

A decorative graphic of a scroll or ribbon that starts at the top left, loops around, and ends at the top right. The scroll has a wavy, ribbon-like texture.

# the Write Issues

*Alfred University Writing Center*

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## Outlining Success

Writing an outline can seem like a tedious and unnecessary process, especially if you're forced to turn one in for a class. However, making an outline can be a useful organizational strategy, and it can help you both before and after you begin to write your paper. Your outline serves as a map of the information you want to cover, and like a map, it can help you see what direction you want to travel in from the start, or it can help you get back on track if you stray from your intended path.

After free-writing, brainstorming, and gathering your sources, try writing down a one-phrase or one-sentence description of each topic that you want to cover in the paper, and your thesis if you have one. Start by writing down the big themes, then move down to the key ideas or facts that support those themes, and then a one-sentence summary of the quotes that you will use. If you are a disorganized writer like me, you may want to draw some arrows connecting the main ideas with the appropriate quotes once you have this list, and then you can use the list to make your outline.

If the outline is not something you have to turn in for class, you can use any format that makes sense to you. Go ahead and use letters, numbers, Roman numerals or any combination

that makes the organization clear to you. (See example of a standard outline format below.)

When you make this sort of outline at the beginning of the paper-writing process, it can take a long time, but once it's finished, it's like a Connect-the-Dots game, because it gives you a sense of how to connect point A and point B in your paper. A well-written outline at the beginning can take a lot of the work out of the rest of the paper, because you already have a good sense of the basic (or perhaps in-depth) structure of the paper. Some people are really resistant to outlines, and they refuse

to write even a basic outline before beginning their papers. One of the most common complaints I hear is that outlines "cramp my style" because they feel too structured. Don't give up on outlines just yet, though!

A reverse outline, which is an outline you write after you have all or most of a draft of your paper, can be useful to everyone, because it allows you to easily evaluate your paper's structure and organization. Reverse outlines are especially helpful with longer papers. Writing a reverse outline is easy—it can be as simple

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### Outline of Richard II Paper

#### I. Introduction

Thesis: Comparing and contrasting Richard's and Bullingbrook's respective use of sun and garden metaphors shows us not only a great deal about their characters, but also a key distinction of the play: the difference between a king and a leader, and what it takes to be both.

#### II. Body

A. Richard's metaphor, like his thoughts, is completely disconnected from the events of real life; it floats in the ether.

B. Richard's recurring association of kingship with the sun tells us that he believes the king is an elevated entity, gliding through life above his people; and that's exactly the way Richard is until his deposition, as his power disintegrates beneath him.

C. Bullingbrook's metaphor of the gardener, however, shows that he believes that just being there isn't the end of a king's responsibilities.

D. By combining the sun and garden metaphors, we realize how necessary each idea is.

#### Conclusion

Restate thesis: Bullingbrook's use of the garden metaphor shows his strength as a leader, but Richard's use of the sun metaphor shows his legitimate kingly presence, which can never truly be taken away.

# MLA Changed Again!

Just when you thought you were getting the hang of MLA citations, the Modern Language Association changed up the rules in 2009. Don't despair just yet, though. There are some new rules to learn, but in general this new format makes citations clearer and easier to do.

The main changes are:

- 1.) No more underlining! Books, periodicals, movies, etc. are now italicized instead of underlined.
- 2.) URLs are no longer required for web sources, as long as the citation provides enough information to lead the reader to the source easily.
- 3.) The publication medium must be listed at the end of each citation. The majority of the sources will now say "Print" or "Web," but "TV" or "Performance," for example, might appear as well. When the source comes from the web, the date of access (when you found the source) needs to be listed as well.
- 4.) You no longer have to worry about whether your source article or story appears on consecutive pages. As long as the volume and issue numbers are included, you're all set.
- 5.) Since many web sources now require a publisher's name, date of publication and page numbers, there are some new abbreviations that indicate that one of these wasn't available to put in the citation. For example, when there's no publisher's name on the website, "N.p." stands for "no publisher given." "N.d" stands for "no date," and "n.pag" stands for "no pagination" when a source appears only online or in databases that do not provide pagination.

Here are some sample citations using the 2009 MLA format:

## Book

Book citations remain largely the same, except that the titles are italicized instead of underlined, and the medium ("Print") is listed at end.

Steer, Dugald, and Ernest Drake.  
*Dragonology: Field Guide to Dragons*.  
Cambridge, MA: Candlewick,  
2007. Print.

## Scholarly Print Publications

Regardless of pagination, all scholarly publication citations include both volume and issue numbers. End citations with the medium of publication, e.g. "Print."

