

RESEARCH

*Research, defined

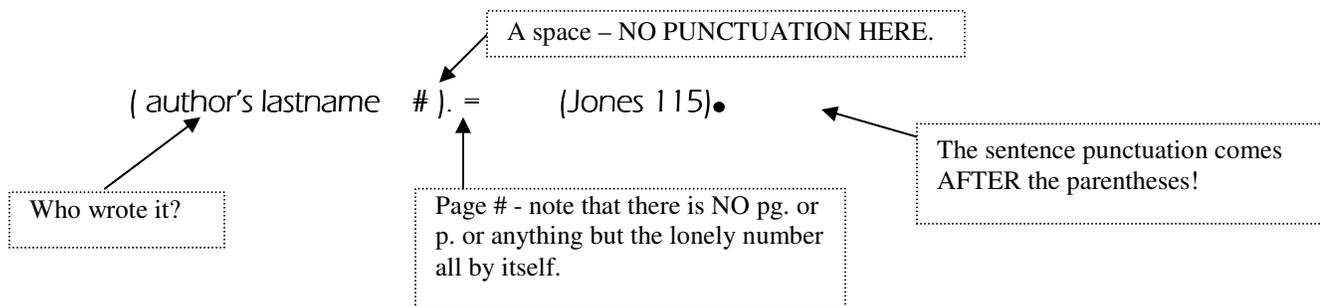
Research is a complex process, but one that should be rewarding – provided you have the right tools in your toolbox! This packet is designed to be sure that you have the skills that you will need to research, not only in this class, but in high school English classes, and classes in other subject areas.

*Quoting and recognizing the thoughts of others

Using quotations is one of our most commonly used skills. **ANY TIME** you use the words (in a quoted statement) OR THOUGHTS (a paraphrased statement) of someone else in your own writing, you **MUST** give that source credit for the words or the thought. We do that using PARENTHETICAL DOCUMENTATION.

➤ **Paraphetical Documentation** answers two questions:

- **WHO** wrote it? and what **PAGE** is it on?



- For **direct quotes** – place the closing quotation marks at the end of the quote, follow with open parenthesis, author’s LAST name, page number, closed parenthesis, and punctuation.
EXAMPLE:
“Early years of Shakespeare’s adult life were not well documented” (Thomas 247).
- For **paraphrased statements** – simply include the parenthetical documentation at the end of the sentence using the same format. Notice that the punctuation still goes after the parentheses.
EXAMPLE:
Little information is available regarding Shakespeare’s young adult life (Thomas 247).
- **Other useful citation information:**
 - If you refer to the author’s name in the text of your paragraph, there is no need to then write the last name in the citation. In that case, just put the page number in parentheses.
Example: According the George Thomas, the “early years of Shakespeare’s adult life were not well documented” (247).
 - When citing a work for which no author is given, use an abbreviated version of the title followed by the page number. If the title is in quotation marks in the bibliography entry, use quotation marks in the parenthetical documentation; if italicized in the bibliography entry, italicize in the parenthetical documentation.
Example: If the title is “Teaching Reading through the Content Areas,” your citation would be: (“Teaching” 32).

➤ **Conventions and hints for using quotations**

- Embed quotations within a sentence that introduces the idea in some way and/or explains why the quotation is important
- Follow the quotation with commentary that connects it to your argument or main point.
- Use ellipsis (...) when you need to leave out any words in the quotation.

EXAMPLE:

“Early years ... were not well documented” (Thomas 247).

Place [brackets] around any words you change in the quotation.

EXAMPLE:

“Early years of [his] adult life were not well documented” (Thomas 247).

