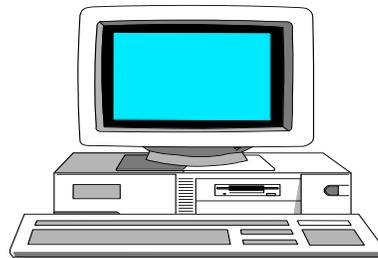# PWCS

Eleventh Grade Research Writing
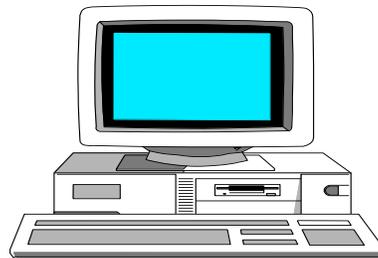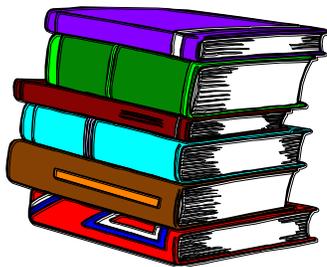
Student Handbook

PWCS

Eleventh Grade Research Writing

Student Handbook

Dear Eleventh Grade Students:

I am proud that eleventh grade students in the Prince William County Public School Division complete a research paper as part of their junior year instructional experience. Your teachers and administrators are confident that the skills you will develop conducting your research project will benefit you in your future endeavors, regardless of the career you choose.

I recognize that this requirement will necessitate a considerable amount of work from you and your teachers. However, the process of completing your research paper is an important component of a quality educational program. I encourage you and your parents/guardians to discuss with your teacher any questions you may have about this project.

I am confident that you will be successful in your efforts, and I wish you every success for the new school year.

Sincerely,

Superintendent of Schools

TABLE OF CONTENTS

General Requirements

Topic

♦ Student choice with teacher advisement

♦ Minimum of four full pages of text; maximum of seven pages
(The Works Cited page will be numbered; however, it is not considered part of the text.)

Sources

♦ Minimum of five cited sources, emphasizing a variety of types as appropriate to the subject

Formatting

♦ 12 point, double-spaced, standard business font, such as Times Roman or Courier

♦ 8 1/2 x 11 inch white paper of good quality

♦ Set computer margins one inch at top and bottom and on both sides of text.

♦ Pages should be numbered consecutively throughout the manuscript in the upper right corner, including Works Cited page, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin.

♦ Do NOT include your name on any page. Include your student number beside the page number by placing it to the left of the page number, leaving a space between. Your student number replaces your last name in the MLA format.

♦ The title is centered one inch from the top of the page with a double space between title and line of text.

♦ The title should have NONE of the following: underlining, quotation marks, all capital letters, or bold print.

♦ Your title is NOT your topic or your thesis statement and is usually not in the form of a complete sentence or question. The thesis statement is found in the text, not on the title line.

♦ Modern Language Association (MLA) Style

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th ed. New York: Modern

Language Assn., 2009. Print.

Point of View

♦ Third person

♦ The words *I, you, me, my, our, us, we,* or *your* should **NOT** appear in your paper **UNLESS** it is part of a quote.

Special Notes

A stapled final copy submitted for central scoring includes the text, a works-cited page, and a signed Statement of Authorship. Do NOT include a separate title page, outline, abstract, teacher's name or school name.

A research paper combines the student's conclusions about a topic with the ideas of people with expertise to support those conclusions. Failure to give credit to the ideas of others is a form of plagiarism. The following statement is from the "Rules and Regulations" section of the *2011-12 Code of Behavior* for Prince William County Public Schools.

"**Plagiarism - Students are responsible for giving due recognition of sources from which material is quoted, summarized or paraphrased, as well as to persons from whom assistance has been received.**"

Deviations from the general requirements will result in lower scores in the affected domain(s).

Why are eleventh grade students required to write a research paper?

This question is undoubtedly in your mind as you contemplate responsibilities for completion of your English 11 class. This question is a valid one and can be addressed through the following examples. We are engaged every day in research projects. The search begins when we need to know more about something of interest. This need for information arises from our personal experiences. For instance, if you would like to spend your vacation time in Alaska, you need information about transportation, lodging, points of interest, food expenses, and weather. Where do you turn for information? You seek people who know something about Alaska or materials which describe its features. These may be travel agents, people who have lived or traveled there, brochures or other written information. After the necessary information gathering, you would evaluate what you have found and make a decision or draw a conclusion. The Alaskan vacation becomes a reality, a possibility, or a completely impractical idea.

Suppose you are in the market for a new or used car. What do you need to know? Who can help you? At what point will you be ready to decide which car is right for you? And so the research process goes on in many different ways and for many different reasons everywhere people are learning, exploring and living their lives.

In an information-based society, you must be aware of your informational needs, how to find answers to your questions, and how to evaluate the reliability of the information you find. An assigned research paper will help you learn skills for increasing your knowledge of a subject, become proficient at locating and interpreting information and make informed decisions in your life. This proficiency becomes the basis for life-long learning.

This handbook combined with teacher instruction will enable you to learn a formal procedure for completing a research paper. The teacher's responsibility is to instruct and guide you through the 14-step process; your responsibility is to do all of the actual work. Following the 14-step process and committing yourself to a genuine period of discovery should lead you to a satisfactory completion of clarifying, analyzing, synthesizing, and presenting material.

RESEARCH PAPER PROCESS
FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

The 14-step process which follows is the basis for Prince William County's research writing; therefore, these steps will be the outline for the information contained in your handbook. The steps guide you through the process of completing the research paper. Your teacher will provide instruction, guidance, and assessment as you complete the 14 steps. Successful completion of each of the 14 steps is required prior to the submission of the final paper.

- ❑ **1.** Learn to assess writing through rubric scoring

- ❑ **2.** Review MLA guidelines for documentation

- ❑ **3.** Select and narrow a topic

- ❑ **4.** Examine library and electronic sources

- ❑ **5.** Prepare a working list of possible sources

- ❑ **6.** Develop a preliminary thesis

- ❑ **7.** Read, study, and take notes

- ❑ **8.** Formulate the final thesis statement

- ❑ **9.** Develop an outline

- ❑ **10.** Write first draft, including parenthetical documentation and works-cited page

- ❑ **11.** Revise first draft

- ❑ **12.** Proofread and edit draft

- ❑ **13.** Proofread for correct documentation and formatting

- ❑ **14.** Submit final paper, copies, all research materials, and signed Statement of Authorship

1 Learn to assess writing through rubric scoring

What is a writing rubric?

A rubric is a guide for examining, discussing, and evaluating the essential elements of writing. All good writing has common essentials: development of a topic with elaboration (reasons, details, examples, support) in an organized, logical manner with a beginning, middle, and end; appropriate language for the purpose of the paper and the audience; and clarity and readability through the use of standard sentence structure, grammar, mechanics, and formatting.

A rubric can be applied to any type of writing (descriptive, narrative, expository or persuasive) on any grade level. Such a rubric is included in the Prince William County Language Arts Curriculum. The State of Virginia uses a rubric for assessing writing tests. Several times in your school career you have been asked to provide a writing which has been assessed by a rubric. The purpose of these writing assessments is to monitor the progress of your writing proficiency.

