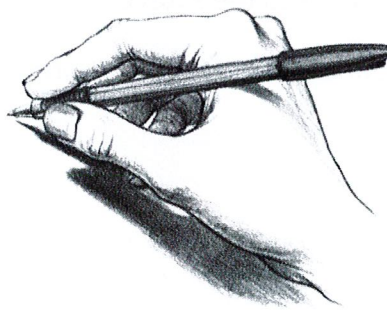




# South Fayette School District

## A Secondary MLA Writer's Reference Manual



2022-2023

## INTRODUCTION

This manual is the style guide to be used by the students and faculty of South Fayette School District. It is based on the MLA format for writing and documenting research papers. It highlights the most commonly used ways to document sources. For more in-depth information concerning MLA formatting, please consult the *MLA Handbook 9th Edition*.

As a rule, your teacher is the final authority on how to properly format your paper.

## WHAT IS PLAGARISM?

The purpose of a research paper is to explore, read, and compose a thesis based on your topic. You should synthesize previous scholarly research with your findings and ideas on the subject.

Plagiarism is taking someone else's work and using it as though it were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally. It is easy to avoid plagiarism as long as you remember that you may not use someone else's words just because they are well-written. Material should be cited when dealing with paraphrasing, direct quotes, and statistics. Plagiarism is a serious offense that can result in not only a failing grade, but may also have legal implications when copyright infringement takes place.

### Hints for Avoiding Plagiarism

1. When you quote from a source, use quotation marks and give credit to the source.
2. When you reword or summarize a passage, give credit to the source.
3. When you use statistics, give credit to the source.

Of course, you do not have to cite your own ideas and interpretations of the material.

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# MECHANICS

## CAPITALIZATION RULES FOR TITLES

The following rules apply when capitalizing titles:

- Capitalize the first word and the last word of a title.
- Always capitalize the following parts of speech:
  - Nouns- Capitalize *adventures* in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.
  - Pronouns- Capitalize *our* in *Save Our Children*.
  - Verbs- Capitalize *are* in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*.
  - Adjectives- Capitalize *ugly* in *The Ugly Duckling*.
  - Adverbs- Capitalize *down* in *Go Down, Moses*.
- Capitalize subordinating conjunctions (for example: *after, although, because, before, if, until, and when*). Capitalize *if* as in *One If by Land*.

Do **not** capitalize the following when they fall in the middle of a title:

- Articles (*a, an, the* as in *The Old Man and the Sea*).
- Prepositions (for example: *about, in, on, to, between, of* as in *Lord of the Flies*)
- Coordinating conjunctions (for example: *and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet* as in *Romeo and Juliet*)

Ignore capitalization of words in titles on the Internet because they are often incorrect. Use proper MLA format rules for capitalization of titles.

## PUNCTUATION RULES FOR TITLES

The titles in your paper should either be italicized or enclosed in double quotation marks.

**Use italics for the following: (long independent works, and works that contain other works)**

- Names of books (*The Grapes of Wrath, Of Mice and Men*)
- Names of plays (*The Crucible, Hamlet*)
- Long poems published as books (*Paradise Lost*)
- Names of periodicals such as newspapers, magazines, journals (*Wall Street Journal, Time*)
- Names of films (*Lord of the Rings, Schindler's List*)

- Names of radio and television shows (*Dateline, Dawson's Creek, Friends*)
- Names of music albums (*A Place in the Sun*)
- Names of artwork (*Mona Lisa, David*)
- Names of software (*PowerPoint, Excel*)
- Names of websites (*Barron's Online*)

**Use quotation marks for the following: (short works, works that are contained in other works)**

- Names of newspaper articles ("Rise in Aid to Education Is Proposed")
- Names of magazine articles ("Oprah Interviews Elie Wiesel")
- Names of encyclopedia articles ("Anorexia")
- Names of essays in a book ("The Fiction of John Steinbeck")
- Names of short stories ("The Bet")
- Names of poems ("The Raven")
- Names of chapters in books ("The American Economy before the Civil War")
- Internet article titles ("Steroid Use")

## **DOCUMENTING SOURCES**

### **PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS**

The method of documentation used most frequently in high schools and colleges today is called parenthetical citations or parenthetical documentation. Your research paper should have many parenthetical citations because you must give credit to the person or source that provided you with the information.

#### ***What should be cited with parenthetical citation?***

- Cite information that is paraphrased.
- Cite all direct quotations. Quotation should be enclosed in quotation marks, and **you** should comment on the quotation.
- Cite statistics and other facts.
- Cite images/pictures.
- Cite graphs, charts, and diagrams.
- Cite a story you might include to illustrate a point.



You do **not** need to cite information that is considered common knowledge. Information that is common knowledge is information that people already know or information that is considered to be common because it is easily found in a number of sources.

