

Roxbury Central School

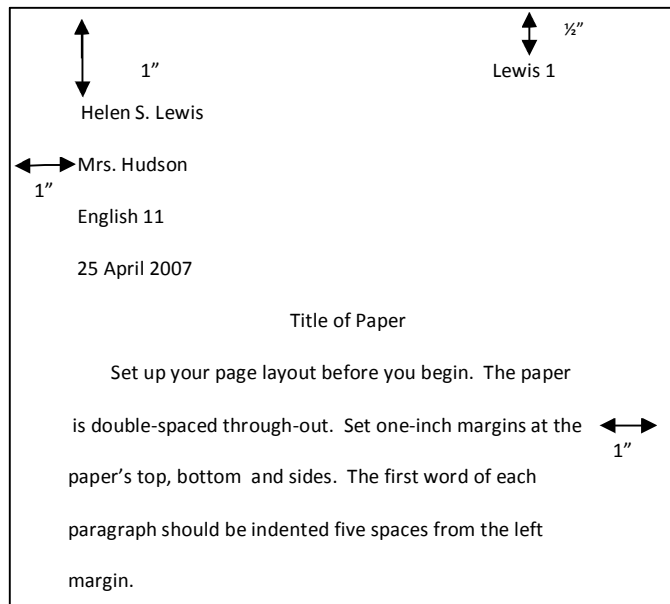
Academic Paper Formatting Guidelines

Roxbury Central School has adopted the Modern Language Association of America (MLA) documentation style for preparing academic papers. The following guidelines will assist you in formatting your paper in MLA style. A comprehensive guide to the style can be found in the sixth edition of the Association's MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers by Joseph Gibaldi.

Page Setup

- Select an easily readable font (e.g., Times New Roman in 12 point).
- Set 1-inch margins on the top, bottom and sides of your paper.
- Use double spacing throughout (including list of works cited).

Header



- Place page numbers one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin.
- Type your last name before the page number.
- On the first page at the left margin: type your name, teacher's name, class name and date.
- The date should be in the following format: 25 April 2007.
- No title page is needed.
- Center the title of the paper. Use initial capital letters for each important word in the title.

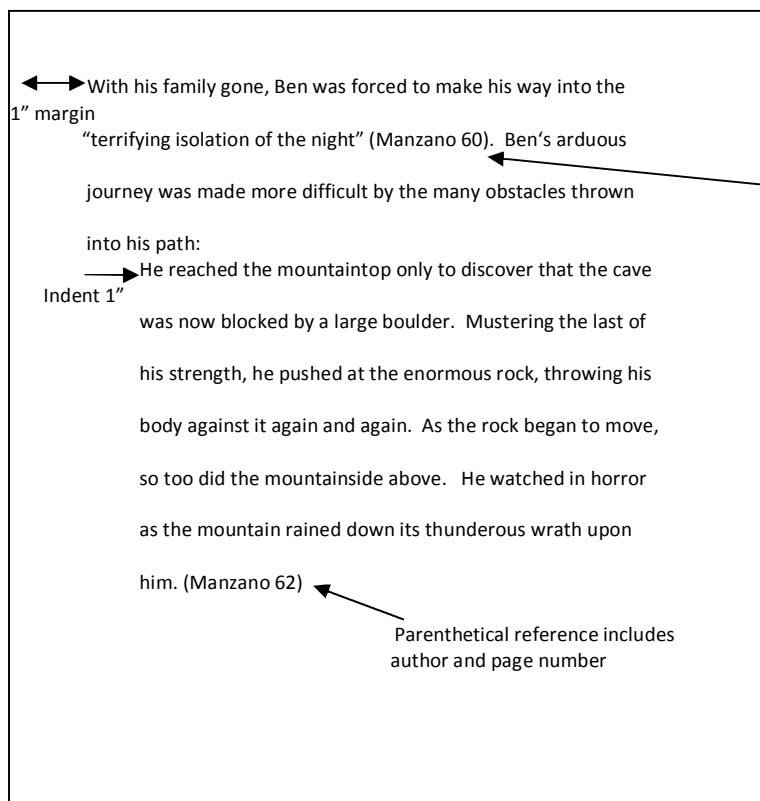
Fig. 1. The layout of first page of an academic paper.

Body of Paper

- Indent first word of paragraphs five spaces/one-half inch.
- Indent long quotations ten spaces/one inch from left margin.
- Label all visual material (maps, illustrations, graphs, charts, etc.). These are labeled *Figure* (abbreviated Fig.) and given a number. A label or caption is given below the illustration (see fig.1 above).

Documentation: Using Direct Quotations

Direct quotations may be used to provide the reader with the exact words that someone used. Keep quotations brief, using only those phrases or passages that are pertinent and necessary.



To format short quotations (fewer than four lines):

- Place the direct quote in quotation marks.
- Place the parenthetical reference one space after the quote and type the sentence period after the reference.
Example: With his family gone, Ben was forced to make his way into the "terrifying isolation of the night" (Manzano 60).

To format long quotations (more than four lines):

- Do not use quotation marks.
- Indent the quotation one-inch from the left margin.
- Place the parenthetical reference one space after the ending punctuation mark.