Your teacher will review with you the use of this rubric. You will then apply the rubric to student writings so that you will understand how basic elements of writing are assessed.

After you practice scoring papers using the rubric, your teacher will assist you in the use of an enhanced version of it, which was designed specifically for examining and assessing research papers. You will then apply the rubric to research papers of other eleventh grade students and to your research paper.

Research Writing Rubric

Scoring Domains

- ❑ **Content**

- ❑ **Style**

- ❑ **Structure**

- ❑ **Presentation**

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS RESEARCH WRITING RUBRIC – CONTENT

LEVEL	THESIS	EVIDENCE/SUPPORT	UNITY	ORGANIZATION
4 **CONSISTENT CONTROL**	• One central idea/concept/hypothesis/premise fully and precisely stated • Developed consistently throughout the document	• Strong support for thesis by drawing information from multiple sources • All information relevant, reliable and up-to-date • All information accurately stated; appropriate use of summarization, paraphrasing and quotations	• No distracting information • All differences among sources handled effectively • Appropriate balance between narrative/descriptive material and critical analysis	• Uses logical progression of evidence or support for ideas/concepts/hypotheses/premises according to the content area • Transitions facilitate flow of ideas/concepts/hypotheses/premises • Conclusion contains no distracting information which digresses from the thesis (If appropriate, the conclusion clearly indicates unsolved questions and new questions that have emerged from the research)
3 **REASONABLE CONTROL**	• One central idea/concept/hypothesis/premise stated but not perfectly clear • Developed somewhat throughout the document	• Adequate support for thesis by drawing information from various sources • Most information relevant, reliable and up-to-date • Most information accurately stated; appropriate use of summarization, paraphrasing and quotations	• Little distracting information • Most differences among sources handled effectively • Adequate balance between narrative/descriptive material and critical analysis	• Generally uses a logical progression of evidence and support for ideas/concepts/hypotheses/premises according to the content area • Transitions used between many ideas • Conclusion contains no distracting information which digresses from the thesis
2 **INCONSISTENT CONTROL**	• Idea/concept/hypothesis/premise suggested but not stated • Inconsistent development throughout the document	• Support for thesis weak or from too few sources • Some information irrelevant, unreliable or out-of-date • Some information accurately stated; information mostly paraphrased or quoted	• Some distracting information • Differences among sources inadequately handled • Some balance between narrative/descriptive materials and critical analysis	• Lapses in progression of evidence or support for ideas/concepts/hypotheses/premises according to the content area • Few transitions between ideas • Conclusion is simply stated
1 **LITTLE OR NO CONTROL**	• No apparent idea/concept/hypothesis/premise	• Support for thesis inadequate • Most information irrelevant, unreliable or out-of-date • Much information inaccurately stated	• Much distracting information • Differences among sources not handled • Inadequate balance between narrative/descriptive material and critical analysis	• Little or no progression of evidence or support for ideas/concepts/hypotheses/premises according to the content area • No transitions between ideas • No conclusion

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS RESEARCH WRITING RUBRIC – STYLE

LEVEL	VOCABULARY	AUDIENCE/PURPOSE	SENTENCE VARIETY
4 **CONSISTENT** **CONTROL**	• Uses precise vocabulary unique to the content area or topic	• Relates to a specific audience with a clearly identified purpose • Tone/voice/point of view are appropriate to content and grade level; compelling and sustained throughout	• Appropriate to content and grade level • Varies in length and complexity
3 **REASONABLE** **CONTROL**	• Uses less precise vocabulary unique to the content area or topic	• Relates to a specific audience with a clearly identified purpose • Tone/voice/point of view are adequate for content and grade level and generally sustained throughout	• Adequate to content and grade level • Varies in length and complexity
2 **INCONSISTENT** **CONTROL**	• Uses general vocabulary not specific to the content area or topic	• Does not relate to an audience or has no clear purpose • Tone/voice/point of view not sustained	• Inadequate for content and grade level • Frequently used simple sentences
1 **LITTLE OR NO** **CONTROL**	• Uses little or no vocabulary from the content area or topic	• No awareness of audience or purpose • Little or no control of tone/voice/point of view	• Inappropriate to content and grade level • Little or no control of sentence variety

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PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS RESEARCH WRITING RUBRIC – STRUCTURE

LEVEL	SENTENCE FORMATION	MECHANICS	USAGE
4 **CONSISTENT** **CONTROL**	• Writes in complete sentences, using standard word order and subordination	• Uses capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and format (paragraph indentation, division of words by syllables) correctly	• Uses standard grammar
3 **REASONABLE** **CONTROL**	• Makes occasional errors, but not significant enough to distract from the meaning of the document	• Use of occasional errors is not sufficient to distract from the meaning of the document	• Makes occasional errors in grammar but not sufficient to distract from the meaning of the document
2 **INCONSISTENT** **CONTROL**	• Makes frequent errors which distract from the meaning of the document	• Use of frequent errors distracts from the meaning of the document	• Makes frequent errors which begin to distract from the meaning of the document
1 **LITTLE OR NO** **CONTROL**	• Displays little or no understanding of sentence formation	• Displays little or no understanding of appropriate punctuation or conventional spelling	• Displays little or no understanding of grammar usage

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS RESEARCH RUBRIC – PRESENTATION

LEVEL	WRITTEN	
	DOCUMENTATION	FORM
4 CONSISTENT CONTROL	**Uses correct MLA documentation**	• **Uses correct MLA page formatting and numbering** • **Paper legible and neat**
3 REASONABLE CONTROL	**Uses MLA documentation with few errors**	• **Uses correct MLA page formatting and numbering with few errors** • **Paper legible and generally neat**
2 INCONSISTENT CONTROL	**Uses MLA documentation with many errors**	• **Uses MLA Page formatting and numbering inconsistently** • **Paper difficult to read**
1 LITTLE OR NO CONTROL	**Uses little or no MLA documentation**	• **Uses little or no MLA page formatting and numbering** • **Paper very difficult to read**

Remember:

◆ Use a variety of sources.
◆ For every source on the works cited page, there must be at least one <u>matching</u> parenthetical citation in the body of the paper.
◆ Include as much information as you can for electronic sources.

