



**Notre Dame High School  
Social Sciences Department**

# **Essay Writing Guidebook**

## What is a Five-Paragraph Essay???

In World History/Honors World History, you will be writing five-paragraph, expository essays. Expository writing is used to explain things, processes or ideas by giving detailed explanations, definitions and examples. Your reader will expect to learn the various facts and ideas on the topic you are presenting as a writer. Expository writing is meant to inform. You should clearly identify and present your ideas so the reader can envision what you are conveying in your essay.

**A five-paragraph essay has three main parts:** (1) the Introductory Paragraph (which introduces your topic, catches the reader's interest and states your thesis statement); (2) three Body Paragraphs (which expand upon your topic/thesis); and (3) the Concluding Paragraph (which restates your thesis and summarizes your topic/thesis).

In your five-paragraph essay assignments, you will be presented with a question. You will answer that question by stating a thesis statement. Then you will support your position with evidence from our readings and discussions and your own critical thinking. **Even when you are ready to write, you cannot just put words down on paper, hoping that they will magically organize themselves into the required format.** The final organization and content of your essay must allow the reader to follow your thought processes from their beginning to their logical conclusion. So, you **MUST** follow the classic five-paragraph essay format.

**The five-paragraph essay format is, in short:**

1. Tell the readers what you are going to tell them.
2. Tell them.
3. Tell them what you just told them.

**Specifically, you will plan your essay as follows:**

1. Think about our readings and discussions and determine your own position on the question for the essay. Your answer to this question, stated in a positive form, becomes your thesis statement. It tells *the readers what you are going to tell them*.
2. Find at least three arguments that support your position. Without at least three points to support it, your argument will not be strong enough. This is where you *tell them*.
3. Restate your thesis statement as positively as possible. In other words, *tell them what you have told them*.

**Structure of the Essay:** After you have created a basic outline for your essay, you will begin to expand upon what you have already written. You will need to write:

- An Introduction (Paragraph #1);
- Three Body paragraphs (Paragraphs #2-4); and
- A Conclusion (Paragraph #5).

## Five Paragraph Essay Description

- I. **Introductory Paragraph (Paragraph #1):** Your introductory paragraph introduces your topic/thesis, catches the reader's interest, and sets the scene (i.e., the time period and persons/countries involved). Specifically, your introductory paragraph will contain:
  - A. **A TOPIC SENTENCE:** Introduce your reader to the general topic of your essay with one topic sentence – a clear and limited statement.
  - B. **BACKGROUND:** Set up some background for your Thesis Statement by writing **two or three sentences** that set up the three sub-topics (subjects of the three body paragraphs of your essay) of your argument.
  - C. **A THESIS STATEMENT:** (the last sentence of your introductory paragraph). States: (a) your direct answer to the question of the essay; AND (b) indicate your three factors/points you will discuss, formulated into one complex sentence. Each factor/point will be the main idea for each of your body paragraphs.
- II. **Three Body Paragraphs (Paragraphs #2, #3, #4):** Following your Introductory Paragraph are the three Body Paragraphs. These three paragraphs follow the same structure of any good paragraph, and are **in order of your least important, convincing argument to your most important, convincing arguments** (meaning that Paragraph #2 is your LEAST convincing argument and Paragraph #4 includes your MOST convincing argument).

### Each Body Paragraph must include:

- A. **Topic Sentence:** The topic sentence tells the reader the sub-topic (main idea of the entire paragraph) which directly relates to Thesis Statement.
- B. **Statement and description** of factor/**point #1** of the 3 sub-topics of your essay topic, which supports your thesis statement.
  - **Elaboration on factor/point #1** of your sub-topic – give it factual support.
- C. **Statement and description** of factor /**point #2** of the sub-topic of your essay topic.
  - **Elaboration on factor/point #2** of your sub-topic - give it factual support.
- D. **Conclusion** – Make the connection between your two factors/points about your sub-topic AND your thesis statement.
- E. **A Transition Statement** (introduce the next sub-topic – which will be discussed in your next paragraph)

**III. Concluding Paragraph (Paragraph #5):** Your Concluding Paragraph will (1) restate your Thesis Statement; (2) show that your Thesis Statement has been supported in your essay; and (3) provide a stand alone conclusion to your discussion. Your conclusion must include:

- A. **Restatement of Thesis Statement.** In your first sentence of the Conclusion you will merely restate your thesis in a slightly different form.
- B. **Show Support of your Thesis Statement.** A summary of your two or three best, most convincing sub-topics must be stated in an original and powerful manner to convince the reader of the validity of the information you have presented.
- **You MUST discriminate** between your three sub-topics and choose only the best ones.
  - **No NEW EVIDENCE** may be presented in this summary – this summary is based solely on the evidence you have already given in your essay. (Second, third, possibly fourth sentences of the Conclusion)
- C. The final sentence in your Concluding Paragraph must be a complete, authoritative and precise answer to the question of the essay. *No opinions (keep your opinion in the background!) or new information.* Also, this **sentence must be able to “stand alone”** – its meaning cannot depend on the sentences in the Concluding Paragraph which precede it.