Suarez, Susan D., and Gordon G. Gallup.  
"Self-Recognition in Chimpanzees and Orangutans, but Not Gorillas." *Journal of Human Evolution* 10.2 (1981): 175-88. Print.



## Online Periodical

Online periodicals include both the name of the website in italics and the website publisher. Note that some websites will have different names than their print formats, such as ones that include a domain name such as .com or .org. If no publisher is listed, use "N.p." to indicate that. Follow with the date of publication and "Web" as the medium.

Ellin, Abby. "The Romance of Recession: Dating is on the Rise." *NYTimes.com*. The New York Times, 11 Feb. 2009. Web. 22 Mar. 2010.

## Scholarly Journal from an Online Database

Cite journal articles from an online database the same way you would a

print version. Provide the database name in italics. Library information is no longer required, but list the medium of publication as "Web" and end with the date of access.

Gottlieb, Alma. "Where Have All the Babies Gone? Toward an Anthropology of Infants (and Their Caretakers)." *Anthropological Quarterly* 73.3 (2000): 121-32. JSTOR. Web. 22 Mar. 2010.

## Online-Only Publication

For articles that appear in an online-only format or in databases that do not provide a page number, use the abbreviation "n. pag." for "no pagination." End the citation with the medium of publication, "Web", and the date of access.

"Zombie Yoga: Living a Full Life through Undead Lessons." *Living Green*. Thefuntimesguide.com, 19 Mar. 2010: n. pag. Web. 22 Mar. 2010.

## Online Scholarly Project

Online scholarly projects appear italicized. Difficult-to-find projects may be listed in quotation marks with the website name and domain in italics. Publication location and date follows. Web medium of publication and date of access end the entry.

Kline, Daniel T., ed. *Geoffrey Chaucer Online: The Electronic Canterbury Tales*. U of Alaska Anchorage, 30 Jul. 2007. Web. 22 Mar. 2010.

Leah Houk

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# Chicago Style

Whenever I hear the phrase “Chicago Style,” I’m tempted to think about hot dogs and deep-dish pizza. Unfortunately, in academic settings, the proper meaning of this phrase is somewhat less appetizing. When writing a research paper, Chicago Style relates to citing sources you have used in creating that paper. These resources are represented in two ways: both in the paper and in a bibliography. Here are a few things you need to know about Chicago Style:

## Footnotes and endnotes

Unlike MLA format, Chicago requires each in-text citation to be accompanied by its own footnote. Here’s an example of proper quotation followed by an in-text citation from fellow tutor Arianna Carini:

The transformation masks “connect [the Kwakiutl] to the supernatural world. When [the villagers and guests] enter the dance floor, [they] enter the spirit world, and [they] return to this world when the dance is done”<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph, Robert, ed. *Listening to Our Ancestors: The Art of Native Life along the North Pacific Coast*. Washington D.C.: National Geographic, 2005, 69.

The footnote itself is at the bottom of the page with all other footnotes; an endnote comes at the end of the paper on a separate page. Either form is correct, but check with your professor to see which one he/she prefers. In each footnote that introduces a new author or source, include all information about that source. For each following footnote from that same source, only include the author’s name, the title of the source, and the page number. If you have two consecutive footnotes that are from the exact same source, you can use the term “Ibid.” (Latin for “in

the same place”) to show that the two sources are the same.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph, Robert, ed. *Listening to Our Ancestors: The Art of Native Life along the North Pacific Coast* (Washington D.C.: National Geographic, 2005), 69.  
<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Footnotes are not only used for sources directly quoted in the paper. If you borrow an idea or refer to a source, you need to add a footnote for that source. Otherwise, you could be plagiarizing.

## Bibliographies

A bibliography is always the last page of a paper; it lists the resources you have used in formulating your paper—whether or not you directly cited those sources in your paper. This list provides information about



the author, title, publication date and location, as well as page numbers or URLs (if applicable). The general guideline of an entry is as follows:

Author’s last name, first name. *Title*. Publication city: Publisher, year of publication.

If there is no author given, or no year of publication (or any of the other information), then continue with the next available information. Other popular sources such as web sites, on-line journals, and works of art are formatted as follows:

## Web site:

Author’s last name, first name. “Title of web page.” *Publishing organization*

*or name of web site*. Publication date if available. URL. (date you accessed the web site, if necessary).

## On-line journal:

Author’s first name, last name. “Title of Article,” *Title of Journal*. Volume number, issue number (year of publication): page numbers (if applicable). URL. (date of access).