Fig. 2. Using quotations in a paper.

Documentation: Citing Sources in the Text of the Paper

You must carefully document the sources of all facts, ideas, quotations, and information used in your paper. It is important to give credit to the author of any ideas or materials you have used. Provide a complete alphabetical listing of the works cited at the end of the paper. In the body of the paper, include a parenthetical citation anytime you use someone's work.

- Place the author's last name and the page number(s) of the source in parenthesis.
Example: At the time of his death in 1807, Dr. Epstein's estate was valued at approximately \$17,000 (Benjamin 14).
- If your works cited list contains more than one author with the same last name, include the first initial or the author's full name. Example: (C. Dickens 116-117)
- If the source has two or three authors, use each of their last names. Example: (Ailey, Brennan, and Shaw 222-225)

- When the source has four or more authors, give the first author's last name followed by *et al.* (Et al is a Latin phrase meaning *and others*). Example: (Smiley et al. 332)
- If the author of the source is mentioned in the paragraph, you may simplify the parenthetical reference by including just the page numbers. Example: According to Smythe, the planting efforts of the settlers were continually hampered by harsh weather (131).
- If the source does not credit an author, include an abbreviated version of the book's title. Example: (Iroquois 32)

The Works Cited Page: Documenting Sources

The works cited page is an alphabetical list of the sources of all facts, ideas, quotations, and information used in your project. It is an acknowledgement of all the print and non-print sources that were utilized including, books, reference materials, images, articles in periodicals, and information from databases and Web sites. The examples below are among the most commonly used (for a more comprehensive list, consult the [MLA Handbook](#)):

- **Book by One Author**
Author's Last name, First name. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, copyright date.

Example:

Bruchac, Joseph. Wabi: A Hero's Tale. New York: Dial Books, 2006.

- **Article from a Periodical (newspaper, magazine, journal, etc.) from a Library's Online Subscription Database**

Author of article. "Title of Article." Name of Periodical Volume number.Issue number

Publication Date: Page Numbers. Name of Database.Database Vendor.

Library, City, State Abbreviation. Date of Access. <URL of Database search page>.

Example:

Abler, Thomas S. "Unconquered: The Iroquois League at War in Colonial America."

Journal of American History 93.4 Mar. 2007: 1210-1211. MasterFILE Select.

EBSCO. Roxbury Central School Library, Roxbury, NY. 26 October 2007.

<<http://search.ebscohost.com>>

- **A Page from a Web Site**

Name of author of page (if given). "Title of page." Name of Web Site. Date of

latest update. Sponsoring Organization (if not already given). Date of Access <URL of Web

Page>.

Example:

"Native American Homes." Carnegie Museum of Natural History. 24 July 2007. 25 Oct. 2007

<<http://www.carnegiemnh.org/exhibits/north-south-east-west/iroquois/introduction.html>>.

The Works Cited Page: Formatting

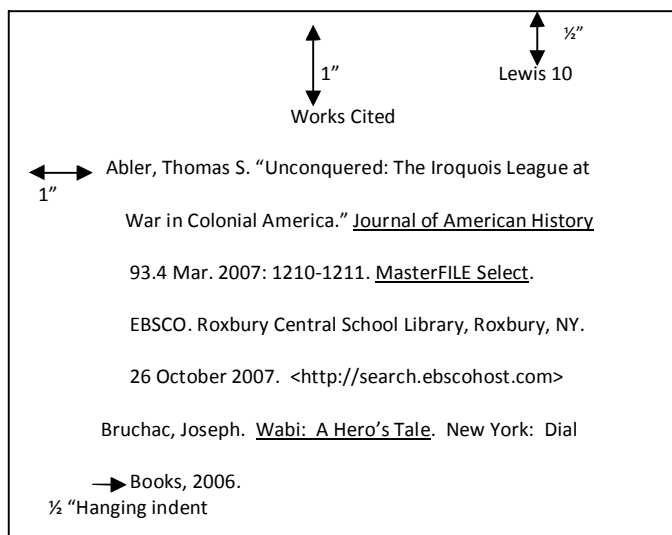


Fig. 3. The layout of a works cited page.

- Place the works cited on a new page at the end of your paper (continuing the page numbers of the paper).
- It is double-spaced and has the same header and margins as the rest of the paper.
- Center the title *Works Cited* approximately one-inch from the top of the page.
- Double-space between the title and the first entry.
- The entries are listed alphabetically by the authors' last names. If no author is given, alphabetize by the title ignoring *A*, *An*, or *The*.

- Each entry begins flush with the left margin. If the entry is longer than one line, use a hanging indent (each additional line is indented one-half inch/five spaces).

Printing

- Use standard 8 ½-by-11-inch paper.
- Print in black ink.
- Print on one side of paper only.
- Keep a copy of your paper.

For More Help

- Consult with your teacher or librarian.
- For a comprehensive guide to MLA Style, please consult the following:
Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 6th ed. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2003.
- Visit the Reference Room on the RCS Library Web page for many links to writing and MLA style: <http://www.roxburycs.org/rcs/johnson/library.htm>