

**Writer's Choice**  
Grammar and Composition

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Grades 9–12

 **Glencoe  
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# About MLA Style

The information in this book follows the MLA style of documentation as put forth in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (5th edition). *The MLA Handbook* was originally developed in 1977 by the Modern Language Association, a scholarly, not-for-profit organization that promotes the study and the teaching of language and literature. Although there are other widely accepted styles of documentation—the APA style is standard in the fields of history, anthropology, and the social sciences; the CBE style is standard in scientific fields—the MLA style is the system most frequently used in the humanities.

All documentation systems arise from the responsibilities that writers have to other writers and to readers: each writer must give credit to the writers whose work he or she has used and must provide readers with the information they need to find and verify the sources for themselves. Understanding how research is documented can help students evaluate the ideas in other writers' work. Following a documentation style will help ensure that their research will be taken seriously by others. Therefore, when students learn and follow the MLA style or another widely accepted style of documentation, they are likely to become stronger readers as well as stronger writers.

Although it is important that humanities students and scholars use the rules in the *MLA Handbook* to guide their research and documentation, the rules themselves are constantly being adapted to better meet the needs of the reading and writing community, especially in the face of rapid technological change. If doubt arises about the correct way to document a source, the writer should keep in mind the primary aims of documentation—to give credit where it is due and to help a reader locate the source—and provide the information necessary in as clear a manner as possible.

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

## Due Dates for Your Research Paper

	Due Date	Date Done	Teacher's Comments
<b>Prewriting</b>			
Choosing a topic			
Surveying library resources			
Developing research questions			
Formulating a controlling idea			
Making bibliography cards			
Evaluating sources			
Taking notes from sources			
Creating an outline			
Creating a thesis statement			
<b>Drafting</b>			
Combining and deleting notes			
Writing a first draft			
<b>Citing Sources</b>			
Inserting documentation into the draft			
Creating a list of works cited			
<b>Revising</b>			
Revising the draft			
Revising the documentation			
<b>Editing and Presenting</b>			
Editing and proofreading the final draft			
Assembling the research paper			

Topic \_\_\_\_\_

Required Length of Paper \_\_\_\_\_

Required Number of Sources \_\_\_\_\_

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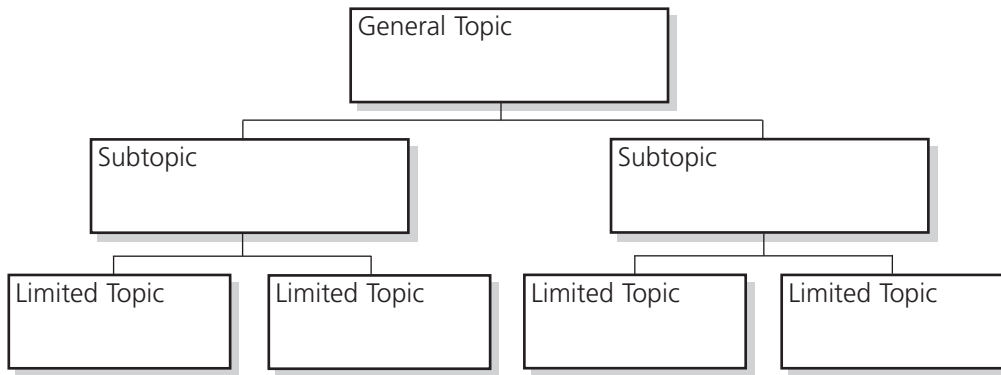
# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

### Narrowing Your Topic

**Directions** To begin writing your research paper, first think of a topic that you can explore thoroughly in a paper of the assigned length. Your topic shouldn't be so broad that you could cover it by writing only in generalities. On the other hand, your topic shouldn't be so narrow that you can't find adequate resources. To narrow a topic, develop an idea pyramid. First pick a general topic that interests you; it will be the top of the pyramid. Then think of subtopics of that general topic to put under the general topic. Fill out the pyramid below.



**Directions** After thinking of a limited topic, a writer must also check whether it is appropriate for a genuine scholarly inquiry. To find out if your topic is suitable, answer the following questions.

1. Is your topic one that you would expect to be written about or mentioned in encyclopedias and in other respectable publications—or in supermarket tabloids? (If your topic is sensational, it's not scholarly.)  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. If you had to write about your topic right now, how much could you write about it? A paragraph? An essay? (If a topic is one which you and your readers already know about, it's not a scholarly inquiry because you won't learn anything. Topics such as "pioneers came West in covered wagons" and "planets orbit the Sun" won't provide much new information.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why do you want to learn more about your topic? (If you're not genuinely interested in your topic, you will have difficulty writing an interesting paper.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Can you be objective about your topic? Why or why not? (If you have strong preconceived notions about the topic, you probably can't be objective. If you are personally involved with the topic, you probably can't be objective.)  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

## Surveying Your Topic and Formulating a Controlling Idea

**Directions** Before settling on a topic, do some prereading to survey library resources. After about an hour's research, you should be able to determine whether you'll be able to find adequate resources. You may even discover a more interesting aspect of your topic.

1. To survey your topic, skim resources such as those listed below. After each kind of resource, identify by title (and by date, for periodicals) the resources that seem to be promising sources of information. Look for sources in each category. If you can't find at least five resources in your prereading, your topic needs to be expanded or changed.

**Encyclopedias** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Books** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Periodicals** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Newspapers** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Web sites** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Audio-visual resources** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. After finding a topic for which there appear to be adequate resources, think of three questions about your topic for which you hope to find answers. List your research questions below.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What one idea will control your research? In other words, what is the goal or the point of your research?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

## Cooperative Learning: Evaluating Your Own Topic

**Directions** Share your topic idea and prereading findings with a partner. Then answer the following questions about your partner's research topic. If you need more space, continue your answers on the back of this sheet. Use your partner's responses to help you develop your thinking on your topic.

1. What is your partner's topic? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your partner's controlling idea? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you think your partner's topic is interesting? Why or why not? Why does your partner think his or her topic is interesting?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What other subtopics has your partner considered? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What other subtopic could you suggest for your partner to consider? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you think that your partner will find adequate resources? Why or why not?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Where could your partner look for additional information on his or her topic? (Suggest related subtopic headings as well as additional sources such as interviews, videotapes, and specialized libraries.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What aspect of your partner's topic would you most like to learn more about? Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

## Practice Creating Bibliography Cards for Books

**Directions** Use the following information from the title page and the copyright page of a book to fill in blanks in the bibliography card below. Assume that this is the second bibliography card that you have created for a research paper investigating plagiarism.

Title Page	Copyright Page
Thomas Mallon <b>Stolen Words</b> Forays into the Origins and Ravages of Plagiarism Ticknor & Fields / New York / 1989	Copyright © 1989 by Thomas Mallon All rights reserved For information about permission to reproduce selections from this book, write to Permissions, Ticknor & Fields, 215 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10003 Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data Mallon, Thomas Stolen words: forays into the origins and ravages of plagiarism / Thomas Mallon. Bibliography Includes index ISBN 0-89919-393-5 1. Plagiarism. 2. Imitation (in literature). 3. Literary ethics. Printed in the United States of America

card number _____
_____
name of author
_____
* title of a part of the book (or anthologized work)
_____
title of the book
_____
* name of the editor or the translator
_____
* volume number _____ * series name
_____
city of publication/publisher's name (abbreviated)/year published
_____
* page numbers (of a book part or of an anthologized work)
_____
* <i>may not apply to all sources</i>

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

## Practice Creating Bibliography Cards for Periodicals

**Directions** Use the following information from the magazine cover and the first page of an article to fill in blanks in the bibliography card below. Assume that this is the fifth bibliography card that you have created for a research paper investigating plagiarism.

Magazine Cover	
Vol. 136 No. 24	December 3, 1990
TIME	
The Weekly Newsmagazine	

First Page of the Article
Kidnapping the Brainchildren
by Lance Morrow
page 126

_____	card number _____
_____	
name of author(s)	
_____	
title of the article	
_____	
name of the periodical	
_____	
* series number or name and volume number (for journals only)	
_____	
* edition and section (for newspaper only)	
_____	
full date of publication in the order: day, month (abbreviated), and year	
_____	
page numbers of the whole article	
_____	
* <i>may not apply to all sources</i>	

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

## Practice Creating Bibliography Cards for Online Sources

**Directions** Study the bibliography cards for online sources. Then follow the directions below.

### Online Encyclopedia

Card 2

*"Bookbinding." Encarta Online Encyclopedia. 2000. Microsoft Corporation. 19 June 2000*  
<<http://encarta.msn.com/find/concise.asp?ti=761565995&sid=1#s1>>

Use this order for an article in an online encyclopedia or information database: author (if given), title of article, name of the project, name of the project director (if given), date of electronic publication or last update, version number (if included and if not part of the title), name of sponsoring organization, date of access, and URL.

### Personal or Professional Web Site

Card 3

*Hinchliffe, Lisa. Cut-and-Paste Plagiarism: Preventing, Detecting and Tracking Online Plagiarism. 20 June 2000.*  
<<http://alexia.li.uiuc.edu/~janicke/plagiary.htm>>

If a URL must be divided between two lines, break it after a slash and be careful not to add a hyphen. Since URLs change frequently, it is always good to include any additional information that might help a reader of your work locate the source through an Internet search engine.

### Article in Online Periodical or in Online Version of Print Media

Card 4

*"What's Wrong with Copying?" The Economist 5 April 1997. 20 June 2000*  
<[http://www.economist.com/tfs/archive\\_tframeset.html](http://www.economist.com/tfs/archive_tframeset.html)>

Use this order for a personal or professional Web site: name of person who created site (if given and relevant), title of site or (if no title is given) description of site (e.g., Home page), name of any organization associated with the site, date of access, and URL.

### Movie

Card 5

*Hamlet. Dir. Franco Zeffereilli. With Mel Gibson and Glenn Close. Warner Bros. 1990.*

Use this order for a movie or videotape: title of the movie, director (also include performers and producer, if pertinent), the distributor, and the year.