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS RESEARCH WRITING RUBRIC – RATING FORM

DOMAINS	CONSISTENT CONTROL 4	REASONABLE CONTROL 3	INCONSISTENT CONTROL 2	LITTLE/NO CONTROL 1
• CONTENT	• One central idea/concept/hypothesis/premise fully and precisely stated • Strong support for thesis by drawing information from multiple sources • No distracting information • Uses logical progression of evidence or support for ideas/concepts/hypotheses/premise according to the content area	• One central idea/concept/hypothesis/premise stated but not perfectly clear • Adequate support for thesis by drawing information from various sources • Little distracting information • Generally uses a logical progression of evidence and support for ideas/concepts/hypotheses/premises according to the content area	• Idea/concept/hypothesis/premise suggested but not stated • Support for thesis weak or from too few sources • Some distracting information • Lapses in progression of ideas according to the content area; ideas/concepts/hypotheses/premises may be repetitive	• No apparent idea/concept/hypothesis/premise • Support for thesis inadequate • Much distracting information • Little or no progression of evidence or support for ideas/concepts/hypotheses/premises according to the content area
• STYLE	• Uses precise vocabulary unique to the content area or topic • Relates to a specific audience with a clearly identified purpose • Sentence variety, length, and complexity appropriate to content and grade level	• Uses less precise vocabulary unique to the content area or topic • Relates to a specific audience with a clearly identified purpose • Sentence variety, length, and complexity adequate to content and grade level	• Uses general vocabulary not specific to the content area or topic • Does not relate to an audience or has no clear purpose • Sentence variety, length, and complexity, inadequate for content and grade level	• Uses little or no vocabulary from the content area or topic • No awareness of audience or purpose • Sentence variety, length, and complexity inappropriate to content and grade level
• STRUCTURE	• Writes in complete sentences, using standard word order and subordination • Uses capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and format (paragraph indentation, division of words by syllables) correctly • Uses standard grammar	• Makes occasional sentence errors, but not significant enough to distract from the meaning of the document • Makes occasional mechanical errors but not sufficient to distract from the meaning of the document • Makes occasional grammatical errors but not sufficient to distract from the meaning of the document	• Makes frequent sentence errors which distract from the meaning of the document • Makes frequent mechanical errors which distract from the meaning of the document • Makes frequent grammatical errors which distract from the meaning of the document	• Displays little or no understanding of sentence formation • Displays little or no understanding of appropriate punctuation or conventional spelling • Displays little or no understanding of grammar usage
• PRESENTATION	<u>Written</u> • Paper legible and neat • Correct documentation, page formatting, and numbering without error	<u>Written</u> • Paper legible and generally neat • Correct documentation, page formatting, and numbering with few errors	<u>Written</u> • Paper difficult to read • Inconsistent documentation, page formatting, and numbering; many errors	<u>Written</u> • Paper very difficult to read • Little or no documentation, page formatting, and numbering

Title of Paper _____   Reader _____

Research Paper Scoring Guide

Domains

1. **Content**
   - A. Thesis
   - B. Supporting Evidence
   - C. Unity
   - D. Organization

II. **Style**
   - A. Audience Awareness
   - B. Communication of Purpose
   - C. Sentence Variety
   - D. Vocabulary

III. **Structure**
   - A. Sentence Formation
   - B. Mechanics
   - C. Usage/Grammar

IV. **Presentation**
   - A. Documentation
     1. Use of Parenthetical Documentation
     2. Works Cited
     3. Match Between Parenthetical Documentation and Works Cited
   - B. Format of Paper

Content	4	3	2	1	x 2 =_____
Style	4	3	2	1	x 1 =_____
Structure	4	3	2	1	x 1 =_____
Presentation	4	3	2	1	x 1 =_____
Total Points					

4 = Consistent Control   3 = Reasonable Control
2 = Inconsistent Control   1 = Little or No Control

2 | Review MLA guidelines for documentation

The style format specified in the General Requirements for this research paper is found in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (Seventh edition). This handbook shows examples of formats you will need when you give credit to your sources. Since conveying information from a variety of sources is essential in reporting research findings, you will need to know how to credit properly the sources you used in developing your paper. The MLA style uses parenthetical documentation (citing sources within the text) and a page of works cited at the end of the paper.

Parenthetical documentation

When you cite (or refer to) sources within your paper, you are providing more *details* as to exactly what you derived from each source and where you found the material. These citations acknowledge works, facts, and ideas of others and become your support system for your thesis throughout your paper. Some general guidelines to follow for parenthetical documentation include the following:

♦ The citation appears in parentheses where a pause would naturally occur.

♦ The punctuation mark at the end of the sentence is placed **outside** the closing parenthesis.

♦ Parenthetical documentation is **brief**. Usually, the author's name and page number are sufficient. In other cases, use only the first significant word(s) of the works-cited page entry.

♦ For every source on the works-cited page, there must be at least one **matching** parenthetical citation in the body of the paper.

Examples of these forms of citation can be found in this section of your handbook or the *MLA Handbook* (Seventh edition).

Works-cited page

A works-cited page placed at the end of your paper gives general information about the sources you have used. **For this page, include only works which you actually documented within your paper.** The information contained in these entries will enable those who read your paper to be able to locate your sources. The seventh edition of the *MLA Handbook* adds a requirement of medium of publication (e.g. Print) to be included for print publications. A typical works-cited entry for a book includes the following, with punctuation included:

1. Author's Last name, First name.
2. *Title of Book.*
3. City of publication:
4. Publisher's name,
5. Year of publication.
6. Medium of publication consulted.

Example:

Green, Philip. *Handling Research with Ease.* New York: ABC Research,

1997. Print.

You naturally will encounter many different types of sources. Examples range from books with several authors, multivolume works, reference materials, government publications, magazine or newspaper articles, films, pamphlets, and even works with no author given, to mention a few. Also included among sources to be documented are electronic sources.

Regardless of the origin of your source, each one that you use must be documented. Examples of kinds of entries you can use as models are found on the following pages. Listed first will be the ways of documenting sources used within the text. Following that will be examples of forms needed for your works-cited page. Notice that these include documentation for the samples given in the parenthetical documentation as well as examples of other forms. You will then find a *sample* works-cited page. Study and follow the style very carefully.

Remember: For every source on the works-cited page, there must be a clear and specific match between each internal citation and its entry on the works-cited page. A reader should be able to identify the specific source for each internal citation.

Examples of parenthetical citations

Author's name and page number(s)

 As one critic notes: "Think what you are asking preservationists to do. In fact,

the remarkable thing is that the eagle has made such a comeback at all"

(Claiborne A2).

Author's name in text

"Tennis sneakers or basketball shoes," as James Fixx states in *The Complete Book*

of Running, "aren't sturdy enough and don't give your feet enough support" (134).

Title only (no author given)

The "Pyramid Way" is a helpful guide for someone who wishes to get

enough foods from each food group every day (*Daily*).

Since the Sumerians began record keeping over 5,000 years ago, humans

have searched for the perfect way to record words ("Power" 110).

*If the page number is not known, use only title ("Power").

More than one author

Swan Lake, either a symphony piece or a dance drama, "is undoubtedly the most

popular of all classical ballets" (Balanchine and Mason 432).

More than one author with the same last name

Even the earliest human beings had a number system. They needed

to determine the size of their families, flocks, and enemies (D. Smith 16).

*If the page number is not known, use only author's name (D. Smith).

Corporate author

What are the possibilities for the future? Some may see "green cows

which would have functioning chloroplasts—bodies containing chlorophyll

that perform photosynthesis in their skin." These cows would be in the

meadow to catch sunlight, not to graze (Reader's Digest 67).

One author with more than one work

There is no proof that any one special diet or regimen of vitamins is

necessary for the long distance runner (Fixx, *Complete* 162).

"Muscle and body organs can be broken down in the body's continuing search for

glucose" (Fixx, *Second* 139).

