

## **MLA Formatting and Style Guide**

### **General Format**

**MLA style specifies guidelines for formatting manuscripts and using the English language in writing. MLA style also provides writers with a system for referencing their sources through parenthetical citation in their essays and Works Cited pages.**

**Writers who properly use MLA also build their credibility by demonstrating accountability to their source material. Most importantly, the use of MLA style can protect writers from accusations of plagiarism, which is the purposeful or accidental uncredited use of source material by other writers.**

### **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. Bookman Old Style). Whatever font chosen, 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.**
- **Name, Date, Period and Title is to be structured in the following manner. Name, Date and Period are placed on the left margin and single spaced. Leave two lines then center the Title, then leave two lines and begin writing. Consult your instructor to see if they want their name with the name heading. (Mr. Fowler does not generally want this)**
- **Leave two spaces 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.**
- **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 (Title Sheet)**

- **Do not make a title page for your paper unless specifically requested.**
- **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. Keep the font size consistent with the size of the body of the text of the paper.**
- **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"****
- **Five inches below the Double Spaced Title: Single space and center the student name, period, Instructors name, and date.**

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

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Professor Elaine Bassett  
English 106  
3 August 2009

Andrew Carnegie: The Father of Middle-Class America

For decades Americans couldn't help but love the red-headed, fun-loving Little Orphan Annie. The image of the little girl moving so quickly from poverty to wealth provided hope for the poor in the 1930s, and her story continues to be a dream of what the future just might hold. The rags-to-riches phenomenon is the heart of the American Dream. And few other people have embodied this phenomenon as much as Andrew Carnegie did in the late 1800s and early 1900s. His example and industry caused him to become the father of middle-class America.

Andrew Carnegie can be looked to as an ideal example of a poor immigrant making his way up to become leader of the capitalist world. Carnegie was born into a poor working-class family in Scotland. According to the PBS documentary "The Richest Man in the World: Andrew Carnegie," the Industrial Revolution was difficult on Carnegie's father, causing him to lose his weaving business. The Carnegie family was much opposed to the idea of a privileged class, who gained their wealth simply by inheritance ("Richest"). This type of upbringing played a large factor in Andrew Carnegie's destiny. In order to appease his mother's desire for material benefits, and perhaps in an effort to heal his father's wounds, Carnegie rejected poverty and cleaved to prosperity.

Carnegie's character was ideal for gaining wealth. His mother taught him to "look after the pennies, and the pounds will take care of themselves;" he later turned this proverb into "watch the costs, and the profits take care of themselves" ("Richest"). Such thrift was integral to his future success. He also believed that "all is well since all goes better" ("Richest"). His theory

**The Following is a sample of the format of an MLA works cited page.**

**All citations are to be alphabetized. Follow Specific instructions for the development of works cited pages / bibliographies as instructed by MLA handbooks or MLA web sites such as <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl>**

**Russell, Tony, Allen Brizee, and Elizabeth Angeli. "MLA Formatting and Style Guide." *The Purdue OWL*. Purdue U Writing Lab, 4 Apr. 2010. Web. 20 July 2010.**