**Directions** On a separate sheet of paper, create bibliography cards for the sources below.

**Online Encyclopedia Article:** Encyclopedia.com's 1999 version entry "Samuel Taylor Coleridge," which was accessed on June 16, 2000, through the URL <http://www.encyclopedia.com/articles/02917.html>. This site is sponsored by Infonautics Corporation.

**Online Periodical:** An article from the November 24, 1997, issue of *Time* magazine by Bruce Handy with the title "Steven Stealberg?" The access date was June 21, 2000, and the URL is [http://www.time.com/time/magazine/1997/dom/971124/the\\_arts\\_show.steven\\_stealb.html](http://www.time.com/time/magazine/1997/dom/971124/the_arts_show.steven_stealb.html).

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

### Practice Creating Bibliography Cards for Various Sources

**Directions** Notice how the information on the following bibliography cards differs from cards for books and periodicals. Then follow the directions given on the next page for making bibliography cards.

#### Encyclopedia Article

Card 3

McCracken, J.C. "Printing".  
The World Book Encyclopedia. 1987 ed.

Use this order for an article in a reference book: author (if article is signed), title of article, name of encyclopedia (or other reference book), edition (if stated), and year. If articles are arranged alphabetically, you may omit volume and page number. Include city of publication and publisher only if the source is a less familiar reference book.

#### Government Publication

Card 7

United States. Office of the Federal Register,  
National Archives and Records Administration.  
The United States Government Manual  
1990/91. Washington: GPO, 1990.

Use this order for a government publication with no specified author: name of government, name of agency, title of publication, city of publication, publisher (abbreviated), and year.

#### Work in an Anthology

Card 6

Connolly, Cyril. "On Being Won Over to  
Coleridge." Previous Convictions. New York:  
Harper, 1963. 156-159.

Use this order for a work in an anthology: author, title of the piece cited (essay, poem, short story), name of anthology, translator and/or editor (if stated), volume (if stated), place of publication, publisher (abbreviated), year, and pages for the piece cited.

#### Interview

Card 12

Professor Roberta Jovey.  
Personal interview. 15 Feb. 1992.

Use this order for an interview: name of person interviewed, type of interview, and date of interview.

#### CD-ROM

Card 4

Brombert, Beth Archer. "Stendhal." Grolier  
Multimedia Encyclopedia. CD-ROM. 1997 ed.  
Grolier Interaction. 1997.

Use this order for an article on a CD-ROM: author (if given); title of article; title of publication; name of editor, compiler, or translator (if relevant); publication medium; publisher; and date of publication.

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

continued from page 9

## Television Program

Card 10
<i>That Delicate Balance II: Our Bill of Rights</i>
<i>PBS, WNET, New York, 4 Feb. 1992</i>

Use this order for a television program: title of episode (if given), title of the program, title of the series (if any), network, local station, city of the broadcast, and broadcast date.

## Work of Art

Card 11
<i>Seurat, Georges. Sunday Afternoon on the</i>
<i>Island of La Grande Jatte. The Art Institute</i>
<i>of Chicago, Chicago.</i>

Use this order for a work of art: artist's name, title of the painting or sculpture, institution or individual housing the work, and city. If you are using a photograph of the work of art, include complete publication information.

**Directions** On a separate sheet of paper, practice creating bibliography cards for the sources below. Assume that these are your fifteenth through twenty-second bibliography cards.

**Encyclopedia Article:** *Academic American Encyclopedia's* entry "Copyright" in Volume 4, Ci–Cz, on page 256. Copyright ©1988 by Grolier Incorporated of Danbury, Connecticut

**Government Publication:** The June 1989 pamphlet called *Copyright Basics*, distributed by the Copyright Office, Library of Congress, published by the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20559

**Work in an Anthology:** "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem, which is included on pages 215–231 of Volume 2 of *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, the 1968 edition. The general editor is M. H. Abrams. The publisher, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., is in New York City.

**Interview:** A telephone interview conducted on July 22, 1992, with appeals lawyer B. J. Jaffee

**CD-ROM Encyclopedia Article:** An article titled "Copyright" from the 1996 edition of *Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia*, which is on a CD-ROM. Copyright © 1994, 1995 by Compton's New Media, Inc.

**Movie:** The 1989 movie version of Shakespeare's play *Henry V*, directed by and starring Kenneth Branagh, distributed by Samuel Goldwyn Company and Renaissance Films

**Television Program:** CBS's weekly investigative reporting show *60 Minutes*, seen Sunday, March 29, 1992, on Channel 7, WCVB (Boston)

**Work of Art:** *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* a post-impressionist painting done by Paul Gauguin in Tahiti in 1897; viewed in Boston, Mass., at the Museum of Fine Arts

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

## Correcting Sample Bibliography Cards

**Directions** Compare the following sample bibliography cards with the information provided for each source. What mistakes did the writer make in preparing the cards? Correct all errors you find on the models below.

### Newspaper Article

*New York Times* Sunday, March 15, 1992, Section 2 Arts & Leisure page 1, continues on pages 22-23 "Hollywood Law: Whose Idea Is It, Anyway?" by Joy Horowitz

### Online Version of Print Media

July/August 1995 *Columbia Journalism Review* article titled "Plagiarize, Plagiarize, Plagiarize . . . Only Be Sure to Call It Research" by Trudy Lieberman, accessed online from URL <http://www.cjr.org/year/95/4/plagiarize.asp> on June 16, 2000.

### Book

*Coleridge, the Damaged Archangel* Norman Fruman, George Braziller, Inc., New York Copyright © 1971 by Norman Fruman. Published simultaneously in Canada by Doubleday Canada, Limited. All rights reserved. For information, address the publisher: George Braziller, Inc., One Park Avenue, New York 10016. Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 71-148743. Standard Book Number: 0-8076-0607-3

### Book

*MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, Fifth Edition Joseph Gibaldi. The Modern Language Association of America. New York 1999.

Copyright 1977, 1984, 1988, 1995, 1999 by the Modern Language Association of America, 10 Astor Place, New York, New York 10003-6981  
Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Gibaldi, Joseph, 1942-. *MLA handbook for writers of research papers*. Includes bibliographies and index. 1. Report Writing—Handbooks, manuals, etc. 2. Research—Handbooks, manuals, etc.

### Sample

Card 4

*Horowitz, Joy. "Hollywood Law: Whose Idea Is It, Anyway?" New York Times Sunday 15 Mar. Sec. 2: 1+*

### Sample

Card 8

*Lieberman, Trudy. "Plagiarize, Plagiarize, Plagiarize . . . Only Be Sure to Call It Research." Columbia Journalism Review. 16 June 2000 <<http://www.cjr.org/year/95/4/plagiarize.asp>>.*

### Sample

Card 1

*Fruman, Norman. The Damaged Archangel. Braziller, 1971. 71-148743.*

### Sample

Card 9

*Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 5th ed. New York: MLA.*

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

## Evaluating Sources

**Directions** As you conduct your research, be aware of the kinds of sources you're using. Ideally you should have a combination of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources (such as diaries, letters, photographs, and interviews with people), contain firsthand information. They offer a direct personal view of the subject and are invaluable for their immediacy. Secondary sources (such as books, magazine articles, and encyclopedias) contain information that has been gathered and analyzed. They often present a more objective view than a primary source. Answer the questions below to get an overview of the kinds of sources you have identified so far.

1. What primary sources do you plan to use?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What secondary sources do you plan to use?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What other types of primary or secondary sources would help round out your research?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Directions** All sources should be examined for author bias, timeliness, and accuracy. Practice evaluating sources by answering these questions about an unfamiliar source.

4. Is the author qualified to write about this topic? What makes you think so?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What is the author's purpose in writing? (For example, is the author writing to inform, to prove a point, to sell a product, or to entertain?) What leads you to this conclusion?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Opinions should be backed up with evidence. Does this author provide facts and statistics? Can they be checked for accuracy?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Has new information been discovered since this source was written? How might that affect the source's accuracy?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Would someone from another culture, religious group, or economic class view this subject differently than the author does? What are some other perspectives on this subject?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. On the basis of the answers given above, how accurate would you say this source is?

\_\_\_\_\_



# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

## Evaluating Online Sources

**Directions** Most magazines and books have editors, researchers, and systems of verification that try to ensure people are accountable for the information they publish. The information found on the Internet has not necessarily been subject to that kind of careful review. Therefore, even more than with print sources, you are responsible for assessing the reliability of the information you find on a Web site. The questions below can help you to do so. Find a site that pertains to your research paper topic and assess the site's usefulness and credibility by answering the following questions.

- 1. Usefulness:** How useful does the site look to you? Why? (Take into account the amount of information, the organization of the site, the links provided, and the date at which the site has been last updated.)

---

---

---

- 2. Sponsorship:** Who or what sponsors the site: an organization, an individual, a media group, or a business? (If the source of the site is unclear, note this.) What, if anything, do you know about the sponsor?

---

---

How might the sponsor influence the information provided by the site? What conclusion can you draw if the source of the site is unclear or inaccessible?

---

---

- 3. Purpose:** What do you think is the main aim of the site? To sell? To advocate? To inform? What brings you to this conclusion? How might this site's aim affect its reliability?

---

---

- 4. Presentation and Support:** Is the text clearly written and free of grammatical errors?

---

---

Are opinions backed with evidence? Are facts documented? If so, what sort of documentation is given?

---

---

- 5.** How would you assess the overall credibility of this site? How would this affect the way you would use it as research?

---

---

---

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

### Evaluating Sample Note Cards

**Directions** A writer who is creating the research paper “The Paradox of Plagiarism” took three notes from the following passage on page 121 of the book described on her bibliography card 2. Read the passage, which is about why talented writers plagiarize, and then examine the note cards. Look for errors in note taking; then respond to the items below.