***Finding and recording information**

Of course, when you are researching independently, you will have to *find* information to quote or paraphrase before you can use it in your writing! The best place to start, of course, is the library, but you may find valuable information elsewhere, too! Anything that offers useable information on your topic can be used! Here are some helpful tips on finding and evaluating the reliability of sources:

➤ **Locating sources**

- **where to look**
 - library
 - online
 - news and media
- **print sources**
 - books
 - periodicals (scholarly journals, newspapers, magazines)
 - encyclopedias
 - other reference books
- **electronic sources**
 - online databases and encyclopedias
 - organization websites
 - publication websites (archives)
 - cd-roms
 - video/dvd recordings
 - radio and television shows
- **primary sources** – interviews, first-person accounts, un-analyzed data

➤ **Reliability of sources**

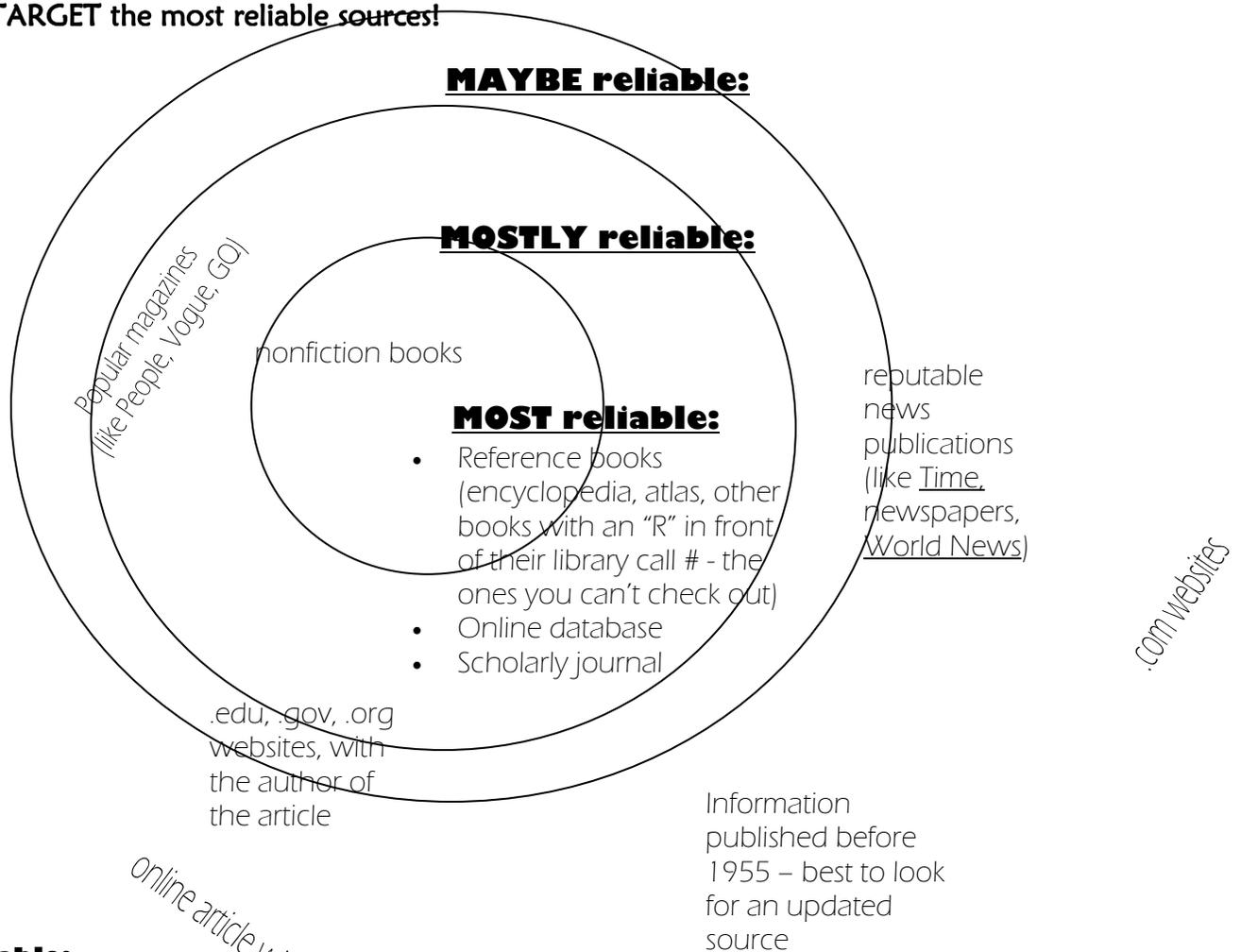
It is the researcher’s responsibility to find and use trustworthy sources! You should consider both the authority of the publication/type of source (see chart following) and the date of the information. Remember that some types of information may become outdated. Find the most current information possible!

