voice.
- Keep it concise. The longer and more complicated your title is, the more boring it's going to become.
- Make sure it's accurate and relevant to the content of your essay.
- Don't stray from the truth just to grab someone's attention. Lying is wrong.
- If all else fails, do a quick Google search to see other titles people have used. But *don't steal them*. This is for inspiration purposes only.

100 EXCELLENT ESSAY TITLES YOU CAN STEAL

We've put together a list of some of our favorite titles about a variety of different subjects, from English literature to history to biology. Feel free to take these ideas and modify them for your own topics and subjects.



HISTORY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

1. How the Holy Roman Empire Changed the Western World
2. Julius Caesar: Ruthless Dictator or Powerful Military Genius?
3. What Really Caused World War II?
4. The Hidden Meanings in Leonardo DaVinci's "The Last Supper"
5. The Holy Roman Church: The Secret Catalyst For History's Conflicts
6. Ending Apartheid: The Aftermath of Gandhi's Revolution
7. Was Galileo a Heretic? Examining the Life and Times of the Father of Modern Science
8. Is the Civil Rights Movement Still Important Today?
9. A Human Sacrifice: Slavery as the Cause of the American Civil War
10. The Poor Man's War: Economic Divisions During The Vietnam War
11. Preservation in Practice: Mummification in Ancient Egypt

12. Voodoo Rituals in African History:
A Cultural Analysis
13. Abraham Lincoln:
The Greatest President in American History
14. From Mummies to Masses:
A Comparison of Death Rituals in Ancient Cultures
15. The Secret Language of
African-American Slave Quilts
16. Fighting For Freedom on The Underground Railroad
17. Absolute Power Influencers Others, Absolutely:
The Influence of King Louis XIV on Peter the Great
18. Gender and Advertising in the 1900s:
A Look Back at the Formation of the
Golden Age of Advertising
19. How the Steel Strike of 1919 Changed
Labour History Forever
20. Hunting Humans: The Salem Witch Trials of 1692
21. Woodstock 1969:
How a Hippie Mudfest Transformed Popular Culture



LITERATURE/ENGLISH LIT

22. The Madness in Macbeth:
How an Evil Man Corrupted Himself
23. Was Hamlet Really Mad, or Was it All Part of His
Plan?
24. Who is the Real Villain in
Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*?
25. The Symbolism of the Monster in Horror Fiction
26. Justice and Character in Plato's *The Republic*
27. "There's Just One Kind of Folks":
Racial Divisions in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*

28. The True Value of Friendship
in the *Harry Potter* Novels

29. Landscapes and Literature: The Significance of
Scenery in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*

30. The Value of the Female Body in *Little Women*



SOCIOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

31. Shaping The Future in the Face of Climate Change

32. Eating Disorders in America:
Combatting a Problem From the Top Down

33. Facing America's Obesity Problem:
Would Healthier School Lunches Work?

34. Globalization and Social Interaction
in the 21st Century: How Social Media
Has Changed The Way we Communicate

35. Lowering the Drinking Age Would Benefit Society

36. The Rise in Racial Stereotypes After 9/11

37. Urbanization and Pollution:
Dealing With the Aftermath of
Human Migration Patterns

38. The Real Meaning of Independence Day:
Why America Should Rethink the Fireworks

39. Food For Thought:
How Cuisine is Ingrained with Culture

40. Sparkling For a Price:
Blood Diamonds and the Human Rights Crisis in Africa

41. A Critical Culture: Body Shaming in Modern Society

42. Are Smartphones Ruining Today's Culture?

43. An Analysis of Ethical
Alternatives to Animal Testing

44. Should There be a Minimum Age Requirement For Cosmetic Surgery?
45. The Challenges of Teaching Digital Literacy in 21st Century School-Aged Children
46. The Fast Food Industry and Poverty: A Closed Loop Societal Problem
47. Is Hunting Ethical? An Analysis on Killing For Sport
48. Lab Grown Diamonds: The Solution to a Brighter Future
49. The Importance of Academics in Rural Populations
50. Teaching The Leadership Skills That Shape Future Generations
51. Putting an End to Cyberbullying: Solutions to Reduce Conflict in the Classroom
52. Children of Divorce: Reducing the Stigma of a “Broken Home”
53. The Social Hierarchy of the United States: Why The Lower Class is More Alienated Than Ever Before
54. Putting Feminist Theory Into Practice: An Analysis of The Women’s March
55. Using Video Games to Help Children With Learning Disabilities
56. Pavlov’s Conditioning Experiments: What Have They Taught Modern Psychologists?
57. Deviating From the Norm: Studies in Abnormal Psychology
58. Criminal Rehabilitation: Why The For-Profit Prison System Needs an Overhaul
59. The Impact Birth Order on Procrastination in Elementary-Age Children
60. Seeking Solutions For Homelessness in America
61. Who is to Blame For Developmental Issues in Children?

62. Advocating For Autism:
Why The Municipal Budget Is Not Enough

63. Practical Solutions For Individuals
With Paranoid Schizophrenia



THE SCIENCES

64. GMOs: The Secret to Solving World Hunger

65. Survival in the Depths of the Ocean:
Camouflage Mechanisms in Sea Animals

66. Viral Health Threats:
Learning From The 2014 Ebola Outbreak

67. The Influence of Genetics on Childhood Obesity

68. Human Cloning: The Fine Line of Ethical Discovery

69. Innovative Developments in Organ Transplantation

70. Hormones and Behavior Modification:
The Missing Link in Clinical Trials

71. Pathways to Progress in Spinal Cord Injury Recovery

72. The Gestational Period of Animals: A Comparison
Between Domesticated and Wild Mammals

73. Fact or Fiction?
The Scientific Perspective on Hypnosis

74. New Research on the Regulation
Mechanism in Stem Cell Biology

75. Healthy Habitation: Ecology and the Aging Process

76. Why MRI Scans Should be Free in the United States

77. The Benefit of Bud: Why Medical Marijuana
Should be Legalized Everywhere

78. Not so Different After All:
Comparing Domesticated Cats and Wild Cats



POPULAR CULTURE: FILM, MUSIC, AND MEDIA

79. Constructing Cultural Identity:
Perceptions of Gender in Film
80. Have Disney Movies Gotten Better With
Stereotypes? An Examination of Modern Disney Movies
81. Not Just Fun and Games:
The Reality of Mental Illness in *The Joker* (2019)
82. The Projection of Racial Stereotypes
in Disney's *Peter Pan* (1953)
83. Come to the Dark Side:
Religious Symbolism in *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977)
84. 99 Problems: Breaking Down
the Stereotypes in Rap Music
85. Undead Adventures:
An Examination of Zombies in Popular Culture
86. Sitcoms vs. Streaming:
The Downfall of Network Cable in the Netflix Era
87. Is Google Watching?
Privacy Concerns With Google Home Devices
88. Advertising in the Digital Age:
Mixed Media Messages For Marketing Innovation
89. Personalization and Power
in Social Media Marketing
90. Why Time Travel Looks Different in Every Movie
91. Is Beyonce a Real Feminist?
Examining Music and Feminist Theory

EDUCATION, BUSINESS, AND CURRENT/GLOBAL AFFAIRS

92. A Study of Business Ethics in the
Twenty-First Century

93. The Rise and Fall of Labour Unions

94. Genocide and Globalization:
Human Rights in Rwanda

95. Heritage and Homework:
Teaching Indigenous Education in Elementary Schools

96. Why a Monarchy Does Not Work in Modern Society

97. Teaching English as a Second
Language in Refugee Populations

98. Tech Talk: The Impact of Westernization
on Technological Development

99. Should Home Economics
Still be Taught in High Schools?

100. Clicking Coursework:
The Benefits of Online Classes in University





Chapter 6: Sources

When it comes to writing an academic essay, sources are going to be key. Now that you've learned what goes into writing a good essay, it's time to put together your evidence and make strong statements that will get you that A+ paper. In this chapter, we'll help you figure out exactly how to use primary and secondary sources, where to find them, and how to make sure your evidence is credible.

