

# Writing across the Curriculum

A Standardized Guide to  
Assessing Student Writing

## Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Writing Assessment: An Overview.....      | 2  |
| Standard Writing Rubric.....              | 3  |
| Organization: Student Writing Samples     |    |
| Exemplary.....                            | 4  |
| Effective.....                            | 5  |
| Basic.....                                | 6  |
| Incomplete.....                           | 7  |
| Content/Support: Student Writing Samples  |    |
| Exemplary.....                            | 8  |
| Effective.....                            | 19 |
| Basic.....                                | 10 |
| Incomplete.....                           | 11 |
| Fluency/Language: Student Writing Samples |    |
| Exemplary.....                            | 12 |
| Effective.....                            | 13 |
| Basic.....                                | 14 |
| Incomplete.....                           | 15 |
| Mechanics: Student Writing Samples        |    |
| Exemplary.....                            | 16 |
| Effective.....                            | 17 |
| Basic.....                                | 18 |
| Incomplete.....                           | 19 |
| Citation: Student Writing Samples         |    |
| Exemplary.....                            | 20 |
| Effective.....                            | 21 |
| Basic.....                                | 22 |
| Incomplete.....                           | 23 |
| Guide to MLA Citations.....               | 24 |

## **Writing across the Curriculum: An Overview**

In accordance with our school improvement plan's reading goals, we hope to raise the reading scores of all students and to increase the number of students who meet or exceed the state standards in Reading. In order to do this successfully, we must also improve writing instruction throughout all disciplines, so that our students understand how effective arguments are structured and how language can be used fluently to communicate such arguments. Our aim is to increase the number of writing assignments students encounter in a given year, thereby exposing students to a larger variety of writing forms. Because teaching writing can be such a daunting process, however, we have assembled this packet to help all teachers become familiar with standard expectations. We hope that this rubric and the corresponding student writing samples will offer more concrete ways to assess student work in terms of its organization, content and support, fluency and use of language, mechanics, and citation.

### Standard 4-Point Rubric

|                      | Exemplary  | Effective  | Basic  | Incomplete  |
|----------------------|--|--|--|---|
| Organization         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly and purposefully ordered</li> <li>Thoughtful and meaningful transitions</li> <li>Organization enhances meaning</li> <li>Ideas are fully developed</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly focused</li> <li>Useful and varied transitions</li> <li>Organization supports meaning</li> <li>Most ideas are fully developed</li> </ul>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly focused</li> <li>Basic Transitions</li> <li>Organization distracts from meaning</li> <li>Some ideas are fully developed</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unfocused</li> <li>Lack of transitions</li> <li>Lack of logical organization</li> <li>Ideas are not developed</li> </ul> |
| Content/Support      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Careful selection of academic sources</li> <li>Content demonstrates thoughtful analysis of sources</li> <li>Sources enhance the student's argument</li> </ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most support has been carefully selected from academic sources</li> <li>Content includes analysis of sources</li> <li>Sources support the student's argument</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support is limited or has been selected from non-academic sources</li> <li>Analysis of sources is underdeveloped</li> <li>Sources are not clearly linked to the student's argument</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support appears to be non-existent; consequently, the student's argument is not valid</li> </ul>                         |
| Fluency and Language | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentences reflect complex thought</li> <li>Varied word choice enhances style and effect</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most sentences reflect complex thought</li> <li>Varied word choice is attempted but can be distracting</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Few sentences reflect complex thought</li> <li>Most vocabulary is basic</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentences and vocabulary are basic and repetitive</li> <li>Words are used inappropriately</li> </ul>                     |
| Mechanics            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work has 0-3 errors in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and structure</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work has 4-6 errors in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and structure</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work has frequent errors but meaning can still be understood</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Errors in mechanics distract from meaning</li> </ul>   |
| Citation             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All sources are credited and formatted correctly within the work according to MLA guidelines</li> <li>Works Cited page is included and formatted correctly</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most sources are credited and formatted correctly within the work according to MLA guidelines</li> <li>Works Cited page is included and formatted correctly</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some sources are credited and formatted correctly within the work according to MLA guidelines</li> <li>Works Cited page is included but with errors in formatting</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sources are missing and therefore cannot be documented</li> <li>Works Cited page is missing</li> </ul>                   |

**Organization—Exemplary:**

This writing sample is clearly and purposefully focused; the writer uses a variety of thoughtful and meaningful transitions, so that the paper's organizational structure enhances the writer's intended argument. Within this effective structure, all ideas are fully developed.

At the end of *Romeo and Juliet*, both lovers take their lives. Saddened and angry by what the feud between the Capulets and Montagues has brought upon Verona, the Prince announces that some will be pardoned, but others will be punished for their role in the deaths of these two young people. Though Romeo and Juliet kill themselves, it is clear that other forces have played a part in their end. The adults in their lives, for example, seem to be so consumed by their own grudges that they pay less attention to their children, choosing paths for Romeo and Juliet that benefit their family names rather than the children themselves. Furthermore, we get a strong sense that fate plays a big role in determining what luck the young couple will have, as Romeo often comments on threatening dreams he has had. Despite so many forces at work, I would argue that the primary cause of Romeo and Juliet's deaths is indeed their parents' feuding and interference in their lives. If it weren't for their parents' blind hatred for each other, the two lovers might have been able to make peace between their families.