Citing indirect sources

The *MLA Handbook* (Seventh edition), page 226, Section 6.4.7, explains
documentation for quoting or paraphrasing a quotation within a source. If the
person quoted is someone other than the author, the parenthetical documentation
should indicate that, as in the following example:

Roger Smith, Director of Atlas International, indicates that

"at least 90% of the people tested showed improvement" (qtd. in Anderson 214).

This means that the information is found in the source by *Anderson* but was stated
by Roger Smith. *Anderson* will appear on the works-cited page.

For any form of citation not given here, consult your teacher or *MLA Handbook*.

Examples of works-cited documentation for print sources

The following pages have examples of forms you will need when you give credit to your sources. Giving credit to your sources will enable those who read your paper to locate your sources. These examples represent the majority of situations you will encounter. If you do not find what you need, consult your teacher and/or the *MLA Handbook*.

Book by one author

Fixx, James F. *The Complete Book of Running*. New York: Random, 1977. Print.

Zinn, Howard. *A Power Governments Cannot Suppress.* San Francisco: City Lights,

2007. Print.

Book by more than one author

Prothrow-Stith, Deborah, and Howard R. Spivak. *Murder Is No Accident*:

Understanding and Preventing Youth Violence in America. San Francisco:

Jossey-Bass, 2004. Print.

Boorse, Henry A., Lloyd Motz, and Jefferson Hane Weaver. *A Biographical*

History. New York: Wiley, 1989. Print.

Guerin, Wilfred L., et al. *A Handbook of Critical Approaches*. 4th ed.

New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. Print.*

*"If there are more than three authors, you may name only the first and add *et al*. ('and others'), or you may give all names in full in the order in which they appear on the title page" (*MLA* 155).

Article from one volume in a multivolume work

Smith, Joseph. "Industrial Minerals." *Earth Sciences for Students*.

Ed. E. Julius Dasch. Vol. 2. New York: Macmillan Reference USA,

1999, 112-114. Print.

Alighieri, Dante. *The Divine Comedy*. Trans. Charles S. Singleton. Princeton:

Princeton UP, 1970. Print.

A government publication

United States. Dept. of Education. *Assistance to States for the Education*

of Children with Disabilities and the Early Intervention Program for

Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities: Final Regulations. Washington:

GPO, 1999. Print.

Article from a magazine (author given)

Cannon, Angie, and David L. Marcus. "The Boy Under the Desk." *U. S.*

News and World Report 26 July 1999: 22+. Print.

*The + following the page number with no space between indicates the article is not
printed on consecutive pages.

Article from a magazine (no author given)

"The Power of Writing." *National Geographic* Aug. 1999: 110-132. Print.

Article from a newspaper

Krebs, Brian. "Warrants Served in LexisNexis Account Breach." *Washington*

Post 20 May 2005, Northern Virginia Home ed., Business sec.: El+. Print.

*Eliminate articles (a, an, the) that begin newspaper titles. Add the edition, if named,
instead of volume number. If the newspaper is a local publication, "add the city in square
brackets, not italicized, after the name: '*Star-Ledger* [Newark]'" (*MLA* 141).

Work within a collection of pieces by different authors (includes anthologies)

Darity, William, Jr. "Give Affirmative Action Time to Act." *Pro/Con*:

    Individual and Society. Ed. Fiona Plowman. Danbury: Grolier

    Educational, 2002. 74-77. Print.

Hughes, Langston. "Mother and Child." *Black Drama Anthology*. Ed. Woodie

    King and Ron Milner. Markham, ON: New American Library, 1986.

    399-405. Print.

Singer, S. Fred. "Warming Theories Need Warning Labels." *Taking Sides:*

    Clashing Views on Controversial Environmental Issues. Ed. Theodore D.

    Goldfarb. 5th ed. Guilford: Dushkin, 1993. 315-322. Print.

Two or more works by the same author

Fixx, James F. *The Complete Book of Running*. New York: Random,

    1977. Print.

---. *The Second Book of Running*. New York: Random, 1980. Print.

Book by a corporate author

Reader's Digest. *Book of North American Birds*. Pleasantville: The Reader's

    Digest Assn., 1990. Print.

Article in an encyclopedia or other familiar reference work (no author given)

"Comets, Meteors, and Meteorites." *The New Book of Knowledge*. 1991 ed. Print.

Article in a subject-specific encyclopedia or other unfamiliar reference work (author given)

Linzey, Andrew. "Animal Welfare and Rights." *Encyclopedia of Bioethics*.

Ed. Stephen G. Post. 3rd ed. 5 vols. New York: Macmillan Reference

USA, 2004. Print.

Pamphlet

Daily Food Guide Pyramid. Rosemont: National Dairy Council, 1994. Print.

*If there is no date given for publication of a pamphlet, add the initials n.d. in

in place of the date.

Book with an editor (no author given)

Champagne, Duane, ed. *Chronology of Native North American History*.

Detroit: Gale, 1994. Print.

Book published in a second or subsequent edition

Tunnell, Michael O., and James S. Jacobs. *Children's Literature, Briefly*.

2nd ed. Upper Saddle River: Merrill, 2000. Print.

Examples of works-cited documentation for electronic sources

Electronic resources are available in several formats with a specific MLA citation for each. The most common formats are Internet sites and online databases. An Internet site is an online location on the World Wide Web that offers information about a specific subject or interest. Businesses, organizations, governmental agencies, and individuals sponsor Internet sites and decide what information to include. Each site is designed as a discrete, unique home page with its own online address called a URL.

An electronic database is an accumulation of original print documents that are digitized and made available as a collection (such as EBSCO, ProQuest, and Gale Cengage Learning). An online database has an Internet address (URL) and is accessed through a browser such as Internet Explorer or Safari. Online databases include electronic versions of original newspaper articles, press releases, magazines, journals, government documents, and books.

An online database is **not** considered an Internet source in your research paper. The Internet is the form of access to the database; however, the Internet is not the original source of the information.

Articles in electronic databases provide citations and are evaluated by professionals before first being published in print. **Database resources, therefore, are regarded as more reliable sources than Internet sites with undocumented information.**

Previous editions of this handbook have required inclusion of a URL address to accompany the usual information for an online source in works-cited entries. The 2009 edition of the *MLA Handbook* recommends that this does NOT need to be a requirement for inclusion on the works-cited page. However, the complete URL for each electronic text used should be carefully compiled and kept with your notes. Your teacher needs this specific information to locate your sources in checking how well information is being synthesized in your written drafts. Recording the date of access as well as the publication date is **essential** when you are citing electronic sources. These sources may be slightly different each time the electronic text is updated, so the date of access is a necessary component in identifying the specific resource you use.

For works-cited documentation of electronic sources, including online databases and Internet sites, you may now conclude the entry with the medium of publication (web) and the date you accessed that information.

Information on the use of no pagination:
According to information in the *MLA Handbook* (Seventh edition), page 179, n. pag. (no pagination given) only refers to books that are not paginated. This should NOT be confused with information taken from databases in which no pages are given. For those citations, follow the instruction to cite all information available. If the page number(s) are not available, that part of the information should not be listed.

Examples of sample bibliographic entries are shown on the following pages.

Online encyclopedias

Fisher, Paul. "Freedom of the Press." *Encyclopedia Americana.* Scholastic, 2009. Web.