(from *Stolen Words: Forays into the Origins and Ravages of Plagiarism* by Thomas Mallon)

. . . Dr. Robert Michels, of Cornell University Medical College, says that when those [writers] lacking in self-esteem “finally achieve a great success, they devalue or even undermine it. . . . Their success is destroyed because it had built into it the seeds of defeat.” And Peter Shaw, you remember, says that the criminal to whom the plagiarist compares most closely is the kleptomaniac [a person with an obsessive impulse to steal], “both in his evident wish to be detected and in the circumstance that what is stolen may not be needed. (With kleptomania, lack of need, we are told, is absolutely central.)”

#### Summary Note

Psychological reasons Bib. 2  
Plagiarists are successful criminals.  
(summary) page 121

#### Paraphrase Note

Psychological reasons Bib. 2  
Robert Michels of Cornell attributes a plagiarist's  
apparent self-destruction to lack of self-esteem,  
and Peter Shaw suggests that plagiarism resem-  
bles kleptomania in that both show an evident  
wish to be detected and what is stolen may not  
be needed.  
(paraphrase) page 121

#### Direct Quotation

Psychological reasons Bib. 2  
“And Peter Shaw . . . says the plagiarist compares  
most to the kleptomaniac, ‘both in his evident  
wish to be detected and in the circumstances that  
what is stolen may not be needed. . . .’”  
(direct quotation) page 125

**Directions** Respond to the following items on a separate sheet of paper.

1. How do you show a quotation within a quotation? How do you show the intentional omission of words?
2. What information must be included on the note cards to correctly document a research paper?
3. Which errors did you find in each note card?
4. Write your own summary and your own paraphrase of a portion of the excerpted passage.

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

## Practice Creating Note Cards

**Directions** Imagine that you are creating a research paper about plagiarism in literature. Your central idea is that talented writers who plagiarize do not commit plagiarism out of need. Read the following passage and then take three notes. One note should be a summary of the passage, another note should paraphrase some item of significant information, and the third note should quote directly. Assume that the passage is from page 28 of a source described on your bibliography card 14. On each card, jot the kind of note you are taking, write the appropriate page numbers, and use correct punctuation.

(from *Plagiarism: The "Art" of Stealing Literary Material* by Maurice Salzman)

In unconscious plagiarism the subconscious mind of the author has retained what his conscious mind had read or heard, and had forgotten. Only when the reawakened memory has drawn upon what has thus unconsciously been stored up, and the author some time later sets it down in black-and-white, or publishes it by word of mouth, does he learn of the *faux pas* [blunder] he has committed. Often does a retentive memory absorb and hold for its owner many things, which become such an integral part of him that when he reveals them he has so far forgotten their sources as to conclude, even to insist, that they originated entirely within his own brain. He will often discountenance [look with disfavor on] any suggestion that what he has written is not original with him, when in fact he is but repeating that which he has read or heard, one day or fifty years before. Many are the instances of this.

Note Card 1


Note Card 2


Note Card 3


# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

## Cooperative Learning: Evaluating Your Own Note Cards

**Directions** Share your note cards with a partner. Then answer the following questions about your partner's cards. If you need more space, continue your answers on a separate sheet of paper. Use your partner's responses to guide your efforts as you continue the writing process.

1. What is your partner's topic and controlling idea?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Which note cards do not contain complete information? Each note card should have a bibliography card number, an idea heading, a note, and page numbers of the source. Each card should also identify the note as a summary, a paraphrase, or a quotation. On the lines below, identify incomplete note cards by writing the first three words of the note.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which note cards seem unrelated to the topic or to the controlling idea? Why? Identify these note cards by writing the first three words of the note.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Select two note cards that you think are unnecessary. Why does your partner think that he or she should use those note cards? Identify these note cards and state your partner's reasoning.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Which of your partner's note cards are most interesting? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Choose one note card with a direct quotation that would be more effective as a paraphrase and identify the note card by writing the first three words of the note. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, write your paraphrase of the note.

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## OUTLINES AND THESIS STATEMENTS

### Evaluating a Sample Outline for a Research Paper

**Directions** Read the following outline for a research paper about talented writers who plagiarize. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, answer these questions:

1. What is the method of organization for main ideas and for supporting ideas?
2. Is any information missequenced? How would you improve organization?
3. Which information seems irrelevant? Why?
4. Do any headings have only one subheading? Are any subheadings not written in parallel grammatical form? How could the writer improve the form of the outline?

#### The Paradox of Plagiarism

- I. Introduction
- II. Definition of plagiarism
- III. The rise of the concept of plagiarism
  - A. History of printing technology
  - B. Literary imitation no longer acceptable because profit an issue
  - C. Plagiarism as a crime under copyright law and as a moral offense
- IV. Literary imitations as accepted norm
  - A. Virgil's imitations
  - B. Chaucer's imitations
  - C. Shakespeare's imitations
- V. Major literary forms
- VI. Cases of plagiarism
  - A. Plagiarists in literature
    1. Coleridge
      - a. Status as a famous writer
      - b. Plagiarism in most famous book *Biographia Literaria*
      - c. Plagiarism in poems
      - d. Coleridge as a typical "gifted writer" plagiarist
    2. English novel *Death in the Dark* plagiarizes American novel
    3. American novel *Wild Oats* plagiarizes English novel
  - B. Plagiarists in academia, journalism, and public life
    1. Professor ruins career with plagiarized graduation speech
    2. Journalists fired for plagiarism
    3. Politician forced from political race over plagiarized speech
  - C. Plagiarists in Hollywood
- VII. Psychologists' analysis of plagiarists
  - A. Unconscious plagiarism
- VIII. Conclusion

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## OUTLINES AND THESIS STATEMENTS

### Creating an Outline for Your Own Research Paper

**Directions** To create an outline for your own research paper, follow these instructions to organize your information.

1. Sort your note cards into stacks, so that all the cards in any one stack relate to one main idea. Identify the main idea each stack represents and list those ideas below.

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2. Next, arrange your card stacks into a sequence of main ideas that seems logical for the development of your paper. Describe the organization of your major ideas (for example, cause and effect, comparison/contrast, major influences, chronological order, or order of importance). Why is the method of organization that you chose logical for the content of your paper?

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3. Consider other methods by which you could organize your main ideas. Then identify the organizational method you believe will be most effective. List the order in which you would present main ideas if you use this method.

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4. Read each note card in each stack. While all the cards in one stack relate to one main idea, the note cards will serve various purposes. Some note cards in each stack will become subheadings, and some will become supporting details for the subheadings. On a separate sheet of paper, block out the main ideas and the subheadings of your research paper. Use Roman numerals for main headings and capital letters for subheadings.

5. Study your outline's organization thus far and indicate the revisions that you need to make to improve its organization. Now create a revised outline in which you fill in the details from your other note cards. Indicate subheadings under capital letter headings by using Arabic numerals. Use lowercase letters to indicate headings under numeral headings.

6. Review your completed outline. Make sure that you have written all elements as either sentences or as phrases. Also make sure that you have at least two subheadings under each heading. Remember, you can't have an "A" without a "B" or a "1" without a "2."

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## OUTLINES AND THESIS STATEMENTS

### Evaluating Sample Thesis Statements

**Directions** Each of the following thesis statements is for a paper about talented writers who plagiarize. Read the thesis statements and answer the questions that follow. If you need more space, continue your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

- A. Plagiarism is one crime for which the guilty party is always caught red-handed.
- B. Five hundred years ago, talented writers were encouraged to imitate the works of others—now such imitation invites public disgrace, professional ostracism, and lawsuits.
- C. The most surprising thing about plagiarism is not that it occurs; rather, it is that plagiarism is frequently committed by talented writers who have no need to plagiarize.
- D. What I'm going to tell you about famous writers who have ripped off other writers is going to knock your socks off!
- E. The concept of plagiarism did not emerge until the invention of the printing press and the subsequent potential for profit.

1. Which thesis statement(s) expresses the topic of the paper? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Which thesis statement(s) reveals the writer's approach to the topic? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which thesis statement(s) previews or suggests the development of the paper? What do you think the development will be?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Which thesis statement(s), if any, lacks the appropriate level of formality? Explain your answer.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Which thesis statement do you think is the best? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## OUTLINES AND THESIS STATEMENTS

### Evaluating Sample Approaches to a Topic

Thesis statements can take various approaches to a topic. The approach that you choose for your paper will, in part, determine how you will organize the main ideas of your research paper. Some examples of common approaches follow.

- **Predict consequences**—The high-tech innovation of three-dimensional virtual reality will make present video technology obsolete.
- **Claim there is a solution to a problem**—The number of repeat offenders in prisons could be cut in half if more prisoners could pursue college degrees while incarcerated.
- **Claim to have discovered information about which readers know little**—In the days before the Food and Drug Administration, some manufacturers knowingly sold lethal over-the-counter medicines, diet pills, and beauty aids.
- **Point out a cause-and-effect relationship**—Ozone layer depletion will increase the incidence of skin cancer.
- **Draw a parallel**—The same factors that led people to explore the globe will lead others to explore outer space.
- **Assert a conclusion**—Drive, not talent, creates success in the arts.

**Directions** Each of the following thesis statements is for a paper about talented writers who plagiarize; however, each thesis statement takes a different approach to the topic. Read the thesis statements and then answer the questions that follow them. Continue your answers on a separate sheet of paper if you need more space.

- A. Talented writers plagiarize because they have such enormous egos; they simply cannot admit that anyone could have written something better than they could.
- B. Eighteenth-century Romantic poets and modern Hollywood screenwriters have plagiarized for the same reasons and have offered the same excuses for their actions.
- C. If a famous writer is proved to have committed plagiarism, people may not respect the writer.

1. Which thesis statements are suited to the topic? Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Which method of organization does each thesis statement suggest? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Which thesis statement interests you most in reading the paper? Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Which thesis statement interests you least in reading the paper? Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## OUTLINES AND THESIS STATEMENTS

### Writing Your Own Thesis Statement

**Directions** To create a thesis statement for your own research paper, begin by evaluating your research and your central idea.