#### **EXAMPLE OF INADEQUATE FINAL SENTENCES:**

- **Final Sentence Based on Opinion:** *“So, I think that the Chinese were really mean, evil sexist and that their entire civilization should be discounted and forgotten because of the nasty, rotten, and unjust way they treated women.”*
- **Final Sentence Introduces New Information:** *“In addition to philosophy, art and technology in about ancient Chinese civilization, there was a tradition called foot binding that showed that their culture treated women as inferiors.”*
- **Final Sentence cannot “stand alone”:** *“And that is why ancient China became a long-lasting civilization.”*

#### **EXAMPLE OF GOOD FINAL SENTENCE:**

*Although the ancient Chinese never developed a democratic government, as did other great early civilizations, they did create a long-lasting and rich civilization with intricate philosophies, beautiful art forms and advanced inventions.*

# An “Illustrated” Five-Paragraph Essay

## GENERAL TO SPECIFIC

**Introductory Paragraph:**  
General Information



Specific Information

## SPECIFIC POINTS AND EVIDENCE

**Body Paragraphs**  
Discuss and support your Thesis Statement



## SPECIFIC TO GENERAL

**Concluding Paragraph:**

Specific Information



General Information

### Introductory Paragraph:

Introductory Sentence

General Background

Thesis Statement

### Body Paragraph #1:

Topic Sentence  
Supporting Argument #1  
Elaboration/transition  
Supporting Argument #2  
Elaboration/transition  
Conclusion and transition

### Body Paragraph #2:

Topic Sentence  
Supporting Argument #1  
Elaboration/transition  
Supporting Argument #2  
Elaboration/transition  
Conclusion and transition

### Body Paragraph #3:

Topic Sentence  
Supporting Argument #1  
Elaboration/transition  
Supporting Argument #2  
Elaboration/transition  
Conclusion and transition

### Concluding Paragraph:

Restated Thesis Statement  
Reference one or two best  
pieces of evidence from  
body paragraphs  
Concluding Sentence

## Sample Five-Paragraph Essay

The essay below demonstrates the principles of writing a basic essay. The different parts of the essay have been labeled AS FOLLOWS:

- **The thesis statement and restatement of the thesis statement are in bold.**
- *The topic sentences are in italics.*
- Each main point is underlined.
- Internal transitions are shown in CAPITAL LETTERS AND UNDERLINED.
- The conclusions and external transitions are in CAPITAL LETTERS.

*(When you write your own essay, of course, you will not need to mark the parts of the essay!)*

### “Cats, the Ideal Housepet”

“A dog is a man’s best friend.” That common saying may contain some truth, but dogs are not the only animal friend whose companionship people enjoy. For many people, a cat is their best friend. **Despite what dog lovers may believe, cats make excellent housepets.**

*People truly enjoy the companionship of cats. Many cats are affectionate.* They will snuggle up and ask to be petted, or scratched under the chin. Who can resist a purring cat? IN ADDITION, EVEN WHEN CATS NOT FEELING AFFECTIONATE, they are generally quite playful. They love to chase balls and feathers, or just about anything dangling from a string. They especially enjoy playing when their owners are participating in the game. **CATS MAKE EXCELLENT COMPANIONS, BUT THEY ARE ALSO MUCH MORE CIVILIZED THAN DOGS.**

*Cats are civilized members of the household. Unlike dogs, cats do not bark or make other loud noises.* Most cats do not even meow very often. They generally lead a very quiet existence. Cats ALSO do not often have “accidents” in your home. Mother cats train their kittens to use the litter box and most cats will use it without fail. Even stray cats usually understand the concept when shown the box and will use it regularly. **CATS ARE MORE CIVILIZED PETS THAN DOGS, AND IT IS ALSO MUCH EASIER TO CARE FOR CATS.**