5 May 2009.

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3   **Select and narrow a topic**

<hr>

How do you begin?

Something that really interests you is the natural beginning of research because it stems from finding answers to questions. Every day our need and desire to "be informed" causes us to seek information which can help us make better decisions. Some kinds of information are available immediately; other issues involve a process of searching, locating, comparing, analyzing, and evaluating an array of facts before reaching a conclusion. (Ex. Are the low fat oil substitutes safe to eat? Where should the line be drawn for TV, movie, or music censorship? Should we be more active in supporting environmental issues?) During the research process, you may find information which will help support a viewpoint you had when you started your search. In many cases your viewpoint may change as information you find leads you to new conclusions.

<hr>

How do you select your topic?

Events, issues, ideas from class discussions, or questions generated through reading are all major topics from which to begin a research project. To discover an area which might be a starting point for you, make a list of questions in areas that fascinate you or have caused you to wonder. This list will become your broad or general topics. (See format on page 27.) A trip to the library to see the kinds of sources available for some of your early choices is the first step.

Once explored, you will find that some topics are too large to be developed in a short paper, but they can help you to locate information that will lead you to a specific area of emphasis. For example, you may have a question about something in the field of computers. This topic is so large you would need to limit your search to a specific aspect of computer technology, ONE THAT WOULD CONCENTRATE ON A PARTICULAR ASPECT OR QUESTION ADDRESSING YOUR INTEREST. (Ex. Is electronic banking safe? This leaves the point open for conclusions from what is found.) Searches for topics such as "The Civil War," or "Race Cars," could be overwhelming. These titles lend themselves to report writing, a kind of recording of general facts with no focus or research outcome. For broad topics such as these, you should ask yourself what exactly you are trying to discover about the topic. Keep probing until you have a specific focus or point to your search.

How do you know what sources are sufficient?

Keep in mind when you choose your topic that you need a variety of sources to help you be objective. Unless you can relate information from different locations, your findings may not be valid. You need to be open to information with varied viewpoints on your proposed topic. It is better to eliminate sources after you have decided on a focus than to be so narrow you overlook significant support for your investigation. For example, if you are going to research the safety of electronic banking, you need to look at legal or criminal investigations and not plan to center your entire search on sources from banking institutions. Therefore, as you brainstorm topics, think of how you could get ideas to satisfy your original questions and simultaneously communicate your findings in a manageable way. **Work closely with your teacher as you select and narrow your topic. You should not proceed to the next step until you can show that you have a definite point to your search instead of a general fact-finding mission.**

What does it mean to have a definite point to your search?

Research assignments in school serve to prepare you to follow a logical process throughout the rest of your life. The practice you receive makes each step a little easier when you apply it to a self-generated task for your work, home or civic life. The project you are assigned now is not artificial; it involves **presenting a topic with a definite focus** in an organized form. **Keep in mind, it is <u>NOT</u> a report**! Finding information from one or two sources and simply recording facts related to a subject is report writing. Selecting and narrowing a topic now becomes more meaningful because you set out to find information to support an idea/problem/question. From this point, you are investigating, deciding how the information is leading you, determining whether or not the information is valid, and then formulating a reason or focus to represent your findings. It is **NOT** just compiling facts.

Your guide for beginning a research project should be questions such as these:

1. Is this topic one which is fresh and challenging for me?
2. Is the topic appropriate for high school research?
3. Have I chosen an idea about which I can be objective?
4. Will I be able to develop a point in my writing on this subject?
5. Can I locate an adequate variety of materials to know if my investigation is valid?

❑ YOU determine research; pick a topic of interest to you which you can make interesting to others.

❑ An early check in the library will let you see the kinds of sources available.

❑ Research begins with no predetermined answer, so be objective enough to interpret and relate the findings from a sufficient background of information.

❑ A research paper is not a report; research findings develop a definite focus or point of view on a topic.

LIST OF POSSIBLE RESEARCH TOPICS

Keep a list of the things about which you would like to know more. These are prospective research topics for you to consider when you select a topic for the research assignment. Add possible research topics as you find them.

1.

2.

3.

Notes:

4	**Examine library and electronic resources**

Writing a research paper actually serves two purposes. It not only teaches you how to synthesize material into a written paper, it also teaches you how to research a variety of information sources. It is very important that you spend the time that you are given in the library looking for appropriate information and learning how to use all the types of reference materials available to you—both print and electronic. Although libraries will differ in the availability of certain types of sources, general areas of search are recognized in all Prince William County Public Schools.

What you need to do in the library is described to you in the **Information Management Process** (page 30) published by Prince William County Public Schools. This document outlines the research process for you and emphasizes the need to examine carefully the information you find before using it in your paper. Your teacher will review this process document with you, and the steps which are included at the end of this section.

One of the most important things you will do is to **clarify** your topic. Make sure you understand what you are researching before you go to the library. This will help make you more efficient in your search. As part of this clarification you need to decide what reference sources are appropriate to your topic. **You should begin your search by accessing your school's ONLINE Catalog**. This is a database of books and other print resources that your school owns. Look for references that apply to the topic you have previously clarified. Some libraries have their electronic resources cross-referenced in the ONLINE Catalog as well. After using the catalog you should then proceed to electronic sources available in your library. Some of these include the following:

> **ProQuest** — A multidisciplinary resource including *ProQuest Research Library* with citations and abstracts for over 2,500 journals, magazines, and newspapers, many dating back to 1986 or earlier and covering all subject areas

> **Gale Cengage Learning Databases** — A package of databases that includes a variety of resource materials from *InfoTrac for Students*, the *Gale Virtual Reference Library* and *Expanded Academic ASAP*.

> **SIRS Knowledge Source** — SIRS Knowledge Source (SKS) is a comprehensive database portal which is comprised of several distinct reference databases including SIRS Researcher®, SIRS Government Reporter®,SIRS Renaissance®, SKS WebSelect™, SIRS Discoverer®, and Discoverer WebFind™. Updated daily, SKS provides relevant, credible information on social issues, science, history, government, the arts and humanities. Full-text articles and Internet resources are carefully selected from thousands of domestic and international publications and respected organizations.

Encyclopedias (electronic or print) — Entries provide a wide range of
background information or historical facts

These are only some of the electronic resources available. Most libraries also
subscribe to online services which give you access to different databases. Your school
librarian will explain these resources to you and help you to determine which are the most
appropriate for your topic.

As you search through available sources, keep in mind that this is a broad-based,
exhaustive search. You are trying to tap as many sources as possible. Although you may
not use all of the sources for your paper, you are not ready to start eliminating sources yet.
The information you find will help you to determine your focus later as you begin to
formulate a thesis statement. Plan to make several trips to the library and spend several
hours on the computer to search for a wide assortment of information on your topic. Only
when you have sufficient information can you look objectively at the focus you want to
pursue further.

REVIEW

- ❑ Review the **Information Management Process** (see the following page).

- ❑ Learn to use the library and electronic sources efficiently.

- ❑ Look for a variety of sources that are appropriate to your topic.

- ❑ Assess the potential value of your source before considering it as a reference for
  your paper.