1. My paper's central idea is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. The main ideas of my outline are

- I. \_\_\_\_\_
- II. \_\_\_\_\_
- III. \_\_\_\_\_
- IV. \_\_\_\_\_
- V. \_\_\_\_\_

3. The most important thing to know about my topic is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Directions** Now using the approaches listed below, draft two alternative thesis statements for your research paper. Write on the back of this sheet if you need more space. Use approaches that work logically with your topic. For example, if your topic is a current social problem, consider *predicting consequences* and *offering a solution to a problem*. If your topic concerns one of the sciences, consider *pointing out a cause-and-effect relationship* or *claiming to have discovered information about which readers know little*. Circle the thesis statement that will work better in your research paper.

- Predict consequences.
- Claim that a problem exists about which readers are unaware.
- Offer a solution to a problem.
- Claim to have discovered information about which readers know little.
- Point out a cause-and-effect relationship.
- Draw a historical (or other) parallel.
- Assert a conclusion (which you will justify in the body of your paper).

4. Thesis statement one: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Thesis statement two: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## DRAFTING

### Evaluating a Sample Draft

**Directions** Read this draft of a portion of a research paper about professional writers who plagiarize. Then on a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions on the next page.

Writers from Plato to Shakespeare freely borrowed the ideas and the words of other writers, and no one thought less of them for it. As one writer said, "There is nothing original, all is reflected light." As books became mass produced, however, such borrowing became increasingly thought of as literary theft that deprived authors of their earnings. Today, plagiarism violates federal laws and makes people turn away in disgust. The paradox of plagiarism is that many plagiarists are intelligent, gifted writers who do not need to resort to plagiarism at all.

What really is plagiarism, anyway? To understand plagiarism, you first need to understand what plagiarism is and is not. *Plagiarism* may be broadly defined as passing off another's ideas or expressions as one's own. Plagiarism can occur in books, plays, movie scripts, and song lyrics. Plagiarism should not be confused with *literary piracy* or *literary forgery*.

Modern copyright laws offer legal protection for writers' works by making it against the law to reproduce and sell another's original work, in part or as a whole, without permission. The term *copyright infringement* refers to the breaking of copyright laws by "substantial appropriation of protectible material" (#22). What is "substantial" and what is "protectible" are open for debate and are often decided on a case-by-case basis in court. Plagiarism expert Alexander Lindey notes a trend that began in the ancient world: Great writers thought that it was only natural to build on the ideas of those who had gone before them. The Roman poet Virgil, for example, built on the ideas of the Greek poet Homer (#23, 14–15). For *The Canterbury Tales*, the Englishman Chaucer pretty much reworked the Italian Boccaccio's *Decameron* (#23, 71–72). Lindey says Shakespeare "commandeered everything that suited his purpose" (#23, 74). He used other writers' works for the characters and plots in the plays *Macbeth* and *Julius Caesar*. Sometimes he used more than other writers' ideas. One expert examined parts I, II, and III of the play *Henry VI* and "came to the conclusion that out of the 6,033 lines, Shakespeare had copied 1,771 intact, and had paraphrased 2,373 others, so that only 1,889 were entirely his own" (#23, 75). Even though Shakespeare was a heavy borrower, his end products were, however, uniquely his.

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

continued from page 22

**Note Card 1**

*Legal Definitions* *Bib. #22*

*"To constitute copyright infringement, three elements must be present. (1) There must be a substantial appropriation of protectable material. (2) The use of the material does not come within the privilege of 'fair use.' . . . And (3) the material is used in a medium reserved exclusively to the copyright proprietor."*

*(direct quotation)*

**Note Card 2**

*History Writers* *Bib. #23*

*In The Canterbury Tales, Chaucer used many of the ideas and characters found in Boccaccio's Decameron. Some people have said that Tales is more a product of Boccaccio than of Chaucer, but the author points out that Chaucer pulled information from many diverse sources—fables, sermons, etc. and in the end, created a work that was "pure Chaucer."*

*pages 71–72 (paraphrase)*

1. Compare the information in the two note cards above with how the same information appears in the draft. Would you change the draft's treatment of the material? Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What information seems missequenced? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Is there any other information for which a bibliography card source should be noted? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Circle terms that need to be explained and assertions that need factual support. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Look for problems with tone, style, and illogical word choices. Underscore problem areas and write your correction above the words that you underscore.
6. Mark on the draft other changes that you would recommend.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## DRAFTING

# Evaluating Sample Introductions and Creating Your Own Introduction

**Directions** To capture readers' attention, an introduction may begin by asking a question, presenting a startling conclusion, posing a puzzle, or stating an interesting quotation. Read the following introductions for a research paper about talented writers who plagiarize. Note how each introduction begins and how it leads into its thesis statement. Then on a separate sheet of paper, respond to the questions that follow the introductions.

### A. Question

What kind of person commits plagiarism? A stupid person? A desperate person? A greedy person? A lazy person? Most people assume that someone who commits the crime of plagiarism has a motive. Surprisingly, some word thieves seem to lack a motive. Paradoxically, plagiarists are often talented writers who lack any real need to plagiarize, yet do so, sometimes even when they have nothing to gain by their theft.

### B. Startling Conclusion

Many modern writers wish that they could write like Shakespeare, but if they did, they would probably end up in court for the rest of their lives, defending lawsuits for plagiarism. Using the words of other writers was a common accepted practice in Shakespeare's time. Today, however, plagiarism violates federal laws and runs contrary to most people's sense of fair play. But even though legal penalties and public opinion would seem to discourage plagiarism, some very talented writers commit plagiarism.

### C. Quotation

"I didn't mean to do it" sounds like a pretty weak excuse for any crime, especially for theft. If you catch a thief red-handed, you've caught him. The surprising thing about the crime of plagiarism is that it is not easy to pin the charge on a writer.

### D. Puzzle

Plagiarism is a crime that even psychologists have a difficult time explaining. The gain is often minimal, and the evidence for the crime is always out there, waiting only for someone to make the connection between the original and the copy. The consequences are great: Plagiarism ruins a writer's reputation, is just about impossible to defend in court, and results in huge monetary losses. Good writers, even great writers, resort to plagiarism.

## Questions for Evaluating Introductions

1. Does any introduction inadequately represent the topic?
2. Does any introduction not seem to mesh with its thesis statement?
3. Does any introduction have an inappropriate tone?
4. Which introductory paragraph do you think is most effective for the topic? Why? What would you do to improve the other introductions?
5. Now write two separate introductions to your own research papers, each of which begins with a different strategy: asking a question, presenting a startling conclusion, posing a puzzle, or stating an interesting quotation.

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## DRAFTING

### Creating Your Own Draft

**Directions** Use your outline and note cards as guides to write a draft of your research paper. To begin, arrange your note cards in the same order as the ideas on your outline. Read the main idea of each Roman numeral heading on your outline and skim the information on each note card for that heading. Then answer the questions below and on the next page. Continue your answers on a separate sheet of paper if you need more space.

1. Reread your thesis statement. Does the information in your note cards and your outline directly support your thesis statement? Do you need to revise your thesis statement? Eliminate some note cards? Why or why not?

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2. Now rethink your method of organization for main ideas and for supporting details. First consider your main ideas. In what other method of organization could main ideas be sequenced?

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3. You may use a variety of methods by which to organize supporting details. Look at your first outline subheading and its note cards. What is your method of organization for that information? In what other way could you organize the information? Which way is better suited to the development of your paper? Why?

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4. Look at the other subheadings in your outline and their note cards. Which subheading has the weakest method of organization for its details? How will you improve it?

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5. Think of how your outline's main headings and subheadings are related and how you will use transitions to connect the ideas in those headings. Choose one main heading with at least two subheadings. Tell how each idea is related to the one before it. What transitional idea or words will you use to make each transition?

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

continued from page 25

6. Look at the content of your note cards. Which note cards contain blatant bias, by you or by a source, that might destroy the objectivity that you are striving to attain in your research paper? Identify those note cards.

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7. How will you maintain your objectivity in your draft? What steps can you take to ensure that you have fairly considered opposing theories and alternative explanations?

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8. Consider your audience. Which terms or concepts will you need to explain to them? List those terms and concepts.

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9. Your audience may have some prejudices for or against your thesis statement. Describe what you anticipate those prejudices to be and how you will deal with them.

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**Directions** To give your audience a full understanding of your topic, make sure to provide the background information that you gained from your research. The kind of background information will depend on your topic. Read the questions that follow and then identify which of your note cards takes those considerations into account.

- If your paper is about a literary figure, have you considered the political, social, and economic times in which the person lived? Have you considered works of literature in the context of the period in which they were written?
- If your paper is about a historical event, have you painted a picture of what led up to the event? Have you contrasted historical attitudes with contemporary attitudes?
- If your paper is about one of the sciences, have you made a clear distinction between theories, hypotheses, and facts? Look for places in your note cards where you might have details to support theories and hypotheses.

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## DRAFTING

### Cooperative Learning: Evaluating Your Draft

**Directions** With a partner, discuss and evaluate one another's drafts. As you do so, answer the following questions about your partner's draft. If you need more space, continue your answers on a separate sheet of paper. Use your partner's responses to guide your efforts as you continue the writing process.

1. Read your partner's introduction; then stop. What is the topic and the thesis statement? Who is the intended audience? What method of organization will be needed? Does your partner agree with your assessment?

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2. Read the rest of the paper. After you read the first paragraph, you held a certain impression of the writer's purpose, how the writer envisioned the audience for the paper, and how the paper would develop. When you finished reading the paper, did you feel as if the expectations that you held after reading the first paragraph were met? Why or why not?

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3. What are the two most interesting sections or passages of the draft? Briefly describe them.

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4. Is there a section or a passage where the content of the paper does not support the thesis statement? Briefly identify the place and tell why it does not support the thesis statement.

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5. Describe at least one place in which your partner could improve the organization of the paper. Look for breaks in the flow of information, missequenced information, and passages in which a method of organization is not apparent. Briefly describe the problem and tell how you would suggest fixing it.

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

continued from page 27

6. Look for at least two places in which connections between ideas could be improved and identify the places. What would you do to improve the connection?

