**Mr. K’s Writing Hints**

**Final Research Paper Submission Editing Checklist**

**Directions:**

After you have completed each item, please write your initials by that instruction. I suggest you do #1 and #2 before you even begin typing.

1. **Is your paper typed in the correct font and size?** Please type your entire paper using Times New Roman, 12 point font, double spaced. Make sure that your title is also in that same format. Initial here:
2. **Have you typed your last name and inserted a page number in the header?** If you don’t know how to do that, please ask Mr. K or someone seated around you. Once that is done, your name will magically appear on each page.

Initial here: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **Have you formatted your first page with your name, hour, and date in *upper left* corner?** Initial here:

1. **Have you correctly punctuated your direct quotations?** Whenever you use another person’s exact words, you must signal this by using quotation marks.

Example:

Dr. Sangradesh from UCLA’s Stem Cell Research Laboratory claims that, “all stem cells do not necessarily come from embryos; many can be harvested from umbilical cord tissue.”

Initial here:

1. **Did you cut out all of your contractions?** Contractions make your writing appear conversational and relaxed. While contractions are appropriate for writing informal works or works of fiction, your informational writing should reflect a mature and focused writer. Take them out. Make sure words like didn’t, doesn’t, can’t, won’t, and shouldn’t are not *contracted* or shortned; write out the complete set of words (did not, does not, cannot, will not, etc.).

Initial here:

1. **Make sure that none of your sentences start with the compound subject “me and my ..... (friend, mom, brother, sister, dog, etc.)!** The subject of the sentence is NEVER “me and my....”. Instead, the proper way to write that subject would be “my....(friend, mom, brother, sister, dog, etc) and I”. Initial here:
2. **Do any of your sentences start with BUT, AND or SO?** If you have any sentence that starts with BUT, AND, OR, or SO, delete that word. Those words are called conjunctons and should join sentences together NOT start them. Most of the time the sentence will still make sense even without one of those words at the beginning. Initial here:
3. **Are there any sentence fragments or run on sentences in your work?** Do all your sentences have a subject and a verb? Are there long sentences that are not correctly formatted (comma splices, etc.)? Dialogue may be in incomplete sentences, at times, as speech may not necessarily follow written grammar rules. Initial here:
4. **Have you kept a consistent verb tense?** I have noticed that many papers are starting out using past tense switching to present tense and then going back to past tense. Quite frankly, this hurts my head! Please make sure that your entire paper is written either past tense or present tense. Initial here:
5. **Have you corrected the mistakes indicated by Microsoft Word?**  Microsoft word will underline misspelled words with a red line and grammatical errors with a green line. Right click on those lines, and Microsoft Word will provide you with a suggestion to fix the mistake. (N.B., clicking “ignore” will not’t fix the mistake) Microsoft Word won’t catch all of them, but it will catch many. Initial here:

**Formatting Your Paper**

The preparation of papers and manuscripts in MLA style is covered in chapter four of the MLA Handbook, and chapter four of the MLA Style Manual. Below are some basic guidelines for formatting a paper in MLA style.

**General Guidelines**

* Type your paper on a computer and print it out on standard, white 8.5 x 11-inch paper.
* Double-space the text of your paper, and use a legible font (e.g. Times New Roman). Whatever font you choose, MLA recommends that the regular and italics type styles contrast enough that they are recognizable one from another. The font size should be 12 pt.
* Leave only one space after periods or other punctuation marks (unless otherwise instructed by your instructor).
* Set the margins of your document to 1 inch on all sides.
* Indent the first line of paragraphs one half-inch from the left margin. MLA recommends that you use the Tab key as opposed to pushing the Space Bar five times.
* Create a header that numbers all pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. (Note: Your instructor may ask that you omit the number on your first page. Always follow your instructor's guidelines.)
* Use italics throughout your essay for the titles of longer works and, only when absolutely necessary, providing emphasis.
* If you have any endnotes, include them on a separate page before your Works Cited page. Entitle the section Notes (centered, unformatted).

