

RESEARCH PAPER FORMAT

for North Mason High School

The North Mason High School research paper format follows the Modern Language Association (MLA) style. See the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers for more details. Limited guidelines are also available at the MLA website <<http://www.mla.org/>>. Your teacher may diverge from this style for his/her own goals, so always double-check with your instructor about the specifics of the format to be followed for a particular paper. The point of the MLA style is to have a standard, simple, and efficient form for a research paper. The basics of the MLA style are listed below:

FINAL PAPER PREPARATION

1. **Double-space** the entire paper including long quotations and the Works Consulted section.
2. Use standard **one inch margins** on all four sides. Use a **standard font** and **type size** (12 recommended).
3. Begin **numbering** with the first page of the essay and continue through the Works Consulted section. Type your last name before each page number. Place the page numbers in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and even with the right-hand margin. (Use the "header" feature to accomplish this task if it's available on your word processor.)
4. A title page is usually not required for a research paper. Simply type the author's name, the instructor's name, course title, and date in the **upper-left corner of the first page of the paper**. (Begin one inch from the top and double-space throughout.) Center the title (remember just to double-space, no extra spacing); then type the first line of the paper. Do **not** underline the title of your paper. MLA style prefers the title to have just initial capitalization, but all caps in the title is also acceptable.

Note: If your instructor requires a **title page**, use double-spacing and center the title 3.5 inches from the top of the page (one-third of the way down). Return nine times (two-thirds of the way down the page) and center the author's name, instructor's name, course title, and date. Do not put a page number on the title page.
5. If you include an **outline**, then you must also use a title page. The outline should be consistent with the final version of your paper. Use either a topic or sentence outline (as your instructor requires); do not mix the two in the same outline. If your outline is more than one page in length, number it with small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv). MLA prefers double-spacing throughout, but it's also acceptable to use a single-spacing format as long as you double-space before and after the main point headings.