Be sure to vary and integrate your parenthetical citations and not to use them in every sentence or at the end of every paragraph. Make sure that some of your paper is **your** analysis of the information.

### ***How do I write a parenthetical citation?***

Usually, the parenthetical citation includes the last name of the author and the page number of the information. Once you end the sentence, put your parenthetical citation in parentheses and place the period **after** the parenthetical citation. There is **no** comma between the author's last name and page number.

Any parenthetical citation used must be an entry on the Works Cited page. Anything listed on the Works Cited page must be used as a source within the paper.

### **EXAMPLES OF PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS**

#### *One author:*

In 2021, 61% of graduating high school seniors across the country went on to attend either a 2-year or 4-year college or university (Jones 35).

#### *Two or more authors:*

In 2021, 61% of graduating high school seniors across the country went on to attend either a 2-year or 4-year college or university (Jones and Green 12).

#### *More than three authors:*

In 2021, 61% of graduating high school seniors across the country went on to attend either a 2-year or 4-year college or university (Jones et al. 55).

#### *More than one author with same last name (Use first initial to distinguish):*

In 2021, 61% of graduating high school seniors across the country went on to attend either a 2-year or 4-year college or university (M. Jones 15).

In 2021, 61% of graduating high school seniors across the country went on to attend either a 2-year or 4-year college or university (B. Jones 22).

*No author (Use title):*

In 2021, 61% of graduating high school seniors across the country went on to attend either a 2-year or 4-year college or university (“Preparing for Your Future” 36).

## WORKS CITED

A Works Cited page should appear at the end of your research paper with the title Works Cited. It is not bolded, italicized, underlined or written in a larger font. The Works Cited page is an alphabetized, unnumbered list of the publication information of each of the sources you used in your research paper. Do not include sources here that are not cited in your paper. Creating a Works Cited page requires you to be very careful to follow all of the rules.

Please note: Subsequent lines of each new entry should be a hanging indent (indented 0.5 inches). Each entry should be alphabetized and double-spaced.

### Creation and Formatting Entries

Use the following core elements to create a Works Cited entry:

Core Elements- Entries in the works-cited list are created using the MLA template of core elements.

1. Author.
2. Title of Source.
3. Title of Container,
4. Contributor,
5. Version,
6. Number,
7. Publisher,
8. Publication Date,
9. Location.

**Author**- can be an individual, organization, pseudonym or government.

**Title of Source**- title of the work you are citing. This can be replaced with an informative description if there is no formal title.



**Title of Container-** a container is a work in which another work is contained. This can include periodicals, databases, websites, newspapers, print anthologies, albums, podcast, television series, etc.

**Contributor-** Groups, organizations and people that may contribute to a work but are not the primary creator.

**Version-** You must identify a version if a work is in more than one form. Look for a notation that indicates there are other versions or editions.

**Numbers-** The number of a work can be found in a variety of places. Look for volume number, issues numbers, etc. Replace roman numerals and spelled out numbers with Arabic numerals and an abbreviated identifier (vol. 5, no. 7).

**Publisher-** The entity that is responsible for producing the work and/or distributing it to the public. This can include a institution, publisher of the book, network, or agency.

**Publication Date-** The date given as to when the work was published. This can be an exact date, month, year, season or exact time stamp.

*To make a Works Cited list entry, choose all applicable elements from the following template:*

1	Author
2	Title of Source

Container:

3	Title of Container
4	Contributor
5	Version
6	Number
7	Publisher
8	Publication Date
9	Location

- You may skip any element from the template if it is unavailable except for the “Title of Source” element
- List the elements in the order provided in the template
- Always end the entry with a period

## EXAMPLES OF WORK CITED ENTRIES

### Books

#### One author:

Author (Last name, First Name). *Title of the Book*. Publishing Company, Copyright Date.

Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*. Penguin Books, 1995.

#### Two authors:

Author (Last name, First Name), and Author (First name Last name). *Title of the Book*.

Publishing Company, Copyright Date.

Hyde, Margaret, and Elizabeth Forsythe. *Suicide: The Hidden Epidemic*. Houghton, 2016.

#### Three or more authors:

Only provide the first author’s name followed by “et al.” *Title of the Book*. Publishing Company,

Copyright Date.

Green, Jefferson, et al. *Prize Legacies*. Random House, 2016.

#### By an Unknown Author:

*Title of the Book*. Publishing Company, Copyright Date.

*The Smart Aleck’s Guide to American History*. Delacorte Press, 2021.

Edited:

Author (Last name, First name). *Title of the Book*. Edited by (First name Last name), Publishing Company, Copyright Date.

Lewis, Pat. *Drug Addiction*. Edited by Dominic Miller, Delacorte Press, 2021.

Entry in Encyclopedia:

"Article Title." *Title of the Reference Book*, edited by First name, Last name, Edition, Publisher, Date, Page numbers.

