

# RESEARCH PAPER

## RESEARCH PAPER GUIDELINES

**Length:** Eight pages minimum; if using another medium to communicate learning, how will you determine the rigor? For example, using a slide presentation to replace the research paper, what guidelines will be used?

**Paper Submission:** All students must submit a hard copy accompanied by an electronic copy in Microsoft Word saved on a CD or diskette.

**Format:** APA or MLA format, 12-point font, Times New Roman, all double-spaced. Use the format of heading and title when no title page is required.

Use a cover page and include:

Your name  
English Teacher's name  
Course  
Date (month day, year)

**Works Cited:** This is an alphabetical listing of the sources cited in the paper to prove, support, or disprove the thesis statement. A minimum of five sources is required. One may be an interview.

**Parenthetical Documentation:** Any fact you use to back up the central point of your paper must be documented, *whether the fact is directly quoted or in your own words*. Paraphrasing does not mean changing every third word of the original language of the source. If you do not document a fact that supports your central point, you are guilty of **plagiarism**. If you use a writer's exact words but do not give credit and/or do not place the exact words in quotation marks, you have committed **plagiarism**.

**Quotations:** The only reason you need to use exact quotations is if the language of the original resource is very unusual and cannot be paraphrased or the exact quote supports or gives an example of the thesis statement already established. **If you think the original language must be used, please follow these guidelines:**

Never use a quotation without introducing who gave the quote and/or the significance of the quote. A quote by itself, even punctuated correctly, makes little sense if it is not worked smoothly into the context of your own sentence structure and into what your paper is trying to prove.

For quotations that are **four** (or 40 words or longer) lines long or longer, **indent** each line of the **entire** quote **one inch** and double space the material. **Do not use quotation marks, cite source at end.**

*Adapted from Fremont County School District, Dubois, WY*

## PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is cheating or stealing another author's words and ideas without giving appropriate credit. If you do not give credit to the person or persons who wrote the information you receive when researching, you are stealing the information. Colleges or businesses can and will terminate you because of plagiarism. It is more of a moral and ethical issue than a legal one. Most of the problems occur outside of copyright infringement. Plagiarism will cause many problems nonetheless-from failure of the course to expulsion in college.

***Avoiding plagiarism is easy to do by citing all of your sources. Plagiarism will result in loss of credit and required enrollment in a credit recovery course that may delay graduation.***

- Keep careful notes. Differentiate in the manner in which you write ideas, paraphrases or quotes.
- Give credit to the author's ideas, arguments, or thinking. Be safe-cite it. All information must be documented, not just what you have copied word for word.
- Documenting sources also helps you as a researcher evaluate what you believe about a subject.
- You do not have to document information that is common knowledge, such as dates of well-known events in history.
- If the information is a little-known fact, be sure to document it to give you credibility as a writer.
- Always document statistics, charts, maps, or graphs-the author prepared them, so he/she must be given the credit.
- DO NOT turn in a paper that has already been graded for another class or another teacher or the same teacher but a different year, without the teacher's permission.
- DO NOT change the order of a sentence or replace just a few words without citing the sources. You are still using the author's ideas.
- If a person or persons are quoted in your source, then you MUST quote the information within your text.
- "Cutting and Pasting" downloaded articles from the Internet is plagiarism if you do not cite the source immediately after the information.
- Downloading an essay from an Internet site, changing the wording or allowing the computer to change it for you is plagiarism.

**When in doubt, ask the teacher, and  
always, always, always accurately cite your sources.**

*Adapted from Mitchell Technical Institute*

# ASSEMBLING RESEARCH INFORMATION

## Checklist for a Research Paper

- Construct a working bibliography
- Make note cards
- Organize the note cards and make an outline
- Write rough draft
- Revise to final draft
- Complete final paper

## Making Note Cards

- Use a separate note card for each source and for each main idea
- Place the source number in the upper right corner of each card
- Write a label in the upper left corner of the card
- Write the page number at the bottom of each card
- Use only one side of the card
- Be sure to indicate quoted or paraphrased materials
- Be sure all notes exist within context and are accurately recorded
- Reread the notes to make sure you understand them

## Organizing Note Cards

- Use label topics (from upper left corner) to organize the cards
- Discriminate between main and subordinate ideas
- Arrange cards in the order they will appear in the paper
- Write an outline that indicates the order

## Writing a Rough Draft

*An introductory paragraph is:*

- A general statement of information
- A transition sentence using works directly related to the thesis
- A thesis statement and explanation that:
  1. Contains a one-sentence statement of the topic being examined.
  2. States an opinion.
  3. Narrows the topic so it may be adequately supported in research.

*The body of the paper contains:*

- The weakest pro-argument or least important reason/example in support of the thesis.
- A secondary strongest point.
- The strongest pro-argument or most important reason/example in the support of the thesis.
- Proper documentation of the sources.

*The conclusion:*

- Restates the thesis.
- Paraphrases or summarizes ideas supporting the thesis.
- Takes the topic one step beyond and predicts the future of the problem.

*The bibliography:*

- Is an alphabetical list.
- Contains all sources used in the paper.

*Miscellaneous:*

- Follow either MLA or APA style
- Avoid plagiarism - presenting someone else's words or ideas as your own
  1. Borrowing someone's words or ideas is acceptable as long as you give appropriate credit.
  2. Common knowledge does not require documentation

## Writing the Final Paper

- Revise and edit the evaluated rough draft.
- Make a copy to share with your Mentor.

# RESEARCH PAPER STUDENT EDITING SHEET

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Statement: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Content/Organization

- Length appropriate Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- All sections support thesis Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Clearly written Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Well-phrased sentences Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Good transitions Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Conclusion restates thesis Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Conclusion offers solution Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Use of Sources

- Correct number of sources Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- How many:
  - Works cited \_\_\_\_\_ Works consulted \_\_\_\_\_
- Paraphrased information correctly documented Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- No paragraph citations Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of citations in paper Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Mechanics

- Underlined publication titles Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Quotation marks around quotes Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Parentheses around citations Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Periods follow parenthesis Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- End punctuation mark before closing quotation marks in a direct quote Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Corrected all spelling errors Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Eliminated fragments Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Eliminated run-on sentences Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Eliminated contractions Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Mechanical/grammatical errors Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

*Adapted from Northwest Ohio Region Tech Prep*