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

INFORMATION

MANAGEMENT

PROCESS

1. **Clarify your information need
    and create a search plan:**
    what do you need to know?

2. **Access information resources:**
    where can you look to find out?

3. **Evaluate information
    resources:**
    *does this source have what you
    need?*

4. **Analyze the information:**
    what does this source say?
    what does it mean?

5. **Synthesize the information:**
    how do you pull it all together?

5   Prepare a working list of possible sources

      As you begin to find information and opinions on your topic, you will need to record **accurate** information on all possible sources. This list of possible sources is often referred to as your working bibliography. Some of your sources may prove to be very helpful; others may be eliminated when you write the final paper. **It is important to examine all sources and to keep a good record of where they may be found.**

      One method for recording the information is to have a 3x5 or 4x6 card for each source. On that card you should list everything that tells where the source is located. The source could then be assigned a number which could be used with the notes from that location. This would eliminate having to record all the information each time you write notes from that source. Some sources may require more and/or different information.

      You should have many more cards (sources) than you will use for your paper; however, do not eliminate sources yet. If the focus of your paper changes, your sources, too, may change. See the MLA guidelines listed previously in your handbook for recording all the details about sources. The information on the cards will be used when you compile the final works-cited page.

REVIEW

> ❑   Examine all sources and keep a record of where to find them.
>
> ❑   Do not eliminate sources until you have completed your paper.
>
> ❑   The information about your sources is used to complete your work-cited page.

6   **Develop a preliminary thesis statement**

What is the difference between a report and a research paper? We generally think of a report as a body of information pertaining to a topic. A report could certainly involve researching and collecting facts, but it has the information related in the same general manner in which it is found.

In preparing a research paper, you will be asked to take the topic to another level by adding a focus, a point of view, or a slant on the topic. This point of view on your chosen topic becomes the thesis for your paper. A paper with facts about Jackie Robinson's life would be a report; a paper supporting his place in professional sports as a very significant one would be a research paper. Facts and opinions of experts would be needed to support this point of view.

To help you determine your focus or point of view, give a thoughtful reply to the following questions:

(a)   **Summarize what you already know about your topic.**

(b)   **What are some unanswered questions about your topic?**

(c)   Which of the previous questions do you find most intriguing? Why?

(d)   State a position, slant, or point of view on the previous question.

Formulating a preliminary thesis statement will help you focus your research. Remember, you may change your mind as you move through the process. Later, before writing your first draft, you will need to formulate a final thesis statement based on the information you have found.

REVIEW

- ❑   A research paper is a collection of information which supports the writer's position, slant, or point of view on a topic.

- ❑   The point of view on the topic will become the thesis for a research paper.

7 | Read, study, and take notes

Once you have established your topic and have begun to locate sources to support your point of investigation, you are ready to record main ideas and details to be used in your paper. There is no one best method for recording notes. Some researchers prefer note cards; others prefer notebooks or individual sheets of papers. Whichever method you use, be sure to record all information needed for your working list of possible sources. (See Step 5 of the research process.) Although information located on computer searches may be useful, the print-outs should be treated as just another source from which you should form your own notes. They are NOT notes as they are. Your teacher will ask you to provide examples of your note taking as you work through the process.

Purpose of notes

The final paper is YOUR representation of information compiled from ideas you assembled in your search; therefore, the style of writing should be yours and not a combination of styles of other writers. To use thoughts or words of others as if they are your own is *plagiarism*. The *MLA Handbook* explains that plagiarism "…involves two kinds of wrongs. Using another person's ideas, information, or expressions without acknowledging that person's work constitutes intellectual theft. Passing off another person's ideas, information, or expressions as your own to get a better grade or gain some other advantage constitutes fraud" (52).

Plagiarism can be avoided by learning and following three accepted methods of recording your findings. Good note taking **in your own words** will help ensure accuracy of information and guard against plagiarism. **CAUTION: Even when you take notes in your own words, you must cite your source.** When you turn in your final paper, you will be asked to sign a **Statement of Authorship** verifying that the paper is a result of your work in representing the ideas of others and not copied or pieced together from other writers.

Methods for taking notes

(1) **Paraphrasing** is a method of putting any part of a written text into your own words. You must read, understand, and then restate the original idea, making sure you do not change the meaning. Generally, the length will be about the same as the original text.

(2) Direct Quotations are passages recorded exactly as they are written. They may be used if you feel that the author has chosen language that you want to repeat. Direct quotations should be used sparingly and effectively and should flow with the text. They should not be used to "pad" the paper. When used, direct quotations must be enclosed in quotation marks. If you omit any words, use an ellipsis (three periods…) at the place of omission to indicate that the words have been omitted.

Example: The author reflected "…that liberty was something not to be denied" (Smith 92).

If a quotation continues more than four lines, it should be set apart from the regular text by indenting each line one inch (ten spaces) from the left margin, even though you continue to double space. The quotation is usually introduced by a statement leading into it which is then followed by a colon. A period ends the quotation and precedes the parenthetic documentation. *MLA Handbook* (Seventh edition) shows an example (94).

(3) Summarizing, or précis writing, is used when you choose the main points of a longer selection and express them in a very condensed form. Since summarizing is so relevant to research work, your teacher will instruct you in the steps for this type of note taking.

REVIEW

- ❑ Reading, studying, choosing relevant information, and taking notes is the most time-consuming part of the entire research process.

- ❑ Careful note taking in any of the three forms (paraphrasing, quoting directly, or summarizing) supports your writing and, if sources are cited, prevents plagiarism.

8 Formulate the thesis statement

Now that you have read, studied, and taken notes on the sources you have gathered, it is time to decide what the basis of your paper will be. The thesis statement is your answer to the question you have raised. If you have summarized and paraphrased your material correctly and made notes of possible direct quotations, you have the "heart" of your paper completed. At this point you need to ask yourself some questions about your focus question.

- ♦ Have I changed my mind about it?

- ♦ Does my information support it?

- ♦ Will my thesis engage the reader?

- ♦ Do I need to narrow or broaden my focus?

- ♦ Do I need to change my focus entirely?

The reason for re-thinking your position on your topic is that research sometimes leads you in directions you had not anticipated when you began the research process. **Your thesis statement must fit the information and insights you have accumulated.** A good thesis statement is *derived from, not imposed upon* your material. The final thesis statement succinctly states the topic and your unique approach to it. It is included in the introduction of your paper. Readers will expect your statement to be supported in the body of the research paper.

The *MLA Handbook* (Seventh edition) defines a thesis statement as "…a single sentence that formulates both your topic and your point of view. In a sense, the thesis statement is your answer to the central question or problem you have raised" (42).

Guidelines offered by most resources to assist in preparing thesis statements contain standard suggestions on what the statements should and should not contain. Listed below are some guidelines and examples.

1. **The thesis statement is more than a statement of fact or observation**. **It is the main idea (topic) and the writer's perspective about that topic.**
   Fact/observation: Americans spend billions of dollars each year on fad diets.
   Thesis: A personalized diet is needed to fit individual requirements for healthy living.

2. **The thesis statement does not declare a subject to be explored. It identifies a point of view on a subject.**
   Declaration: This paper will discuss the rising crime rate in America.
   Thesis: To combat the rise of violent crimes in America, political leaders should increase technological resources.

