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ELA A30 *class name*

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Formatting a Formal Essay

This is a sample first page of an essay that follows the MLA style guide. To cite your sources of information and format the layout of your essay, you should follow one of two styles guides: MLA or APA. MLA stands for Modern Language Association and APA stands for American Psychological Association. At university, courses in the humanities prefer the MLA style but courses in the social sciences prefer the APA style. At Campbell Collegiate, all courses recommend the MLA style in the formatting of your text and the citing of your sources of information. For more detailed information on MLA style guides, visit either the “Campbell Style Sheets” link on the Campbell Collegiate website or the “MLA Formatting and Style Guide” link on the Purdue Owl Online Writing Lab website.

MLA FORMATTING GUIDELINES

General Formatting

- use 8.5 x 11” (21.5 cm x 28 cm) white paper one side only
- set all margins to 1” (2.5 cm) on all sides
- double-space everything in your essay, including quotations
- use 12 point Times New Roman font
- indent the first line of every paragraph 1”
- include a header with your last name and a page number in the upper right corner (do not include the word “page” or any abbreviation of the word)
- use Arabic numerals for your page numbers

Formatting the First Page

- literary or research essays do not require a title page
- in the upper left corner of your first page, include:
 - your name
 - teacher’s name
 - class name
 - date (day month year)
- centre the title of your essay
 - do not use a bold or a larger font in your title
 - use italics or quotation marks only for titles and/or quoted material within your own title

E.g.: “Equivocation of the Fiend”: The Role of Witches in
Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*

IN-TEXT CITATIONS

Formatting In-Text Citations

Whenever you quote lines or paraphrase ideas from outside sources of information, you need to cite and format the sources within a parenthetical reference.

- Cite your source of information in parentheses at the end of your sentence.
- Add the end punctuation (period or question mark) after your citation.

This information will allow your reader to find the full citation of your source in your works cited page at the end of your essay.

In-Text Examples:

If you do not identify the author of your quotation, include his name and the page number in parentheses. Do not use a punctuation mark between the author's name and the page number.

Nearly all forms of public discourse have been reduced to entertainment: "Americans no long talk to each other; they entertain each other. They do not exchange ideas. They exchange images" (Postman 92-93).

If you identify the author of the quotation in your own sentence, include only the page number in parentheses.

According to Postman, nearly all forms of public discourse have been reduced to entertainment: "Americans no long talk to each other; they entertain each other. They do not exchange ideas. They exchange images" (92-93).

The same rules apply for paraphrasing information from an outside source.

Postman argues that entertaining images distract us from intellectual engagement (92-93).

Corresponding Work Cited Entry:

Postman, Neil. *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. Toronto: Penguin Group, 1985. Print.

In-Text Example Without an Author or Page Number:

When a source of information does not include an author's name, use the title of the article in your parentheses. If the title is long, use a shortened version. When a source of information does not include a page number, which is common for many websites, the author's name or the title of the article is sufficient.

The alliances between European countries forecasted their involvement in the First World War: "The consequences of these alliances and treaties meant that if one country or power bloc went to war, the others would likely go to war too" ("Introduction").

Corresponding Work Cited Entry:

"Introduction to the First World War." *Canada and the First World War*. Canadian War Museum, 22 July 2009. Web. 16 Oct. 2010.

In-Text Example for Poetry:

To format a short quotation from a poem (no more than three lines of verse) in your text, separate the lines of verse with a forward slash and conclude with the line numbers in parentheses.

Theodore Roethke describes dancing with his drunken father as a rough encounter: "The whiskey on your breath / Could make a small boy dizzy / But I hung on like death" (1-3).

BLOCK QUOTATIONS

Block or offset a quotation from your paragraph when quoting four or more complete lines of a verse or four or more lines of typed text.

Begin the quotation on a new line after your sentence. Indent the quotation ten spaces from the left margin and double-space.

Because a block quotation is off-set from your paragraph, you do not need quotation marks.

Poetry Example:

In his poem, "Mending Wall," Frost observes that nature resists man-made walls:

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.

(1-4)

Prose Example:

Thomas King argues that myth and fiction have distorted the accurate account of Aboriginal history:

As a series of entertainments, Native history is an imaginative cobbling together of fears and loathing, romances and reverences, facts and fantasies into a cycle of creative performances, in Technicolor and 3D, with accompanying soft drinks, candy, and pop corn. In the end, who really needs the whole Native history when we can watch the movie? (20).

QUOTATIONS AND PUNCTUATION

Comma

Introduce a quotation with a comma after a tag, a brief introductory phrase, or a dependent clause.

In his poem, “Mending Wall,” Frost wonders, “Before I built a wall I’d ask to know / What I was walling in or walling out” (32-33).

Colon

Introduce a quotation with a colon after an independent clause.

In his poem, “Mending Wall,” Frost questions the building of barriers: “Before I built a wall I’d ask to know / What I was walling in or walling out” (32-33).

No Punctuation

If a quotation fits easily into the grammar of your sentence, do not insert a comma or colon before it.

Lynne Truss defines punctuation as “a courtesy designed to help readers understand a story without stumbling” (7).

Capitalization

Capitalize the first letter of a quotation when the quoted material is a complete sentence.

Professor Nass warns us that “Multitasking could essentially be dumbing down the world” (“Digital Nation”).

ALTERING QUOTATIONS

Ellipsis

For the sake of conciseness, you may eliminate some words from an original quotation by using ellipsis.

The word *ellipsis* means the omission of one or more words. To designate an ellipsis within a sentence, include three dots with a single space before, between, and after each dot (. . .). If you have omitted an entire sentence within your quotation, include four dots (. . . .).