*Another attractive feature of cats as housepets is the level of care they require. Cats do not have to be walked.* They get plenty of exercise in the house as they play and they do their business in the litter box. Cleaning the litter box is a quick, painless process. Cats ALSO take care of their own grooming. Bathing a cat is almost never necessary because under ordinary circumstances cats clean themselves. Cats are more particular about personal cleanliness than people are. **CATS ARE VERY EASY TO CARE FOR AND MAKE EXCELLENT HOUSEPETS.**

Even though many people love dogs, it is cats that make better pets. **Cats are affectionate and playful members of the household. They are also very civilized companions and require a low level of maintenance. In many important ways, cats are the ideal housepet.**

## Essay Form Rules

As you write your essay, follow the following rules:

- Use a 12 point font about the same size and style as this one, with **1 inch margins on all sides**.
- Put your name, the name of the class, the class period, the date the essay is due, and teacher's name in the **UPPER LEFT-HAND** corner.
- **Fasten your paper with a single staple in the upper left-hand corner.** No paper clips! Folders and plastic covers are not necessary – do not use them.
- **Designate Paragraphs** by indenting the first word of the paragraph    inch.
- **Double-space your paper AND do not return twice between paragraphs.** *It is a waste of space!*
- *Spelling, grammar and punctuation always count!* There is no substitute for using a good dictionary and a style manual.

Use formal expository writing/language:

- **Do not use slang, colloquialisms, abbreviations or contractions.** These are signs of lazy thinking or an overly casual attitude.: **Examples:**

**Slang/Colloquialisms:** Pericles was *totally dense*, but Caesar was **so cool!**

**Abbreviations:** The scientist was from CA.

**Contractions:** The ancient Chinese **didn't** continue to explore the world.

- **Use the shortest/clearest words you can find.** Do not use “*flowery*” language when you can use shorter/clearer words. Do not use multi-syllable word unless you are SURE of its meaning and usage. It is much better to use simple language than to use a word or phrase incorrectly! **Example:**

The art of the Ming Dynasty was modernistic, expurgated and elucidated.  
(*bub?*)

- Do not use **run-on sentences** or sentence **fragments**. **Examples:**

**Run-on:** The Romans decided to create a huge empire because they wanted to have control over many areas and get trade routes because they wanted Rome to be the most rich and powerful empire in all of the world.

**Fragment:** The Romans were very militaristic. Because they valued war and wealth.

- Always write in **PAST tense** in history essays. If you are comparing historical events to modern events, all of the events have already happened. So, you always use past tense. **Example:**

The Greeks influenced the architecture seen today in western civilization.

- **Do not use “first person”, “second person” or “third person”.** These are basically three different ways to refer to *I*, *we*, *us*, *you*, and *he or she*. **Examples:**

**First Person:** I, me, my, we, our, and so on.

**Second Person:** you and your.

**Third Person:** he, she, they, their, his, hers, him, her, and so on

- Use **internal transitions** (transitions within paragraphs) and **external transitions** (transitions between paragraphs). Transitions are essential to help your reader understand that you are moving on to your next point. **Examples of Transition Words:** and, again, and then, besides, equally important, finally, further, furthermore, nor, too, next, lastly, what's more, moreover, in addition, first (second, etc.)

- **Do not include “statements of purpose”.** You don’t need to tell the reader what you intend to say or what you just explained. Just SAY it! **Examples:**

“This essay will...;”

“In conclusion...;”

“As you can see...;”

“In this essay I will...”,

“these points prove that...”

- **Use the Active Voice:** Sentences in active voice are usually easier to understand than those in passive voice because active-voice constructions indicate clearly the performer of the action expressed in the verb. In addition, changing from passive to active voice often results in a more concise sentence. So use active voice unless you have good reason to use the passive.

**Examples:**

**Active Voice (clear):** The committee *decided* to postpone the vote.

**Passive Voice (not as clear):** A decision *was reached* to postpone the vote.

- **Stick to the topic of the ESSAY QUESTION:** During the entire essay writing process (planning, outlining and writing and proofing) make sure that you are fulfilling the purpose of the essay assignment. Don’t get sidetracked. Concentrate on the essay question you are being asked to answer and the evidence provided by your source material.

- **Keep Your Personal Views in the Background!** You must convince your reader of your position based on your arguments and elaboration, NOT based on your opinions. Your opinions are not convincing and are irrelevant to your essay.  
**Example:**

Even if you strongly believe that Pericles was a male chauvinist and a dog hater, an expository essay about the affects of ancient Greek politics on western civilization is not the place to discuss your opinion.