We're going to begin by breaking down the different types of sources you're likely going to be using and where you can find them.

Primary Sources

A primary source is a document or text written during the time an event took place, usually by someone who witnessed or participated in the event. These sources are more commonly used in subjects such as history, the humanities, social sciences, and the arts, but could also be valuable in a variety of other topics.

Common types of primary sources may include:

- Letters
- Journal entries
- Autobiographies
- Manuscripts
- Political documents, such as the United States Constitution
- Speeches
- Eyewitness accounts
- Archived newspaper articles

Primary sources can be really tricky to find if you're not sure where to look. If you're willing to venture outside and go see them in person, museums, government buildings, and libraries are full of excellent primary sources.

However, not everyone has time to go and dig through piles of archives or papers dating back decades or even centuries. That's where the Internet comes in. Since many primary sources are considered part of the creative commons or open source networks, you can usually locate them on the Internet with a quick Google search or through your library database. Websites such as The Internet History Sourcebooks Project, Project Gutenberg, and government archives have pretty big collections to choose from, organized by time period or subject. Take a look at our Internet Resources Guide at the end of this chapter for more helpful places to look for primary sources.

Secondary Sources

The most common type of source you're probably going to use are secondary sources. These types of sources are usually written by historians, experts, researchers, or industry professionals that provides an analysis or an interpretation of data or events. They are normally written for other experts in the field to present research or a new perspective on a topic, and rely on research or evidence from other sources. Almost all secondary sources include a bibliography at the end. Some secondary sources are based on primary sources. For example, many scientific research papers are based on findings from primary source material.

A few common types of secondary sources could be:

- Academic journal articles
- Books
- Thesis papers or dissertations
- Reviews or critiques
- Biographies
- Magazine or trade publication articles

For the majority of your papers, your secondary sources are going to be either books or academic journals. Some specialized papers might require that you look in more niche publications or research areas, but it's a safe bet that using secondary scholarly sources are going to be your bread and butter.

Peer-Reviewed Sources

You're going to see the words "peer-reviewed" come up a lot in your essay instructions, assignment details, and many other places. Professors often require you to use only peer-reviewed sources in your papers because they are more credible and reliable as evidence. In some cases, these are also referred to as "refereed" sources.

Peer-reviewed sources are sources, usually published in books or academic journals, that have been reviewed and fact-checked by a team of people before publication. Most of the time, the people who are doing the fact-checking are other experts within that field. Additionally, the fact-checkers or reviewers don't usually have any connection to the authors, so they provide a more objective perspective. This adds to the credibility of the article.

To identify if an article you want to use is peer-reviewed, check the publication. If it doesn't tell you in the description, most of the time a publication will state this information on its website. It's safe to say that most academic journals are peer-reviewed, but this isn't always the case. Opinion papers, editorials, letters to the editor, magazine articles, and reviews are not usually peer-reviewed and sometimes aren't

allowed as a source in your paper. Most university online library databases include a search filter option where you can request peer-reviewed results only, so make sure you check for this while searching for sources.

How to Find Good Source Material

It's easy to end up in a bottomless pit of source material, digging through list after list of database search results. This can get very frustrating very quickly. When you find yourself approaching this point of desperation, here are some things you can do to get back on track.

Use the Internet (carefully). You can use websites like Wikipedia to get some decent background information about your subject, but you absolutely cannot use them as sources for your paper. These sources can be edited by anyone, and are not fact-checked, so you can't trust that the information is going to be accurate or credible. However, there are tons of great online databases and search engines that can help you find credible, academic sources to use. Your school library website is a great place to start.

Refine your search. Narrow down your keywords to specific topics. When looking through academic journals for sources, it's hard to find general information because most journals are written about a very specific branch of a topic. For example, you won't be able to find a generic academic journal with an overview of the Civil Rights Movement, but you can find sources about specific elements such as the use of protest songs during the movement, how the Civil Rights Act was developed, and so on.

For generic information about an event or topic, books are your best bet. Since books are much longer than journal articles, and take a lot more time to write and publish, they have tons of room for a broad range of information. Many books are written by people who have dedicated their lives to studying those subjects, so they have a lot to say about them. However, be careful when using certain types of books, as books aren't always peer-reviewed, and many of them tend to lean heavily toward that person's opinion or perspective. As a result, they can be biased.

When in doubt, talk to a librarian. Their job is to know where to find information, and they are happy to help you. It doesn't hurt to strike up a conversation at your school's library, and chances are someone else has done the same research as you in a previous class.

Reading and Taking Notes

No one likes adding extra steps to their assignments, but taking notes while you do your research is a necessary and vital way to make sure you absorb beneficial information and strengthen your paper. If

you take notes, you can go back once you begin writing and find exactly what you need to cite in your paper without having to skim through over and over again.

Read the article thoroughly first. Then, go back and take notes as you read it again. If you're reading a printed out copy of the article, highlight the information you think will be most important to your paper. If you don't have time to read the article twice, or if you just don't want to, try to complete this process by section. You may think this is a daunting task, but it will be a major help to you when you write your essay.

Using a Spreadsheet to Collect Research

A great way to take notes while you go through your research is using a spreadsheet or even just a basic table. As you notice information that will be valuable for your arguments, record them and their citation information so you can quickly grab it from the spreadsheet without digging back through the article to find the quote.

Here is an example spreadsheet you could use for your notes:

Article Title	Author	Page Number	Quote	Reference Link or URL

This simple structure will help you keep track of important information you don't want to forget about, and that you can go back to if you need to reference something. It may seem like a lot of extra work when you're doing the reading, but it'll save you the harder work later on.

An Internet Research Guide: The Best Databases Breakdown by Industry

Primary Sources

- [The Internet History Sourcebooks Project](#)
- [The National Archives](#)
- [Project Gutenberg](#)
- [Times Digital Archive, 1785-1985](#)
- [New York Times Historical Archive](#)

- [Women and Social Movements 1600-2000](#)
- [African American Newspapers](#)

General Secondary Sources

- [Google Scholar](#)
- [ProQuest](#)
- [Academic Search Premier](#)
- [MLA International Bibliography](#)
- [WorldCat](#)

History and the Humanities

- [JSTOR](#)
- [Project MUSE](#)
- [SpringerLink](#)
- [British History Online](#)
- [Archive of Americana](#)
- [Gender Studies Database](#)
- [Contemporary Women's Issues](#)
- [GenderWatch](#)
- [Historical Abstracts](#)
- [SocINDEX With Full Text](#)

English and Literature

- [Literature Online](#)
- [World Shakespeare Bibliography Online](#)
- [Books in Print](#)
- [Library Literature & Information Science](#)
- [Resource Center](#)
- [Gale Literature](#)

Pop Culture, Media, and Communications

- [Communication & Mass Media Complete](#)
- [Entertainment Industry Magazine Archive](#)
- [Film Literature Index](#)
- [American Film Scripts Online](#)
- [WorldCat](#)
- [Grove Music Online](#)
- [ERIC](#)
- [Music Periodicals Database](#)
- [JSTOR](#)

The Sciences, Mathematics, and Environmental Studies

- [Access Medicine](#)
- [GeoRef](#)
- [PubMed](#)
- [Web of Science](#)
- [SciFinder](#)
- [Scopus](#)
- [MathSciNet](#)

Law and Political Science

- [SpringerLink](#)
- [Criminal Justice Abstracts](#)
- [HeinOnline](#)
- [Nexis Uni](#)
- [Justis](#)
- [WestLaw Next](#)
- [E-Stat](#)

Business, Marketing, Economics, and Commerce

- [Econlit](#)
- [ScienceDirect](#)
- [Business Source Complete](#)
- [Business Monitor Online](#)
- [Frost & Sullivan](#)
- [Statista](#)
- [World Development Indicators](#)
- [Datastream International](#)
- [Economist](#)
- [E-stat](#)

Art and Architecture

- [Art and Architecture Complete](#)
- [International Bibliography of Art](#)
- [Art History Research Net](#)
- [ArtStor](#)
- [Oxford Art Online](#)

Education Studies

- [ERIC](#)
- [JSTOR](#)
- [Education Database](#)
- [Physical Education Index](#)
- [Project MUSE](#)



Chapter 7: Citations and Formatting

Once you've located and found your sources and are ready to use the information for your arguments, you need to know how to properly cite and format that information. This step is extremely important because you always need to make sure you're giving credit wherever necessary. Formatting is so important that you could even fail your paper if you don't do it properly.