Original Quotation:

Thomas King argues that “most Canadians, like most Americans, have a shockingly poor grasp of their own history. Dates, people, the large and small nuances of events have all been reduced to the form and content of Classic Comics” (11).

Quotation with Deleted Words (Ellipsis)

Thomas King argues that “most Canadians . . . have a shockingly poor grasp of their own history. Dates, people, the large and small nuances of events have all been reduced to the form and content of Classic Comics” (11).

Important Note: Do not begin or end a quotation with ellipsis.

Incorrect: A history on Canada’s involvement in Afghanistan will “. . . detail the fighting, the hunkering down, and the long, slow departure from disappointment abroad to victory at home . . .” (Simpson).

Correct: A history on Canada’s involvement in Afghanistan will “detail the fighting, the hunkering down, and the long, slow departure from disappointment abroad to victory at home” (Simpson).

Square Brackets

For the sake of clarity, you may add to or alter some words from an original quotation. Enclose the additions or alterations in square brackets.

In his first soliloquy, Hamlet remembers that his mother “would hang on [Hamlet Senior] / As if increase of appetite had grown / By what it fed on” (1.2.143-45).

WORKS CITED PAGE

Academic honesty requires that you provide a complete citation of all your sources of information on a works cited page at the end of your essay.

To format the list of your sources, you should:

- centre the title of the page: Works Cited.
- list your sources in alphabetical order by using the first word in each citation (either the author's last name or the title of the work).
- double-space your entire list including individual entries.
- do not indent the first line of your entry but indent its second and subsequent lines by 0.5".

Sample Works Cited Page

Works Cited

"Digital Nation." *Frontline*. PBS Online, 2 Feb. 2012. Web. 10 Apr. 2014.

"Introduction to the First World War." *Canada and the First World War*. Canadian War Museum, 22 July 2009. Web. 16 Oct. 2010.
<<http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/exhibitions/guerre/now-war-start-e.aspx>>.

King, Thomas. *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native Peoples in North America*. Toronto: Anchor Canada, 2013. Print.

Postman, Neil. *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. Toronto: Penguin Group, 1985. Print.

Simpson, Jeffrey. "Afghanistan: We Lost the War, but Won the Battle." *The Globe and Mail*. Globe and Mail, 15 Mar. 2014. Web. 28 Apr. 2014.

Shakespeare, William. *Harcourt Shakespeare: Hamlet*. Toronto: Nelson, 2010. Print.

Truss, Lynne. *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*. Toronto: Penguin Books Canada, 2003. Print.

WORKS CITED PAGE: PRINT

Books:

When citing a print source of information on your works cited page, include the following information and formatting:

1. author's last name, first name
2. *title of the book*
3. place of publication
4. name of publisher
5. date of publication
6. medium of publication (Print)

Tip for the place of publication: If the copyright page lists more than one publisher, include the place that is geographically closest to you. In most cases, you will list a Canadian place of publication, such as Toronto.

Tip for the date of publication: If more than one date is given, cite the most recent date.

Examples:

Book with One Author

Greene, Brian. *Fabric of the Cosmos: Space, Time, and the Texture of Reality*. Toronto: Random House of Canada, 2005. Print.

Book with Two or Three Authors

Mewett, Allan W., and Shaun Nakatsuru. *An Introduction to the Criminal Process in Canada*. Scarborough: Thompson Canada Ltd., 2000. Print.

Book with Four or More Authors

Woodrow, R. Brian, et al. *Conflict over Communications Policy: A Study of Federal-Provincial Relations and Public Policy*. Montreal: D.C. Howe Institute, 1980. Print.

Book with an Editor

Williams, Mary E., ed. *The Middle East: Opposing Viewpoints*. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, Inc., 2000. Print.

Book in Translation

Marquez, Gabriel Garcia. *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*. Trans. Gregory Rabassa. Toronto: Random House of Canada, 1982. Print.

Articles in a Periodical (Magazine):

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Periodical* Day Month Year: Pages.
Medium of Publication.

Examples:

Gillis, Charlie. "The New Hockey Fights." *Maclean's* 7 Apr. 2014: 26-33. Print.

Zimmer, Carl. "The New Science of the Brain." *National Geographic* Feb. 2014: 28-57. Print.

For more examples of how to cite different sources of information, visit the Purdue Owl Online Writing Lab website at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/> .

WORKS CITED PAGE: WEB

When citing a website on your works cited page, include the following information and formatting:

1. Last name, first name of the author, editor, or corporate author (if available)
 - last name, first name
2. “Title of the article or short work” from the site in quotation marks
3. *Title of the Site* italicized
4. name of publisher, organization, or sponsor of the site
 - use n.p. to designate no publisher
5. date of publication or last update
 - day, month (abbreviate), and year if available
 - use n.d. to designate no date
6. medium of publication (Web)
7. date of access
8. Optional: URL address
 - give the complete address including http://
 - enclose the URL in angle brackets (< >)
 - do not format as a hyperlink

In your citation, follow each piece of information with a period and a single space but note the use of a comma between the name of the publisher and the date of publication. (Sometimes the rules of style cannot be explained.)

Tip: If you cannot locate the name of the author and/or publisher of the website, then your source of information may not be reliable or scholarly.

Examples:

Simpson, Jeffrey. “Afghanistan: We lost the war, but won the battle.” *The Globe and Mail*. Globe and Mail, 15 Mar. 2014. Web. 28 Apr. 2014.

“Growing Up Online.” *Frontline*. PBS Online, 22 Jan. 2008. Web. 26 Apr. 2014.

“Introduction to the First World War.” *Canada and the First World War*. Canadian War Museum, 22 July 2009. Web. 26 Apr. 2014.
<<http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/exhibitions/guerre/now-war-start-e.aspx>>.