Internet sources can be tricky! Here are some general tips for finding reliable information online:

- Use online databases (like those available through your school library webpage) as a first resource.
- A Pathfinder for your topic may be available through your library’s website.
- Stick to websites ending .edu, .gov, and .org.
- Try looking in the archives of publication websites (like the Dallas Morning News website)

- Avoid articles that do not cite an author.
- **THINK** while you read online sources! Be wary of articles that present only one side of an issue, those that do not provide facts and evidence to support arguments, or those that seem motivated by a bias.
- Some online sources are unreliable in general. These include Wikipedia, listservs and chatrooms, and most blogs. There is really no way to evaluate the credibility of authors on these locations.

TARGET the most reliable sources!



NOT reliable:

- Wikipedial
- Online chat conversations
- listserv postings
- Most blogs
- Self-published Publications of obviously biased groups or individuals
- individuals' websites
- Tabloids
- Fiction books

*Creating a working bibliography (Source cards)

A working bibliography is a record of potential sources of information for your research paper. Every time you find a source that might be helpful for your topic, you should create a “bibliography card.”

1. each source is recorded on a separate 3x5 index card
2. each source must be assigned a “source number” which is recorded on the bib card
3. each source is recorded according to proper MLA format (see the following page for MLA format examples)
4. bib cards follow the format below:

Proper MLA bibliography entry

3

Thomas, Paul. Essay on “Sonnet 130 – William Shakespeare.” Poetry for Students. Eds. Marie R. Napierkowski and Mary K. Ruby. Vol 1. Detroit: Gale, 1997. 246-57.

Source Number – assigned in the order that sources are found

Notice that bibliography entries have a sort of backwards indentation – this is called a *hanging indent*. All lines except for the first one are indented to the same margin.

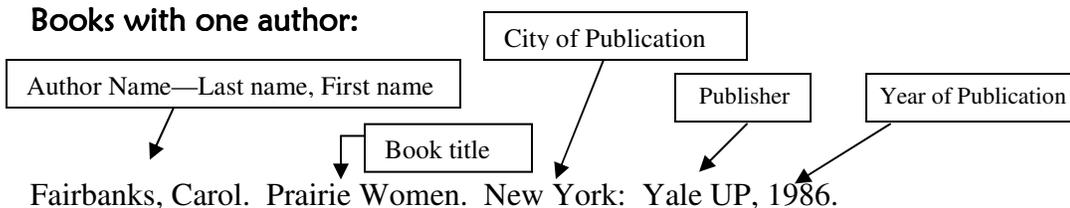
Works Cited Guidelines

These rules come from an organization called the MLA (Modern Language Association) and they are the rules that you will follow through High School and beyond.

1. Author’s Names are in reverse order: last, first.
2. Title of the Book underlined.
3. Publisher/Publishing Company: City, Year.
4. If a citation continues after the first line, the rest of the lines are indented.

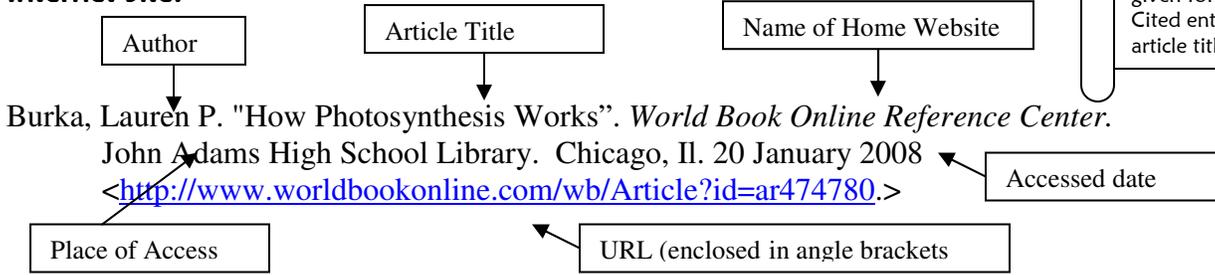
Examples:

