

Framingham High School's

RESEARCH PAPER GUIDE

Fifth Edition

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NOTE: Some of the information in this booklet is adapted from Robert D. Sheperd's Writing Research Papers. Boston: McDougal Littell, 2001 and Joseph Gibaldi's MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 4th ed. New York: MLA, 1995.

Revised in 2004 by Mr. Cook and Ms. Donaldson

Step 1: Getting Started

At first the research project may seem to be more than you can handle, but a step-by-step approach breaks down the process, making the research paper more manageable.

Make sure you understand what type of research paper you are being asked to write. There are basically two types of research papers:

Report—Some teachers ask you to research a topic and assemble all the information you find into a report on the topic. This usually does not involve your opinion on the topic you research. For example, your science teacher might ask you to write a research paper reporting on the local geology of Framingham.

Thesis—Some teachers ask you to research a topic and create your own opinion about that topic, which you put into the form of a thesis statement. You then assemble the information you find to support your opinion—to prove that your thesis is true. For example, your science teacher might ask you to write a research paper with a thesis about how the local geology affects land use in Framingham.

Step 2: Gathering Information

Evaluating Sources

You can gather information for your research paper in the school library, in the public library, or at home if you have access to the Internet. Libraries have excellent sources of information, including databases, books, magazines, newspapers, and Internet access. As you begin to do research, you must decide which sources are the best and the most useful. You can evaluate sources by asking the following questions:

- What kind of source have you found? (book, newspaper article, video, magazine article from an online database, Internet website, etc.)
- For what purpose was the source written? (to persuade, to inform, to entertain, to amuse, to refute another position, etc.)
- Is the source up-to-date?
- How accurate is the source? Does the author have any prejudices that will make the information unreliable? What is the background or qualification of the author--a university professor or a high school student?

Note-Taking

Although there are many ways to take notes, we suggest that you use 4" x 6" index cards. Using index cards for note taking allows you to sort information you have found into different categories before you begin writing. Using index cards for Works Cited information allows you to alphabetize your sources when creating the Works Cited page.

Works Cited Cards

A Works Cited card has two purposes:

- It gives you information to help you find the source again.
- It documents the sources you are using for your paper.

Your Works Cited cards should contain the following:

- All of the Works Cited information available from the source you are using. See **Step 5: Creating a Works Cited Page** to determine what information you will need. It is always better to have too much information than to have too little information about a source.
- Where you located the source, such as the Framingham High School library.
- A source number (i.e. 1, 2, 3, etc.).

Example Works Cited card:

Author: T.S. Eliot	Source #1
Title of article: "Tradition and the Individual Talent"	
Title of source: <u>The Best American Essays of the Century</u>	
Editor: Joyce Carol Oates	
City: Boston, Massachusetts	
Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Company	
Date of publishing: 2000	
Original publication: <u>The Egoist</u>	
Date of original publication: 1919	
Page numbers: 90-97	
Location of Source: Framingham High School Library	

Note Cards

There are four different things that can be on note cards:

1. A direct quotation: copying the words of a source exactly.
 - Be accurate. Make sure that your direct quotations copy each word (including spelling and capitalization) and punctuation mark exactly.
 - Record the name of the person you quote (i.e. an author or interviewee).

2. A paraphrase: restating an idea from a source in your own words.
 - Paraphrase carefully. A paraphrase should contain no more than 10% of the same words as the original source (including “a,” “an,” and “the”).
 - If you do use an exact phrase of the author’s, place it within quotation marks.
 - Also, record the name of the person who stated the idea (i.e. an author or interviewee).
 - A paraphrase should enable someone else to get the author’s main idea without having to read the original text.

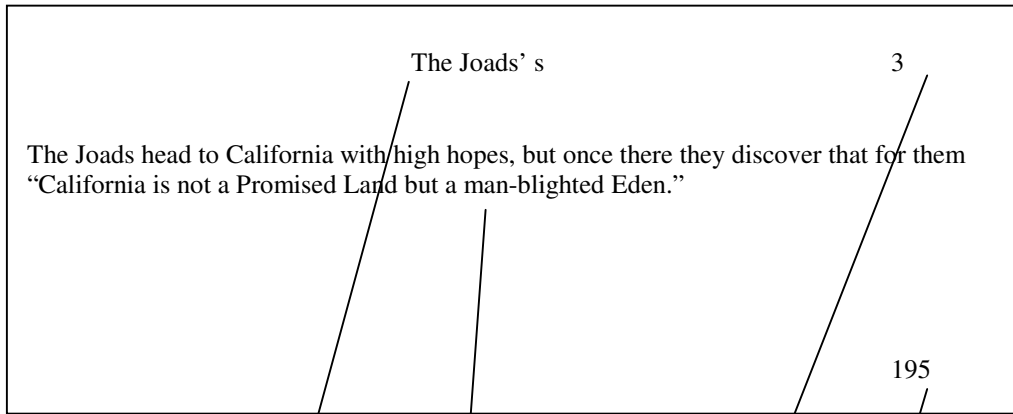
3. A summary: restating the central ideas from a source in your own words in order to reduce what you have read to a few key points.