**Formatting the First Page of Your Paper**

* Do not make a title page for your paper unless specifically requested.
* In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date. Again, be sure to use double-spaced text.
* Double space again and center the title. Do not underline, italicize, or place your title in quotation marks; write the title in Title Case (standard capitalization), not in all capital letters.
* Use quotation marks and/or italics when referring to other works in your title, just as you would in your text: Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas as Morality Play; Human Weariness in "After Apple Picking"
* Double space between the title and the first line of the text.
* Create a header in the upper right-hand corner that includes your last name, followed by a space with a page number; number all pages consecutively with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.), one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. (Note: Your instructor or other readers may ask that you omit last name/page number header on your first page. Always follow instructor guidelines.)

Here is a sample of the first page of a paper in MLA style:



**MLA In-Text Parenthetical Citations**

When writing in our English class, we must follow the Modern Language Association’s citation method. The MLA is simply an organization that ensures consistency in writing. A citation is a complete reference to a source. This means that the author’s last name and the page number(s) from which the quotation or paraphrase is taken must appear in the text, and a complete reference should appear on a Works Cited page. A Works Cited page is virtually the same thing as a bibliography, btw.

When referencing the works of others in your own text, we must use parenthetical citations. This method involves placing relevant source information in parentheses after a quotation or a paraphrased section of text. So, the author’s name may appear either in the sentence itself or in parentheses following the quotation or paraphrase. The page number(s) should *always* appear in the parentheses, not in the text of your sentence. For example:

Hinton describes Dally with “could get into a good fight sometimes, had no specific thing to hate,” (19).

Ponyboy’s characteristics are described with “I have light-brown, almost-red hair and greenish-gray eyes,“ (Hinton, 9).

Both citations in the examples above, (19) and (Hinton, 19), tell readers that the information in the sentence can be located on page 19 of a work by an author named Hinton. If readers want more information about this source, they can turn to the Works Cited page, where, under the name of Hinton, they would find the following information:

Works Cited

Hinton, S.E. *The Outsiders*. New York: Viking Penguin Inc., 1967. Print.

(this will be on a separate page)

N.B., When using a web-based source within your text, you do not need to include page numbers or URLs. Rather, include the author’s name in your signal phrase or parentheses as you would a book. If you do not know an author, use an abbreviated form of the title or address. For example, you could use (“Effects of Plankton on Spongebob) or (Cnn.com).

Yo! Make sure that each citation is written within a set of *parentheses* and that it is *included* within the sentence that it is referencing! Ain’t nobody got time for floating citations!



**Creating a Works Cited Page**

Your Works Cited page is the proof that your proof has been proven. Say what? This page is the record of all the resources you have used and referenced within your paper. It is a bibliography.

1. Start by centering the title “Works Cited” in the center of a new page within your document. Make sure to maintain the same font style and size (I recommend Times New Roman 12 pt).
2. Then, press return twice and align your paper to the left.
3. Right-click and choose “Paragraph.” Then, select “hanging” from the Indent dropdown menu.
4. Next, you’ll need to collect your citation information. Find your resource packet and go to [www.bibme.org](http://www.bibme.org)
5. Follow the directions that the website gives you. Just make sure that you select the appropriate type of resource.
	1. Notice that your citations will appear in the right windowpane after you select “Add to my Bibliography.”
	2. You can easily copy those citations into your Word document by highlighting the text you want to copy and right-clicking on the selection. Click “copy” in your right-click popup menu.
	3. Right-click in Word on your Works Cited page and click “paste.” You can also press CTRL+V to paste.
6. After you have included all of your citations on your Works Cited page, you must organize them alphabetically like the example below. Notice that each entry is categorized alphabetically, whether or not it begins with an author’s name or the title of the work.
7. Ensure that you do not use numbering or bulleting to organize your entries. It’ll look crae crae.

Works Cited

"Blueprint Lays Out Clear Path for Climate Action." *Environmental Defense Fund*. Environmental Defense Fund, 8 May 2007. Web. 24 May 2009.

Clinton, Bill. Interview by Andrew C. Revkin. “Clinton on Climate Change.” *New York Times*. New York Times, May 2007. Web. 25 May 2009.

Dean, Cornelia. "Executive on a Mission: Saving the Planet." *New York Times*. New York Times, 22 May 2007. Web. 25 May 2009.

Ebert, Roger. "An Inconvenient Truth." Rev. of *An Inconvenient Truth*, dir. Davis Guggenheim. *rogerebert.com*. Sun-Times News Group, 2 June 2006. Web. 24 May 2009.