## Work of art printed in a book:

Artist’s last name, first name. “Title of art work,” medium, date of art work (Institution where art work is housed (if known), city where housed if not already named). *Title of printed source*, by Author of printed source. Place of publication: publisher, date, page or plate/figure/slide number.

## Work of art printed in an electronic source:

Artist’s last name, first name. *Title of art work*, medium, date of art work (Institution where art work is housed (if known), city where housed if not already named). URL to first slash. (e.g. [www.artstor.org](http://www.artstor.org))

Two good resources for finding out more information about Chicago Style are the Purdue University Writing Center site (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/>) and the University of Arizona library site (<http://www.library.arizona.edu/search/reference/citation-cms.html>). A more complete list of source formatting is available there, as well as useful tips and hints when writing in Chicago Style.

Happy writing!

Liz Wager

## Register Write Now!

It's never been easier to make an appointment at the Writing Center. Just visit [my.alfred.edu](http://my.alfred.edu) to access the new and improved Writing Center homepage, register and make an appointment with a tutor. From the My.Alfred homepage, click on the drop down menu under the Academics tab on the upper left-hand side. The Writing Center is the last option on the drop-down menu. Click through to the Writing Center homepage. In the middle of the page, there is a link to sign up for an appointment.

After a short registration screen for first-time users, you can then click through to the Writing Center's online schedule where you can make an appointment with the tutor of your choice or at a particular time. Please note that on the log-on screen the default location is in Seidlin during the weekday hours. If you would like to make an appointment for weekend hours at Herrick, please select the option on the drop-down menu on the log-in screen.

Make an appointment by looking for an "open" space, as indicated by a white box. Reserved times are filled in blue. When you click on a white box to make an appointment, a dialogue box will come up. This box contains biographical information about the tutor; the time of your session, and your name will appear automatically in the "reserved for" area. You can also provide additional information regarding your assignment. Please take a moment to do this as it will help the tutor to help you! To reserve the timeslot, click on the "save appointment" button at the bottom of the dialogue box.

Lastly, please remember to cancel your appointment online if you cannot keep it. If you miss more than two appointments without canceling your reservation ahead of time, you will be prohibited from making any appointments for the remainder of the semester. Visit the Writing Center soon! Tutors are ready to assist you with all of your writing needs.

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as scribbling the main idea of each paragraph in the margins of your paper, and checking to see that each idea flows nicely into the next, or that each of the ideas really does support your argument.

The reverse outline can function as a checklist, too. It can help you make sure that your paragraphs each contain only one main idea, that your transitions aren't awkward, that your quotes are supported or explained (especially important in an English paper), and that each quote really does illustrate or back up your claim. Evaluating the structure of a one-page reverse outline of your paper, and perhaps moving the one-sentence summaries around, is less intimidating than trying to evaluate an 8-page research paper.

Writing outlines is not just for type-A, hyper-organized students—anyone can learn to use some kind of outline to his or her advantage. And though you may not be type-A, making an outline will certainly help you toward getting an A on your paper.

Leah Houk

## A Word About. . .

This edition of the Write Issues focuses on several new developments relevant to writers on campus. Most exciting for those of us who work in the Writing Center is our new online sign-up system. You no longer have to schlep down to the basement of Seidlin Hall to make an appointment; now you can now sign up any time from any computer with internet access at [www.rich75.com/alfred](http://www.rich75.com/alfred) or follow the links from [my.alfred.edu/writing](http://my.alfred.edu/writing). Kristin Van Ormer explains how. Other new developments relate to citing sources in your papers. The art history department has switched from using MLA documentation to using Chicago Style, so Liz Wager offers a concise guide to in-text and bibliographic documentation Chicago Style. For those who continue to use MLA, there is a new version out this year that Leah Houk covers in her article. We also offer you advice on creating and using outlines.

Vicky Westacott  
Director of the Writing Center

## Writing Center Hours

### In The Writing Center (Seidlin 003)

Monday & Thursday 9:20 am - 12:20 pm, 1:20 - 4:20 pm  
Tuesday & Wednesday 10:20 am - 12:20 pm, 1:20 - 4:20 pm  
Friday 9:10 am - 12:20 pm, 1:20 pm - 3:20 pm

### At Herrick Library

Tuesday 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm  
Thursday 8:00pm - 10:00 pm  
Sunday 4:00pm - 6:00 pm, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Sign up for an appointment online or just stop by Seidlin 003. Questions? Call x2245 or email [fcobb@alfred.edu](mailto:fcobb@alfred.edu)

