

# Rancho Buena Vista High School

## Formatting Guide for Teachers and Students based on the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Seventh Edition*

**\*Keep this guide until you graduate!**  
**Available for download at <http://www.rbvhs.org/>**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## **RBVHS Guide to Modern Language Association (MLA) Documentation 7<sup>th</sup> Edition**

### **What is the Purpose of this Packet?**

The Modern Language Association (MLA) has established specific guidelines that instruct how to format a paper and cite your sources so that the audience knows which ideas belong to you and which belong to others. High schools across the country use MLA as their primary formatting requirement. The purpose of this packet is to provide you the requirements and examples of the correct format for all of your MLA style essays and research papers throughout high school.

### **How Will This Packet Help Me?**

Enclosed you will find directions for how to set the margins, font, and size (using Microsoft Word) before beginning papers and presentations; what types of titles and headings are expected in papers and where to put them; what information you need to collect from a source while looking at a print source or searching the internet; how to incorporate those sources—either direct or paraphrased—into your written work; how to create a Works Cited page (giving credit to the sources you visited and borrowed information from); and examples of what correctly formatted work should look like.

### **Does Anyone Really Use MLA?**

Actually, yes! MLA style is used predominantly by professionals in the field of the humanities (art, literature, and foreign language) for research and presentation. It is generally used in high schools and at the university undergraduate level in a variety of subjects. Though MLA is widely recognized and used, be sure to pay attention to the specific style and formatting instructions of your individual teacher.

### **Why and When Should I Use MLA?**

Knowing how to set up your papers and presentations will save you time and give instructors and readers a neat, easy-to-follow presentation of your work. Having everyone follow a format, such as MLA, shifts the focus of assessment to your individual ideas, instead of their presentation. Following guidelines for format will also allow *you* to focus more on your assignment and the ideas within it, rather than worry about what it will look like visually. Use your MLA heading and title guidelines for all hand-written assignments, and other guidelines any time you write a paper (unless otherwise instructed by your teacher).

### **Are There Other Formatting Guidelines?**

Yes. Another universally accepted format for professionals in the field of science, social sciences and graduate studies/research is APA, established by the American Psychological Association. Generally speaking, high schools do not use APA format. In addition, there are other formats which are required for journalism or business writing. Again, be sure to pay attention to the specific directions of your instructor.

## Formatting Your Papers for MLA Style Using Microsoft Word

### Font and Size

12pt size is standard; use Times New Roman or Arial font.

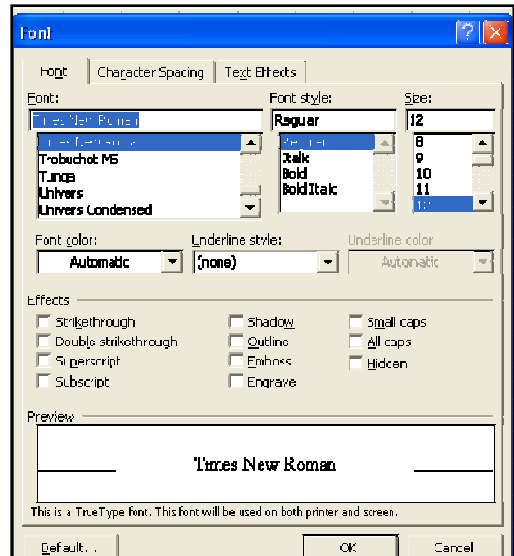
#### Using MS Word 97-2003

1. *Format*
2. *Font*
3. Choose *Times New Roman* or *Arial*.
4. *Size 12*

#### Using MS Word 2007 and later

1. *Format*
2. *Font*
3. Choose *Times New Roman* or *Arial*.
4. *Size 12*

Note: MS-Word documents often default to 10-point font size. This is too small for most people to read easily. To set your default font and size, first follow the instructions above and then click "Default" in the bottom left corner. Answer "Yes" to the question when prompted.



### Paragraphs and Spacing

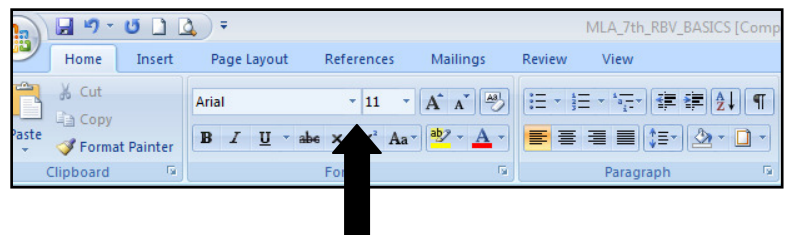
Use the "tab" button when typing or 1/2" indentation when hand-writing for each new paragraph. Double-space all formal writing assignments all the way through. Use one space after periods or other punctuation marks. Left align your text (do not justify).