**When you finish writing, proofread and revise your essay:**

- *Proof, Proof, Proof your essay carefully!* Don't think that you can sit down at the computer the night before the due date and write an essay that will earn you a decent grade! Your teacher will be well aware of how little effort you put into the assignment and your grade will reflect that lack of effort.
- **Read your essay aloud before you prepare your final copy.** Some people can HEAR errors better than they can see them. (And you can bet that your teachers WILL pick up those errors!)
- **Always check the final copy carefully for omitted words and careless errors.** If your eye for mistakes is not good, ask a nit-picking friend (or relative) to review your work.
- Remember that **no computer software spell-checker is perfect!**

## Creating a *Strong Thesis Statement* - *in Two Easy Steps*

### What is a Thesis Statement?

Almost all of us--even if we don't do it consciously--look early in an essay for a one-sentence summary of the argument or analysis that is to follow. We refer to that summary as a “**thesis statement**.”

### Why Should You Write a Thesis Statement? For several reasons...

- to test your ideas by boiling them down into one well-constructed, coherent sentence
- to better organize and develop your argument
- to give your reader a "guide" or map to your argument
- it is part of your essay assignment!

Your thesis statement will accomplish these goals if you think **of the thesis as the answer to the question that your paper discusses**. So, the first step is to figure out what the essay assignment is asking – what is the essay question? The second step is to create a *STRONG* thesis statement to answer that question.

### Step #1 – Find the Essay Question

Almost all essay assignments, no matter how complicated, can be reduced to a single question – *that is the Essay Question*. Your first step in creating a strong thesis statement (and writing an excellent essay) is to figure out the specific question in your essay assignment. Here are two examples of this process:

- **Example #1 – Your Essay Assignment:** Early in the seventeenth century many explorers came to the “New World” in search of a Northwest Passage. Write an essay discussing the major reasons they were looking for this passage.

#### *What is the “Essay Question?”*

**The Essay Question is:** Why did many seventeenth century explorers look for a Northwest Passage?

- **Example #2 – Your Essay Assignment:** In an essay, explain this quotation and discuss ways it could be used in conversation: "To believe in something, and not to live it, is dishonest. "

#### *What is the Essay Question?*

**The Essay Question is:** What is the meaning of the quotation, “To believe in something, and not to live it, is dishonest,” and how might it be used in a conversation?

### Step #2 - Answer the Essay Question with a *Strong Thesis Statement*

After you've figured out the Essay Question, you begin to compose one complete, complex sentence answering that question.

**Q:** In what ways are the religious teachings of Islam similar to those of Judaism and Christianity?

A: "Islam, like Judaism and Christianity, is monotheistic and has rules for ethical behavior; but Islam is based on a different holy text called the Quran."

***Surprise! The answer to the Essay Question is the thesis statement for the essay.***

**Of course the goal is not only to write ANY OLD thesis statement, but to write a STRONG (effective) thesis statement.** So, after you have (1) determined the Essay Question; (2) done all your research; and (3) come to a well reasoned, supportable answer to the Essay Question, you have to write your thesis statement. So, how do you write a strong thesis statement rather than a weak one? By making sure your thesis statement contains **all of the four elements of a strong thesis statement:**

- *it takes a stand*
- *it shows how your point justifies a discussion*
- *it expresses one main idea*
- *it is specific*

**1. THESIS TAKES A STAND:** Your Thesis **MUST** state your conclusions about a subject.

**Example:** If you are writing a paper for a class on fitness, you might be asked to choose a popular weight-loss product to evaluate. Here are two thesis statements:

**“There are some negative and positive aspects to the Banana Herb Tea Supplement.”**

This is a weak thesis. First, it fails to take a stand. Second, the phrase "negative and positive" aspects" are vague – they don't really tell you anything.

**“Although Banana Herb Tea Supplement contains many vitamins, it results in the loss of muscle and lean body mass, so it poses a potential danger to customers.”**

This is a strong thesis because it takes a stand.

**2. THESIS JUSTIFIES THE DISCUSSION ABOUT YOUR TOPIC:** Your thesis must indicate the point of your discussion – you must show that there really is something that deserves discussion in your essay.