4. Your own ideas and thoughts about the topic you are researching, or about the paper you are going to write.

Your note cards should contain the following information:

- ❑ A source number or the author’s last name (taken from your Works Cited card).
- ❑ A guideline (a title identifying the content of the note card).
- ❑ Notes (see above for the four kinds of notes).
- ❑ Page numbers.

Example note card using source number:



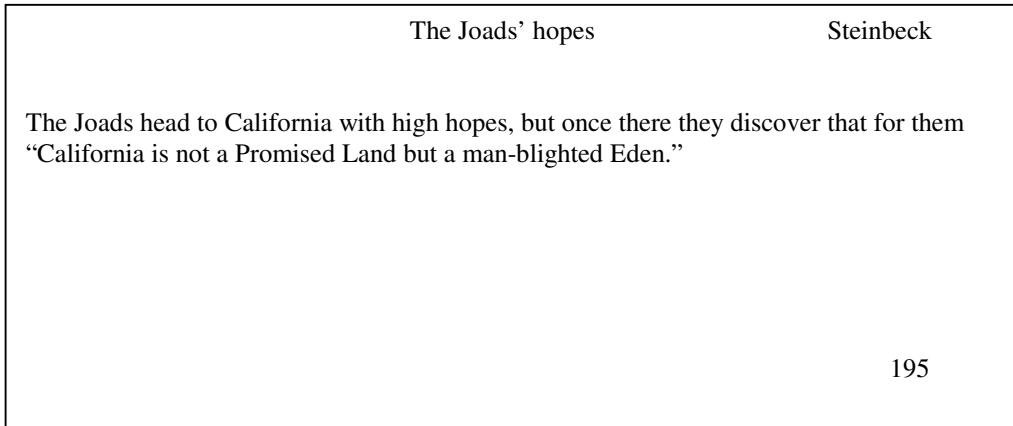
Guideline

Note

Page number

Source number (or author's last name)

Example note card using author's last name:



The Joads' hopes

Steinbeck

The Joads head to California with high hopes, but once there they discover that for them "California is not a Promised Land but a man-blighted Eden."

195

Step 3: Creating the Outline

An outline is basically a simple list of the points you will make and information you will use in your paper. If you used note cards, it is helpful to sort the note cards into different categories before writing your outline.

An outline is supposed to make writing your paper easier because it helps you organize your ideas before you sit down to write. Some outlines are brief, but others are quite detailed.

Appendix A shows an example of a detailed outline.

Step 4: Writing the Rough Draft

DO NOT FORGET: SAVE YOUR PAPER OFTEN. When your computer crashes or the power goes out, you will be glad you did.

Structure

Introduction

- ❑ Begin with a “hook,” a sentence that grabs your reader’s attention.
- ❑ Introduce the research paper topic.
- ❑ If you are writing a thesis paper, clearly state your thesis.

Body Paragraphs

- ❑ Begin with a topic sentence.
- ❑ Go into detail explaining something specific about the topic.
- ❑ Smoothly incorporate evidence and quotations from your research.
- ❑ Explain, in your own words, why this evidence is significant to the topic.
- ❑ Transition between paragraphs.

Conclusion

- ❑ Sum up what you have written and explained within your paper.
- ❑ Try to do more than just restate your introduction. Instead tell your reader why the information in your paper is important.
- ❑ Think about the following questions:
 - Why is this topic important enough for the audience to read about it?
 - What are the practical applications?
 - How does this relate to society in general?
 - What has this topic contributed to society?

Using Parenthetical References

A parenthetical reference quickly provides the reader with the source from which you took information. It usually includes the name of the author of the source and the page number in parentheses.

When writing, it is of the utmost importance that you give credit to anyone whose ideas or words have been used in your paper. (Note the information about plagiarism on page 11). You should also cite the source of any information in your paper that is not considered common knowledge.

1. If you include the author's name in your own writing, you do not need to include it in the parenthetical reference. Simply use the page number on which you found the quotation.
2. When there is no author for the work from which you took the quotation, use the title of the work, or a shortened version of the title, as it appears in your Works Cited, followed by the page number.
3. If you have two or more works by the same author in your Works Cited, include the author's last name, the title of the work, and the page number in your parenthetical reference.
4. If you quote an indirect source (i.e. someone else's comments published in a source) use the abbreviation "qtd. in" before the author's last name in the parenthetical reference. For example: (qtd. in Matthews 22).

Using Quotations

There are different rules for formatting when you quote prose and poetry. Use page numbers for quotations from **prose** and line numbers for quotations from **verse**.

A **parenthetical reference** is always needed when you use a quotation.