#### Using MS Word 97-2003

1. *Format*
2. *Paragraph*
  - a. *Line Spacing*
    - i. Choose *Double*
    - ii. Make sure *Spacing before and after* is set to 0pt
  - b. *Alignment*
    - i. *Left*

#### Using MS Word 2007-onward

1. *Format*
2. *Font*
3. Choose *Times New Roman* or *Arial*.
4. *Size 12*



## Formatting Your Papers for MLA Style Using Microsoft Word (continued)

### Margins

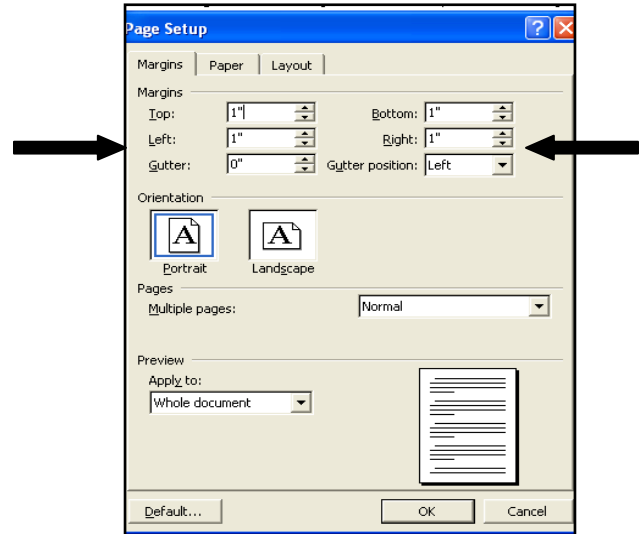
Set margins to 1" on top, bottom, right, and left. Use standard, white, 8.5" x 11" paper.

#### Using MS Word 97-2003

1. *File*
2. *Page Setup*
3. Change Left and Right to 1"

#### Using MS Word 2007 and later

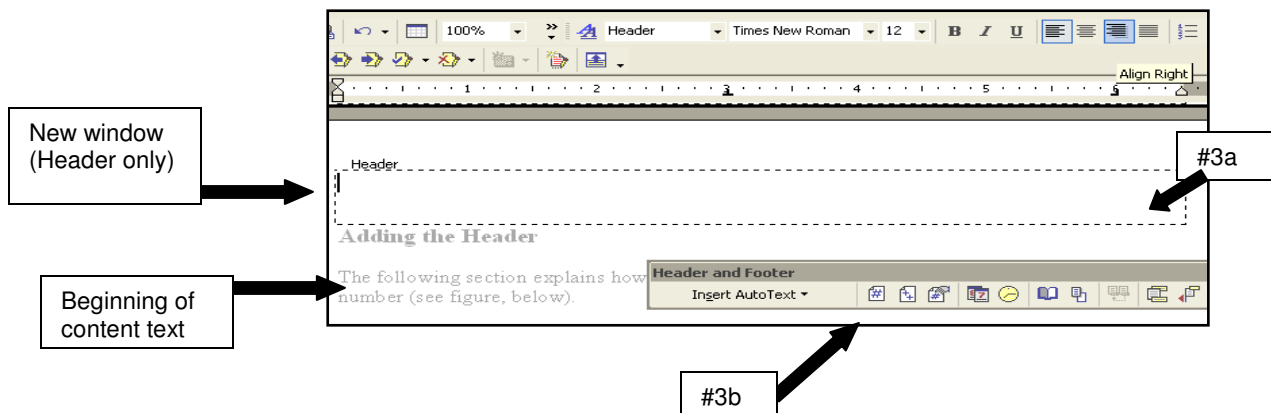
1. *File*
2. *Page Setup*
3. Change Left and Right to 1"



### Header

The header consists of your last name and page number in the top right corner, 1/2" from the top, with one space, but no comma between them. This should be on *every* page, beginning with the first. There is no footer.

1. *View*
2. *Header and Footer*
3. A new editing window will open up, allowing you to edit the top and bottom margins of your paper. Right align your text and double check that it is still the same font and size (see above)
  - a. Type your last name. *Space*.
  - b. Find the button that looks like # and click on it. The page number should automatically appear.



## Formatting Your Papers for MLA Style Using Microsoft Word (continued)

### MLA Heading

The MLA heading is written in the top left corner of the first page only. It consists of four parts, each part written on a separate line, also double spaced if typing.