Books with one author:

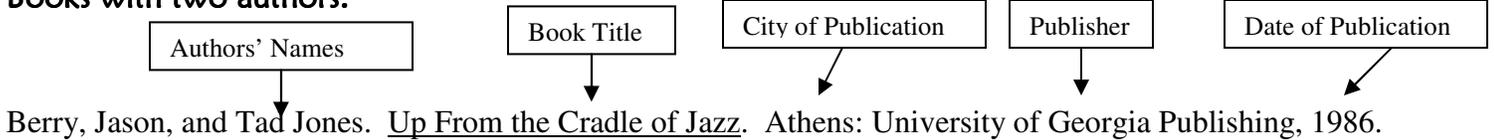


Note: You may not have all of the information asked for in the model. In that case, skip to the next item. Authors are often not given for websites, and the Works Cited entry then begins with the article title.

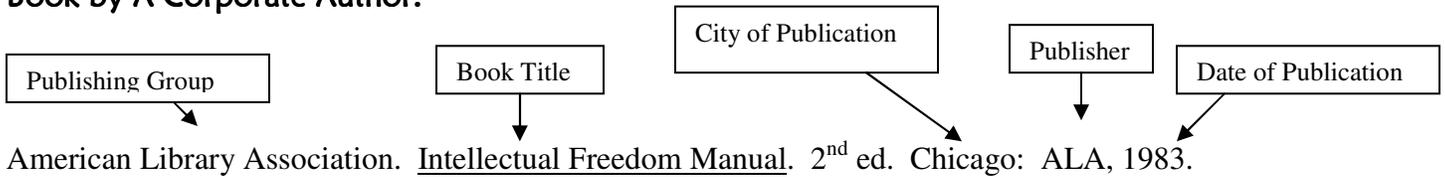
Internet Site:



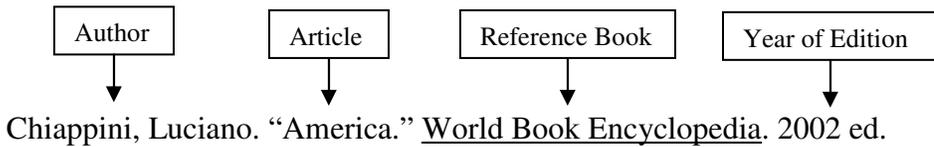
Books with two authors:



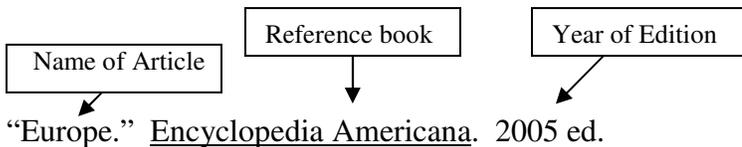
Book by A Corporate Author:



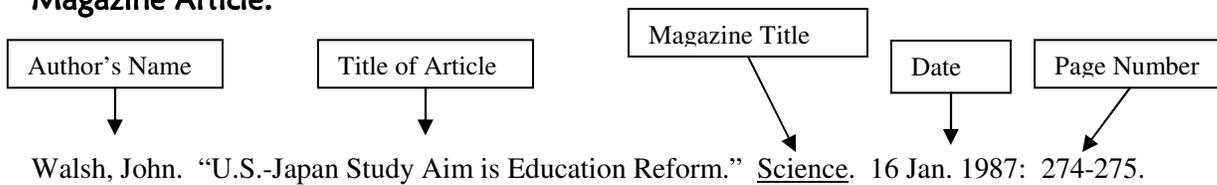
Article from an Encyclopedia or other reference book with an author:



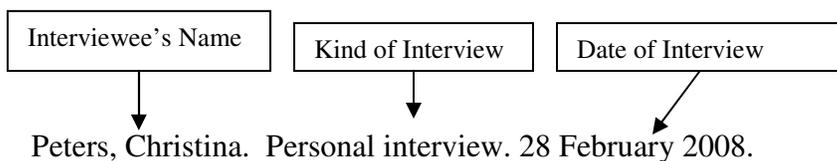
Article from a reference book with no author:



Magazine Article:



Citing a personal interview:



Note: Sometimes in an internet article or an encyclopedia article the author's name might not be there. If it is not, skip to the next piece of information in the citation. Do the same if the date of last update is missing.