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7. Look for at least one assertion that needs more factual support. Identify the assertion. Does your partner agree? Why or why not?

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8. Evaluate how well your partner has used research sources. Has your partner used so many direct quotations that it seems as if that is all you're reading? Are your partner's ideas smoothly integrated with those of the sources that he or she used? Look for at least two places where direct quotations would be better written as paraphrases or where information from sources could be more smoothly integrated into the draft. Make concrete suggestions for improvement.

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9. Describe the tone of your partner's paper. Do you think that the tone is suited to the topic? Why or why not? Why does your partner say that he or she used that tone?

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10. Do you agree with your partner's thesis and with the conclusions that your partner makes about the topic? Why or why not?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## CITING SOURCES

### Evaluating Sample Citations

**Directions** Read this draft of another portion of the research paper “The Paradox of Plagiarism.” Sources for the documentation follow, and they are correct. On the draft, cross out information that does not need to be documented, circle information that needs documentation, and correct documentation that is incorrect.

For a work to be judged as plagiarism, it must be obviously stolen and not merely similar to another work. Many works contain similarities because certain basic themes, plots, and cliched characters have been used for centuries. (Salsman 74) In fact, when an eighteenth-century playwright stated “that there were only thirty-six possible dramatic situations,” German author Goethe agreed, saying, “It is almost impossible in the present day to find a situation which is thoroughly new. Only the manner of looking at it can be new, and the art of treating and representing it.”

Sometimes plagiarism occurs accidentally through coincidence: A person thinks of an unusual idea for a story, only to discover that someone else has already had the same idea (Lindey 49–50). According to law, the person who first puts the idea on paper owns the idea: “The copyright in the work of authorship immediately becomes the property of the author who created it” (Copyright Office 2).

Some accidental plagiarism occurs on a subconscious level when “the subconscious mind of the author has retained what his conscious mind has read or heard, and had forgotten” (Salsman 28). For example, Helen Keller wrote a story that she titled “The Frost King” and later discovered an earlier story of such striking similarity that a disgraced Keller concluded “that mine was a—plagiarism.” Neither Keller nor her readers could remember her ever having heard the story (Salsman 242).

Sometimes plagiarism occurs through ignorance. Gregg Easterbrook received an apology from a writer who had used passages from Easterbrook’s book. The writer contended that the work was not plagiarism, because Easterbrook had been acknowledged in the book’s footnotes. However, Easterbrook argues, “Footnotes mean the place a fact can be found; they do not confer the right to present someone else’s words as your own work (Easterbrook 46).”

Maurice Salzman: *Plagiarism: The “Art” of Stealing Literary Material*

Gregg Easterbrook: “The Sincerest Flattery,” *Newsweek*, pp. 45–47, quotation on p. 46

Alexander Lindey: *Plagiarism and Originality*

no author: *Copyright Basics*, Copyright Office, Library of Congress, from page 2

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## CITING SOURCES

### Practice Creating Works Cited Entries

**Directions** The following works cited entries are punctuated and formatted according to MLA style. Note that in an entry of more than one line, the second line is indented.

Hinchliffe, Lisa. *Cut-and-Paste Plagiarism: Preventing, Detecting and Tracking Online Plagiarism*. 21 June 2000 <<http://alexia.lis.uiuc.edu/~janicke/plagiary.htm>>.

Mallon, Thomas. *Stolen Words: Forays into the Origins and Ravages of Plagiarism*. New York: Ticknor, 1989.

Morrow, Lance. "Kidnapping the Brainchildren." *Time* 3 Dec. 1990: 126.

On a separate sheet of paper, create a correctly formatted works cited list, using the information provided below. Alphabetize all entries (including the three above) by authors' names (or by title if no author is given), use correct punctuation, and shorten publishers' names by abbreviating and deleting unnecessary words. For periodicals, abbreviate the month and give the day of the month first. For a second entry by one author, use three hyphens, a period, and a space instead of the author's name. To be sure that you are listing the information for each entry in the correct order, refer to the Practice Creating Bibliography Cards on pages 6–10.

"Copyright" in 1991 edition of *Encyclopedia Americana*, article written by Stanley Rothenberg.

United States Copyright Office of the Library of Congress pamphlet *Copyright Basics*, published June 1989 by the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) in Washington

Beth Archer Brombert's article on Stendhal in the 1997 edition of *Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia* on CD-ROM, published by Grolier Interactive Inc., and copyright © 1997.

*Plagiarism and Originality*, authored by Alexander Lindey, published in 1952 by Harper & Brothers, Publishers of New York

*Plagiarism: The "Art" of Stealing Literary Material*, authored by Maurice Salzman, published in 1931 by Parker, Stone, & Baird Co. of Los Angeles

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## CITING SOURCES

### Cooperative Learning: Evaluating Your Documentation

**Directions** With a partner, discuss and evaluate one another's documentation within your drafts. As you do so, answer the following questions about your partner's documentation. If you need more space, continue your answers on the back of this sheet. Use your partner's responses to guide your efforts as you continue the writing process.

1. Read your partner's draft, focusing on the documented information. Pause at each item of documented information and ask yourself why that information needs to be documented. Are there documented items that are common knowledge and do not require a citation? List them. Does your partner agree? Why or why not?

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2. Read your partner's draft, focusing on information for which sources are not named. Identify information that is not documented and tell why you think it should be documented. Does your partner agree? Why or why not?

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3. Look at the formats of the documentation in your partner's draft and check them against your partner's note cards and bibliography cards. Which citations appear to be incorrect? Identify them and indicate the problem.

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4. Look at the draft of your partner's works cited entries and check them against the documentation in your partner's bibliography cards and draft. Which citations appear to be incorrect? Identify them and indicate the problem.

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## REVISING

### Evaluating a Sample Revision

**Directions** Read this revision of a portion of the research paper titled “The Paradox of Plagiarism.” Then on a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions that follow.

Even <sup>By</sup> during Shakespeare's lifetime (1564–1616), some people were <sup>claiming</sup> saying that only original writers should receive praise—and money—for their efforts. For example, George Puttenham in “Arte of English Poesie” said that a man who had stolen another's verse should <sup>(indicted)</sup> be <sup>indicted</sup> ended of petty larceny for pilfering other men's devices from them and converting them to his own use” (Lindey 72–73). A hundred years after <sup>Shakespeare's death</sup> the death of Shakespeare, borrowing of the words of others <sup>were</sup> was no longer an accepted practice.

The idea of plagiarism <sup>arose with the</sup> traces its roots to invention of the moveable-type printing press. Until the 1300s, monks hand-copied books <sup>by hand</sup> by hand. There were relatively few books in existence, but <sup>and</sup> relatively few people <sup>were literate. Few people</sup> could read. <sup>No one</sup> No one made <sup>any</sup> any money selling books. During the 1300s, printers began using woodblock presses to stamp words and pictures on paper. With the rise of the Renaissance, more people <sup>began learning</sup> learned how to read, <sup>and as a result, the demand for books grew.</sup> To speed the printing process, metal type was invented by 1440. <sup>followed by the invention of the</sup> The movable-type printing press was <sup>sixty-four</sup> invented in 1476. By 1500, <sup>64</sup> 64 years before the birth of Shakespeare, several million books had been printed (McCracken).

1. Why is the first paragraph resequenced to follow the second paragraph?
2. In the first paragraph, why is *By* a more effective transition than *Even during*?
3. Why is *indicted* inserted and put in brackets?
4. What do the ellipsis indicate? Are they correctly used here?
5. Is the change from *was* to *were* correct?
6. Why is *traces its roots* changed? Why is *by hand* deleted?
7. Why do you think the writer changed *No one made any money* to *Few people made money*? Can you suggest a better change?
8. Why was *and as a result, the demand for books grew* added?
9. What else would you change?

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## REVISING

### Practice Correcting a Sample Revision

**Directions** Read this revision of a portion of the research paper titled “The Paradox of Plagiarism.” Then respond to the items that follow it by making corrections on the revision. The spelling of source authors’ names and the page numbers are correct.

By the early 1700s, even more books were being printed for an ever-widening reading audience. Printers grew rich by publishing books and not paying the authors who wrote them. As writers saw their profits ripped off they clamored for protection of their legal rights (Rothenberg).

By the mid 1700s, the preprinting-press trend of literary imitation completely reversed itself. (24, Mallon). The first copyright law giving authors’ the right to profits from their works emerged in England in 1709 (Ladd). Plagiarism became increasing thought of as a serious character flaw in addition to being against the law.

Samuel Coleridge (1772–1834), poet, philosopher, and literary critic, was one of the most accomplished, brilliant, and famous writers of his day. He hid the fact that he was also a plagiarist (Furman). In fact, Coleridge wrote passionately against the sin of plagiarism. He wrote scathing attacks on those who used the words and ideas of others. Coleridge’s literary biographer Norman Fruman notes that in Coleridge’s most famous book of criticism, *Biographia Literaria*, he will often “express severe contempt of imitators and plagiarists” (78). Coleridge attacked a fellow writer for plagiarizing St. Thomas Aquinas (a thirteenth-century philosopher) when he writes “The main thoughts were the same in both, the order of the thoughts was the same, and even the illustrations differ only by [his] occasional substitution of more modern examples” (Fruman 77). Ironically “Coleridge took whole pages of his *Biographia Literaria* practically intact” from German writer Schelling (Lindey 84).

1. Where can organization be improved and transitions added?
2. Is the form of any documentation incorrect?
3. How can tone and style be improved? Look for slang, weak verbs, unclear pronoun references, and areas where language can be tightened.
4. How can the grammar, usage, and mechanics be improved?

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## REVISING

### Practice Correcting a Sample Revision

**Directions** Read this revision of another portion of the research paper titled “The Paradox of Plagiarism.” Make your suggestions for improvement by writing on the revision. Consider organization, logic of information, tone and style, spelling, usage, and mechanics. The spelling of author’s names and the page numbers of sources are correct.

