

Writing a Humanities Paper

Purpose: To increase your ability to do research; to find information; to evaluate and select meaningful information; and to organize & communicate in writing that is clear and interesting. Most importantly, research results in a greater understanding of the subject, making you (the student) – learn.

Sources: For your research writings use your textbook, outside books, magazines, newspaper articles, VHS tapes & DVDs, and sources on the internet. For a Research Paper, it should include at least, one ‘original source,’ that is a ‘first-hand’ or ‘eyewitness’ account. For Journal entry writings, use the textbook only.

Citations: Cite your sources of information using a brief citation at the end of each paragraph and a complete citation in your ‘Works Cited’ page (Bibliography). All quotations & paraphrases must be cited. An example of citing from your textbook in a paragraph, usually at the end of a sentence or at the end of a paragraph: Julius Caesar was “stabbed to death” during a Senate meeting “on the Ides of March” in 44 B.C., by his own countrymen (p 73-74).

Examples for Works Cited page:

(Textbooks): Cunningham & Reich, *Culture and Values – Vol. 2.*, 7th edition.

(Books): Marling, Carol Ann, *Norman Rockwell*, New York: Taschen, 2005

(Articles): Patricia Jones, “The Art of Picasso,” *Newsweek*, January 10, 2000, p. 86.

Web Site Citation: Your Web citations must include: 1) author’s name, 2) title of work in quotation marks, 3) title of Web page capitalized, 4) full http address (underlined), 5) the date you visited the site

Alice Smith, “The Genius of Picasso,” MASTERS OF ART,
<http://www.cas.usf.edu/english/walker/mia.html> - August 14, 2009

Plagiarism: Beware the temptation to copy your report from outside resources. Your challenge is to put the facts & ideas you’ve found into *your own words*. Use quotation marks if using an author’s exact words. Changing just a few words around is still plagiarism, even if you cite the source of information, but in doing so, you are being honest in letting the teacher know that you know this. Using no citing may result in an ‘F’ for your paper or a lowering of your Final Grade.

Good Writing: Your writing should be *simple, clear, & forceful*. Remember to use paragraphs to organize your thoughts effectively. Make sure that YOU understand what you have written, and beware of using vocabulary words & phrases that you may not be able to explain, if you are asked to explain.

Paragraphs and not block formatting should be used when writing a report or an essay. New paragraphs should be created if you are changing the subject or making a new point. Begin all new paragraphs but hitting the TAB button of a computer, one time (tab button automatically jumps the amount of 5 spaces). There should be NO EXTRA LINES between new paragraphs. The indentation of a new paragraph lets me know it is a new paragraph. Learn how to use your word processor.

Simple Writing Mistakes: Reduce spelling or typing mistakes by having your paper proofread by someone else or using computer software (Spell-check / Grammar-check). Use ATLAS to check for an exact method of writing something that you may question. I look up many things under ATLAS for the newest MLA Method of writing.

Your best way to ensure a perfect paper is to proofread your paper out loud to yourself. If something doesn’t sound correct, it most likely, isn’t. Also, Spell-check does not know the difference of using words in context, so if you type the word ‘from’ but wanted to use the word ‘form’ instead, you have spelled it correctly, so Spell-check will not think it is wrong. If you are reading your paper out loud, YOU will CATCH THE MISTAKE and be able to correct it before handing it in. It sounds old fashioned, but this is why the New York Times still pay good money to professional proof-readers today.