Helpful hints:

1. Alphabetize by first word of citation.
2. When using MLA format you **DO NOT** number sources on Works Cited page.
3. The title of your Works Cited page is easy: **Works Cited** centered on the page
4. Keep your font 12 pt. Times New Roman –Boring is best!
5. Double space all information.

***Compiling and Recording Information**

➤ **Use of Note Cards**

Note cards are a researcher's best friends. The use of note cards allows a researcher to cleverly organize and re-organize information without having to write it all down over and over again. Follow these rules for using note cards to take notes.

1. Each card may contain information from only **ONE** source!
2. Record information about specific subtopics on separate cards (no more than one subtopic per card!)
3. Write the subtopic (outline Roman numeral) in the top left corner.
4. Write the source number in the top right corner.
5. Write the **information** from the source in the middle of the card
 - a. paraphrase the information
 - b. if you want to quote the source, copy the information **word-for-word and put it in quotation marks**
6. Write the page number at the bottom of the card.
7. Note cards look like this:

Subtopic	Source #
Paraphrased information (or "quotation")	
page #	

VERY IMPORTANT NOTE CARD REMINDERS:

- only one topic and one source per card
- your notes are worthless without the source # and page #!

Remember, Taking good notes is not a matter of simply copying down information, nor is it simply copying down every word an author has written down on your chosen subject. As you record information, concentrate only on those parts that are relevant to your topic and purpose!

➤ **Paraphrasing expository texts**

Remember these 6 Steps to Effective Paraphrasing

1. Reread the original passage until you understand its full meaning.

2. *Set the original aside*, and write your paraphrase on a note card.
3. At the top of the note card, write a key word or phrase to indicate the topic of your paraphrase.
4. Check your paraphrase with the original to make sure that your information is accurate.
5. Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.
6. Record the source # and page # on your note card so that you can credit it easily.

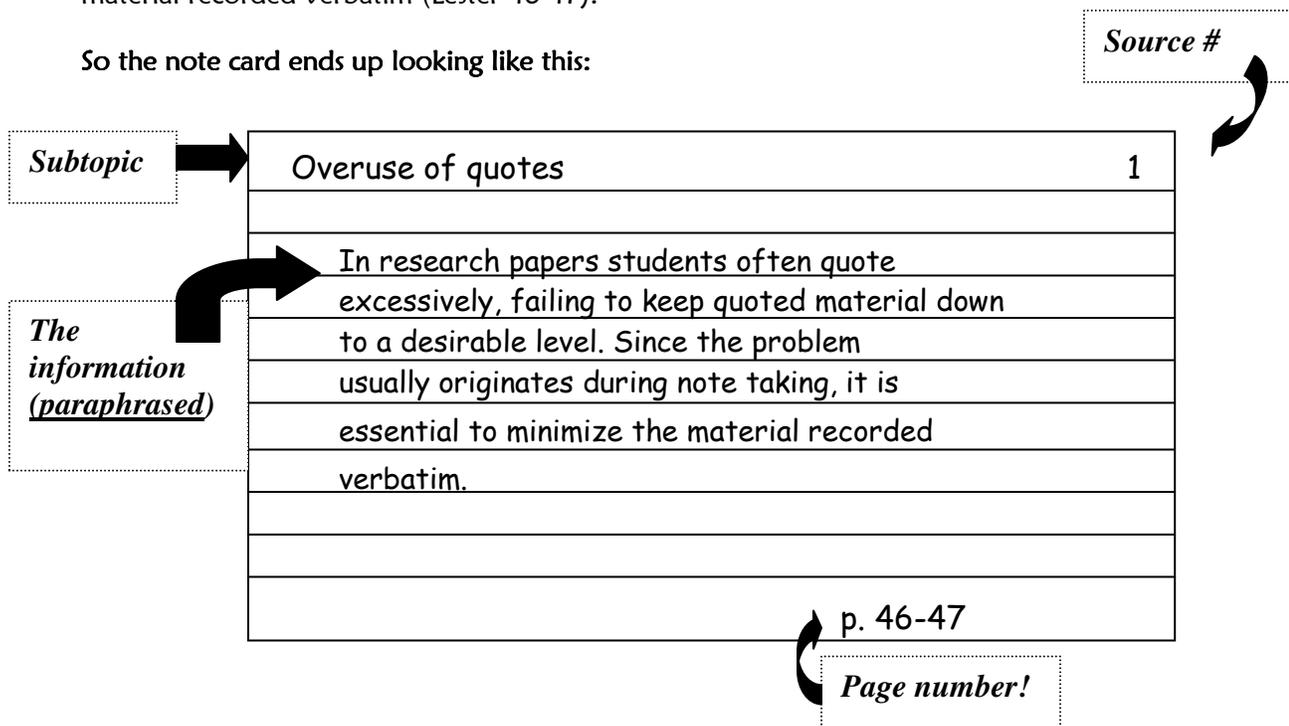
Example: The original passage – Lester pp. 46-47

“Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final [research] paper. Probably only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter. Therefore, you should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes.”

A legitimate paraphrase:

In research papers students often quote excessively, failing to keep quoted material down to a desirable level. Since the problem usually originates during note taking, it is essential to minimize the material recorded verbatim (Lester 46-47).

So the note card ends up looking like this:



***Organizing information**

Now it's time to organize your findings and write an outline. Follow these steps:

- **Step One: Analyze and organize your information**
 1. Stack your notecards by topic/category
 - a. Do you have enough information to write a balanced paper?
 - b. Does your information come from varied sources?
 - c. Are there any glaring "missing" pieces?

2. Put each stack in the order you want the information to appear in the paragraph
- **Step Two: Decide on a Method of Organization**
Try out different organization patterns:
 1. chronological
 2. cause and effect
 3. compare and contrast
 4. from weak to strong points

There is no “right” method of organization, and all of these models must be adapted to fit your needs. Decide which method works best for YOUR thesis. You must PROVE YOUR THESIS IS TRUE.

- **Step Three: Write your outline**
 1. Be careful to follow the formatting guidelines.
 2. Think about the LOGICAL PROGRESSION of information.
 3. Be specific about what details (including quotations and examples from sources) will go where.

***Rules for Outlining**

- Subdivide topics by a system of numbers and letters, followed by a period.

Example:

- I. Main Idea
 - A. Supporting detail
 1. Specific example
 - a. Commentary or elaboration
 - b. Commentary or elaboration
 2. Specific example
 - a. Commentary or elaboration
 - b. Commentary or elaboration
 - B. Supporting detail
 1. Specific example
 - a. Commentary or elaboration
 - b. Commentary or elaboration
- II. Main Idea
 - A. Supporting detail
 1. Specific example
 - a. Commentary or elaboration
 - b. Commentary or elaboration

... and so on...

- Each heading (Main Idea) and subheading (Supporting Detail) must have at least two parts.
- Do NOT use Introduction or Conclusion as headings.

***Compiling information into a research paper**

Proper MLA Format:

1. Use 8 ½ x 11 white paper.
2. Double space: click “Format”; Click “Paragraph”; Under the title “spacing” click the drop down box for “line spacing” and click DOUBLE
3. Use only one side of the paper.
4. Set ONE inch margin ALL around.
5. Use Times new Roman Font.
6. Every word and/or letter MUST be 12 point font – even your TITLE.
7. NO pictures or clip art. This is RESEARCH.
8. Put your name in the header: Click “View”; Click “Header and Footer”; Type in your first and last name on the right-hand side of the box

Example!