Coleridge’s total “indebtedness” to other writers for *Biographia Literaria* may never be known, but critics estimate that of the chapters dealing with philosophy, for about a fourth of the material, Coleridge plagiarized (Mallon 36). Norman Fruman notes that in many of Coleridge’s works, Coleridge frequently plagiarized German writers, who he translated and who his audience had probably did not or could not read.

Coleridge also plagiarized poems. For a few poems, Coleridge gave an odd admittance that the works were “imitated” from other poets. To many critics, however, Coleridge goes far beyond imitation. In his twenty-four-line poem “Elegy,” only the first three lines are original, the others are either very close paraphrases or are word-for-word identical to their source (Fruman 39). Coleridge first printed *Elegy* anonymously, with no mention of its source, poet Mark Akenside. Only in later years, he claimed the poem as his, and added that it was “Imitated from one of Akenside’s Blank-Verse Inscriptions” (Fruman 38–39).

Similarly, Coleridge claimed another of his poems as being “altered and modernized from an Old Poet”, yet nearly every line is taken, word for word, from a poem by Ben Jonson (Fruman 40–42). The two stanzas below were examples in Fruman’s book, *Coleridge, the Damaged Archangel* (41). The words that are Coleridge’s original words are underlined. The rest are Jonson’s.

I’ll tell, that if they not glad,  
They yet may envy me:  
But then if I grow jealous mad,  
And of them pitied be,  
’Twould vex me worse than scorn!  
And yet it cannot be forborn,  
Unless my heart would like,  
my thoughts be torn.

He is, if they can find him, fair  
And fresh, and fragrant too;  
As after rain the summer air,  
And looks as lilies do,  
That are this morning blown!  
Yet, yet I doubt, he is not known,  
Yet, yet I fear to have him fully  
shewn.

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## REVISING

### Cooperative Learning: Evaluating Your Revision

**Directions** With a partner, discuss and assess one another's revised research papers. As you do so, answer the questions about your partner's revision. If you need more space, continue your answers on a separate sheet of paper. Use your partner's responses to guide your efforts as you continue to revise.

1. Read your partner's introduction; then stop. Do you want to read the rest of the paper? Why or why not? How could your partner make the introduction more engaging?

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2. Read the rest of the paper. Find at least one place that contains missequenced or superfluous information and suggest how to improve it. Find at least one place that needs a stronger transition and suggest an improvement.

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3. Identify two places that need more supporting detail. (Look for unsupported assertions and passages that you don't understand.)

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4. Evaluate how smoothly your partner integrated the words and the ideas of sources with his or her own ideas. Identify at least two such places that could be improved and suggest how they could be improved. Does your partner agree?

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**Directions** To help your partner to identify and correct the following problems, write suggestions for change on your partner's paper.

5. Circle places that need more clarification. Look for areas that you don't understand or that seem illogical. Point out technical terms that aren't explained.
6. Identify sentences that could be restructured, varied in length, or combined. Make your suggestions for changes in the margin.
7. Underscore weak verbs, passive voice, repeated words, and awkward wording.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## EDITING AND PRESENTING

### Editing a Sample Final Research Paper

**Directions** Proofread this four-page portion of the completed research paper titled “The Paradox of Plagiarism.” Read that paper several times, each time looking for different kinds of errors. Use the Works Cited excerpt at the end of the paper to check documentation. Make your corrections on the research paper. Proofread for these errors:

- omitted words and transposed elements
- misspellings and typing errors
- grammar and usage errors
- poor word choices
- punctuation and documentation errors

In the months immediately after Coleridge’s death in 1834, reports of his plagiarisms began to surface. Since then, scholars have combed through all of Coleridge’s works, hunting for—and finding—parallels between Coleridge’s writing and that of other writers. Scholars now attribute some of Coleridge’s lesser works to other writers (Furman 43). Coleridge’s best poems, “Kubla Khan” and “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,” however, are original works (Furman 334–341).

The paradox of Coleridge’s thefts is why would a writer with incredible talent, himself a harsh critic of plagiarists, steal from other writers? Some of his defenders claim that Coleridge became caught in a web of crippling debt and writers block, other defenders assert that Coleridge read so much that he simply became confused by what was his and what belonged to other writers (Mallon 28–32), but considering the extent of some of his word-for-word plagiarisms, that excuse is implausible. Coleridge’s critics however point out that Coleridge typifies many plagiarists: They deplore other plagiarists, they have no excuse for their own thefts, and, most puzzling of all, they are so talented that they . . . “lack of any real need to steal (28–35 Mallon).”

Even though copyright laws protected writers in Coleridge’s England, writers in the United States did not receive similar protection until a federal copyright law were enacted in 1790 (Ladd). After the law’s passage, however, another problem arose. Since no international copyright laws existed, American Publishers avoided paying royalties by ignoring the works of American authors and printing without permission the works’ of British authors, such as Charles Dickens. Writers on both sides of the Atlantic complained that they were being

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

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cheated. American authors, including Mark Twain and Ralph Waldo Emerson, fought for additional copyright protection, which were finally passed in 1891 (Rothenberg).

In the past one-hundred years, neither public scorn for plagiarists or copyright laws have eliminated plagiarism on either side of the Atlantic. Like Coleridge, some writers still appropriate the words of foreign authors. For example, in the 1930s, a British novelist received rave reviews for his detective novel *Death in the Dark*. Astute readers revealed that the book was “virtually a replica” of *The Maltese Falcon*, a well-known novel by American author Dashiell Hammett. A lawsuit followed. The British author stated that he had copied the book merely “for practice.” The court halted publication of the book, ordered the plagiarist to pay all court costs, and awarded the author rightful his profits (Lindey 107–108).

In 1989 another plagiarism-across-the-waters instance occurred. A twenty-three-year-old American author published his first novel *Wild Oats* to critical acclaim. A year later the book made its debut in Great Britain. As British writer Martin Amis read *Wild Oats*, he was not bothered by the plot’s similarities to his that of own first novel, “The Rachel Papers”; many novels share common plots. Amis did take objection, however, to the “about fifty” word-for-word bits that were taken from his novel. Subsequently, Amis informs the British press and provides the following comparison, among others (Mallon 102–104):

“My legs started off, at first spastically shooting out in all directions, then co-ordinating into a groovy shuffle.” (from *The Rachel Papers*)

“Billy started towards her, legs spastically shooting out in all directions at first, then coordinating into a groovy shuffle.” (from *Wild Oats*)

A few days later, the *New York Times* newspaper ran an article titled “New Novelist Is Called a Plagiarist.” The article included an interview of the accused author who said, “I’ve been dreading this for months” and “It is the most awful mistake, which happened because I made notes from various books as I went along and then lost the notebook telling where they came from” (Mallon, 110).

Literary critic Darryl Pinckney praised *Wild Oats*, but called the writer “foolish” for plagiarizing what he considered inconsequential tidbits (Mallon 117–118). In his book, Mallon concludes, “Without them [the bits] *Wild Oats* would have been remembered as a

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

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fair-to-middling first novel instead of a scandalous curiosity" (121). The author of *Wild Oats* has not published another novel; Amis has published over a dozen more books.

In another incident in France, the author of the best-selling novel, *La Bicyclette Bleue*, admitted that she "borrowed heavily" from American Margaret Mitchell's novel *Gone with the Wind*. The author felt that she had not plagiarized because "only" about the first 100 pages of her 400-page novel was taken from Mitchell's work. Sales projections indicate *La Bicyclette Bleue* will earn profits of about \$16 million, which Margaret Mitchell's heirs claim are rightfully theirs ("Back With," *Time*). Ironically, the remaining 300 pages are considered as good as the pages with "borrowed ideas" and the French novelist has gone on to write two sequels, both of which are totally original works and best sellers.

Margaret Mitchell's heirs originally won a \$4.8 million judgment against the French author. The verdict was overturned on appeal, but that verdict may be appealed (Lottman). Regardless of the outcome, however, legal fees for international lawsuits cost millions. Had the French author had relied on her own efforts from the start, she could have avoided the expense and the disgrace all together.

While some novelists may be able to revive their careers by writing another best-selling novel, plagiarism in academia and journalism often ends careers. For example, in 1991 a university dean plagiarized his commencement address for graduating journalism students, and the subsequent public outcry forced him to resign (Easterbrook 45). No logic can be found in his action: He had nothing to gain, either monetarily or professionally. As a dean of journalism, he surely possessed sufficient writing skills to create an adequate commencement speech.

Similarly, a columnist for the *Sacramento Bee* was fired after he plagiarized hundreds of words taken from a Stephen King book for a column on horror shows (Lieberman). A *Sacramento Bee* editor was quoted as saying that the plagiarist "is an extraordinarily talented young man" and that his "original work was better than what he copied." (Lieberman)

Politicians' speeches also receive close scrutiny. When it was revealed that a political candidate had plagiarized a portion of a speech from a British politician, the matter did not end there. As is often the case, when one instance of plagiarism is uncovered people are unwilling

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to let the plagiarist slink off; the hunt is on to find other instances of plagiarism. Further investigations discovered that the political candidate had plagiarized portions of other speeches, and even that he had failed a course in law school, because he had plagiarized five pages of a paper (Shapiro). After such intense scrutiny, the political candidate no longer had a name-recognition problem—it seemed as if everyone knew him as the man whom had plagiarized speeches. He withdrew his bid for nomination. As one attorney noted, sometimes authors do accidentally create works that are remarkably alike, . . . “but if the thing continues systematically, only one thing can be thought of it” (72 Salzman).

Thus, people are still asking the same question that they have asked since the 1600’s: why do good writers—even great writers—resort to plagiarism? The passage of time and even a abundance of psychological theories have yet to provide a logical answer. Some chalk up such plagiarism up to stupidity while others say that it is “. . . a trait, pathetic, that makes you turn aside in embarrassment” (Morrow). What ever the reasons, the good writer who plagiarizes at great risk, and often for little gain, remains—a paradox.

