
Research Assistance

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MLA Sample Paper

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Jane Sample

Professor Smith

ENGL 201

29 January 2018

Title of Paper

Your MLA-formatted paper should be in Times New Roman 12 point font. Lines should be double-spaced. Your header will consist of your last name followed by the page number. At the upper left hand side of your paper you will list your name, the course number, your professor's name, and the date. The title of your paper should be centered on the next line, followed by the beginning of your paper. The paper starts with your introduction paragraph. The last line of your introduction paragraph should be your thesis statement.

In-text citations should come at the end of any quoted or paraphrased material. The in-text citation should include the author's last name and the page number that the quote or paraphrase is from and will be placed at the end of the sentence before the period, for example: (Smith 20). When you have a quote longer than four lines (or longer than three lines for poetry), you should format it as a block quote. When formatting a block quote the entire quote should be indented a half inch (one tab) from the left margin. You should not place quotation marks around the quote, and the in-text citation should appear after the period at the end of the quote, rather than before. For example:

He smiled understandingly — much more than understandingly. It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come across four or five times in life. It faced — or seemed to face — the whole external world for an instant, and then concentrated on you with an irresistible prejudice in your favor. It understood you

just so far as you wanted to be understood, believed in you as you would like to believe in yourself, and assured you that it had precisely the impression of you that, at your best, you hoped to convey. (Fitzgerald 48)

If you have a quote from a poem that is longer than three lines, you should write the lines as they appear in the poem.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference. (Frost 105)

In instances where you need to quote more than one paragraph, indent each paragraph by an extra quarter-inch.

“I’m Gatsby,” he said suddenly.

“What!” I exclaimed. “Oh, I beg your pardon.”

“I thought you knew, old sport. I’m afraid I’m not a very good host.”

He smiled understandingly — much more than understandingly. It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come across four or five times in life. (Fitzgerald 48)

In the previous example the first three lines are dialog, so they are all indented an extra quarter inch. The fourth line is also indented an extra quarter inch, but the subsequent lines from the same paragraph are only indented the first half inch.

The final paragraph is your conclusion, which is where you can sum up your argument or analysis. The Works Cited page should appear at the end of your paper on a new page. In order

to include more examples, I've included works that were not cited within the body of this sample paper in the Works Cited section. However, when you create your own Works Cited page, you should only include references that were either quoted or paraphrased in the body of your paper. Each citation will have a hanging indent, which means the first line will be flush left and any subsequent lines will be indented a half inch. When including URLs for online sources, do not make the URLs hyperlinked (clickable) unless otherwise instructed by your professor. Always defer to your professor's instructions when writing and formatting your paper.

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