

COMBS HIGH SCHOOL PAPER FORMAT GUIDELINES, 2009-10 (MLA 2009)

Combs High School has adopted a standardized paper format, which follows MLA 2009 format. Unless a different format is requested by an individual teacher, please follow the guidelines given in this handout.

PAPER FORMAT:

- Papers should be typed. Use a professional, size 12 font (e.g. Times New Roman or Arial).
- Papers that are hand written (if requested by your teacher) *must* be written in blue or black ink, front of the page only.
- Use double spacing in the body of your paper.
- Include 1 inch margins on all sides.
- Include a heading in the upper **left** hand corner of the first page of your paper. Headings should include first and last name, date, class, and period on consecutive lines. (Do NOT use a title page unless your instructor asks for one.)
- Include a title, double spaced from heading, centered on the page. Your title should NOT be underlined, placed in quotation marks, or italicized. Make sure to capitalize your title (standard capitalization rules).
- Double space after the title.
- All pages, including the first page, need a header in the upper **right** hand corner. Your header should include your last name and page number.
- Use italics for the titles of longer works in your papers. Do NOT underline longer works unless the paper is hand written. Use quotation marks for shorter works.
- If you cite sources in your paper, include a Works Cited page (see section entitled “Works Cited Page”).

Example:

Lee 1
Thomas Lee
12 August 2009
10 English
Per. 4
How to Improve Your Study Skills
Sitting down for three hours to cram for a final is not my idea of a fun evening. Like many teens I know, homework is my least favorite activity, but I want to get good grades. It is important to me that I develop the skills I need to be successful in high school, and later in college. Luckily, there is a way to study smarter, to get more out of the time you spend studying rather than spending more time studying. Simply by incorporating the following strategies, you will...

CITING SOURCES:

- Short Quotations—
 - If a quote is fewer than four lines, use quotation marks.
 - After the quotation, include the author's last name and page number where the information was found in parentheses.
 - Punctuation marks come AFTER the citation, unless they are part of the quote (for example, if the quote itself is a question, include the question mark as part of the quote. A period still needs to be included after the citation, however.).

Example:

"The key to taking good notes is clarity - not abundance. Categorize your notes by topics and sub-topics. Your notes should be detailed enough to tell a complete story when you look back on them for mid-terms or finals" (Fiero 1).

- Long Quotations—
 - For quotes longer than four lines, indent the *entire* quote 1 inch from the left margin and do NOT use quotation marks.
 - After the quotation, include the author's last name and page number where the information was found in parentheses.
 - Punctuation for longer quotes is included BEFORE the citation, rather than after.

Example:

When you attend your first day of class you will be given a syllabus which will provide you with an overview of the topics covered, reading/homework assignments, and grading criteria. Don't just read it; study it! This will be your chance to honestly assess whether the class and/or the teacher are a good match for you. First year students tend to overestimate their ability (and time) to handle a heavy workload. Anticipate two hours of homework *per class* for proper study time. (Fiero 1)

- Adding or Omitting Words—
 - When quoting a source, it is important to use exact words. Sometimes, however, it is necessary to add or omit a word or words.
 - When adding a word or words in a quote, use brackets around the words. This shows that the words are not part of the original text.

Example:

"[Shakespeare] is supposed to have worked for a butcher, in addition to helping run his father's business" (Mabillard 1).

- When omitting a word or words in a quote, use ellipsis marks to show where the words have been left out (ellipsis marks are three periods ... with a space before and after the periods).

Example:

“Shakespeare probably began his education at the age of six or seven at the Stratford grammar school...”
(Mabillard 1).

IN-TEXT CITATION:

- In-text, or parenthetical, citation is used when citing information from a source in your paper.
- Usually, an in-text citation includes author’s last name and the page number where the information was found in parentheses.

Example:

“Like all of the great poets and dramatists of the time, Shakespeare learned his basic reading and writing skills from an ABC, or horn-book” (Mabillard 1).

- The in-text citation helps the reader find the complete reference on an included Works Cited page.
- If no author is given, a shortened title of the work is used instead of an author name. Remember that titles of short works should be in quotation marks, while longer works should be italicized. A page number should also be provided.

Example:

“Read before class - lecture will mean more and you can pay more attention to what is being discussed” (“Listening With a Purpose” 1).

