

MLA Essay Checklist

The Basics

- ☐ text is double-spaced including quotations
- ☐ Times New Roman font
- ☐ 12 pt. font size
- ☐ no **bold writing**
- ☐ 2.54cm margins on all four sides
- ☐ Your name, the teacher's name, course name, and date of submission listed in the top left of the first page.
- ☐ Essay title is centered and is **not** underlined, bolded or italicized.
- ☐ Title is in 12 point font and is descriptive of the topic and purpose of your essay
- ☐ Book Titles or *Major Works* should be underlined or italicized, not both. "Short Stories", "Poems", "Articles" should be put in quotations marks.
- ☐ header numbering all pages consecutively (except cover page) in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. Includes last name, followed by a space with a page number; number all pages consecutively with Arabic numerals (2, 3, 4, etc.)
- ☐ only one space after periods or other punctuation marks
- ☐ the upper left-hand corner of the first page lists: your last name and the page number
- ☐ strong thesis statement and **two** main **arguments** included in the intro
- ☐ past tense used to describe historical events and people ("Lenin was given permission to return to Russia by the Germans in the hopes that he would destabilize the government there.")
- ☐ proper indentation (first line of each paragraph moved to right five spaces/tabbed once. Indenting is not an afterthought. If you need an arrow to indicate it is indented then it is NOT!)
- ☐ use transition words to allow your essay to "flow"
- ☐ no **personal pronouns** ("you don't know how important voting is until...")
- ☐ no **narrative language** ("I will write", "in my essay", "I believe", "in conclusion")
- ☐ sentences express complete thoughts (be careful with "**But**" or "**Because**")
- ☐ abbreviations are not used (etc., esp., ...)
- ☐ proper punctuation
- ☐ no "texting" language: gonna, wanna, sorta, etc.
- ☐ **contractions** are NOT used (can't, won't, isn't, doesn't)
- ☐ proper spelling
- ☐ the author is addressed by full name or last name only, NOT FIRST NAME

Objective C: Communicating

ii. Communicate information and ideas effectively using an academic style of writing (MLA) and using transitions and topic/concluding sentences.

In Text Citations (Note: bolding is only for indication of the items highlighted-it is not to be done in your paper!)

- ☐ All framed direct and indirect borrowings (quotes and paraphrases) are followed by the page number in parentheses after the quotation marks and before ending punctuation e.g.:
 - ***Woodrow Wilson declared**, "It is not learning but the spirit of services that will give a college a place in the public annals of the nation" **(453)**.
 - * "The faulty study resulted in crop mismanagement," **Dr. Broomfield comments (27)**.
- ☐ the author's last name and the page number of the source separated by a single space are in parentheses to identify the source of each passage or idea used e.g.:
 - * Antony's "modifications of Brutus's formulaic oratory are the first hint that [Anthony] knows his business" **(Macrone 45)**.
- ☐ quotations longer than four typed lines are indented ten spaces (tabbed twice) and are introduced with a colon (:) for punctuation. The punctuation comes *before* the citation's parenthesis.
- ☐ when two or more sources are cited within a single sentence, the parenthetical notes appear right after the statements they support.
- ☐ when you need to document a work without an author, simply list the title, shortened if necessary, and the page number, using quotes or italics as is appropriate.
- ☐ avoid in-text citations of websites by identifying the site in your paper itself
- ☐ **always explain how each quotation supports your argument!**

The Works Cited Page

- ☐ the title "Works Cited" is centered at the top of the page
- ☐ include only sources mentioned in the paper
- ☐ items on the Works Cited page are arranged in alphabetical order by last name of the author. If no author is given, list it according to the title, excluding articles.
- ☐ the first line of each entry is flush with the left-hand margin. Subsequent lines of the entry are indented five spaces/tabbed once
- ☐ the list is entirely Double-spaced- Do not quadruple-space between entries
- ☐ there is a period at the end of each entry
- ☐ each type of text is cited according to MLA guidelines (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>)