The best way to include a quotation in your paper is by choosing a very short excerpt and weaving it smoothly into your own sentence.

Example:

One critic suggests that "Antigone resembles a modern woman" (Frank 22).

Another way to include a quotation is by identifying the author followed by a verb, such as *writes*, *states*, *suggests*, *argues*, *contends*, etc. and a comma.

Example:

Jane Frank states, "Antigone resembles a modern woman" (22).

1. Quotations of prose:

A. Short quotations: quotations that take up **fewer than four** typed lines of **your** paper:

1. Introduce your quotation followed by a **comma**.
2. Insert the quotation into your paper using quotation marks, eliminating the punctuation mark at the end.
3. Place the parenthetical reference after the quotation with a period following the closing parenthesis.

Example:

The narrator explains, “It was many and many a year ago” (Gmoser 2).

B. Long quotations: quotations of more than **four** typed lines of **your** paper:

1. Introduce your quotation followed by a **colon**.
2. Indent each line of the quotation one inch (10 spaces or 2 tab keys).
3. At the end of the quotation place a period.
4. Place the parenthetical reference after the period.
5. Double-space the quotation.
6. Do not use quotation marks.

Example:

Even Gerty’s eyes display her physically dirty lifestyle; they are a “workaday grey” (Wharton 88). Lily knows she could not bear to live in Gerty’s house:

As she entered her [own] bedroom, with its vase of carnations filling the air with perfume, [. . .] she had a vision of Miss Farish’s cramped flat, with its cheap convenience and hideous wallpapers. No; she was not made for mean and shabby surroundings, for the squalid compromises of poverty. Her whole being dilated in an atmosphere of luxury

[. . .] it was the only climate she could breathe in. (Wharton 25-26)

Even the air in Lily’s house is cleaner; the scent of flowers is important to her throughout the novel.

2. Quotations of verse:

A. Short quotations: quotations of **three lines or fewer**:

1. Introduce the quotation followed by a comma.
2. Insert the quotation into your paper using quotation marks, eliminating the punctuation mark at the end. (Do not begin another line of text).
3. Use / marks to indicate the break between two lines.
4. Place the parenthetical reference after the quotation with a period following the closing parenthesis. **REMEMBER TO USE LINE NUMBERS, NOT PAGE NUMBERS.** Continue writing on the same line.

Example:

The pilgrim responds, “Over the Mountains / Of the Moon, / Down the Valley of the Shadow” (Gmoser 4-6).

B. Long quotations: quotations of four or more lines:

1. Write a proper introduction followed by a **colon**.
2. Indent each line of the quotation one inch (10 spaces or 2 tab keys).
3. At the end of the quotation place a period.
4. Place the parenthetical reference after the period.
5. Double-space the quotation.
6. Do not use quotation marks.
7. Do not use / marks to indicate a break in lines. Instead, copy the lines exactly as you see them in the poem or play.

Example:

At the end of the poem, the narrator explains:

From the thunder and the storm,
And the cloud that took the form
(When the rest of Heaven is blue)
Of a demon in my view. (Gmoser 13-16)

Avoiding Plagiarism

Your teachers at Framingham High School take plagiarism very seriously, as do colleges. The FHS student handbook defines plagiarism as: “stealing and passing off the ideas or words of another as one’s own; to use without crediting the source; to commit literary theft” (Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary). The penalty for a first offence is one day of Saturday school and a zero on the assignment. Additional offences will result in more severe disciplinary action.

Four Types of Plagiarism

Original Source:

“Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.”

-The Gettysburg Address

1. Word-for-Word Copying

Example of plagiarism:

Eighty-seven years ago our new nation was conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Note: Here you should accurately quote the passage underlined above and add parenthetical documentation, because you have used your source’s original wording.

2. Paraphrasing

Example of plagiarism:

Almost a hundred years ago when our ancestors created the constitution, they built it on the foundation of equality among all people.

Note: Since you are paraphrasing your source’s original idea, you must document the source of this idea by adding a parenthetical reference even though you have completely rephrased it.

3. Mosaic Plagiarism

Example of plagiarism:

America was dedicated to liberty and conceived with the idea that all men are created equal. In fact, our people have been loyal to that proposition ever since our fathers brought forth a new nation on this continent.

Note: The underlined words are taken directly from the text. Here again you should accurately quote the original passage and add a parenthetical reference because you still have used much of your original source’s wording. Such a mosaic, although unimaginative, would be honest and correct.

4. Plagiarizing another's ideas or terminology

Original Source:

“Everyone uses the word language and everybody these days talks about culture...
'Languaculture' is a reminder, I hope, of the necessary connection between its two parts...”

(Agar, Michael. qtd. in Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 4th edition. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1995. 27.)

Example of plagiarism:

At the intersection of language and culture lies a concept that we might call “languaculture.”