**Example:** If your assignment is to write a paper on family styles and traditions using your own family as an example, you might come up with either of these two thesis statements:

**My family is a traditional family from India.**

This is a weak thesis because it states an observation, but doesn't show that there is something that should be discussed. Your reader won't be able to tell the point of the thesis statement and your essay. On the other hand:

**While most Americans would view the process of arranged marriage as overbearing and impersonal, my family, as many traditional families from India, believes that this process shows great parental love, results in strong, lasting marriages and is an excellent way to choose a spouse.**

This is a strong thesis because it shows how your experience is different, interesting and worth discussion. A good strategy for creating a strong thesis is to show that the topic is controversial. Readers will be interested in reading the rest of the essay to see how you support your point.

**3. THESIS EXPRESSES ONE MAIN IDEA:** Readers need to be able to see that your paper has one main point. If your thesis expresses more than one idea, then you might confuse your readers about the subject of your paper. **Example:**

**Ancient China was unusual because it had interesting philosophies, it was cut off from other countries and it started footbinding to show women were inferior.**

This is a weak thesis statement because the reader can't decide whether the paper is about marketing on the Internet or web pages. To revise the thesis, the relationship between the two ideas needs to become clearer. One way to revise the thesis would be to write:

**Ancient China was an extremely unique culture, because it arose in geographic isolation and so it had the opportunity to develop an original culture and a variety of original philosophies.**

This is a strong thesis because it shows that the two ideas are related. Hint: a great many clear and engaging thesis statements contain words like "because," "since," "so," "although," "unless," and "however."

**4. THESIS STATEMENT IS SPECIFIC:** A thesis statement should show exactly what your paper will be about, and will help you keep your paper to a manageable topic. For example, if you write a paper on hunger, you might start with:

**World hunger has many causes and effects.**

This is a weak thesis statement for two major reasons. First, "world hunger" can't be discussed thoroughly in a five-paragraph essay – it is just too complicated! Second, "many causes and effects" is vague – it doesn't tell your reader anything. You must identify **specific** causes and effects. A revised thesis might look like this:

**Hunger persists in certain parts of Africa because jobs are scarce, methods are ineffective, and farming in the infertile soil is rarely profitable.**

This is a strong thesis because it narrows the subject to a more specific and manageable topic and it also identifies the specific causes for the existence of hunger.

**That's it...**  
***Find the Essay Question***  
***and***  
***Answer the Essay Question with a Strong Thesis Statement***

# Five- Paragraph Essay Planning Worksheet

## Paragraph One: Introduction

1. Topic Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_
2. First Major Point/Sub-Topic: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Second Major Point/Sub-Topic: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Third Major Point/Sub-Topic: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Thesis Statement: \_\_\_\_\_

## Paragraph Two: First Body Paragraph - First Major Point/Sub-Topic

1. Topic Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_
2. First Supporting Argument: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Elaboration/Example: \_\_\_\_\_  
Elaboration/Example: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Second Supporting Argument: \_\_\_\_\_  
Elaboration/Example: \_\_\_\_\_  
Elaboration/Example: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Conclusion: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Transition: \_\_\_\_\_

## Paragraph Three: Second Body Paragraph – Second Major Point/Sub-Topic

1. Topic Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_
2. First Supporting Argument: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Elaboration/Example: \_\_\_\_\_  
Elaboration/Example: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Second Supporting Argument: \_\_\_\_\_  
Elaboration/Example: \_\_\_\_\_  
Elaboration/Example: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Conclusion: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Transition: \_\_\_\_\_

## Paragraph Four: Third Body Paragraph – Third Major Point/Sub-Topic

1. Topic Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_
2. First Supporting Argument: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Elaboration/Example: \_\_\_\_\_  
Elaboration/Example: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Second Supporting Argument: \_\_\_\_\_  
Elaboration/Example: \_\_\_\_\_  
Elaboration/Example: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Conclusion: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Transition: \_\_\_\_\_

## Paragraph Five: Concluding Paragraph

1. Restatement of Thesis Statement: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Summary of most convincing 1 or 2 Main Points/Sub-Topics: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Concluding Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

## Essay Assignment Peer Review Form

### Paragraph 1: Introduction

Topic Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

Background: \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis Statement: \_\_\_\_\_

### Paragraph 2: Argument #1

Argument #1 topic sentence

Supporting Argument A: \_\_\_\_\_

Elaboration: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Argument B: \_\_\_\_\_

Elaboration: \_\_\_\_\_

Conclusion and transition: \_\_\_\_\_

### Paragraph 3: Argument #2

Argument #2 topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Argument A: \_\_\_\_\_

Elaboration: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Argument B: \_\_\_\_\_

Elaboration: \_\_\_\_\_

Conclusion and transition: \_\_\_\_\_

### Paragraph 4: Argument #3

Argument #3 topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Argument A: \_\_\_\_\_