Student Name (First and Last)  
Teacher Name  
Name of Class, Per (ex: Algebra II, Per 4)  
Due Date (Day Month Year)—no commas between

### Title

Even when hand-writing assignments, a title is helpful. It should be centered, with the first letter of each important word capitalized, one line below the MLA heading and one line above the beginning of your paper. DO NOT bold, italicize, or increase the font of your title.

2. *Format*
3. *Alignment*
  - a. *Centered*

\*Your home computer may have a Word Processor or Microsoft Word version that requires different formatting directions. Be sure to save your work in a format that is compatible with where you will print your paper!

**Formatting Your Papers for MLA Style Using Microsoft Word**  
**EXAMPLE PAGE**

1" (left margin)

1/2" (top margin)

Last Name 1

Student's Name

Teacher's Name

Name of Class, Period

Due Date (Day Month Year)

Double-space

Indent 1/2" Guidelines for Papers at Rancho Buena Vista High School

1" (left margin)

All assignments should be neatly written in blue or black ink or word-processed using a standard 12-point font. All assignments should use upper and lower case letters appropriately. Word-processed documents should be double-spaced beginning with the MLA heading; this includes block-indented quotations that comprise more than four lines of type.

Indent 1/2" If a quotation runs more than four lines, set it apart from your text on a new line and indent one inch from your left margin, or a total of 2" from the left edge of the page. Do not put quotation marks around the quotation, and do not indent on the right margin further. Do remember to include your citation but include it separate (see below). Introduce your quote with a colon like this:

1" (right margin)

2" total (left margin)

Your thesis statement should be descriptive but it should not be too explanatory. If your thesis statement is very explanatory, the reader won't be triggered to read the entire write-up. It should entice the reader to want to continue reading but not be so long that the reader becomes confused about what your main point really is. It is essential that *you* have a clear purpose in mind before you begin writing. (Clark 56)

1" (bottom margin)

**Research Papers and Projects  
Collecting Sources**

Research papers and projects always contain information compiled from other sources. When you write a research paper, or use another person's information in your own work, you must cite the sources of your information. As there is required information for each different type of source, it is helpful to use a Source Worksheet like the one below when collecting information. Every source may not have every item, but fill in as much as you can.

**Note: This Source Worksheet is provided to students free of charge in the library and can be downloaded from the RBV homepage as well.**

**Source Worksheet  
Basic Source Information**

Format: (check one)   Print   Web   Online database   Other \_\_\_\_\_

Author(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Editor: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Article, Encyclopedia entry, Image, Song, Web page: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book, Magazine, Newspaper etc: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Publication (needed for magazines/newspapers): \_\_\_\_\_

Pages (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Edition (if listed): \_\_\_\_\_

Volume (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Publication (city): \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher (company name): \_\_\_\_\_

Copyright date (needed for books): \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Information for Online Sources**

Title of Database or Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher or Online Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date (you accessed the site): \_\_\_\_\_

Web Address/URL (not required for works cited, but you may need to find the page again):  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Research Papers and Projects Citing Sources That Have Been Collected

### How and Why

When you use someone else's prior research, information, image, etc. it is your legal responsibility to give credit to the original producer of the work. There are two ways to do this and you can use a combination of both: you can directly cite another person's exact words; or you can use their information, but put it into *your own words* (paraphrase). **Both require what's called an "in-text citation" and the same format is used for either type.** The purpose of an in-text citation is to direct the reader to that source's entry on the Works Cited page of your report. The amount of information you need to provide depends on the type of source you used.

### MLA Web Resources for Teachers and Students

- The Owl at Purdue Online Writing Lab: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>
- Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/mla.html>
- Williams College Libraries: <http://library.williams.edu/citing/styles/mla.php>
- AndySpinks.com: <http://andyspinks.com/mla/>

### Direct Citations/Quotations

When an original author has phrased an idea in a powerful, clever, or unique way, it may be useful to use his/her exact words. When you want to do this, you must clearly indicate that the words are a quotation by placing quotation marks around them and then crediting the source.

#### Short Quotation

Place quotation marks " " around the exact words, followed by the author's last name and page number (no comma between), then closing punctuation.

"The industrial revolution began in Great Britain for several reasons..." (Bernadac 19).