"Computers." *Encyclopedia Americana*, edited by Jennifer Brown, 4th ed., McGraw-Hill Education, 2021, p. 415.

**Periodicals**

Article from Magazine:

Author (Last name, First Name). "Title of Article." *Title of the Magazine*, vol.#, no.#, Date, pp. #-#.

Jones, Norman. "Computers." *Changing Times*, vol. 16, no. 2, June. 2021, pp. 48-53.

Article from Newspaper:

Author (Last name, First Name). "Title of Article" *Title of the Newspaper*, vol.#, no.#, Date, pp.#-#.

Smithers, Bob. "Steelers Victory." *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, 25 Sept. 2023, pp 19-20.

## **Web Publications**

### Webpage:

Author (Last name, First Name). "Title of the Article." *Title of Overall Website*, Publisher (omit if same as website name), Date, URL. Accessed Date.

Green, James. "The Rove Presidency." *The Atlantic*, 14 Oct. 2020,

[www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2007/09/the-rove-presidency/](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2007/09/the-rove-presidency/) .

Accessed 15 May 2021.

### Online Database:

Author (Last name, First name). "Title of Article." *Title of Periodical*, vol.#, no.#, Date.

*Title of Database*. URL.

Black, Nicole. "Postmodernism." *Postmodern Culture*, vol. 10, no. 5, May 2021. *JSTOR*,

[www.jstor.org/stable/47238198](http://www.jstor.org/stable/47238198).

## **Media**

### Film:

Start with the film title, followed by:

- Name of director,
- Film studio or distributor,
- Date of the release:

*Title*. Director. Distributor, Date of Release.

*It's a Wonderful Life*. Directed by Frank Capra. Republic, 2021.

Image/Picture:

- *If you accessed the artwork online, add the date the artwork was created (not the date of publication on the website).*

Artist name. *Name of Image*. Date artwork was created. *Name of distributor*, URL.

Green, Jerald. *Bridge over a Pond*. 2021. *Decoded Past*, [decodedpast.com/bridge-over-a-pond/8473/](https://decodedpast.com/bridge-over-a-pond/8473/).

Video Game:

*Title of game*. Version. Distributor, Date of Release.

*Minecraft*. Version 1.18.200. Sony Interactive Entertainment, 9 Dec. 2020.

Live Radio:

Start with the episode title followed by:

- Program or series name
- Name of the network
- Call letters of the station
- Date of broadcast
- 

“Episode Title.” *Series Name*, hosted by (first name last name), Call letters of the station, Date.

“Importance of Education.” *A New Path*, hosted by Cheryl West, KDCA, 18 Feb 2021.



# Formatting MLA Paper

## Page 1 of an MLA Formatted Paper

- Page 1 of the report needs to begin your header and page numbers. It will be a running head one-half inch from the top.
- Page 1 of the report will have the following information once inch from the top on the left side of the page and doubled spaced:
  - o Your first and last name
  - o Your teacher's name
  - o The class
  - o The date written as Day Month and Year (ex. 4 March 2021)
- Page 1 of the report then contains the title of your paper centered. Do not increase the font of the title, do not bold it, do not italicize it, and do not underline it. If you title contains a subtitle, use a colon to separate them.

## General Paper Rules

- Continue using the header of your last name and page number through your Works Cited page.
- Do not use a separate title page unless your teacher requests that you have one.
- Top, bottom and side margins should be one inch.
- The entire paper is double-spaced, including the heading and the Works Cited page.

## Numbers in a Paper

- Spell out numbers of one or two words or numbers that begin a sentence. Do not use a numeral at the beginning of a sentence. Use figures for numbers that require more than two words to spell out. Numerals may be used if the paper uses a lot of numbers, such as math-related paper.

## Quotations in a Paper

- Quotations from authorities are excellent to use for support. When you use a quotation, remember to use quotation marks. You may include the entire quotation or parts of a quotation.
- If a quotation is longer than four typed lines, set it off by beginning a new line that is indented then spaces or one inch from the left margin, type it double-spaced, do not include quotation marks, and put a parenthetical citation after it. Note that the punctuation at the end of the sentence is placed before the parenthetical citation in an indented quotation.

**Example of a quotation longer than 4 lines:**

At the conclusion of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, Ralph and the other boys realize the horror of their actions:

The tears began to flow and sobs shook him. He gave himself up to them now for the first time on the island; great, shuddering spasms of grief that seemed to wrench his whole body. His voice rose under the black smoke before the burning wreckage of the island; and infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake and sob too.

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**Note-** The name of the author does not appear in the parenthetical citation because it appears in the sentence introducing the quotation.

*(This handbook has been updated from the original SFSD MLA handbook to reflect the changes made in the newest edition of the MLA Handbook 9<sup>th</sup> Edition).*