Elaboration: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Argument B: \_\_\_\_\_

Elaboration: \_\_\_\_\_

Conclusion and transition: \_\_\_\_\_

### Paragraph 5: Conclusion:

Restatement of Thesis: \_\_\_\_\_

Summarization: \_\_\_\_\_

Conclusion: \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Comments/Recommendation(s):**

## A Guide to Revising Your Essay

### *Teacher Abbreviations for Correcting Your Writing*

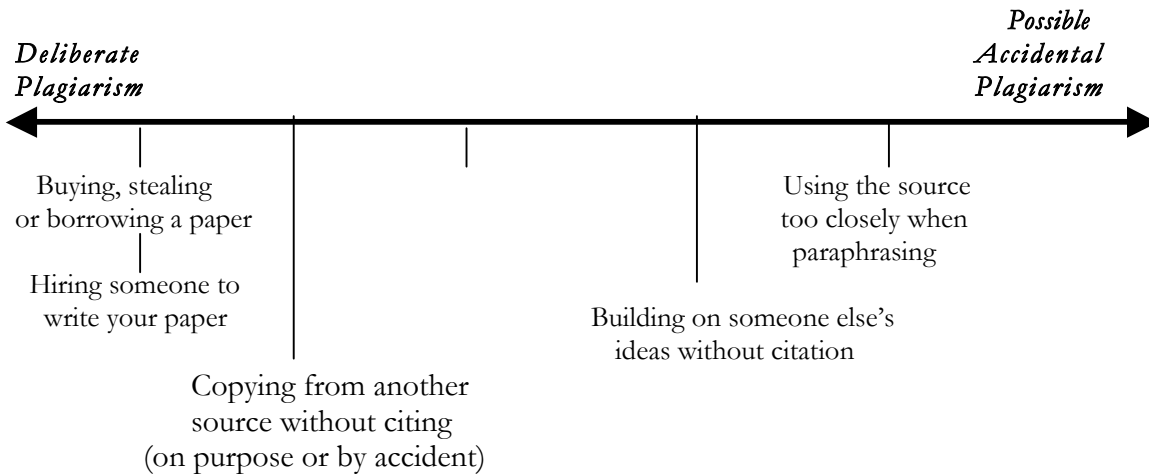
Abbreviation	Meaning
<i>Awk.</i>	<b>Awkward:</b> awkward sentence structure, thus the sentence does not make sense. Rephrase your point/idea. Usually, it means you need to simplify the sentence and your language.
<i>w.c.</i>	<b>Word Choice:</b> Often means you chose the wrong word to convey your point, OR you used the word incorrectly. Get out the thesaurus or dictionary.
<i>sp.</i>	<b>Spelling:</b> you have misspelled a word – <i>look it up!</i>
<i>gram.</i>	<b>Grammar:</b> Something is grammatically incorrect, i.e., capitalization, punctuation. Often agreement is a problem here. Example: <i>I have been forced to make many bad choice.</i>
<i>Tense</i>	<b>Tense:</b> This means you are using present tense or have shifted tenses, i.e., you were in past tense and now you are in present or vice versa.
?	<b>What?</b> This usually means you have introduced a thought or person or event that has never been mentioned/explained and your reader has no clue of its relationship to your paper.
<i>cit.</i>	<b>Citation:</b> No citation provided for a quote or what the reader thinks might be a direct paraphrase.
<i>cont.</i>	<b>Contraction:</b> Needs to be changed, i.e. from <b>couldn't</b> to <b>could not</b> . This also means write out abbreviations like U.S. so it reads United States.
<i>frag.</i>	<b>Fragment:</b> A sentence fragment, meaning you have written an incomplete sentence.
<i>run-on</i>	<b>Run-on Sentence:</b> You have too many thoughts strung together in one sentence. Split it into two sentences.
//	<b>Slashes:</b> You need a space here – such as one space after a comma, two after a period.
<i>colloq.</i>	<b>Colloquialism:</b> You have used informal language in a formal paper. Examples: <i>gonna</i> or <i>shafted</i> .
/P or /	<b>Paragraph:</b> a new thought has been introduced - you need a new paragraph.

*SOP*

**Statement of Purpose:** You have used a statement of purpose – delete!  
Examples: *In this essay I will...*; *Based on all I have said...*; *In conclusion...*

# Plagiarism

*Plagiarism* is the **unacknowledged use of somebody else's words or ideas**. Both intentional actions and inadvertent mistakes can lead to plagiarism. Since teachers will probably not distinguish between intentional and accidental plagiarism, the sure way to avoid plagiarism is to make sure you give credit where it is due. For example, here are some actions that could lead to an accusation of plagiarism:



So, keep in mind that you **MUST** document your sources when...