3. **A thesis is not the title. It is the paper's controlling idea and should be written as a complete sentence within the introductory paragraph.**
   Title: "Baby Boomers" in the Next Century
   Thesis: The present "baby boom" generation faces future problems which have not been sufficiently addressed.

4. **A thesis statement is not broad and general. It is narrow enough so that it can be fully supported.**
   Broad/general: Many teenagers have after-school jobs.
   Thesis: Teenagers working in jobs after school gain experience which will benefit them in the job market after they graduate.

5. **The thesis statement does not deal with both sides of an issue. It has one idea to keep it clear and specific.**
   Several ideas: Recycling programs have many advantages, but they also face many problems.
   Thesis: Recycling programs work if they become major objectives for responsible citizens.

REVIEW

□ Your thesis statement is your commitment to your readers.

□ A good thesis statement is "derived from" your material.

9 **Develop an outline**

The most efficient way to construct anything is to follow a plan. Think of buildings, housing developments, recipes, and yes, even writing. **A plan is the logical basis for all forms of construction**. Organizing topics from your notes forms the *plan* for your research paper. From these notes you will develop main headings to guide you in logically combining your gathered material.

One way to begin is to take your notes and sort them by topics. (This is where having note cards is an advantage.) A visual display of cards will help you to determine your main headings and formulate a method of organization for your paper (ex. chronological order, explaining a process, comparison, order of importance). This does not mean that you should have the same amount of material for all headings. Instead, by putting together the main topics in an outline, you can see what information you have, as well as where you might need to continue searching to be able to explain some topics. This part of the process is one that truly defines research. It is here that you begin to clarify how much material you will need to develop the main points of your paper. Often researchers must return to libraries or other sources to get additional materials to help support particular points. This is the step to test how thorough your search has been. If you are diligent in your preparation of the outline, you will have the framework for your paper, and this will save you time later.

A standard guide in preparing an outline can be found on the following page.

REVIEW

❑   An outline is a plan which gives organization to your investigation.

❑   The way to formulate an effective outline is to sort and categorize your notes.

❑   Spending extra time on this step will save time in the actual writing stage.

The Topic Outline

      In a topic outline, each item is a topic to be discussed in the paper; it is not a sentence. The terms "introduction," "body," and "conclusion" should not be included in the topic outline. Below is the format for the topic outline for a research paper.

Title of paper (centered above the outline)

State the thesis for the paper here, skipping two lines between title and thesis.

  I. **Main Topic** (first major point to be developed in paper)

    A. **Subtopic** (support for first main topic)

    B. **Subtopic** (support for first main topic)

        1. **Subtopic of B** (additional support for this idea/topic)

        2. **Subtopic of B** (additional support for this idea/topic)

           a. **Subtopic** broken down with even more support

           b. **Subtopic** broken down with even more support

           c. **Subtopic** broken down with even more support

 II. **Main Topic** (second major point to be developed in paper)

      The form follows with as many main topics and subtopics as you need. As you list your support, you must remember that if you subdivide supporting details, you should have at <u>least two</u>. **There is not an A without a B, or a 1 without a 2.**

      If details need to be subdivided more than the illustration shows, use numerals in parentheses (1), and then small letters in parentheses (a). Again, remember, when details are subdivided there must be at least two or there is no need to subdivide the original topic.

      You may remember from writing previous outlines that each topic and subtopic begins with a capital letter. Since this is a topic format, you will not use punctuation at the end of lines. Follow the form above for indenting each new kind of subtopic so that all letters or numbers of the same kind will be indented the same. Your teacher will give you other guidelines to help you organize your information effectively.

10   Write the first draft, including parenthetical documentation and works-cited page

First draft with parenthetical documentation

The first draft of a research paper should be written primarily to organize the content. This is the place for making sure that you present the thesis with a particular point or "slant," that you treat your topic with thorough support, and that you follow a logical plan of development which you set up in your outline.

To accompany your body of material, you will need an introduction and a conclusion. The paper should begin with a paragraph to raise the interest level of readers and to make clear the thesis (purpose) of the writing. You need a strong lead sentence to grasp immediately the reader's attention and then several sentences to give background to your thesis statement. Some students write the introductory paragraph first; others wait until the main body is written to form ideas which would help announce their purpose.

The actual draft of the paper should include paragraphs to develop the different parts of your outline. Some parts may be stated in a single paragraph, and others will require two or more. An important caution is for you to present the material in your style and your words, not just join facts from separate sources of notes. The paper should flow in a uniform manner; therefore, do not forget to use transitional words as you work your way from one topic to another. When writing your draft, make sure that you are including parenthetical documentation to show the sources of your ideas. **Remember, all researched information you include in your paper should be credited to a source.**

A conclusion is exactly what the name implies: drawing your reader to a complete close having shown the significance of what you said you were going to do in the introduction. It is here that your reader should be left with the feeling of knowing that you developed a point and you selected a variety of materials to validate your investigation. No new material should be presented in the conclusion. Likewise, ideas presented before should not be presented in their same form. **CAUTION: DO NOT SWITCH POINT OF VIEW IN THE CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH.**

Works-cited page

At the end of your paper you will add a page of works cited. **You will list and give specific information for all of the works you have referred to in the body of the paper.** Why is this information needed? The purpose is to give complete and accurate credit to your sources and also to make it possible for the reader to find your sources.

This page should be labeled Works Cited. Do NOT use any of the following titles for your page: Bibliography, Selected Bibliography, Works Consulted, Annotated List of Works Cited, or Literature Cited. (Refer to the *MLA Handbook* if you have questions about these terms.) These are not descriptive of the list you are being asked to provide for this project. You are simply to list the works you used for support in your written text.

Guidelines in the *MLA Handbook* (Seventh edition) indicate that this works-cited page should be numbered. NUMBER this page. The format is specified by MLA style:

> Center the title, *Works Cited*, an inch from the top of the paper.
> Double-space between the title and the first entry. Begin each entry
> flush with the left margin; if an entry runs more than one line,
> indent the subsequent line or lines one-half inch from the left
> margin. This format is sometimes called *hanging indention,* and
> you can set your word processor to create it automatically for a
> group of paragraphs. (131)

Remember to list the entries in alphabetical order. The entire list should be double-spaced.

The following suggestion is a way to help you keep network addresses in standard print form if you are using electronic sources in any other research projects. A hyperlink is a predefined linkage between one object and another. On the World Wide Web, the hyperlink displays an underlined text typically in blue with a graphical hyperlink as a small graphic image. Computer *Help* instructions give the following directions to prevent the network addresses from being displayed on the works-cited page as a blue hyperlink.

1. Right-click the hyperlink you want to remove, point to **Hyperlink** on the shortcut menu, and then click **Edit Hyperlink**.

2. Click **Remove Link**.

REVIEW

- ❑ Your main concern with the first draft is to organize the content of the writing.
- ❑ Added to your body of material should be an introduction and conclusion.
- ❑ The introduction clearly states your thesis and creates interest for the reader.
- ❑ A conclusion provides closure.
- ❑ All sources must be accurately credited.