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## EDITING AND PRESENTING

### Cooperative Learning: Evaluating and Editing Your Own Paper

**Directions** With a partner, evaluate one another's completed research papers and works cited pages. To help your partner to identify problems, use a pencil to underscore the word or words in your partner's paper where a problem occurs. In the margin of the paper, use the letters in parentheses below to indicate the kind of problem. Your partner will consider your evaluation and decide which corrections to make.

- misspelled word (*SP*)
- grammar or usage error (*GU*)
- punctuation error (*P*)
- capitalization error (*CAP*)
- wrong word (*WW*)
- omitted word (*O*)
- sequence error (*SEQ*)
- documentation format error (*DOC*)

**Directions** Evaluate your partner's paper by answering the following questions:

1. Is the title of the paper appropriate? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. After reading the paper, do you feel satisfied that you have gained a thorough and well-rounded view of the topic?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What did you like most about the paper? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What did you learn from reading the paper that surprised you the most? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. If your partner wanted to devote a day to improving the paper, what improvements would you suggest? Consider the paper's methods of organization, use of research sources, logic and clarity of explanations, appropriateness of tone, variety of sentence structures, selection of word choices, and overall appearance.

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Research Paper Analytic Evaluation Rubric

<p><b>Focus/Organization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The paper’s topic is neither too broad nor too narrow.</li> <li>• The introduction includes a thesis statement that presents the topic and the writer’s approach to it.</li> <li>• The ideas are logically sequenced.</li> <li>• The conclusion reinforces the thesis and the main points.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Comments</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Score _____/35</i></p>
<p><b>Elaboration/Support/Style</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General ideas are supported with facts, examples, opinions, and quotations taken from a variety of sources.</li> <li>• Sources are cited correctly within the text and in a Works Cited list.</li> <li>• Quoted statements are set off with quotation marks; credit is given to paraphrased sources.</li> <li>• The writer’s own ideas are supported by cited material.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Comments</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Score _____/35</i></p>
<p><b>Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writing is free of misspellings, and words and capitalization is used correctly.</li> <li>• Sentences are punctuated correctly, and the piece is free of fragments and run-ons.</li> <li>• Standard English usage is employed.</li> <li>• The paper is neat, legible, and presented in an appropriate MLA format.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Comments</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Score _____/30</i></p>

**Engagement in the Writing Process**

The student

- made a prewriting plan
- discussed the draft with a partner
- contributed suggestions to other writers
- revised the draft
- proofread the final draft

**Comments**

*Overall Score \_\_\_\_\_/100*

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## WRITING A REPORT: FICTION

### Prewriting for Your Report on a Work of Fiction

**Directions** As a part of your prewriting for a report on a novel or a short story, write your responses to the following items. Adapt questions as necessary to make your report appropriate to the type and length of the work of fiction you have chosen. Continue on the back of this sheet if you need more space.

1. Name the work of fiction and its author. State the number of pages and the date of publication.

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2. Identify the type of fiction, such as historical novel, fictional biography, slice-of-life short story, mystery, romance, fantasy, or social criticism.

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3. Name and briefly describe the main characters.

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4. Briefly describe the setting—the time and the place.

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5. In one sentence, summarize the plot. (Example: A woman searches for gold in the jungle but finds herself instead.)

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6. Identify the point of view, such as first person or omniscient narration. Does the point of view ever change? When? To what other point of view?

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7. Briefly state the theme. (Example: Goodness is always rewarded)

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

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**Directions** Respond to the following items on a separate sheet of paper. Use examples from the work of fiction to support your reasoning.

8. How does the story unfold? In straight chronology? With flashbacks? With chapters ending in cliffhangers? By alternating between parallel stories or points of view?
9. How does the point of view limit or enhance what the audience knows?
10. Describe the motivation of each main character. (Example: Amy seeks freedom.)
11. How do the characters change or grow? Compare their development.
12. How do the characters, major and minor, relate to each other?
13. Do you like the characters or care about them? Why or why not? Do you identify with one particular character?
14. Are the characters stereotypes? Do you know real people like them? How can the experience of the main characters be generalized to the human condition?
15. If you could meet one of the characters, what one question would you ask?
16. Identify the climax, or turning point, of the action.
17. Is the ending foreshadowed? How and where? Would you suggest a different ending? Why or why not? If the story continued, what would you expect to happen?
18. If you could insert yourself into the plot, at which point would you appear? Why? What would you do or say?
19. How extensively does the author describe the setting? Evaluate how the author has crafted descriptive passages.
20. Is the setting of the story crucial to the characters' development or to the successful unfolding of the plot? Why or why not?
21. Does the setting contribute to the mood or the suspense? How?
22. Describe the tone (the author's attitude toward the subject and the audience).
23. Does the author rely more on narration or on dialog to move the action along? Are narration and dialog skillfully interwoven?
24. Evaluate the author's use of figurative language (such as metaphor and simile) and symbolism (for example, the color red or an eagle in flight).
25. How well did the author keep your interest? Could you have put the work down at any time, or were you compelled to keep reading?
26. Pick one of the following and explain how it influences the theme: the plot, the characters, the setting, the point of view, or the style and the tone.
27. If you have read literary criticism on your work, how did the critic's evaluation of the work differ from yours?
28. What do you know about the author? How does the author's ethnic background, gender, time in history, or social position affect the work?

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## WRITING A REPORT: FICTION

### Evaluating a Sample Draft of a Report (Fiction)

**Directions** Read the following excerpt from a draft of a report on the novel *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens, published in 1859. As you read, note the report's accomplishments and failings. Then use the questions that follow on the next page to critique the excerpt. Write your answers on the lines provided below and directly on the model draft itself.

Charles Dickens published *A Tale of Two Cities* in 1859. It is a historical novel and it is also a romantic novel at the same time. Big events, especially the French Revolution, surround the characters in *A Tale of Two Cities* and influence their lives. Ordinary people are caught up in the confusion and the great drama of history and politics. Dickens's theme is that people's lives are governed by fate over which they do not have any control. He shows this by setting his story during a time when the French government had pretty much lost control over itself.

To summarize the plot: Dr. Manette had been imprisoned in the Bastille eighteen years earlier by aristocrats named Evrémonde. His daughter, Lucie, marries Charles Darnay, who is trying to escape his origins in the French aristocracy. But their happiness is threatened by Madame Defarge, who is always knitting. She seeks revenge for the evils done to her family by the Evrémondes, who were Darnay's ancestors. Lucie and Charles are saved in the end by Sydney Carton's self-sacrifice.

The story is set in Paris, France, and in London, England. I once went to France with my family. It mostly takes place between 1775 and 1793, with flashbacks to 1757. Knowing the real historical events that were taking place puts the time period into context. The storming of the Bastille prison in 1789 by a mob of Parisian citizens marks the beginning of the French Revolution. The Reign of Terror took place in 1793. Sometimes characters travel from Paris to London or from London to Paris. Other times the book tells about things that are happening in London and Paris more or less at the same time.

The political turmoil in *A Tale of Two Cities* disrupts the otherwise ordinary lives of the characters. For example, Charles Darnay would be content to live a peaceful life with Lucie and her father in London, earning his living as a tutor. Madame Defarge is another such example of an ordinary person transformed by her time. Darnay returns to France to help a former servant, however, at a time when just being born among the high and mighty is a treasonable offense. The crimes committed by his Evrémonde ancestors, which had gone unpunished pre-French Revolution, make Darnay guilty in the eyes of the Revolutionary courts.

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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1. Identify the writer's thesis statement. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What specific evidence has the writer provided to support the thesis statement?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What information in the report needs explanation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Where has the writer interjected irrelevant personal comments or included superfluous information? Eliminate such wording on the draft.
5. Find examples of informal wording that is inappropriate for a report. List them below and then correct on the draft.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Find two instances in which you would combine sentences or use more vivid language. Briefly identify them below and show your revisions on the draft.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Find one sentence in which the writer has used an unclear pronoun reference. Explain the problem below and correct it on the draft.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Locate a problem with the sentence organization in a paragraph. Describe the problem below and correct it on the draft.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What other revisions would you suggest? Write changes on the draft.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## WRITING A REPORT: FICTION

### Cooperative Learning: Evaluating a Revision of Your Report (Fiction)

**Directions** With a partner, discuss and evaluate one another's revisions. Use the questions that follow as guides. Write answers to the questions for your partner's report. If you need more space, continue on a separate sheet of paper. Then trade papers with your partners. Use your partner's responses to guide your efforts when you prepare your final report.

1. The title and author of the work is  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What do you know about the plot of the story from reading your partner's report? Does your partner think that you have a clear picture of the plot?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Paraphrase the report's thesis statement. Identify paragraphs that do not support it.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How could the organization of the report be improved? To check the organization, try creating a rough outline of the report on a separate sheet of paper.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Are all assertions about characters backed up with examples from the story? Describe at least one point that could be better supported.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What do you want to know about the setting (time and place in which the story takes place) that you have not read in the report?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What did you like best about the report? Why? What did you like least? Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Directions** To help your partner identify problems with style, make penciled suggestions for change on your partner's report. Circle sentences that need more clarification. Make suggestions in the margin for sentences that could be varied in length or combined. Underscore weak verbs, repeated words, and awkward wording.

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

WRITING A REPORT: FICTION

## Writing a Report Comparing Two Works of Fiction

**Directions** Choose two works of fiction to compare that have one key feature in common, such as the author, the genre, or the subject. Begin to prewrite your report by filling in the chart below. Consider both similarities and differences. Use examples from the works to support your comparison. You may wish to copy the chart onto a separate sheet of paper to allow more space to fill in the boxes.

Criteria for Comparison-Contrast		
Title		
Author		
Number of pages		
Date of publication		
Type of fiction		
Plot summary		
Descriptions of main characters		
Setting (time and place)		
Point of view		
Theme		

**Directions** Respond to the following items on a separate sheet of paper. Use examples from the two works to support your reasoning.