Note: Here you should add a parenthetical reference because you have borrowed a specific term without acknowledging the source.

Step 5: Creating a Works Cited Page

The following are some basic forms for Works Cited entries. Use these forms on the works cited note cards (see step 2) and in the Works Cited list that appears at the end of your paper.

Helpful Hints:

- Pay close attention to the format of entries, including the punctuation.
- Double space everything on the Works Cited page.
- Many sources will not have all of the information listed below. In those cases you should simply omit whatever information is unavailable.
- Some sources have edition numbers and some do not. If the source does not have an edition number, you can omit that information.
- Many sources list several cities of publication. In those cases you should pick the first city to use on your Works Cited page.
- Many sources list several years of publication. In those cases you should use the most recent year on your Works Cited page.

Articles from Encyclopedias and other Reference Books

Note: You do not have to give complete publication information for general encyclopedias, such as World Book. Editors, cities of publication, publishers, edition numbers, and volume numbers can all be omitted. Use the examples below or ask your teacher or librarian what you are expected to include.

A. Article in a general encyclopedia with author

Last name, First name. "Title of article." Title of reference book. Year of publication.

Example:

Gilbert, Marc Jason. "Vietnam War." The World Book Encyclopedia. 2003.

B. Article in an encyclopedia or reference book without author

"Title of Article." Title of reference book. Volume. City: Publisher, Year of publication.

Examples:

"Homer." Ancient Greece and Rome: An Encyclopedia for Students. Vol. 2. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1998.

“Pandas.” Encyclopedia of Mammals. Vol. 11. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997.

“Sherman’s March to the Sea.” Encyclopedia of the American Civil War. Vol. 4. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2000.

Books

A. One author

Last name, First name. Title: subtitle. City of publication: Publishing Company, year of publication.

Examples:

Angold, Michael. Byzantium: The Bridge from Antiquity to the Middle Ages. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2001.

Barghusen, Joan D. The Aztecs: End of a Civilization. San Diego: Lucent Books, 2000.

Manchester, William. A World Lit Only by Fire: The Medieval Mind and the Renaissance: Portrait of an Age. Boston: Little, Brown, 1993.

B. Two or three authors

Examples:

Alderman, Ellen and Caroline Kennedy. The Right to Privacy. New York: Knopf, 1995.

Blain, Virginia, Isobel Grundy, and Patricia Clements. The Feminist Companion to Literature in English: Women Writers from the Middle Ages to the Present. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.

C. Editor, but no author

Example:

Nabokov, Peter, ed. Native American Testimony: A Chronicle of Indian-White Relations from Prophecy to the Present, 1492-1992. New York: Viking Penguin, 1991.

D. Two or three editors

Examples:

Findling, John E., and Frank W. Thackeray, eds. Events That Changed America in the Eighteenth Century. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998.

Andrews, William L., Frances Smith Foster, and Trudier Harris, eds. The Oxford Companion to African American Literature. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

E. Four or more authors or editors

Use the Latin abbreviation et al., which means "and others"

Example:

Baym, Nina, et al., eds. The Norton Anthology of American Literature. Second shorter edition. New York: W.W. Norton, 1986.

F. Author and a translator

Example:

Homer. The Odyssey. Trans. Robert Fagles. New York: Viking Penguin, 1996.

G. Author, a translator, and an editor

Example:

Frank, Anne. The Diary of Anne Frank: The Critical Edition. Trans. Arnold J. Pomerans and B.M. Mooyart-Doubleday. Eds. David Barnouw and Gerrold van der Stroom. New York: Doubleday, 1989.

H. Edition other than the first

Example:

Janson, H.W. and Anthony F. Janson. History of Art for Young People. 5th ed.
New York: Abrams, 1997.

I. Multivolume work

Example:

Child, Francis James, ed. The English and Scottish Popular Ballads. 1883-98.
Vol. 1. New York: Dover, 1965.

J. Republished book or a literary work available in several editions

Give the date of the original publication after the title. Then give complete publication information, including the date for the edition that you have used.

Example:

Steinbeck, John. Of Mice and Men. 1938. New York: Penguin Books, 1993.

Parts of Books

A. Poem, short story etc. in a collection of works

Examples:

Angelou, Maya. "Still I Rise." The Norton Anthology of African American Literature. Eds. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Nellie Y. McKay. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997.

Soto, Gary. "Broken Chain." Baseball in April: And Other Stories. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990.

Stowe, Harriet Beecher. "Sojourner Truth, the Libyan Sibyl." The Meridian Anthology of Early American Women Writers: From Anne Bradstreet to Louisa May Alcott, 1650-1865. Ed. Katherine M. Rogers. New York: Meridian, 1991.

B. Novel or play in an anthology

Example:

Miller, Arthur. The Crucible. Best American Plays: Fourth Series, 1951-1957.

Ed. John Gassner. New York: Crown, 1963.