#### Long Quotation (more than 4 lines)

If a quotation runs more than four lines, set it apart from your text on a new line and indent one inch from your left margin, or a total of 2" from the edge of the left page. Do not change margins on the right. Do not put quotation marks around the text, but do remember to include your in-text citation. *In a long, indented quotation only, the citation is placed outside of the sentence, meaning your end punctuation is before parenthesis.* Introduce your quote with a colon like this:

One critic adeptly summarized the mainstreaming of the punk genre:

For punk rock, the 1990s were both a watershed and a nightmare. The mainstream commercial success in that decade of rock bands like Nirvana, Green Day, Rancid, and Blink 182 was unprecedented for a genre that survived the Reagan-Bush era on three

**Research Papers and Projects**  
**Citing Sources You've Collected (continued)**

dollar concerts, indie labels, and the relatively limited broadcast range of college radio stations. (Matula 19)

**Paraphrased Information**

You can include someone else's ideas in your paper by putting those ideas into your own words. When paraphrasing, always cite the source of the paraphrased information with in-text citation, and restate the information using your own words and sentences.

Do not include quotation marks. After the information, include the author's last name and page number (no comma between), then closing punctuation.

The abundance of natural resources in Great Britain and its colonies was one factor that allowed the industrial revolution to begin there (Lampard 10).

## Research Papers and Projects How to Create a Works Cited Page

### What and Why

The Works Cited page is a list of the specific books, articles, and other resources used in collecting background information and in writing your paper. It contains the comprehensive information about a source that you briefly referenced in your in-text citation.

### General Guidelines

1. Your Works Cited page should be the last page of your paper using the same formatting as the rest of your paper. Double check that the correct page number is listed in the header.
2. As the Works Cited is the last page, it should only contain the header in the top right corner. No MLA heading!
3. Center the exact words Works Cited (make sure it is plural) at the top of the page (do not italicize, bold or use quotation marks).
4. Double space the entire page, without extra lines between entries.
5. Cite entries in alphabetical order by *first word of entry*, not by source type. Do not number or bullet sources.
6. When including date of access, etc., reverse the date so it is in Day Mo. year format.  
Example: 15 Nov. 2010
7. Indent the *second* and *subsequent* lines of each entry five spaces (1/2" or 1 "tab") by using what's called a hanging indent (see example page).
8. Use *italics* (instead of underlining) for titles of larger works (books, magazines, movies) and "quotation marks" for titles of shorter works (poems, articles, TV shows).
9. For every entry, you must state the format of publication. This refers to the *type* of source. Most entries will likely be Print (books, magazines, newspapers, etc.) or Web sources (websites, online articles, databases, RSS feeds), but other possibilities may include E-mail, DVD or MP3.
  - a. If you're citing an article or a publication that was originally issued in print form but that you retrieved from an online database (like EBSCO), type the online database name in italics also. The same is true for interviews you obtained from an internet source. Be sure to cite the name of the original interviewer and in italics, the name of the site or company you retrieved it from.
10. Pay special attention to the punctuation, formatting, and capitalization required for each type of entry! Put a period at the end of each entry. See the example pages.

## Research Papers and Projects How to Format Works Cited Entries

### Print Sources

#### Book—Single Author

Author Last name, First name. *Title of book*. City of publication: Publisher, Copyright year. Print.

#### Book—Two or more authors

First author's Last name, First author's first name, and Second author's First name Last name.

*Title of book*. City of publication: Publisher, Copyright year. Print.

*\*Note: If the print source has a listed editor or translator, put a comma after the name(s) and add ed. (for one editor) or eds. (for multiple editors).*

#### Political Cartoon from a Book

Creator's Last name, First name. "Title of Work." Format (Cartoon or Illustration) neither underlined nor in quotation marks. *Title of Book*. City of Publication: Publisher: Copyright year. Page number.

#### Magazine/Newspaper

Author Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Magazine or newspaper*. Date: Pages. Print.

#### Political Cartoon from a Magazine/Newspaper

Creator's Last name, First name. "Title of Work." Format (Cartoon or Illustration) neither underlined nor in quotation marks. *Title of Newspaper or Magazine*. (Day Mo. year): page number (if available).

#### Reference or Encyclopedia Article or Edited Collection

Author Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Book*. Editor. Volume. City of Publication: Publisher, Year. Pages used. Print.

**Research Papers and Projects**  
**How to Format Works Cited Entries (continued)**

**Electronic Sources**

**Website**

Editor, author, or compiler Last name, First name (if available). "Title of Article/Webpage." *Title of Web Site*. Publisher or sponsor (if none given, omit), Date of creation or update in Day Mo. year (if none given, omit.). Web. Date of access in Day Mo. year.

**Online Articles (from a database like EBSCO or ProQuest)**

Author Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Source or Journal*. Volume. Issue (Year): Pages. *Name of Database*. Web. Date of access in Day Mo. year.