1. How does the story unfold in both works? Evaluate how successfully the authors introduce characters, create conflict, build to climaxes, and end the stories.
2. Compare the characters in both works—consider their motivations, how they change and develop, and how real they seem. Do you find the characters in one work more appealing than in the other? Why or why not?
3. How do you think each author perceived his or her audience? For clues, compare each author's tone and style (consider vocabulary), biases toward subject matter or certain characters (for example, all rich people are cruel), and explanations of specialized information.
4. Compare your personal response to each work. Which work did you find more compelling or more powerful? More difficult to read? Why?
5. If either work is considered a literary classic, do you think its stature is deserved? Why or why not?

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## WRITING A REPORT: FICTION

### Writing a Report Comparing a Book to a Movie

**Directions** Choose a movie that is an adaptation of a work of fiction. Begin your prewriting for a report comparing the two versions by writing your responses to the following items. Continue on a separate sheet of paper if you need more space.

1. Name the title of the novel or the short story, its author and genre, and the year in which it was published.

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2. Name the movie's title, director, leading stars, and year of production.

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3. Did the author of the book write the screenplay or act as consultant?

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**Directions** Respond to the following items in full sentences on a separate sheet of paper. Support your answers by citing evidence from both versions.

4. Summarize the basic plot(s) of the book and of the movie. How closely does the movie's plot mirror that of the book? Which parts of the book were eliminated? Knowing that a book must inevitably be compressed to fit into a two-hour movie, do you agree with the omissions chosen by the director and the screenwriter? Which scenes or plot twists not originally in the book were added to the movie?
5. Identify the main characters in the book and in the movie. Has the movie adaptation changed the relative importance of main characters in the book? How do actors' physical appearance and interpretation of roles compare with your mental images from reading the book?
6. Compare the author's descriptions of the settings with the cinematographer's photography. Which more successfully created mood and moved the story along? Why?
7. Make suggestions for improvements in adapting the book as a movie. (For example, which memorable scene or character from the book would you have liked to see in the movie?)
8. Did the movie adaptation change the impact of the book's message or theme? In what way?
9. Compare your personal response to each version. Did you find the book or the movie more satisfying? Why?
10. Did you read the book before seeing the movie? How did the order in which you saw the movie and read the book color your preference for one or the other?

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

WRITING A REPORT: NONFICTION

## Prewriting for Your Report on a Work of Nonfiction

**Directions** As a part of your prewriting for a report on a nonfiction book, essay, or magazine article, write responses to the following items. Adapt questions as necessary to make your report appropriate to the form and length of the work of nonfiction you have chosen. Continue your responses on the back of this sheet if you need more space.

1. Name the work of nonfiction and its author or authors. State the number of pages and date of publication.

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2. If you are not reporting on an entire book, identify the collection or the periodical in which the work appears.

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3. Identify the form of the work as subjective (autobiography, memoir, personal essay) or objective (biography, historical account, scientific facts, social or political analysis).

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4. Describe the primary mode of writing (exposition, persuasion, description, or narration).

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5. Summarize the author's thesis statement and list three main points that the author makes.

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6. Describe the author's tone (formal or informal, humorous or serious) and the author's attitude about the subject.

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7. Describe the ideal audience for this work. (For clues, consider the author's tone and style, use of specialized or technical vocabulary, biases toward the subject matter, and treatment of opposing viewpoints.)

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

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8. What are the author's biases? (Remember that an author shows bias in his or her selection of facts as well as in opinions expressed.) Provide at least two examples from the work that illustrate your point.

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9. Is the author a recognized authority in the subject area about which he or she is writing? How do you know?

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10. Is the content of the work mostly fact or mostly opinion? Do you think that the balance of fact to opinion is suited to the subject matter? Why?

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**Directions** Respond to the following items on a separate sheet of paper. Use examples from the work of nonfiction to support your reasoning.

11. Did the work give you the information you wanted and needed? List three facts that you learned from reading the work.
12. Does the author support his or her opinions or conclusions by a logical presentation of facts? Support your answer with evidence from the work.
13. If the work is intended to persuade, has the author convincingly presented his or her viewpoint? Cite persuasive evidence from the work.
14. Does the author consider the opinions of others? How does the author deal with conflicting opinions? Cite evidence from the work.
15. Does the author present his or her material in an imaginative fashion? Does the author use any techniques of a writer of fiction to describe setting or characters? Support your answer with examples from the work.
16. Which elements of the work compelled you to keep reading?
17. Which elements of the work need improvement?
18. If you could ask the author questions, what points would you like to see clarified or explained?
19. What additional information would you like to learn about the topic of this work of nonfiction?

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

WRITING A REPORT: NONFICTION

## Evaluating a Sample Draft of a Report (Nonfiction)

**Directions** Read the following excerpt from a draft of a report on *The Sea Around Us*, a nonfiction work by Rachel Carson. As you read, note the report's accomplishments and failings. Then use the questions that follow on the next page to critique the excerpt. Write your answers on the lines provided below and directly on the model draft itself.

Rachel Carson's first wrote her popular science book *The Sea Around Us* in 1950. Oceanographers were making discoveries rapidly in 1950s, so that Rachel Carson revised it in 1961. Although oceanographers have continued to probe the mysteries of the oceans, *The Sea Around Us* remains a classic because Carson explains scientific information so imaginatively.

As a marine biologist, Carson brought knowledge of her subject to her writing. In addition, her almost poetic language makes her descriptions special to read. For example, Carson describes on page 39 camouflaged life in the Sargasso Sea. She writes, "little marine beasts of the weedy jungle seem to be playing an elaborate game of disguise . . ." She continues, "All these elaborate bits of mimicry are indications of the fierce internecine wars of the Sargasso jungles, which go on without quarter and without mercy for the weak or the unwary."

Carson uses language effectively to make her main point: The sea surrounding us is our ocean-mother. The ancient seas formed long ago in geologic times, and eventually living things left the ocean to venture onto dry land, which she describes on pages 23 and 24 as "forsaking their all-providing, all-embracing mother sea" to live where "there was no living voice, and no living thing moved over the surface of the rocks." As Carson puts it on page 28, each of us "carries in our veins a salty stream in which the elements sodium, potassium, and calcium are combined in almost the same proportions as in sea water." However, everything eventually returns to the sea; on page 196, "The continents themselves dissolve and pass to the sea: in grain after grain of eroded land."

Carson makes scientific facts exciting to read about. She makes science exciting by showing readers her own enthusiasm for her subject, the sea around us. She wrote other books too, like *Under the Sea Wind* and *The Edge of the Sea*. Her most famous book, *The Silent Spring*, isn't about the ocean at all; it's about pesticides. Carson sounds as if she is curious

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# Research Paper and Report Writing

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herself when she probes the mysteries of the depths and darkness of the deep, dark, sunless sea. What will she find in this alien world? Why are there waves? How are islands born? How are they destroyed? By satisfying her own curiosity, Carson shows us that learning about oceanography is fun stuff.

I learned new facts about the ocean that I had never known before. I learned that the forces of the wind and of the earth spinning around to the east produce ocean currents, like the Gulf Stream. I learned what a tsunami is. I thought luminescence was really weird; it is when fish and other organisms release light, so that many of them look like stars or moonlight in parts of the ocean that are always dark.

1. Identify the writer's thesis statement. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What specific evidence has the writer provided to support the thesis statement? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What words in the report need to be defined? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Find two sentences where the writer has used an unclear pronoun reference. Explain the problems and then correct them on the draft.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Find examples of informal wording that is inappropriate for a report. Cross out the words and replace them on the draft.
6. Locate sentences with redundant or superfluous wording. Simplify or eliminate such wording on the draft.
7. Find two instances where you would combine sentences. Correct them on the draft.
8. Find an instance where you would break a run-on sentence. Correct it on the draft.
9. Would you change any direct quotations to paraphrases? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What other revisions would you suggest? Write your changes on the draft.



# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

WRITING A REPORT: NONFICTION

## Cooperative Learning: Evaluating a Revision of Your Report (Nonfiction)

**Directions** With a partner, discuss and evaluate one another's revisions. Use the questions that follow as guides. Write answers to the questions for your partner's report. If you need more space, continue on a separate sheet of paper. Use your partner's responses to guide your efforts when you prepare your final report.

1. The title and the author of the work is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Paraphrase the thesis statement of your partner's report and identify paragraphs that do not support it.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Check the organization of main ideas and supporting ideas by creating a rough outline of the report on a separate sheet of paper. What changes in organization would you suggest? Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Are all assertions in the report backed up with facts or examples from the work? Describe at least one point that could be better supported.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What do you know about the work's author from reading the report? Does the report tell you if the author is a qualified expert in the subject area? Whether the author supports claims with facts? Whether the author presents opposing points of view?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What did you like best about the report? Why? What did you like least? Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Directions** To help your partner identify problems with style, make penciled suggestions for change on your partner's report. Circle sentences that need more clarification. Make suggestions in the margin for sentences that could be varied in length or combined. Underline weak verbs, repeated words, and awkward wording.

# Research Paper and Report Writing

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## WRITING A REPORT: NONFICTION

### Writing a Report Comparing Two Works of Nonfiction

**Directions** Choose two nonfiction books or two articles to compare that have some key feature in common (same topic, same author, or same general mode of writing). Begin to prewrite your report by filling in the chart below. Consider both similarities and differences. Use examples from the works to support your comparison. You may wish to copy the chart onto a separate sheet of paper to allow more space to fill in the boxes.

Criteria for Comparison-Contrast		
Title		
Author(s)		
Number of pages		
Date of publication		
Mode of writing		
Subject		
Thesis statement		
Role of author		
Objectivity of author		
Intended audience		
Tone		
Style		

**Directions** Respond to the following items on a separate sheet of paper. Use examples from the two works to support your reasoning.

1. Compare each work for its facts. Were the facts logically presented? Were the facts convincing? Were opinions backed up with facts?
2. Compare each author's biases and status as an authority.
3. How effectively does each work inform? Persuade? Consider opposing opinions?
4. Compare your personal response to each work. Which did you like better? Why? Would you recommend either work to a friend? Why or why not?