C. Introduction, preface, foreword, or afterword written by someone other than the author

Example:

Coles, Robert. "Foreword." No Place to Be: Voices of Homeless Children.

By Judith Breck. Boston: Houghton, 1992.

Magazines or Newspapers

If the author is unknown, start with the title etc. If you are not sure how to cite other media sources, see the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, or ask your teacher or librarian.

A. Article from a magazine or newspaper

Last name, First name. "Article title." Title of Source. Day and/or Month Year: page.

Examples:

Deahl, Ashlea. "Cellphone Etiquette? Hello?" The Boston Globe. 26 July 2003:

E1.

"The Decade of the Spy." Newsweek. 7 March 1994: 26-27.

"Doctors Get Help Assessing Older Drivers." Associated Press. The Wall Street

Journal. 31 July 2003: D2.

Vesilind, Preet J. "The Driest Place on Earth." National Geographic. August 2003:

46.

Audio and Video

A. Television or radio program

The information in an entry for a television or radio program usually appears in the following order:

- Title of the episode or segment (in quotation marks)
- Title of the program (underlined)
- Title of the series, if any (neither underlined nor in quotation marks)
- Name of the network
- Call letters and city of the local station
- Broadcast date

Examples:

Watergate Plus 30: Shadow of History. PBS. WGBH, Boston. 30 July 2003.

“Ben Franklin.” Science Friday with Ira Flatow. NPR. WBUR, Boston. 4 July 2003.

B. Sound recording

Example:

Clausen, Alf and John Swartzwelder. “The Amendment Song.” The Simpsons: Songs in the Key of Springfield. Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1997.

C. Film or video

A film entry usually begins with the title, underlined, and includes the director and/or the producer, the distributor, and the year of release.

Examples:

“Episode 1, 1861—The Cause.” The Civil War. Prods. Ken Burns and Ric Burns. PBS Video, 1989.

It’s a Wonderful Life. Dir. Frank Capra. RKO. 1946.

Like Water for Chocolate [Como agua para chocolate]. Dir. Alfonso Arau. Miramax, 1993.

Websites and Online Informational Databases

In order to locate a wide range of reliable information, it is important for researchers to use both Internet websites and online informational databases effectively.

Websites:

Evaluating the accuracy and usefulness of Internet websites is an important part of research. Because anyone from anywhere can place information on the net, websites may range from highly reliable pages produced by university scholars to projects posted by elementary school students. Therefore, it is always important to know who produced a website, and to validate the questionable information by consulting other research sources.

Entries for online sources in the Works Cited should contain as many of the following details listed below as is available. If you are uncertain of a particular source, check with your teacher or librarian for assistance.

How to cite a website:

- Name of the author, editor, creator, or designer.
- Title of the document in quotation marks. Examples of titles of documents include individual, titled pages or sections within the website.
- Title of the whole website (underlined).
- Date of electronic publication, or of the latest update.
- Name of university or sponsoring organization.
-
- Name of the editor, creator, or designer of the website, if different from the author of the document.
- Date when you found the information.
- <URL>.

Examples:

Landow, George. "Victorian and Victorianism." The Victorian Web. 21 December 2002. Brown University. 21 July 2003.
<www.victorianweb.org>

"Research Milestone." Framingham Heart Study. December 2002. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. 21 July 2003.
<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/framingham/>.

Shakespeare, William. Macbeth. The Complete Works of William Shakespeare. Creator: Jeremy Hylton. November 2000. M.I.T. 21 July 2003. <http://the-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/work.html>.

Article in an online encyclopedia:

“Dust Bowl.” Encyclopedia Britannica Online. Vers. 99.1. Encyclopedia Britannica. 1 Oct. 1999.
<<http://www.eb.com:180/bol/topic?eu=32140&sctn=1>>.

Article in magazine or newspaper online:

Chiles, James R. “Bang! Went the Doors of Every Bank in America.” Online. Smithsonian. Apr 1997. Abstract. 1 Oct. 1997.
<<http://www.Smithsonianmag.si.edu/Smithsonian/issues97/banks.html>>.

Wilford, John Noble. “Oldest Planet Is Revealed, Challenging Old Theories.” The New York Times on the Web. 11 July 2003. 21 July 2003.
<<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/11/national/11PLAN.html>>.

Online Informational Databases

Online informational databases are located on the Internet and accessed by subscription; that is, one must pay a fee to access information. They are often available free to patrons through school and public library systems. Examples include: Infotrac and Newsbank. The information contained in a database comes from previously published sources, and may include: reference materials, newspapers, magazines, primary source documents, transcripts from TV and radio broadcasts, audio and video segments. Search engines will not find this material. Because these sources are documented (author, title, source, date, etc.) and are edited for publication, they can usually be considered reliable and accurate.

How to cite a database:

Note: If a database provides citation information, you may reproduce it exactly as shown. Otherwise, cite as much as you can of the following information in this order.

