

Research Paper Evaluation

The items checked below are those which need to be improved.

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PRESENTATION (MLA format)

- One-inch margins
- Correct title format
- Double-spaced throughout (including block quotations)
- Do not skip lines between paragraphs (including block quotations)
- Half-inch indent for first line of all paragraphs
- One-inch (left) indent for block quotations (no right indent)
- Correct use of typography: 11- or 12-point serif Roman (preferably 12-point Times or 11-point Garamond), no bold-face, no sanserif, no decorative use of italics
- Correct headers
- Correct heading

UNITY

- Adequately limited focus
- Clear thesis statement
 - Requires forecasting statement
- Information is relevant to your thesis
- Information captures readers' attention

Introduction

- Gripping opening sentence
- Compelling introductory strategy (reader wants to read on)
- Background information provided for thesis

Conclusion

- Thesis reiterated in light of your argument
- Effective concluding strategy—not merely a summary of your essay

COHESION

- Clear and logical organization
- Clear topic sentences in all body paragraphs
- Effective concluding sentences in all body paragraphs

Transitions (clear connections)

- Within paragraphs
- Between paragraphs
- Between paragraphs and thesis
- Between your writing and cited material

SUPPORT

- Convincing evidence for thesis and all subsidiary assertions (including all topic sentences)
- Relevant information to thesis
- Current sources (when appropriate)
- Add a source of this type for balance:
 - journal
 - newspaper
 - magazine
 - book
 - Internet
 - _____
- Effective balance of paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting (quote only around ten percent of the time if at all)
- At least two citations per body paragraph
- Context provided for all borrowed material, *always* mentioning the author by name in your text (not only in parenthetical citations)
- Authority of every author established with first reference
- Comment thoroughly on the relevance of *every* citation—relevance to your argument in the immediate paragraph and to your overall thesis

DOCUMENTATION OF SOURCES

- Documentation of all paraphrases, summaries, and quotations (anytime you use someone else's words, ideas, or information)
- Correct MLA parenthetical-citation format
- Correct use of quotation marks
- Correct use of block quotations (when more than four lines)

Annotated MLA "Works Cited" Page(s) (Bibliography)

- Use alphabetical order
- Use MLA format for citing:
 - journals
 - newspapers
 - magazines
 - books
 - Internet
 - _____
- Correct headers
- Do not use MD, MA, PhD, Mr, or Ms with the authors' names

Presentation of your Works Cited page(s)

- One-inch margins
- No quotation marks
- Hanging indent for all entries
- Do not skip lines between entries
- "Works Cited" at top
- No underlining
- Double-space all entries

Abstracts (annotations: summaries and explanation)

- Add an abstract for each of your sources (see assignment sheet)
- Develop your abstracts in required length and detail
- Explain how each source advances the purposes of your essay
- Use your own words
- Use complete sentences

EDITING (housekeeping)

Diction (choice of words)

- Wordiness
- Artless repetition
- Inappropriate use of absolutes
- Inappropriate use of slang
- Inappropriate use of "really"
- Awkward wording
- Clichés
- Excessively vague language
- Irrelevant use of second person
- Specialized terms not defined

Sentence Skills

- Fragment sentences
- Fused sentences ("run-ons")
- Subject/verb agreement
- Pronoun/antecedent agreement
- Faulty parallelism
- Monotony in use of sentence patterns (use a balance of simple, compound, and complex sentences)
- Comma splices
- Incorrect verb forms
- Meaningless shift in verb tense
- Misplaced modifiers

Punctuation

- Commas
- Parentheses
- Brackets
- _____
- Semicolons
- Colons
- Ellipses

Spelling

- Spelling
- Possession
- Numbers v. numerals
- Hyphenation
- Capitalization