This part can be tricky, so this chapter will guide you through the process of finding good evidence, using it in your paper, and citing it properly according to the required formatting style.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the act of taking someone else's idea, work, or discovery and passing it off as your own. This is a pretty big trigger word when it comes to universities and colleges. It is considered a form of academic dishonesty. Getting caught plagiarizing could get you a failing grade, put on academic probation, and even expelled.

So how do you avoid plagiarism in your paper? It's not as difficult as it sounds. The key is to make sure you're citing all of your sources properly and giving credit wherever credit is due. Any time you use an idea that belongs to someone else, you must make sure that you indicate this was not your original idea. This goes for both direct quotations and paraphrasing.

Quotations vs. Paraphrasing

There are two main ways that you can incorporate evidence in your paper: direct quotations and paraphrasing. A direct quotation is the act of taking the author's exact words and putting them in your paper, surrounded by quotation marks and properly cited. When you paraphrase, you take the author's quote and rewrite it in your own words. Now, paraphrasing doesn't mean you can steal credit for someone else's ideas. You still need to cite your sources even when you paraphrase, especially when discussing an author's original point of view.

So how do you know when you should use a direct quotation and when you should paraphrase? This will depend on the type of paper you're writing and the specific evidence you're using. If you're writing a literary analysis, for example, you'll want to use mostly direct quotations from the text so you can provide a detailed examination. For a research paper, you will likely rely on paraphrasing to keep your essay flowing smoothly. Anytime you write over five exact words in a row from a source, you need to make a direct quotation and cite it properly.

Ultimately, the less direct quotations you use, the better. This shows your professor you really understand the source material and your topic, and can reiterate your supporting arguments in your own words. Whenever you can restate something it shows that you can understand and explain it thoroughly. Sometimes a professor will specifically request that you do not use direct quotations, so make sure you pay attention to your paper instructions.

Formatting Your In-Text Quotations

No matter what citation style you're using, you'll have to make sure your quotes are properly cited and formatted when used within the text of your paper.

Follow the basic rules:

- If you use the author's name in the sentence, it doesn't need to be included in the in-text citation. Here's an example: "William Smith argues that social interactions are the true dividing factor in elementary schools (45)."
- The punctuation always goes after the citation parentheses.
- You don't need to use in-text citations for information that is considered to be common knowledge.
- For poetry or play quotations longer than one line but shorter than three lines, use a slash (/) to separate breaks between lines.

Longer quotations need to be formatted differently. This is a common situation when writing literary analysis papers or quoting from Shakespeare, but applies anytime you're using a longer quote. If the lines you're quoting are longer than three lines or sentences, you'll need to break up your paragraph and centre it. These go as block quotes, with the citation placed after the last word of the quote. Don't indent this block quote. You will continue your paragraph on the next line.

Here's an example:

In Hamlet's monologue is one of the most quoted speeches in the history of literature:

"To be, or not to be--that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing end them. To die, to sleep--
No more--and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to" (*Hamlet* 3.1.57-64).

Here, Hamlet contemplates the consequences of death and suicide, and while this speech is normally done on stage with the character holding a skull, in the play the skull is held during another scene in act five.

Formatting the Bibliography

Depending on the type of citation style your professor has requested, you'll need to pay close attention to your formatting when listing your sources at the end of your paper. All bibliographies need to be organized in alphabetical order with an indent for each additional line of the same citation. It should start on a new page, even if the last page of your paper only has a couple of lines, and each entry should have at least one corresponding citation within the paper.

It's important to note that the bibliography page **does not** count toward your total page count. That means you can't stuff your paper with a bunch of sources and use them all to add an extra few pages to your paper to meet the count.

For academic sources with multiple authors, the authors should be listed in the bibliographical entry in the order they appear in the source. They are listed this way based on which author has led the research study or contributed the majority of the information. For example, if the journal is written by Edward Salamander, Marsha Ronan, and Alexander Abbett, your entry would begin with Salamander and be shortened to "Salamander et al." in your in-text citation because Salamander is the most prominent contributor. Don't rearrange this in alphabetical order.

Make sure you maintain the same spacing in your bibliography as you do in the rest of your paper. For example, if your paper instructions require double spacing, make sure your bibliography entries are also double-spaced.

In this next part of the chapter, we're going to give you a breakdown of the 3 most common citation methods: MLA, APA, and Chicago Style (notes and bibliography). We're going to also show you some examples for some of the most common types of sources you'll likely use in your paper.

A BRIEF MLA CITATION GUIDE

MLA (Modern Language Association) citation is commonly used in a variety of disciplines, such as the humanities, English, language studies, cultural studies, and the arts. MLA utilizes a Works Cited page at the end of the paper and in-text citations in parentheses.

A BOOK WITH ONE AUTHOR

In-Text:

(Last Name Page Number).

When Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassman developed the atomic bomb, they began with uranium and hit it with neutrons to watch how it broke into other elements (MacCarald 6).

Works Cited:

Last Name, First Name. *Book Title*. Location: Publisher, Year.

MacCarald, Cara. *The Invention of the Atomic Bomb*. Mankato, MN: The Child's World, 2017.

A BOOK WITH TWO AUTHORS

In-Text:

(Last Name and Last Name Page Number).

The authors explain that when it comes to fear, human feelings and knowledge are constantly at war, trying to overpower one another for control of the brain (Verstynen and Voytek 67).

Works Cited:

First Author's Last Name, First Author's First Name and Second Author's First Name and Last Name. *Book Title*. Location: Publisher, Year.

Verstynen, Timothy and Voytek, Bradley. *Do Zombies Dream of Undead Sheep?: The Neuroscientific View of the Zombie Brain*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2014.

A BOOK WITH MORE THAN TWO AUTHORS

In-Text:

(First Author's Last Name et al. Page Number).

Simon must rise to the challenge and join the ranks of the “demon-fighting half-angel beings” known as Shadowhunters (Clare et al. 9).

Works Cited:

Last Name, First Name, Second Author's First Name and Last Name, and Third Author's First Name and Last Name. *Book Title*. Location: Publisher, Year.

Clare, Cassandra, Sarah Rees Brennan, Maureen Johnson, and Robin Wasserman. *Tales From The Shadowhunter Academy*. New York, NY: Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2015.

A CHAPTER IN A BOOK

In-Text:

(Last Name Page Number).

In 1957, interracial couples were “a rare sight to see” (Houston 190).

Works Cited:

Last Name, First Name. “Title of Chapter.” *Book Title*, edited by Editor's First Name and Last Name, Publisher, Year, Page Range.

Houston, Jeanne. “Living in Two Cultures.” *Purpose and Process: A Reader for Writers, Fifth Edition*, edited

by Stephen Reid. London: Pearson Education, 2003, 187-194.

AN ACADEMIC JOURNAL

In-Text:

(Last Name Page Number).

Treason is the central theme in the story as the multi-faceted layers come together to spell out Macbeth's fate (Coursen Jr. 380).

Works Cited:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, Volume Number (vol. #), Issue Number (No. #), Year, Page Range.

Coursen, Jr., Herbert R. "In Deepest Consequence: Macbeth." *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 18, no. 4, 1967, pp. 375-388.