- Author
- Title of document in quotation marks
- Title of original source underlined
- Publication information of original source.
- Name of database underlined
- Publisher of database.
- <URL>.

Examples:

Bruckner, D. J. R. "Storyteller for a War that Won't End." The New York Times. 3 April 1990. pp. C15, C17. Contemporary Literary Criticism. Gale Group, 2003.

<<http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/GLD/hits?>>.

Cassuto, David. "Turning Wine into Water: Water as Privileged Signifier in *The Grapes of Wrath*." Papers on Language and Literature. Vol. 29, No. 1. Winter 1993. 67-95. Contemporary Literary Criticism. Gale Group, 2003.

<<http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/GLD/hits?>>.

Ellis, Kristi. "DOL Report: Child Labor Still Abounds." U.S. Department of Labor Report. 3 June 2003. Fairchild Publications. Infotrac General Reference Center Gold. <<http://web4.infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/>>.

"Julia Alvarez." Contemporary Authors Online. Gale, 2003.

<<http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/GLD/hits?>>.

Vaishnav, Anand. "Bay State Students No. 2 on US Test but a Racial Gap Persists in Scores." The Boston Globe. 3rd ed. 11 July 2003. Newsbank.

<<http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?>>.

Example of a works cited entry provided by the database:

"Genghis Khan." Encyclopedia of World Biography. 2nd ed. 17 Vols. Gale Research, 1998. Reproduced in Biography Resource Center. Farmington Hills, Mich.:

The Gale Group. 2003. <<http://www.galenet.com/servlet/BioRC>>.

Step 6: Editing and Revising the Draft

- ❑ Edit for grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- ❑ Edit for typographical errors.
- ❑ Edit for format errors.
- ❑ Be sure to have other people proofread your paper.
- ❑ Check the thesis statement and make any clarifications necessary.
- ❑ Check the topic sentence ideas for clarity.
- ❑ Are all of the topic sentences supported with evidence?
- ❑ Do all of the topic sentences relate back to the thesis statement?
- ❑ Review the body paragraph order; the strongest argument should be first.
- ❑ Do the transition sentences smoothly connect all the ideas?
- ❑ Revise the introduction so that the ideas flow from general to specific.
- ❑ Revise the conclusion for clarity.
- ❑ Once the paper has been revised, go back and revise the outline according to the ideas and arguments of the research paper.

Step 7: The Final Draft

Basics

- ❑ Make sure that the paper has been revised and edited thoroughly.
- ❑ Be sure to have your outline revised according to the paper.
- ❑ Be sure you have all the required elements as outlined by the teacher.
- ❑ Use the checklist at the back of this book to help you.

Style Issues

- ❑ Do not use the first person (I, we, us) or the second person (you, your).
- ❑ Do not use contractions (isn't, didn't, it's, etc.).
- ❑ Do not use slang or colloquial terms (alot, gonna, cuz, etc.).
- ❑ Use present tense when writing about or referring to literature.

Font and Size

- ❑ Times New Roman
- ❑ 12 point font

Header

1. Make sure you are on page one of your paper.
2. For Microsoft Word Documents, click on “View” and scroll to “Header and Footer.”
3. Click on “Align Right” so your last name appears in the upper right-hand corner of your paper.
4. Type in your last name only.
5. Click on the number button. Your paper should now be numbered automatically.

Margins

- The header must be one-half inch from the top of the page.
- The heading for your paper must be one inch from the top.
- The left, right, and bottom margin must be one inch.

Heading

- The heading should be in the top left corner of the paper.
- The heading should be double-spaced.
- The heading should include the following information:
 - Your name
 - Your teacher’s name
 - Your class name
 - The date

APPENDICES

Please note: The following examples are meant to provide models to guide you in writing your own outlines, papers, and works cited pages. They are not perfect; they are merely examples of work created throughout the process of writing the research paper. If you do use these as guidelines, though, they will prove extremely helpful to you.

Harry Potter

Mr. Cook

World Literature

15 August 2002

Kafka's Undercurrent of Optimism

Thesis: A great deal of evidence supports the interpretation that Kafka is pessimistic, but some evidence contradicts that interpretation, and the contradictory evidence is persuasive enough to prove that Kafka's writing is not pessimistic, that it does express hope in the end.

- I. Kafka's apparent pessimism is influenced by his immediate surroundings.
 - A. Critics agree his writing is heavily influenced by his father.
 1. Kafka thought of his father as "coarse, practical and domineering" ("Kafka" 677).
 2. After the death of two older brothers in infancy, Kafka felt the pressure from his father of being the oldest.
 - a. Critics see his father as the root of his pessimism.
 - b. Characters are often "...tortured by anxiety and loneliness" (Hoffmeister 209).
 - B. Kafka felt isolated as a German-speaking Jew in Czechoslovakia.
- II. Despite the perceived pessimism, some critics believe he wasn't entirely pessimistic.
 - A. Thomas Mann believes Kafka was not an unbeliever, that he was spiritual.
 - B. Use of humor implies some optimism.
 1. Kafka himself laughed immensely while reading The Trial to friends.