- **Quoting**
- **Paraphrasing, or referring to somebody else's words or ideas** from a magazine, newspaper, book (in this class that includes information from your textbook), movie, web page, computer program (like Encarta), email, letter, advertisement or any other medium.
- Copying the exact words or a "unique phrase" from some source.
- Reprinting any diagrams, illustrations, charts or pictures.

**On the other hand, there is no need to document when...**

- You are writing your own experiences, your own observations, your own insights, your own thoughts, your own conclusions about a subject.
- You are using "common knowledge" – folklore or common sense observations.
- You are compiling generally accepted facts.
- You are writing up your own experimental results.

## Works Cited Form

Many of your World History assignments, including your Five-Paragraph Essays, will include a Works Cited. Follow these rules for preparing your Works Cited. A sample Works Cited page is attached for your review and reference for format style.

### General Reminders:

1. **Title of Your List of Sources:** Title your list of sources, simply: **Works Cited**
2. **Hanging Indentation:** Start the second line (and all subsequent lines) of EACH citation one-half inch to the right of the line above.
3. **Double Space:** Double space your Works Cited.
4. **Order of List of Sources:** Alphabetize your list of sources by author, or for any anonymous works by title (ignoring but not deleting *A*, *An*, and *The*).
5. **Capitalization:** Capitalize all significant words, regardless of how the original source is capitalized. Capitalize most words except articles (*a*, *an*, *the*), prepositions (*of*, *to*, *in*, *against*), coordinating conjunctions (*and*, *but*, *for*, *nor*, *or*, *so*, *yet*), and the *to* in infinitives. But if any of these occurs as the first or last word of a title or subtitle, capitalize it.
6. **Make Sure You Have All Citation Information:** While you are doing your research, be sure to write down or photocopy all of the information you need to prepare the "Works Cited".

### Citation Forms and Examples

#### Periodicals (Magazine/Newspapers/Journals):

1. Your citation must include: The Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." Title of Magazine or Newspaper. Day Month Year of Publication: page(s). Note that titles of magazines and newspapers should be underlined.

#### **Example:**

Mossberg, Walter. "The Trading Ships of the Ming Dynasty". Smart Money. April  
1996: 152-154.

#### Books:

1. **For a book with one author:** Author's Last Name, First Name. Title of Book. City of Publication, City or City and State of Publication: Publisher, Copyright date. (Titles of books must be underlined)

**Note: Cite the state of publication** only if the city is not well known. If the city of publication is well known, cite only the city of publication. (New York: Knopf, 1989)

**Example:**

Boss, Malcolm. The Examination. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1994.

- 2. Two Authors:** If there are two authors for a book, invert only the first name. For example: Smith, Tom, and Marcy Jones.

**Example:**

Smith, Carol, and Kate Jones. The 10 Top Things to Remember About China.

Belmont, California: Dutton Inc., 2001.

- 3. More Than Two Authors:** If there are more than two authors, use the first author's last name followed by et. al. Title of Book. City of Publication, State of Publication: Publisher, Copyright date.

**Example:**

Ellis et. al. World History: Connections to Today. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey:

Prentice Hall, Inc. 2001.

**Encyclopedia or Other Reference Volumes**

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." Title of Encyclopedia. Year of Edition.

**Example:**

Smith, John. "Bats." Academic American. 1995 ed.

**If no author is listed:** "Title of Article." Title of Encyclopedia or Reference Volume. Year of Edition.

**Example:**

"Bats." Academic American. 1995 ed.

### **CD-ROM Encyclopedias (Encarta, Grolier's, etc.)**

Author or other source. "Title of information." Name of CD-ROM. [CD-ROM] Publisher.

#### **Example:**

Smith, Lori. "Emily Dickinson." Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia. [CD-ROM] Grolier  
Electronic Publishing, 1997.

### **Online Materials:**

The methods for citing online materials are still evolving, and they will probably continue to do so in the near future. But, in general, Internet citations should include the same information as traditional citations when that information is available:

- Author(s)
- Title
- Publisher
- Date Published
- Date of Access
- Page number(s)
- Address (URL)

However, online sources frequently do not contain all of this information; for example, Web pages are often not dated and rarely have anything resembling page numbers. When citation information is not available, writers simply leave it out.