AN ACADEMIC JOURNAL FOUND IN AN ONLINE DATABASE

In-Text:

(Last Name Page Number).

The article links the concept of human rights to the rise in awareness for animal rights within the last decade (Foex 750).

Works Cited:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, Volume Number (vol. #), Issue Number (No. #), Year, Page Range. *Name of Database*, doi (Digital Object Identifier). Access Date.

Foëx, Bernard A. "The Ethics of Animal Experimentation." *Emergency Medicine Journal : EMJ*, vol. 24, no. 11, 2007, 750-751. *NCBI Resources*, doi:10.1136/emj.2007.050146

A WEBSITE, BLOG PAGE, OR OTHER INTERNET SOURCE

In-Text:

(Last Name, "Title of Page").

The CDC warns that individuals who either currently have cancer or who have recovered from cancer in the past are at high risk for developing flu complications (DCPC "Cancer, Flu, and You").

Works Cited:

(Entire Website)

Last Name, First Name (if available). *Website Name*, Name of Organization/Sponsor/Publishing Company, Date of Creation, DOI/URL. Access Date.

Centers For Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, n.d., <https://www.cdc.gov/>. Accessed 22 Jan. 2020.

(Page on a Website, Blog Post, etc)

Last Name, First Name (if available). "Title of Page." *Website Name*, Name of Organization/Sponsor/Publishing Company, Date of Creation, DOI/URL. Access Date.

DCPC. "Cancer, Flu, and You." *Centers For Disease Control and Prevention*, The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 10 Jan. 2020, <https://blogs.cdc.gov/cancer/2020/01/10/cancer-flu-and-you/>. Accessed 10 Feb. 2020.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES

In-Text:

(Last Name Page Number).

The story features the metaphor of "yarn babies" in order to reflect society's implications on the roles of

women as reproductive symbols (Arimah 56).

Works Cited:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine/Newspaper*, Day Month Year, Page Range.

Arimah, Lesley Nkea. "Who Will Greet You at Home." *The New Yorker*, 26 Oct. 2015, pp. 56-67.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES (ONLINE)

In-Text:

(Last Name Paragraph Number).

The husband and wife sat in their kitchen alone as the lines had gone down from a snowstorm (Lahiri par. 1).

Works Cited:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine/Newspaper*, Day Month Year, URL. Access Date.

Lahiri, Jhumpa. "Interpreter of Maladies." *The New York Times*, 1999, movies2.nytimes.com/books/first/l/lahiri-maladies.html. Accessed 22 Jan. 2020.

A POEM IN A PRINTED SOURCE

In-Text:

(Last Name Page Number).

"In Flanders fields the poppies grow/ Between the crosses, row on row" (McRae 12).

Works Cited:

Last Name, First Name. "Poem Title." *Name of Book*, Publisher, Year, Page Range.

McRae, John. "In Flanders Fields." *World War One British Poets*, edited by Candace Ward, Dover Publications

A POEM FOUND ONLINE

In-Text:

(Last Name, lines Line Numbers).

There was a “five-haired beard of wisdom/ trailing from his aching jaw” (Bishop, lines 63-64).

Works Cited:

Last Name, First Name. “Poem Title.” Year. *Website Title or Organization*, URL. Access Date.

Bishop, Elizabeth. “The Fish.” Poets.org. 1946. *Poets.Org*, <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/fish-2>. Accessed 10 Feb. 2020.

SHAKESPEARE AND OTHER LITERARY PLAYWRIGHTS

In-Text:

(*Play Title* Act.Scene.Line).

“I have a strange infirmity which is nothing / To those that know me” (*Macbeth* 3.4.85-86).

If your paper is only about one play, and you have already referenced that play in an in-text citation, you don't need to keep including the title of the play in the rest of your citations.

Works Cited:

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Play*. Ed. First Name Last Name. Location, Publisher, Year, Page Range (if it's a collection).

Shakespeare, William. *Macbeth*. Ed. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, and Katharine Eisaman Maus. New York: W W Norton & Co., 2008.

MLA FAQs

What should I do if my source doesn't have an author?

Sometimes a source won't have an author, like a website or an industry publication. If that's the case, start your Works Cited entry with the title. A general rule of thumb for in-text citations is to use whatever comes first in the Works Cited entry. For example, if you've cited a website without an author, the Works Cited entry will begin with "Title." You can use a shortened version of the title as long as it still makes sense and clearly indicates which source it is.

My source doesn't have page numbers. How do I cite this in my text?

If the source doesn't have any page numbers, you can use paragraph numbers for in-text citations, so it would look like this: (Smith par. 3). You may need to count them yourself. Alternatively, if the article is written in a news-style and doesn't have very distinct paragraphs, you can cite it using the author's last name and a shortened title, like this: (Smith, "Global Warming").

I can't find a date on my Internet source. How do I cite this?

If your source doesn't have a date and you can't seem to locate one through Internet research, write "n.d." to indicate that a publication date is not available.

What if my authors have the same last name?

List them as you normally would in the Works Cited page. The alphabetical order will be determined by the author's first initial instead. For your in-text citations, all you need to do is just add the author's first initial before their last name, like this: (L. Smith 33).

What do I do if I have to cite two works by the same author?

This might happen from time to time, especially if you're writing a literary essay or using an author who is well published within a specific field. In this case, list the author's last name, a shortened title in quotations like this: (Litman, "Global Warming," 33).

MLA Title Page and Numbering

Papers that are written in MLA format do not require a title page. Instead, at the beginning of your paper, include your first and last name, your professor's name, the class name, and the date, each on a separate line in the top left-hand corner. On the next line, write your title and center it. Don't bold or italicize the title. Your introductory paragraph will begin on the next line under the title.

Page numbers will go in the top right of each page. It should be formatted with your last name, so your first page will look like this: "Last Name 1." You can make this update when you add in page numbers using your word processor.

A BRIEF APA CITATION GUIDE

APA (American Psychological Association) style citation is commonly used in the sciences and social sciences, such as psychology. APA papers require a title page, a References page, and in-text citations in parentheses.

A BOOK WITH ONE AUTHOR

In-Text:

(Last Name, Year, p. Page Number).

When Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassman developed the atomic bomb, they began with uranium and hit it with neutrons to watch how it broke into other elements (MacCarald, 2017, p. 6).

References Page:

Last Name, First Initial. (Year). *Title of the book in sentence format (no capitalization unless after punctuation)*. Location: Publisher.

MacCarald, C. (2017). *The invention of the atomic bomb*. Mankato, MN: The Child's World.

A BOOK WITH TWO AUTHORS

In-Text:

(Last Name & Last Name, Year, p. Page Number).

The authors hint at foreshadowing early in chapter one, when they state "Uncle Morgan's news was never very great" (King & Straub, 1984, p. 19).

References Page:

First Author's Last Name, First Author's First Initial & Second Author's Last Name, Second Author's First Initial. (Year). *Title of the book in sentence format*. Location: Publisher.

King, S. & Straub, P. (1984). *The talisman*. New York, NY: Scribner.

A BOOK WITH MORE THAN TWO AUTHORS

In-Text:

(First Last Name et al., Year, p. Page Number).

According to one study, adolescents faced numerous challenges in classroom learning after they had been exposed to social media (Markle et al., 2012, p. 345).

References Page:

First Author's Last Name, First Author's First Initial, Second Author's Last Name, Second Author's First Initial, & Third Author's Last Name, Third Author's First Initial. (Year). *Title of book in sentence format*. Location: Publisher.

Markle, T., Scronan, E., & Smith, M. (2012). *Teaching digital literacy to adolescent youth*. New York, NY: Random House.

A CHAPTER IN A BOOK

In-Text:

(Last Name, Year, p. Page Number).

Homosexuality is just as invisible in a classroom as household abuse, substance issues, and other social problems (Gilbert, 2001, p. 78).

