

## Modern Language Association (MLA) Format and Documentation

This handout covers the basics of MLA format and the documentation of sources students frequently use. For more complete information, refer to the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7<sup>th</sup> ed.*, available in the Writing Center and at the reserve desk at the Chester Fritz Library. The MLA has a brief FAQ page online at [http://www.mla.org/handbook\\_faq](http://www.mla.org/handbook_faq)

### Formatting Your Paper

- ✓ **Margins:** One-inch on the top, bottom, and sides of each page.
- ✓ **Page Numbering:** Use your word processor to create a header that includes your last name and the page number in the upper right hand corner of the page, one half inch from the top of the page. Every page has this header.
- ✓ **Title Page:** MLA style does not require a title page; instead, the first page of the paper should begin with four lines, double spaced, indicating: your name, name of the course instructor, name of the course, and the date.
- ✓ **Spacing:** Double-space every line (including long quotes and the citations on the Works Cited page).
- ✓ **Indenting:** Indent the first line of every paragraph five spaces or one tab. Indent long quotations ten spaces or two tabs.
- ✓ **Font and Typeface:** Use a 12-point font in Times New Roman

In this example from the first page of an MLA-style paper, the student's name is Sarah Trude, her instructor is Jason Zevenbergen, and the course is English 120:

Trude 1

Sarah Trude

Jason Zevenbergen

English 120

6 May 2013

Censorship as an Act of Freedom

On September 22, 1995, within the same year that the film titled *The Indian in the Cupboard* debuted in the United States, Lynne Reid Banks' award-winning book of the same title was banned from the Bemidji, Minnesota school district. I first discovered this case of book banning on a web page that also describes other cases. The viewer is invited to click on a buried pumpkin and "harvest" books that have been banned.

### Creating the Works Cited Page

- ✓ Continue the page numbering sequence from the main body of your paper.
- ✓ Center the words “Works Cited” one inch from the top of the page.
- ✓ Continue double-spacing.
- ✓ If the citation takes up more than one line of the page, indent the remaining line(s) one-half inch from the left margin.
- ✓ Reverse the name of the author: list the author’s last name followed by a comma and the author’s first name.
- ✓ Alphabetize the works you cite by the last name of the author. If there is no known author, alphabetize by the first word in the title of the work other than *A*, *An*, or *The*.

An MLA-style works cited page looks like this:

Johnson 12

#### Works Cited

“Americans Without Work.” Editorial. *New York Times*. New York Times, 22 Dec. 2009. Web. 23 Dec. 2009.

Didion, Joan. “On Going Home.” *The Beacon Book of Essays by Contemporary American Women*. Ed. Wendy Martin. Boston: Beacon, 1996. 3-5. Print.

Gould, Elizabeth. “Women Working in Music Education: The War Machine.” *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 17.2 (2009): 126-143. *Project Muse*. Web. 23 Dec. 2009.

Gregory, Phillipa. *The Other Boleyn Girl: A Novel*. New York: Simon, 2001. Print.

Han, Phil. “Jailbreak Fugitive Updates Facebook Page.” *CNN.com*. Cable News Network, 23 Dec. 2009. Web. 23 Dec. 2009.

Stewart, Maria W. “Two Texts on Children and Christian Education.” *PMLA* 123.1 (2008): 156-165. Print.