**Political Cartoon from the Web**

Creator's Last name, First name. "Title of Work." Format (Cartoon or Illustration) neither underlined nor in quotation marks. *Title of Website/Online Collection*. Day Mo. Year of most recent site update (if available). Web. Date of access in Day Mo. year.

**Magazine or Newspaper Article (from a database)**

Author Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Magazine or Newspaper Name*. Date: Pages. *Database Title*. Web. Date of access in Day Mo. year.

**E-mail (including e-mail interviews)**

Message Sender Last name, First name. "Re: Subject line of email." Message Receiver Last name, First name. Date received in Day Mo. year. E-mail.

**Online Photograph, Illustration, or Image**

Artist Last name, First name. *Image Title*. Date of Publication in Day Mo. year. Collection or Institution. *Website or database name*. Format (Web, Print, etc.). Date of access in day mo. year.

**Research Papers and Projects**  
**How to Format Works Cited Entries (continued)**

**Song or Sound Recording**

Artist Last name, First name/Group name. "Song Title." Any other major contributors. *Album Title*. Publisher, Year. Format (CD, DVD, MP3, etc.).

**Film or Video Clip (on DVD)**

*Title*. Director. Major Performers. Distributor, Year. Format (DVD, VHS, etc.).

**Film or Video Clip (Online)**

*Title*. Director. Major Performers. Distributor, Year. *Website or database title*. Format (DVD, VHS, etc.). Date of access in Day Mo. year.

**Other**

**Interview**

Interviewee's Last name, First name. *Professional Title of Person Interviewed*. Interview by First name Last name of person who did interview. *Name of Source (if applicable)*. Format of interview (Personal Interview, Phone Interview, etc.). Date interviewed in Day Mo. year.

**Research Papers and Projects**  
**EXAMPLE WORKS CITED: PAGE 1**

**Double-  
space  
all**

**1"**

**½"**

Last name #

Works Cited

Asher, Sandy, and David L. Harrison, eds. *Dude! Stories and Stuff for Boys*. New York: Dutton, 2006. Print.

Bailey, Moira, and Jill Smolowe. "Confessions of a Bully." *People Magazine*. 18 Oct. 2010: 70-71. Print.

Bishop, Suzanne, Michelle Smith and Moe Watson. *Making it to the Top*. New York: Washington Square Press, 2003. Print.

Brown, Joseph. *Becoming a Firefighter*. New York: Harper, 1999. Print.

Derulo, Jason. "Whatcha Say." *Jason Derulo*. Warner, 2011. CD.

*Ed Wood*. Dir. Tim Burton. Perf. Johnny Depp, Martin Landau, Sarah Jessica Parker, Patricia Arquette. Touchstone, 1994. DVD.

"Edgar Allen Poe." *Literary Lifelines*. The Diagram Group. Vol. 8. Danbury, CT:

**½"**  
←→ Grolier, 1997. Print.

"Elie Wiesel." *Elie Wiesel Foundation*. The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity, Web.

**1"** 02 Oct. 2010.

**1"**

←→ Franklin, Benjamin. "Join or Die." Illustration. *The Pennsylvania Gazette* 9 May 1754. ←→  
*Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Online Catalog*. 02 Dec. 2005. Web.  
31 Jan. 2010.

**Research Papers and Projects**  
**EXAMPLE WORKS CITED: PAGE 2**

Last name #

- Hotinski, Roberta. "Rescued from il Purgatorio." *U.S. News & World Report* 127.5  
(1999): 56. *Middle Search Plus*. EBSCO. Web. 15 Oct. 2010.
- "Ideology." *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Neufeldt, Victor, ed. Englewood  
Cliffs: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2005. Print.
- Kunka, Andrew. "Re: Modernist Literature." Message to the author. 15 Nov. 2000. E-  
mail.
- Parks, Rosa. *Civil Rights Activist*. Interview by Dan Rather. *CBS News*. Personal  
Interview. 1 Dec. 1972. Web. 29 Nov. 2004.
- Picasso, Pablo. *Pablo Picasso Painting 021*. Added 7 July 2010. *Daydaypaint.com*. Web.  
2 Jan. 2011.
- Schindler's List*. Dir. Steven Spielberg. Perf. Liam Neeson, Ralph Fiennes, Ben Kingsley.  
Universal Studios, 2004. Streaming video [Netflix].
- Zamora, Angie. *Registered Nurse*. Interview by Samantha Miller. Phone  
Interview. 2 Feb. 2011.