2. Many critics, such as Ronald Gray, fail to see the humor and only acknowledge the apparent negativity.
 - a. Mann recognizes that Kafka is “wrestling” (292) with both sides.
 - b. Gray is lopsided toward the negativity only
- III. Many critics overlook the optimism because it is subtle, but that only seems to make it more significant.
 - A. The end of “The Metamorphosis” is a prime example of his optimism.
 - B. Gregor’s situation, which is “utterly pessimistic” (Gray, Franz Kafka 280), overshadows and hides the family’s optimistic situation.
- IV. Kafka saw life as a mix of futility and hope.
 - A. Kafka told his friend Max Brod that there is “plenty of hope...but not for us” (Benjamin 116).
 1. Kafka believes the powers above are cruel.
 2. He also sees the chance for things to change.
 - B. Benjamin’s folksong shows that Kafka’s view was not uncommon during his day.
- V. The paradox of Kafka’s writing is that it is both comic and tragic.
 - A. Kafka’s humor is intertwined with tragedy (which contrasts American humor that serves as a relief from troubles).
 1. Wallace recognizes the weaving of tragedy and joy in Kafka’s writing.
 2. Whitman’s “Song of Myself” expresses sentiments (1324-1326).
 - B. Kafka’s writing reflects the dichotomy of human existence – to miss it is to miss his real talents as a writer.

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Kafka's Undercurrent of Optimism

Franz Kafka only published a handful of stories during his life, but after his death all his works were published and he became famous posthumously (Hoffmeister 209). The great irony is not that Kafka did not live to see his fame, but that his fame was only achieved because of the disloyalty of a friend. Kafka had requested that all his writings be burned after he died, but his friend, Max Brod, ignored that request and had his writings published instead (209). Thus, in the 1920's Kafka's three novels, The Trial, The Castle, and Amerika, plus his numerous short stories were all made available to the public and to the critics ("Kafka" 677). Ever since then people have been reading and enjoying Kafka's work while the critics have been trying to explain and often disagree about the meaning and purpose of his work. One of the main points of controversy is whether Kafka meant his work to be totally pessimistic. A great deal of evidence supports that interpretation, but some evidence contradicts it, and the contradictory evidence is persuasive enough to prove that Kafka's writing is not totally pessimistic; it does express hope in the end.

One major aspect of Kafka's writing upon which all the critics agree is that it was heavily influenced by his relationship with his father. Kafka was born into a middle-class Jewish family in Prague, Austria-Hungary, known today as the Czech Republic (Nervi). Kafka thought of his father as a "coarse, practical, and domineering shopkeeper and patriarch, who worshipped nothing but material success and social advancement, belonged to a race of giants and was an

awesome, admirable, but repulsive tyrant” (“Kafka” 677). Kafka’s two older brothers both died in infancy, and as the eldest child he never felt able to live up to his father’s expectations (677). Often critics point to his relationship with his father as a root cause of pessimism in Kafka’s writing. The characters in his stories are often “deprived of spiritual security, and tortured by anxiety and loneliness” (Hoffmeister 209). These characters mirror the anxiety that Kafka felt because of his overbearing father. However, his father was not the only contributing factor shaping his characters. Life for a German-speaking Jew in Czechoslovakia was not easy. The “Czechs hated both Germans and Jews, and this alienation permeated his works” (Ozick). In the words of another critic: “the roots of Kafka’s anxiety and despair go deeper than his relationship to his father and family...The source of Kafka’s despair lies in a sense of ultimate isolation from true communion with all human beings” (“Kafka” 678). This spiritual disconnection from other people, especially his father, certainly supports the idea that Kafka was pessimistic about life.

However, other critics suggest that Kafka was a spiritual man who saw life and depicted it as a struggle, but not a hopeless one. Thomas Mann asserts that Kafka was no unbeliever, that he “had faith in the good and the right,” but the inability of humankind to realize and adhere to the good and the right is thematically expressed in Kafka’s works through “a humorously, fantastically despairing good will” (291). Humor is an important element in Kafka that seems to be overlooked by those critics who interpret his work as entirely pessimistic. “Max Brod recalls in his biography that in spite of the ‘fearful earnestness’ of the first chapter of The Trial, the small number of friends to whom Kafka read the manuscript all ‘laughed immoderately,’ and he adds that Kafka laughed so hard he could scarcely continue” (Baum 153). Such a sense of humor serves to contradict those critics who imply that Kafka and his works are purely pessimistic. One such critic is Ronald Gray, who compares Kafka to Edgar Allan Poe when he

writes, “Kafka conveys a sense of insidious, indefatigable evil sapping silently all the time at the roots of human existence...” (A Collection 222). Gray overstates the negativity of Kafka’s writing and meaning; he fails to recognize the humor, which like the humor of satire, does imply hope for positive change. Mann supports this interpretation when he writes that Kafka sees “with the eye of a satirist; yet at the same time with utter sincerity, faith, and submissiveness, wrestling unintermittedly to win inside the incomprehensible kingdom of grace” (292). This is a more convincing interpretation than that of Gray because it balances the negative implications of Kafka’s writing with the positive implications. In contrast, Gray’s interpretation is lopsided toward the negative only.