- If an author is mentioned prior to the quotation, then only the page number is needed in parentheses.

Example:

According to Dave Ellis, “You can have more energy when your activities lead to what you want. Many students quit school simply because they are unclear about their goals. Writing down what you hope to achieve can make your path more clear” (12).

- If there are two authors with the same last name, include the author’s first initial.

Example:

“You should develop a filing system that allows you to keep track of past assignments, ones that you are working on now, and ones that you plan to work on in the future” (J. Johnson 1).

- For an on-line or non print source, page numbers are not needed.
- If using something that is common knowledge in your paper, you do not need to cite your source (e.g. a well known quote, common saying, etc.).

WORKS CITED PAGE:

- The works cited page should ALWAYS be a separate page, which is included as the last page of the paper. It should have the same margins and header as the rest of the paper.
- Include the words Works Cited as a title, centered at the top of the page.
- Double space between and within entries. This means there should be a space between each line of writing throughout the entire page.
- The first line of each entry begins on the left margin, but the second and subsequent lines of each entry are indented (opposite of a paragraph).
- Each entry must include the medium of publication. Most will be listed as Print or Web sources.
- All titles of works should be capitalized. Standard capitalization rules apply.
- Use italics for titles of larger works and quotation marks for titles of shorter works.
- Entries are listed by author name, written last name first. Do NOT list titles or degrees with names.
- If there is no author listed, entry will be listed by article or book title.

Formatting Guidelines: Included in this handout are the formatting guidelines for a variety of sources. Not all source types are listed, however. If a source type is not listed, please refer to the “MLA Formatting and Style Guide” found online at *The Owl At Purdue*.

Books:

One author—

Author. *Title of Book*. City of publication: Publisher, year. Medium of publication.

Stephens, Gary. *Writing Matters*. Phoenix: Jones Publishing, 2008. Print.

More than one author—The first name given appears as it does for books with one author; subsequent authors are formatted by first and then last name.

Street, Marcia, and Frank Heppa. *Writing for Clarity and Purpose*. Los Angeles: Scholastic Press, Inc., 2003. Print.

If there are more than three authors, list only the first author and the phrase et al in place of the other names.

Romero, Wanda, et al. *The Art of Writing*. New York: Smith and Johnson Publishing, 2004. Print.

Periodicals:

Article in a magazine—

Author. “Title of Article.” *Title of periodical* Day Month Year: pages. Medium of publication.

Phelps, Roberto. “Improving Writing Skills.” *Writer’s Market* 7 Jun 2005: 215-20. Print.

Article in a newspaper—Same basic format as a magazine article. The difference is that a newspaper page is numbered differently than a magazine page.

Peel, Josiah. "Schools Adopt New Curriculum." *Raleigh News* 15 Aug 2008: A1. Print.

Electronic Sources—It is no longer necessary to list URLs when using MLA citation, since readers can find electronic sources by author or title using search engines and URLs change often.

Editor or author name (if available). "Title of Article." *Name of Site*. Revision or posting date (if available). Sponsor or publisher. Medium of publication. Date of access.

"How to Be a Better Student." *eHow*. Web. 06 Jun 2009.

Other Sources—

E-mail Interviews:

Author of message. "Subject Line." Recipient of message. Date message was sent. Medium of publication.

Rayburn, Peter. "RE: Study Skills." Message to the author. 15 Jan 2008. e-mail.

Personal Interviews:

Name of interviewee. Personal interview. Date of interview.

Navarro, James. Personal interview. 14 Feb 2007.

Film or Movie:

Film title. Name of director or distributor, date of release. Medium of publication.

Stand and Deliver. Dir. Ramon Mendez, 1988. DVD.

SAMPLE WORKS CITED PAGE

Your Works Cited page should look like the following example.

Lee 5
Works Cited
Covey, Sean. <i>The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens</i> . New York: Fireside, 1998. Print.
Ellis, Dave. <i>Becoming a Master Student</i> . Philadelphia: Wadsworth Publishing, 2004. Print.
Fiero, Gian. "How to Become a Better Student—and a Smarter Person." <i>Ezine@rticles</i> . Web. 14 Jul 2009.
Real, Royane. "Use Affirmations and Visualization to Become a Better Student." <i>Buzzle.com</i> , 11 Oct 2005. Web. 14 Jul 2009.