References Page:

Last Name, First Initial. (Year). Title of chapter in sentence format. In Editor's First Initial Editor's Last Name (Ed.), *Title of book in sentence format* (pp. Page Range of Chapter). Location: Publisher.

Gilbert, L. (2001). You're not the type. In B. Findlen (Ed.), *Listen up: Voices from the next feminist generation*

AN ACADEMIC JOURNAL

In-Text:

(Last Name, Year, p. Page Number).

Financial restrictions are often more difficult for African American publishers to overcome (Brown, 1999, p. 26).

References Page:

Last Name, First Name. (Year). Title of article in sentence format. *Title of Periodical, Volume Number*(Issue Number), pp. Page Range.

Brown, J. (1999). Comic book masculinity and the new black superhero. *African American Review, 33*(1), pp. 25-42.

A JOURNAL FOUND IN AN ONLINE DATABASE

In-Text:

(Last Name, Year, p. Page Number).

The South has been a prominent force in defining the ideology of race in modern history (West, 2003, p. 7).

References Page:

Last Name, First Name. (Year). Title of article in sentence format. *Title of Periodical, Volume Number*(Issue Number), pp. Page Range. DOI or URL.

West, E. (2003). Reconstructing race. *Western Historical Quarterly, 34*(1), pp. 6-26. Doi: 10.2307/25047206.

A WEBSITE, BLOG PAGE, OR OTHER INTERNET SOURCE

In-Text:

(Last Name, Year, para. Paragraph Number if Applicable).

Type 2 diabetes is generally more common in adults over the age of 40, but can still occur before this time (Watson, 2018).

References Page:

Last Name, First Initial if applicable. (Year, Month Date).
Title of the page in sentence format. Website Name. URL.

Watson, S. (4 Oct. 2018). Everything you need to know about diabetes. *Healthline.com*.
www.healthline.com/health/diabetes.

The newly updated APA guidelines only require “Retrieved from” in front of the URL if the website you get the information from is likely to change. For example, if you take information from a Wiki page that may be edited by someone at a later time, you need to include this. All other electronic entries don’t need this included.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES

In-Text:

(Last Name, Year, p. Page Number).

Sophie Turner reflects on her time in the spotlight on Game of Thrones, stating she struggled with anxiety and depression due to the pressure of the role (Hiatt, 2019, p. 59).

References Page:

Last Name, First Initial. (Year, Month Date). Title of the article in sentence format. *Name of Publication*, Issue Number if Applicable, Page Range.

Hiatt, B. (2019, April). Growing up Game of Thrones. *Rolling Stone*, 1326, pp. 54-59.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES (ONLINE)

In-Text:

(Last Name, Year, para. Paragraph Number).

Many small agricultural communities in the rural United States are facing desperate times as local budgets do not provide the resources to fix damaged roads (Cohen, 2020, para. 3).

References Page:

Last Name, First Initial. (Year, Month Date). Title of article in sentence format. *Title of Publication*. URL

Cohen, P. (18 Feb. 2020). The struggle to mend America's roads. *The New York Times*.
www.nytimes.com/2020/02/18/business/wisconsin-roads.html

A POEM IN PRINT

In-Text:

(Last Name, Year, p. Page Number).

"I took the one less traveled by,/ And that has made all the difference" (Frost, 1971, p. 223).

References Page:

Last Name, First Initial. (Year of Publication Edition). Title of poem in sentence format. In Editor's First Initial, Editor's Last Name (Eds.), *Title of book in sentence format* (pp. Page Range of Poem). Publisher. (Original Work Publication Year).

Frost, R. (1971). The road not taken. In L. Untermeyer (Ed.), *Robert Frost's poems* (p. 223). New York, NY: Washington Square Press. (1916).

A POEM FOUND ONLINE

In-Text:

(Last Name, Year).

“I took the one less traveled by,/ And that has made all the difference” (Frost, 1916).

References Page:

Last Name, First Initial. (Year, Month Date). Title of poem. *Title of Website*. URL.

Frost, R. (1916). The road not taken. *The Poetry Foundation*. www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44272/the-road-not-taken.

SHAKESPEARE AND OTHER LITERARY PLAYWRIGHTS

In-Text:

(Last Name, Year of the Edition You're Using, Act.Scene.Line).

“Happily he's the second time come to them;/ for they say an old man is twice the child” (Shakespeare, 1996, 2.2.390-391).

References Page:

Last Name, First Initial. (Year of Publication For Your Edition). *Title of play in sentence format*. Editor First Initial. Editor Last Name (Ed.). Location: Publisher. (Original Work Publication Year).

Shakespeare, W. (1996). *Hamlet*. London, England: Wordsworth Editions. (1603).

APA FAQs

What should I do if my source doesn't have an author?

If your source doesn't have an author, for example a website, you can use the title of the article in your in-text citation. It would look like this: ("Title," Year, Page Number). In very uncommon circumstances, an author may be listed as Anonymous. If you encounter this, use Anonymous as you would the author's name.

My source doesn't have page numbers. How do I cite this?

Whenever you can't find page numbers, use paragraph numbers instead (you may need to count them yourself). If that's not really an option either, you can just simplify the in-text citation to include the name and year, like this: (Last Name, Year).

I can't find a date on my Internet source. How do I cite this?

Any time you can't find a date on your source, you can use the abbreviation "n.d." This goes for both your in-text citations and your References page.

What if two of my authors have the same last name?

If you are using sources from two different authors who happen to have the same last name, just add their initial to the in-text citations to differentiate. So, it would look like this: (L. Smith, 2018, p. 21) and (H. Smith, 2003, p. 33).

What do I do if I have to cite two works by the same author?

Since APA requires the date of the publication within the in-text citation, the year will differentiate for you. Therefore, you only need to identify the publication if you're using multiple publications from the same author from the same year. In that case, use a lower case letter beside the year in the order they appear in the References page. For example, 2018a would refer to the first entry in the References page, while 2018b would be for the next.

APA Title Page and Numbering

APA formatting requires the use of a title page. On the title page, place your paper title on the upper part of the page, centered and capitalized like a regular title. Approximately two lines down from the title, list your name, your institution name, your course name, your instructor's name, and the due date in that order, each on its own line.

The page numbers for APA papers are a little bit different because the title page is different than the other pages. There should be a page number at the top right corner of every page, known as a "running head." On the first page, the title page, your heading should read "Running head: FULL TITLE OF YOUR PAPER" in the left corner, and the page number in the right. Every page after this should include a shortened version of the title, in all caps, on the left and the page number on the right.

Sometimes your APA paper will require an abstract. Most APA papers that require this are professional publications, dissertations, or master's thesis papers. For your typical undergraduate APA paper, you probably won't need to write one. However, if your instructions specifically ask for one, begin on the first page after your title page. Type "Abstract" centered in bold at the top of the page. Begin the abstract on the next line, without indenting. On the next line after your abstract paragraph, write out your keywords on an indented line.

A BRIEF CHICAGO STYLE CITATION GUIDE (NOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY)

Now, just to add to the list of things to worry about, Chicago Style actually has two different forms.

You have notes and bibliography style, and the author-date style. The notes and bibliography style is used primarily in history and the humanities, while the author-date style is commonly used in the sciences.

Notes and bibliography is the more common version of Chicago Style you'll encounter. It's a little more tricky than MLA and APA because it involves the footnote system. The first time your footnote is used, you'll need to write out the whole bibliography entry with a few differences that we will outline for you, and then each footnote from that source afterward can be shortened.

One note to remember for a Chicago Style bibliography is that entries should be single-spaced, with one full space between each entry and two spaces between the "Bibliography" title and the first entry.

A BOOK WITH ONE AUTHOR

First Footnote:

First Name Last Name, *Title of Book* (Location: Publisher, Year), page number.

Charles Townshend, *The Oxford History of Modern War* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 241.

Following Footnotes:

Last Name, *Shortened Title of Book*, page number.