11 Revise first draft

The revision of writing is a most crucial stage in the production of a good work. All writers, beginners and veterans alike, must pay attention to this stage in order to shape or mold their ideas into a meaningful whole. You will need to ask yourself questions which are fundamental to unity, clarity and coherence. In other words, you need to look at your overall paper (or the *big picture*).

Content

1. Is my central idea or thesis clearly stated?

2. Is my central idea in my introductory paragraph?

3. Do I stay with the central idea throughout the paper?

4. Have I included any unneeded or unrelated information?

5. Do I provide adequate support for my central idea or thesis?

6. Have I made connections between the facts I have presented and the conclusions I have drawn?

7. Do I have a logical order for presenting my supporting ideas?

8. Do I have a variety of cited sources?

9. Does each paragraph in the body of the paper develop one topic?

10. Do I define unfamiliar or unusual terms the first time I use them?

11. Do I connect my paragraphs with appropriate transitional expressions?

12. Does my concluding paragraph provide closure?

13. Do I have a minimum of four **full** pages of text? Have I exceeded the maximum of seven pages?

Style

1. Is my choice of words appropriate to my content?

2. Is my choice of words appropriate to my grade level?

3. Do I consistently relate to a particular audience?

4. Have I used sentence variety?

5. Is my sentence structure appropriate to my grade level?

6. Is my sentence structure appropriate to my content?

7. Do I maintain a consistent point of view?

8. Have I presented my material in a formal manner appropriate to research writing?

9. Have I presented my ideas in a manner which engages the reader?

REVIEW

❑ Revision is a process of examining general concerns or the big picture.

❑ The fine-tuning stage comes later when you proofread and edit.

12 | **Proofread and edit draft**

If you have followed closely the steps presented in this handbook you should have a nice framework reflecting your research findings. <u>Do not</u> settle for less than your best effort as you "polish" your writing for final presentation. The editing step is taking a close look at your work to find any errors in grammar, punctuation, or spelling that would interfere with a smooth flow of ideas for someone reading your paper. Examining the way your writing has been put together is similar to looking through a magnifying glass to identify small objects.

You naturally will want to review the paper to see that it conforms to standard grammatical conventions you have learned throughout your school years. You must take the time now to use grammar handbooks and computer programs as you **cautiously** check what you have written and apply grammar rules properly. Mistakes in the following areas will weaken your writing significantly.

✓ **Sentences** should be complete and include a variety of kinds. <u>Fragments and run-ons</u> destroy the flow of any writing.

✓ **Usage** should be noted as you edit, particularly agreement of subjects and verbs, agreement of pronouns and their antecedents, consistent use of verb tenses, and correct word usage.

✓ **Punctuation** should be correct. Pay special attention to commas, apostrophes used in possessives, and quotation marks or underlining to signify specific words or titles. Check the placement of periods in internal citations, also.

✓ **Capitalization** must be precise.

✓ **Spelling** errors should be eliminated. Do not overlook words which are often confused, such as, *your/you're, affect/effect, there/their/they're*, *its/it's.*

Finding and correcting errors in your writing is your responsibility. Consequently, your teacher will not mark the errors for you. You will be taught strategies on how to edit; however, this is your product and you must refer to handbooks, classroom and electronic sources, and your teacher for further assistance.

One helpful hint might be for you to read the paper aloud to help you hear obvious errors. Then, you will want to read the paper several times looking for different kinds of problems each time. Do not try to find all mistakes with one or two readings. You might also work in cooperative groups with peers, having each person look for only one type of grammatical error. It is your responsibility to spend time making sure your paper is as correct as you can make it.

REVIEW

- ❑ Proofread your paper to "polish" it for presentation. The paper is **your** responsibility.

- ❑ Eliminate errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

- ❑ Read your paper aloud to hear obvious errors.

- ❑ Look for different problems each time you read the entire paper.

- ❑ Have peers review your paper to give suggestions for editing.

13 Proofread for correct documentation and formatting

It is now time to check carefully your forms for parenthetical documentation and the works-cited page. There is no way to be too meticulous in this check. *Consistency* is the key. You must follow MLA guidelines; therefore, this is no time for creativity.

Parenthetical documentation

- Are all sources on the works-cited page cited in your paper?

- Are there any sources NOT listed on the works-cited page included in your paper?

- Have you used correct MLA form?

- Have you given credit to all sources of information?

Works-cited page

- Is the page entitled Works Cited?

- Is the title centered?

- Are all sources in alphabetical order?

- Is the spacing correct?

- Are there at least five sources?

- Is there a variety of sources?

- Has correct MLA form been used?

- Are all sources on the works-cited page included in the paper?

- Has all the information been supplied so the reader could locate the source?

- Is the page numbered?

Formatting

- Are the margins correct?

- Are all pages numbered and placed in order?

- Has a title been included? Is it placed correctly?

- Has your name been omitted from all the pages?

REVIEW

❑ All works on the works-cited page must be included in the written paper.

❑ The purpose for documentation is to give complete and accurate credit to your sources.

❑ Follow MLA style consistently.

14	# Submit a final paper, copies, all research materials, and signed Statement of Authorship

It is time to submit your final draft to your teacher. You will need the original and two copies of your paper.

1. The original paper and a signed copy of the *Statement of Authorship* will be sent to Prince William County Public Schools Office of Accountability. The paper will be scored by two trained readers and kept on file in the Office of Accountability.

2. A copy of your paper and all accumulated research materials will be submitted to your teacher to be kept on file in your school.

3. A copy of your paper must be kept in your writing file for future reference.

The paper must now stand on its own. Although topics will vary widely among all eleventh grade students, it is very important that the appearance of the papers be consistent. Refer and carefully adhere to all guidelines in the General Requirements section of your handbook.

Your teacher will require you to sign the *Statement of Authorship*. You will find an example of this form on the next page of your handbook. (Do not remove it from your handbook. Your teacher will provide a copy for you.)

REVIEW

- ❏ Submit final paper and one copy; retain one copy for your records.

- ❏ Sign the *Statement of Authorship*.

- ❏ Submit accumulated materials.

Prince William County Public Schools
Eleventh Grade Research Writing Requirement

Statement of Authorship

For the Student

By my signature below, I certify that I am the original author of the research paper entitled:

This paper is submitted for evaluation as part of the Prince William County English 11 Curriculum. I do hereby affirm on my honor the following:

1. I have researched the topic on my own and have not plagiarized any part of the paper.
2. I have given credit to all sources used.
3. I am responsible for the original writing of the first draft, the revising and editing of that draft, and the writing and submission of the final draft.
4. I will not allow anyone else to use my notes, first draft, computer disk or final paper and claim it as his or her own work.
5. I understand that failure to comply with the stated conditions of the Statement of Authorship will result in a failing grade on the research paper and possible disciplinary action.

Print Name: _____   Date: _____

Student Signature: _____

For the Teacher

By my signature below, I certify that I have monitored this student through each step of the process. To the best of my knowledge, this is only the work of this student. I submit this paper for evaluation as part of the Prince William County English 11 Curriculum.

Print Name: _____   School: _____

Teacher Signature: _____

Work Cited

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th ed. New York: Modern

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