The entire paper is double-spaced (hit Ctrl+2)
This heading is NOT in the "header!"

This is in the HEADER!

Firstname Lastname

Firstname Lastname

Mrs. Teacher

Class/Subject

Month Day, Year

Nothing fancy – no *italics*, no underlining, no "quotation marks"

Your Creative Title for the Paper

No extra space between paragraphs

Tab or indent 5 spaces and start your paragraph. The introduction should create interest in

the reader and include the thesis statement. Use something that will keep your readers reading.

Paragraphs will all be double-spaced. Once you finish the first paragraph hit enter ONCE

and tab again to indent the next paragraph (Campbell 23). There should not be any open space

between paragraphs (Lizard 1).

See the parenthetical documentation?

Don't italicize anything, and keep the whole research paper in the same font/size

(Wolverine 11). Keep writing good paragraphs with internal documentation until you are finished

(Yo 17).

*Recording the sources

The Works Cited Page

1. Each entry on the Works Cited page contains information from your bibliography/source cards.
2. All entries MUST be in alphabetical order according to the first letter in the bibliography entry.
3. All entries MUST have a "hanging indent." To format your entries:
 - o Before you begin typing your Works Cited, Click Format;
 - o Click Paragraph;
 - o Under the heading Indentations, look for Special;
 - o Click Special, then Hanging.This will format all of your entries. If you have already typed your entries, simply highlight your entries, and follow the above mentioned procedure.
4. Entries are double-spaced, but there is no extra space between each entry.

Example:

Header (Firstname Lastname)

Works Cited

Foster, John. The Power of Words. New York: Harcourt, Brace,
and World,

Inc., 1994.

Leggett, Glenn, ed. Twelve Poets. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and
Winston,

1990.

Mack Mavnard "The World of Hamlet " Shakesneare: Modern

Putting it all together

Here is what the research process looks like when you put it all together:

Step 1: Define your Topic.

Narrow your chosen subject down to a topic that can be thoroughly researched within the assigned time limits of your research paper and/or the available resources.

Narrow your topic: Civil Rights ↓
 Civil Rights Movements ↓
 Civil Rights Movements of the 1960's ↓
 "Freedom Riders," Montgomery Bus Boycott, Martin Luther King, Jr.

Step 2: Prepare a Working Bibliography.

Find all of the sources that might be helpful to your research; create a bibliography card for each.

Step 3: Do some background reading on your topic, and develop a thesis.

- Read one or two general articles on your topic in a magazine, book, or encyclopedia.
- Formulate a specific idea that you can support or prove by research.
- A thesis is the controlling idea of your composition. It reflects your purpose and suggests your attitude towards the subject. Remember your audience.
- A thesis must include a topic and an opinion.

Example:

Topic: F. Scott Fitzgerald's novels as a reflection of the 1920's

Thesis: *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald reflects the corruption of the 1920's.

Step 4: Take Accurate and Workable Notes.

Once you have completed background reading, chosen a topic, and prepared working bibliography/source cards, and then begin taking notes on your note cards.

Step 5: Analyze your notes, and prepare a revised thesis (if necessary).

Analyze the information in your notes in order to determine whether you can fully support your thesis. If so, it can now become the thesis for your paper. If the thesis you have is not fully supported by your research, revise it to reflect your findings accurately.

Step 6: Create an outline.

You will use your note cards with quotations and parenthetical documentations to create your outline. Your outline will be detailed to ease the process of writing a rough draft.

Step 7: Write the Rough Draft.

- Now that you have your notes and an outline, use the information to write your paper.
- Your paragraphs should match the organization of your outline.
- Remember to document your sources with parenthetical documentation.
- EVERYTHING that comes off a note card or from a source other than your brain is documented.
- Do NOT plagiarize.

Step 8: Revise and Edit.

- Carefully reread what you have written so that you can find those parts which communicate most effectively as well as those which work poorly or not at all.
- Reorganize if necessary.
- Rewrite what is necessary.

Step 9: Prepare a final copy implementing proper MLA format and documentation.

Step 10: Assemble your composition with the Works Cited page.