Townshend, *Modern War*, 241.

Bibliography:

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Location: Publisher,

Year.

Townshend, Charles. *The Oxford History of Modern War*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005.

A BOOK WITH TWO AUTHORS

First Footnote:

First Author's First and Last Name and Second Author's First and Last Name, *Title of Book* (Location: Publisher, Year), Page Number.

Campbell Craig and Sergey Radchenko, *The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 73.

Following Footnotes:

First Author's Last Name and Second Author's Last Name, *Shortened Title of Book*, Page Number.

Craig and Radchenko, *The Atomic Bomb*, 73.

Bibliography:

First Author's Last Name, First Author's First Name and Second Author's First and Last Name. *Title of Book*. Location: Publisher, Year.

Craig, Campbell and Sergey Radchenko. *The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008.

A BOOK WITH MORE THAN TWO AUTHORS

First Footnote:

First Author's First Name and Last Name et al., *Title of Book* (Location: Publisher, Year), Page Number.

Fallon Brimmerman et al., *Western Civilization From 1600 to 1800* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011),

302.

Following Footnotes:

First Author's Last Name et al., *Shortened Title of Book*, page number.

Brimmerman et al., *Western Civilization*, 302.

Bibliography:

First Author's Last Name, First Author's First Name, Second Author's First and Last Name, Third Author's First and Last Name, and Fourth Author's First and Last Name. Title of Book. Location: Publisher, Year.

Brimmerman, Fallon, Mike Smith, Rose Petersen, and Maria Rotello. *Western Civilization From 1600 to 1800*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011.

A CHAPTER IN A BOOK

First Footnote:

First Name and Last Name, "Title of Chapter," in *Title of Book*, ed. Editor's First and Last Name (Location: Publisher, Year), Page Number.

Laurel Gilbert, "You're Not the Type," in *Listen Up: Voices From The Next Feminist Generation*, ed. Barbara Findlen (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2001), 74.

Following Footnotes:

Last Name, "Shortened Title of Chapter," Page Number.

Gilbert, "Not the Type," 74.

Bibliography:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Chapter." In *Title of Book*, edited by Editor's First Name and Last Name, Page Range. Location: Publisher, Year.

Gilbert, Laurel. "You're Not the Type." In *Listen Up: Voices From The Next Feminist Generation*, edited by Barbara Findlen, 74-83. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2001.

AN ACADEMIC JOURNAL

First Footnote:

First Name and Last Name, "Title of Article," *Journal Name* Volume Number, no. Issue Number (Year): Page Number.

Elliott West, "Reconstructing Race," *Western Historical Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (2003): 11.

Following Footnotes:

Last Name, "Shortened Title of Article," Page Number.

West, "Reconstructing Race," 11.

Bibliography:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Journal Name* Volume Number, no. Issue Number (Year): Page Range.

West, Elliott. "Reconstructing Race." *Western Historical Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (2003): 6-26.

A JOURNAL FOUND IN AN ONLINE DATABASE

First Footnote:

First Name and Last Name, "Title of Article," *Journal Name* Volume Number, no. Issue Number (Year): Page Number, accessed Month Day, Year, URL.

Jeffrey A. Brown, "Comic Book Masculinity and the New Black Superhero," *African American Review* 33, no. 1 (1999): 27, accessed February 25, 2020, doi:10.2307/2901299.

Following Footnotes:

Last Name, "Shortened Title of Article," Page Number.

Brown, "Comic Book Masculinity," 27.

Bibliography:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Journal Name*
Volume Number, no. Issue Number (Year): Page Range.
Accessed Month Date, Year. DOI or URL.

Brown, Jeffrey A. "Comic Book Masculinity and the New Black Superhero." *African American Review* 33, no. 1 (1999): 25-42. Accessed January 25, 2020.
doi:10.2307/2901299.

A WEBSITE, BLOG PAGE, OR OTHER INTERNET SOURCE

First Footnote:

First Name and Last Name, "Title of Web Page," Name of Website, Publishing Organization, Publication Date, URL.

Stephanie Watson, "Everything You Need To Know About Diabetes," Healthline, October 4, 2018, www.healthline.com/health/diabetes.

Following Footnotes:

Last Name, "Title of Web Page," Website Name.

Watson, "Diabetes," Healthline.

Bibliography:

Last Name, First Name if Available. "Title of the Page."
Website Name. Publishing Organization or Company,
Publication Date, URL.

Watson, Stephanie. "Everything You Need to Know About Diabetes." Healthline, October 4, 2018, www.healthline.com/health/diabetes.

For website sources, if the page includes a "last modified" date instead of a publication date, use this date but make it clear that it's the last modified date. If the publication date or last modified date isn't available, use the date you accessed the article by specifying "Accessed..."

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES

First Footnote:

First Name and Last Name, "Title of Article," *Publication Name*, Month Date Year, Page Number.

Brian Hiatt, "Growing up Game of Thrones," *Rolling Stone*, April 2019, 53.

Following Footnotes:

Last Name, "Shortened Title of Article," Page Number.

Hiatt, "Game of Thrones," 53.

Bibliography:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Publication Name*, Month Date Year.

Hiatt, Brian. "Growing up Game of Thrones." *Rolling Stone*, April 2019.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES (ONLINE)

First Footnote:

First Name and Last Name, "Title of Article," *Publication Name*, Month Date Year, URL.

Patricia Cohen, "The Struggle to Mend America's Rural Roads," *The New York Times*, Feb. 18 2020, www.nytimes.com/2020/02/18/business/wisconsin-roads.html.

Following Footnotes:

Last Name, "Shortened Title of Article."

Cohen, "America's Rural Roads."

Bibliography:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Publication Name*, Month Date Year. URL.

Cohen, Patricia. "The Struggle to Mend America's Rural Roads." *The New York Times*, Feb. 18 2020, www.nytimes.com/2020/02/18/business/wisconsin-roads.html.

A POEM IN A PRINTED PUBLICATION

First Footnote:

First Name and Last Name, "Title of Poem," in *Title of Book*, ed. Editor's First and Last Name (Location: Publisher, Year), Page Number.

Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken," in *Robert Frost's Poems*, ed. Louis Untermeyer (New York, NY: Washington Square Press, 1971), 223.

Following Footnotes:

Last Name, "Shortened Title of Poem if Necessary," Page Number.

Frost, "The Road Not Taken," 223.

Bibliography:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Poem." In *Title of Book*, edited by Editor's First Name and Last Name, Page Range. Location: Publisher, Year.

Frost, Robert. "The Road Not Taken." In *Robert Frost's Poems*, edited by Louis Untermeyer, 223. New York, NY: Washington Square Press, 1971.

A POEM FOUND ONLINE

First Footnote:

First Name and Last Name, "Title of Poem," Name of Website, Publishing Organization, Publication Date, URL.

Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken," The Poetry Foundation, n.d., www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44272/the-road-not-taken.

Following Footnotes:

Last Name, "Shortened Title of Poem if Necessary," Line Number.

Frost, "The Road Not Taken," 4-5.

Bibliography:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Poem." Website Name. Publishing Organization or Company, Publication Date, URL.

Frost, Robert. "The Road Not Taken." The Poetry Foundation, n.d., www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44272/the-road-not-taken

SHAKESPEARE AND OTHER LITERARY PLAYWRIGHTS

First Footnote:

First Name and Last Name, "Title of Play," in *Title of Book*, ed. Editor's First and Last Name (Location: Publisher, Year), Page Number.

William Shakespeare, "Hamlet," in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (London, England: Wordsworth Editions, 1996), 680.

Following Footnotes:

Last Name, *Play Title*, Act.Scene.Line

Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, 2.2.56-59.

Bibliography:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Play." In *Title of Book*, edited by Editor's First Name and Last Name, Page Range. Location: Publisher, Year.

Shakespeare, William. "Hamlet." In *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, 670-713. London, England: Wordsworth Editions, 1996.