In addition to the traditional components, Internet citations should include two additional types of information.

**Address:** This is the "location" of the cited material on the Web, such as a URL (<http://cnn.com>), or other information that would help readers find the original document.

**Date of Access:** This is the date you visited the site. This date is especially important because, unlike traditional print sources for research, Internet resources are fluid and likely to change or disappear from the Internet entirely.

**Example:** Web site author. Title of Web page. Publisher. Date of publication. Date of retrieval from the Internet. Full Web address.

National Public Radio (NPR). President Bush appoints new cabinet. 20 May 02, 7

January 02. <http://www.npr.org/newstories/presbushcabinet.html>.

### **Online Periodicals (Journals, Magazines and Newspapers:**

If you go directly to a newspaper or a magazine website, you cite to that website only: Last Name of Author, First Name. The Title of article in quotes. *The Magazine or Newspaper in which the article was first published*. The date of original publication. The date of access. URL.

**Example:**

Elliott, Stuart. "Nielsen Unit Offers Data About Internet Users." *New York Times*. 22 July 1996. 22 Sept. 1996. <http://www.nytimes.com/library/articles/users.html>.

**SIRS Database:**

Smith, Jan. "The Fabulous Foods of India." SIRS Knowledge Source. 20 June 1999. 5 October 2001. SIRS Knowledge Source. <http://ars.sirs.com/cgi-bin/fdind237iii>

**InfoTrac Web Database:**

Theroux, David. "The Politics of Caste". InfoTrac. 11 February 1999. 7 October 2001. InfoTrac. <http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itweb/tpoc/dt/288>

Student Name(s)  
Due Date  
Class Title, Period  
Teacher's Last Name

Sample

### Works Cited

Boss, Malcolm. The Examination. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1994.

Elliott, Stuart. "Nielsen Unit Offers Data About Internet Users." *New York Times*.

22 July 1996. 22 Sept. 1996. <http://www.nytimes.com/library/articles/users.html>.

Ellis et. al. World History: Connections to Today. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey:

Prentice Hall, Inc. 2001.

McCall, Carol, and Kate Jones. The 10 Top Things to Remember About China.

Belmont, California: Dutton Inc., 2001.

Smith, Jan. "The Fabulous Foods of the Han Dynasty" SIRS Knowledge Source. 20

June 1999. 5 October 2001. SIRS Knowledge Source. [http://ars.sirs.com/cgi-](http://ars.sirs.com/cgi-Bin/find237iii)

[Bin/find237iii](http://ars.sirs.com/cgi-Bin/find237iii).

Theroux, David. "The Politics of Confucianism". InfoTrac. 11 February 1999. 7

October 2001. InfoTrac. <http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itweb/tpoc/dt/288>

## Parenthetical Citations in the Five-Paragraph Essay

When you use information from *ANY* source in the text of your essay, whether you quote, paraphrase, summarize or “borrow” ideas or information in any other way, you must use parenthetical citations to cite to the source you used. If you have any doubt about when to use a citation, review your handout on Plagiarism.

For your projects in this class, **follow these rules for citation form.** For any other types of material to be cited, check your “Writer’s Inc., starting at section 185)

- a. **Textbook:** For your parenthetical citations to your textbook (author’s last name and page number): **Example:** (Ellis, et. al. 117)
- b. **Other Books:** For parenthetical citations to other books, give the last name or names of the authors and the page number.

**Example of one author:** (McKenna 346)

**Example of two or more authors:** (Addison, Broderick and Crane 324)

- c. **Online Resources:** For your parenthetical citation to the online articles or other resources – just use title of article: **Example:** (Alexandria Library Rises Again After 1,600 Years)
- d. **Two or More Works:** If two or more works to be cited for one sentence, cite the author’s last names in alphabetical order, followed by the page numbers used from each source: **Example:** (Dennis 577; Eldon 37)

### Sample Paragraph with Parenthetical Citations

Secondly, cats are civilized members of the household. Unlike dogs, cats do not bark or make other loud noises (Dennis 403). Most cats do not even meow very often (*Cats and the Sounds They Make*). They generally lead a very quiet existence. In addition, cats also do not often have “accidents” inside a home (*Accident Rates Among Pets*). Mother cats train their kittens to use the litter box and most cats will use it without fail (Eldon 22). Even stray cats usually understand the concept when shown the box and will use it regularly (Dennis 87). Cats are more civilized pets than dogs, and it is also much easier to care for cats.