Admittedly, the optimistic implications in Kafka’s work are slight, but that serves to make them all the more significant and precious. An example of such hope occurs at the end of “The Metamorphosis” after the death of the protagonist, Gregor Samsa. Kafka implies that Gregor’s family could be headed for happier days:

Then they all three left the apartment together, which was more than they had done for months, and went by tram into the open country outside the town. The tram, in which they were the only passengers, was filled with warm sunshine. Leaning comfortably back in their seats they canvassed their prospects for the future, and it appeared on closer inspection that these were not at all bad, for the jobs they had got, which so far they had never really discussed with each other, were all three admirable and likely to lead to better things later on. (139)

The story has an “utterly pessimistic note, so far as Gregor is concerned,” but it ends with hope for the future of the rest of the family, especially Gregor’s sister, who is old enough to anticipate love, marriage, and a new life (Gray, Franz Kafka 280).

Walter Benjamin conveys another important anecdote of Max Brod, Kafka's friend and biographer:

“I remember,” Brod writes, “a conversation with Kafka which began with present-day Europe and the decline of the human race. ‘We are nihilistic thoughts, suicidal thoughts that come into God’s head,’ Kafka said. This reminded me at first of the Gnostic view of life: God as the evil demiurge, the world as his Fall. ‘Oh no,’ said Kafka, ‘our world is only a bad mood of God, a bad day of his.’ ‘Then there is hope outside this manifestation of the world that we know?’ He smiled. ‘Oh, plenty of hope, an infinite amount of hope—but not for us.’” (116)

This typically Kafkaesque paradox lends itself to both sides of critical interpretation, pessimism and optimism at the same time. Kafka sees what Thomas Mann refers to as the illogical remoteness and even cruelty of the powers above (292), yet he maintains that sliver of hope that things do not have to remain as they are, as we know them. Change is possible. Walter Benjamin relates Kafka's hope for the possibility of change to a folksong of the time entitled “The Little Hunchback:”

When I come into my room,
 My little bed to make,
 A little hunchback is in there,
 With laughter does he shake.
 When I kneel upon my stool
 And I want to pray,

A hunchback man is in the room

And he starts to say:

My dear child, I beg of you,

Pray for the little hunchback too. (134)

Benjamin explains, “This little man is at home in distorted life; he will disappear with the coming of the Messiah, of whom a great rabbi once said that he did not wish to change the world by force, but would only make a slight adjustment in it” (134). Benjamin’s analogy implies Kafka views humanity as a little deformed and imperfect, but still open to the possibility of improvement, most likely through some sort of religious salvation.

That folksong also reminds one of the humor in Kafka, which lends itself to the optimistic hope subtly conveyed in Kafka’s work. David Foster Wallace writes about the difficulty in teaching Kafka to students: “the particular sort of funniness Kafka deploys is deeply alien to kids whose neural resonances are American. The fact is that Kafka’s humor has almost none of the particular forms and codes of contemporary U.S. amusement” (23, 26). Wallace asserts that most American humor provides relief from the tragic troubles of life, whereas Kafka’s humor is intertwined with the tragedy. “Kafka’s comedy is always also tragedy, and this tragedy always also an immense and reverent joy” (26). Wallace has perfectly described the paradox of Kafka’s writing; it is both comic and tragic simultaneously, and the result is not dark pessimism but an enlightened understanding and even joy in the inherent contradictions of life. This is the type of joy Walt Whitman expressed in his poem “Song of Myself” when he wrote bluntly, “Do I contradict myself? / Very well then I contradict myself, / I am large, I contain multitudes” (1324-1326). The point is not to despair at the conflicting comedy and tragedy of life, but rather to revel in the irreconcilable, inherent contradictions of life. Kafka’s writing

never over-simplifies life by conveying complete hope or complete despair. His writing always includes duplicity that points to the dichotomy of human existence. To miss this point and to classify Kafka as purely pessimistic is to miss the true complexity of Kafka's meaning and to miss the hope that glows behind the darkness of his imagination. To ignore the undercurrent of humor, joy, and hope in Kafka's writing undermines the true value of Kafka's genius.

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- Have I used consistent verb tense?
- Have I made sure my paper is free of colloquialisms, contractions, and rhetorical questions?
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