Chicago Style FAQs:

What should I do if my source doesn't have an author?

In this instance, you would just start the bibliography entry with the title of the source and continue from there. The title of the source would then become the start of each footnote as well.

My source doesn't have page numbers. How do I cite this?

If your source is an online source that doesn't have page numbers, you don't need to include that information and can stick with the last name and shortened article title. Your first footnote will feature the URL of the link.

Chicago Style Title Page and Numbering

A Chicago Style title page is similar to an MLA style title page in terms of formatting. The title of your paper, capitalized properly, is centered in the upper middle section of the page. A few lines down, your name, course name, and the paper due date are listed in that order on their own lines. They should be double-spaced. Page numbers go in the top right corner.

OTHER CITATION FORMATS



While MLA, APA, and Chicago Style are very common and will likely be used most throughout your academic career, you may also encounter some other citation styles that are a little more complex.

These styles are often very specific and tailored to one particular subject area, such as law or medical science.

Some styles have also been developed for specific journals and publications, so you probably don't need to worry about them unless you're planning on getting published in a specific place.

Here's a brief summary of some other citation formats.

CITATION FORMAT	SUMMARY
ASA (American Sociology Association)	Used mostly in sociology fields to prepare manuscripts for publication in journals, ASA citation utilizes the author-date method with a Works Cited page.
Harvard	Mostly used by university students for academic essays, Harvard style is very similar to APA style, featuring author date citations and a References page.
AMA (American Medical Association)	Used for writing medical research, AMA style lists all references in numerical order at the end of the paper individually and single-spaced.

<p>Turabian</p>	<p>Since it's very similar to Chicago style, sometimes you'll see this one listed as Chicago/Turabian. Like Chicago style, Turabian has two systems: the notes and bibliography method, and the author-date method.</p>
<p>AAA (American Anthropological Association)</p>	<p>This is a very similar citation style to Chicago and is used by people who are studying anthropology, particularly those looking to publish in journals.</p>
<p>Vancouver System</p>	<p>Used in the medical and science fields, the Vancouver System, also known as Vancouver Referencing Style, uses an author-number system similar to AMA style.</p>
<p>OSCOLA (Oxford University Standard For the Citation of Legal Authorities)</p>	<p>A newer citation style developed by Oxford University, this footnote system is used when writing law or legal papers.</p>
<p>IEEE (Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers)</p>	<p>Used by professionals and students in the engineering and computer science fields, this citation style makes use of square brackets that correspond to a citation list at the end of the paper.</p>
<p>APSA (American Political Science Association)</p>	<p>This formatting is commonly used in political science when working with government documents. It's very similar to Chicago Style and uses most of the same guidelines.</p>



Chapter 8: Editing and Proofreading

At this point, we've walked you through all of the aspects of writing your essay: outlining, writing your paragraphs, citing, and sourcing. So what do you do next?

First, take a deep breath. The hardest part is over! Now it's time for the next step: editing and proofreading your paper. In this chapter, we'll go over what you should and shouldn't do during this process, and the benefits of having someone else look over your work. Be sure to consult our essay editing checklist to make sure you haven't missed anything or made easily avoidable errors that could result in lost marks.

The Importance of Peer Editing

Don't just run your paper through your word processor's spell check function and call it a day. Spell check will show you the grammatical and spelling errors, which are very important, but it's not going to check your paper for flow, argument strength, and overall effectiveness. Editing means a lot more than simply checking your paper for grammar and spelling errors. It means going through and making sure that your paper does exactly what it's supposed to be doing - gets your point across and leaves a message with your reader.

A fresh set of eyes on your paper can make a big difference when it comes to editing. Sure, your essay sounds good to you, but you're the one who wrote it. Of course it sounds good to you!

Losing marks for editing is one of the most avoidable situations for your assignment. A big portion of the rubric will always show a space for editing and proofreading. If you skip the peer editing step, or any editing steps in general, you could get a lower mark than you feel you deserve, all because of something that could have been fixed if you took the time to get someone else to read over your paper.

Give your paper to a friend, classmate, or even your roommate. They don't have to be in the same class as you, and in fact, it's better if they aren't. Without classroom knowledge, your friend can step in and take on the role of your reader with an open mind, and they'll be able to tell you if they understood everything you're trying to say. It's all about getting a completely new perspective on your paper to see how it flows, if it's easy to read, and if everything makes sense to someone who isn't that familiar with your topic.

Using a Professional Editing Service

When a paper is worth a big portion of your final grade, and the stakes are really high, it can be a big advantage to break out the big guns and work with a professional essay editing service. Having a friend or peer look over your paper is a major help, but sometimes it takes a professional to look for small errors or tiny details that could be tweaked to make your paper better overall.

A company that provides professional editing services has a team of highly experienced academic writers who are going to look over your paper for you. These writers have gone through years of schooling and education and have likely written hundreds of papers in their lifetime. They're also well versed in a variety of different subjects - so they really know their stuff. As a result, they are very familiar with all of the most common errors people make, what professors are looking for, and which areas have room for improvement.

If your paper is worth a major portion of your mark, it's worth it to enlist professional help. Consider this for your big assignments, thesis projects, and even your cover letters or resumes.

Essay Editing Checklist

Here is a detailed checklist of all of the more superficial things you should be looking for as you go through and read over your essay during the proofreading and editing process. For a more detailed checklist of everything you should be doing before and after you write your entire paper, see the list at the end of this book.

- Grammar
 - Punctuation:
 - Commas in correct places
 - Apostrophes used properly
 - Sentence Structure
 - Run-on sentences are eliminated
 - Proper use of words (such as the correct use of their)
 - Quotations
 - Direct quotations have quotation marks in the right spot
 - Periods are outside of brackets
 - Periods are inside quotation marks
- Spelling
 - Proper spelling, capital letters, and titles for all proper nouns
 - Paper is free from spelling errors overall (spell-check has been run)
- Structure
 - Each paragraph is indented
 - Filler words are avoided or used sparingly

- The paragraphs are written in an order that makes sense and helps direct the reader through the paper
 - The title makes sense and communicates the topic
 - The thesis statement is easily identified and the body paragraphs follow this order
- Tone
 - The tone is professional, formal, and academic
 - Contractions are avoided unless necessary

50 QUICK ESSAY HACKS AND WRITING TIPS

1. If you have to **write an article summary**, the first thing you should do is study the abstract.
2. If you're **not clear about your essay prompt**, ask your professor for clarification instead of going ahead and writing what you think is right. The last thing you want to do is spend hours writing an entire essay only to have it turn out to be wrong.
3. When **deciding on an essay topic**, if you can't sum up your argument in one sentence, your topic isn't narrow enough and needs to be refined.
4. When choosing a topic for an **argumentative essay**, choose something that makes you really mad. You'll be able to formulate strong arguments and fly through that essay in no time.
5. When working on a **long essay**, start a few weeks early and tell yourself to write just 10 words every day. Chances are, you'll write more than 10 at a time, but the small nature of the task makes you more motivated to sit down and do it.
6. **Make a mindmap before you start writing.** This helps you get a better sense of what to add to your essay and will also help you narrow down your thesis statement or topic.
7. When brainstorming for a **compare and contrast essay**, start by making a *venn diagram* of your topics.
8. **Don't skip your essay outline.** This helps you organize and structure your paper and can make the writing process a lot easier.

9. When **skimming through your sources** and taking notes, *write the notes directly in your document*. Then, line them up to create an essay plan that will help shape your outline.
10. When using **printed sources**, prepare for the writing process in advance by *attaching post it notes* wherever you find relevant information.
11. Stuck looking for sources? **Try using Google Scholar**. You can search tons of databases for published papers and turn on alerts for new papers in your field.
12. **Wikipedia** isn't accepted as a credible source for your paper. But sometimes you can *find helpful primary and secondary sources in the references section* at the bottom of each entry.
13. Can't find any sources? **Try Google Books**. Sometimes you can preview chapters and sections that could have the information you're looking for without having to go to the library.
14. Instead of leaving your bibliography and references to the end, *fill them out as you go along*. This saves you a headache when you're done and helps you keep track of how many sources you've used.
15. When using **online sources**, click the "" symbols by the article in the database. On most websites, this will give you **an automatic citation** in whichever format you select that you can just copy and paste into your bibliography.
16. Use a **citation generator like EasyBib** to auto-format bibliography entries for you. This will save you a lot of time and energy on the most tedious aspect of your paper.

17. The *research process* can be a big factor in procrastinating on an essay. To stay focused, **set a timer and use narrow, specific keywords** to find the information you're looking for.
18. Don't get in the habit of copying and pasting quotations from your sources. **Try to retype them out to absorb the information.** This helps you try to paraphrase, and will *avoid potential plagiarism* if you forget to come back and cite it.
19. Every time you use a citation, *provide an explanation*. This gives your essay context and helps explain why that evidence is relevant to your argument.
20. Use **Google Docs** to write your papers, then export them as Word Documents when you're ready to hand them in. This way, if your computer crashes while writing, you can find another computer and pick up where you left off.
21. When learning about a particular topic, such as **history or psychology**, it can help to *watch a short documentary* about it. There are plenty of educational videos on YouTube and streaming websites to search through.
22. You don't need to write your paper in the order it will be presented. Sometimes it's more effective to **leave the introduction until last**, when you've built up your knowledge about the subject.
23. In **Microsoft Word**, use **SHIFT + F7** to pull up **the thesaurus**. This helps you improve your vocabulary or find new terms to explain what you're trying to say.

24. Make sure each of your body paragraphs *begin with a transition sentence* to easily connect your ideas from one section to another and increase flow.
25. **Never use personal pronouns** unless it is specifically stated in the instructions to do so.
26. **Avoid using passive voice.** When editing your paper, go through in your document and search for the terms *were/was/are/is* and see if there are any opportunities to change these phrases to active voice.
27. Remember to **write in the literary present.** This means using present tense any time you're talking about something that happens in a story, play, poem, or film.
28. Familiarize yourself with **transition words**, and use them effectively to connect ideas and arguments.
29. Use a good blend of **long and short sentences** to keep your essay from getting too stiff or too casual.
30. **Avoid using adverbs.** Whenever you feel tempted to use one, ask yourself if there is a more descriptive way you can write the sentence instead.
31. **Avoid filler words** such as *"really," "very," and "just."* These just take up space and don't really add any value to your sentence or argument.
32. If you need to **lengthen your essay**, go through your paragraphs and see where *you can expand on your thoughts.* If you can add "because..." after the statement, you have room to expand on it.

33. If you're having **trouble filling up your body paragraphs**, go back to your sources or find new ones and *look for additional information you can quote or paraphrase*, which can in turn bring up new points of explanation.
34. **Don't overuse direct quotations.** This makes your writing look lazy. The more you paraphrase, the more it shows your professor that you understand the material.
35. When writing a long essay, *get up and move around often*. This gets your blood circulating, which helps get your energy pumping and improves brain function.
36. If you're hitting a wall and struggling to come up with new ideas while writing your essay, try getting up and switching your location. **The change of scenery can reignite your motivation.**
37. **Get comfortable while writing.** If you're not in a comfortable spot, you're going to get very distracted and lose your motivation quickly.
38. **Stay hydrated** during a long writing session. This helps you stay alert and focused.
39. Use a full-screen text editor to **block out distractions** and help you focus on getting your writing done without interruptions.
40. **Work on your grammar.** Know the difference between *their, they're, and there*. You'd be surprised how many university students still make simple and avoidable grammar mistakes, and this makes a bad impression on your professors or TAs.

41. **Avoid the typical “tricks” to try to reach page counts**, like shortening the margins, larger font size, or using wider spacing. Your professors are not new, and they can tell exactly what you’re trying to do here.
42. **Focus on quality over quantity.** Just because you go above the minimum page requirements doesn’t mean you’re getting extra marks. It’s better to have *a high-quality paper that meets the minimum page requirement* than a really long one that isn’t written very well.
43. If you’ve been given a **maximum word limit, don’t go over it.** Sometimes professors will stop marking when you hit that limit, and this can discredit your essay or cause you to lose marks.
44. If you’re **stuck trying to come up with a title**, try to narrow down your thesis statement into four or five key words, and use those as a base.
45. **Don’t start your essay with a quotation, cliché, or dictionary definition.** This makes your writing appear lazy and unoriginal, and sets the bar low right at the beginning of the paper.
46. While **editing your paper**, go through and *read it out loud*. Sometimes we think things make sense on paper until we hear them out loud, and this will give you opportunities to refine your sentences if necessary.
47. Copy and paste parts of your essay into **Google Translate**. Then, *click the speaker button* to hear Google’s bots say it out loud. This helps you hear it from a different perspective and will help you catch any errors or awkward phrasing.

48. When you're done writing your essay, go back over and **read your essay instructions or questions.** This helps to make sure you've covered everything you need to properly complete the assignment.
49. **Ask your professor or TA for feedback on your rough draft.** Not every professor will do this for you, but it never hurts to ask. The worst that will happen is getting a no in return.
50. Always **pay attention to professor comments and the errors you've made.** This is where you learn your strengths and weaknesses, and areas to focus on for your next paper.

A COMPLETE ESSAY WRITING CHECKLIST

PRE-WRITING

- Topic is narrowed down
- Thesis statement
- A mind map or brainstorming list
- All major points and thesis are listed in an essay outline
- Topic sentences are written for each paragraph/argument
- Body paragraphs are organized in the same way they appear in the thesis statement



WRITING

- Introduction with opening hook and thesis statement
- Body paragraphs for each supporting argument
- Conclusion with re-stated thesis and summary
- Each body paragraph begins with a transition sentence
- Each claim in the thesis has been supported by evidence
- An eye-catching and original title
- The thesis statement is easily identified in the introduction
- All information flows in a way that guides or directs the reader to a conclusion
- Tone is professional, academic, and formal
- Passive voice is used minimally
- Filler words are used minimally (or not at all)

- Information is relevant and supports the arguments (no irrelevant, fluff information)


WRITING

- All sources are properly formatted in the required style
- All evidence used in the paper has been credited
- Each argument or point made is supported by evidence
- Every citation has been explained and relevance is clear
- Every source that has been quoted has proper in-text citations
- Each in-text citation has a corresponding bibliography entry
- Properly formatted title page according to required style
- Periods are used outside of brackets after citation
- Bibliography is in alphabetical order

EDITING

- Minimal use of passive voice
- Paper is free of contractions
- Spell-check is completed
- All proper nouns have been double-checked for spelling and are capitalized
- Unnecessary capitalization is avoided
- Everything flows from start to finish
- There are no run-on sentences and each sentence is a complete thought
- Commas, colons, semicolons, and dashes have been used in proper context

- Proper use of words (ie. their, your - commonly misused versions of words)
- You've double-checked your essay instructions to make sure you've answered everything you were asked



Conclusion

This may seem like a lot of things you need to think about when you're writing your essay, but you'll soon realize that once you start writing more, these things will begin to come naturally to you. There's no reason to be afraid of your assignments and papers when you have the right resources by your side.

Refining your essay writing skills can be a major bonus to you in your future as well. In many jobs, you're going to find yourself needing to write documents like press releases, case studies, presentations, and even project proposals or reports. Good writing skills go a long way in almost any industry, and the elements you apply while writing your essay can also be applied to professional writing.

Remember, there are plenty of services out there that can help you if you're really struggling with your essay. If you need help, reach out and ask for it. No one is going to judge you or think that you're a bad student if you seek out help. In fact, you'll probably be admired for it.

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Good luck with your semester, your essays, and your future academic and professional career!



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