From the beginning, Juliet seems to have little say in who she will marry. Though her father thinks she is too young, her mother hopes to wed Juliet to someone of money or power. In Act I, Scene III, for example, Lady Capulet tries to prepare Juliet to meet Paris, a relative of the Prince of Verona. She says, "Tell me, daughter Juliet, / How stands your disposition to be married?" (71-72). But though Juliet responds that "it is an honor that I dream not of," her mother pays little attention to her protests (73).

**Organization—Effective:**

This writing sample is clearly focused; the writer uses a variety of effective transitions, so that the paper's organizational structure supports the writer's intended argument. Within this effective structure, most ideas are fully developed.

Decisions control our life; from the shoes we wear, to what kind of house we live in. But where do we get the ability to make these decisions? Our culture gives us this authority; our culture includes our family, friends, and other beliefs. They help you form your opinions and give you the morals for your every day decisions and ideas. Every one around you leaves impressions on you that can last a lifetime. For example, in Dave Barry's "Dave Barry Does Japan", Pico Iyer's "Where World's Collide", and David Sedaris' "Us and Them", these authors show that everyday items such as, people, experiences, and places affect the way each individual views others and the world around them.

When Dave Barry is taken out of his normal habitat in "Dave Barry Does Japan", he becomes bewildered and lost. Not only do the Japanese speak a different language that is nothing like English, but their lifestyle is opposite of most Americans. Dave is out of his element and when he tries asking the Japanese a simple yes or no question they have him running around in circles trying to find the answers. He finds it difficult to try to become a part of their culture because the customs he is familiar with (American Ethnicity) taught him what he knows to be correct. For instance, when asking for a bathroom in Japan, Dave is pointed in the direction "of a hole in the floor that somebody forgot to put a toilet on top of." (p118) Their standard of living differs from the every day American's, so when it comes to having no toilets or being overly polite, Americans find it very difficult to openly acknowledge these new concepts.

**Organization—Basic:**

This writing sample is mostly focused; the writer uses some basic transitions, so that the paper's organizational structure distracts from the writer's intended argument. Within this structure, some ideas are fully developed.

Guns are harmful; the only people that should be able to have guns are police officers and military people and only when they are on the job. One reason people should not have guns are because their has been many school shootings. Another reason is it would lower the gun death rate and injuries here in the United States. The only people that should be allowed to have guns in their possession on the job are police officers and military men. These are a couple reasons why people shouldn't have guns in their possession and one reason for people who should have them.

If we had no guns their would be less school shootings, their has been many incidents where their has been school shootings. Their has been many incidents where teens have purchased guns legally or illegally. The students from Columbine high school purchased their guns at a local K-mart. Back on April 4, 1999 injured and shot many students and teachers. Their was 34 people either shot or killed in the high school. If the stores sold no guns their would be no more school shootings. The guns didn't just affect the lives of the students it also affected the families involved." Castaldo, a junior at Columbine in 1999, suffered five gunshot wounds to his chest, back, arm and colon that left him paralyzed from the waist down." Said Moni. These gunshots to a student affected his whole life; it will never be the same after that day.

If many people would stop purchasing guns and using them against people that would lower the gun death rate in the United States by a lot. Many people have either purchased guns either legally or illegally, many used in unlawful ways. One single bullet could cause harm to someone.

**Organization—Incomplete:**

This sample's topic is identifiable, but its primary argument gets lost. The passage lacks basic transitions and the writer's ideas are not developed. Instead, the writer lists facts or ideas without relating them to each other.

Carl sandburg was one of the worlds best poet but that is just my opinoion. He had to brave the hardships of the world in the war mostly. He had alot of time to do something and he did he wrote poetry while one of his young man friends told him that he would be good at poetry so he decied so give it a try and he made it big. Sandburg was born in galesburg Illinois. He is a poet who uses imagery tone and also shift.

One of the ways that sandburg uses Imagery in his poem "Chicago" he uses alot of imagery in ways that I would not have even think of. In this poems he uses imagery by describing the smoke towers that you would see throught the the city. One of the ways that he uses tone in this poem is that he has a time where he is like a happy in the poem then there is a time wherer he is alomst drepressed in the poem. one way where he uses shift in this poem is when it's a happy part then he jsut shifts over to a dark side that no one wojld think that he did.

**Content/Support—Exemplary:**

The writer has selected her or his academic sources carefully and, from these, weaves appropriate quotations together. Furthermore, the content in this sample demonstrates thoughtful analysis of the writer's sources, which enhances the writer's argument.

The conversation that Henry has with the other men just prior to the violent attack is just as important to the theme as the attack scene itself. This conversation previous to the attack takes place to showcase the desensitization to violence and true emotions that war brings about. Prior to the violent attack, Henry, the major, and the drivers, “drank rum and it was very friendly,” despite the fact that they knew an attack was imminent (Hemingway 47). In fact, they even joked that, “They’ll shell the --- out of us,” making light of the situation that was about to occur and depriving themselves of the natural emotions of anxiety or fear (47). Shortly before the attack one of the men, Passini, says that, “There is nothing as bad as war,” but “when people realize how bad it is they cannot do anything to stop it because they go crazy,” proving that war forces people to live with the fighting and desensitize themselves to any emotions they may feel (50). Because the men nonchalantly chat about war as if men being killed were a normal occurrence, Hemingway establishes that war prevents men from truly emotionally grasping the horror of the situation.

**Content/Support—Effective:**

The writer has selected most of her or his support carefully from academic sources, and the content in this sample includes analysis of the writer's sources, but though these sources support the writer's argument, they are not weaved neatly into the analysis.

Women are fake; they tend to hide their true personalities and overdramatize things more than men. When Josephine, Mrs. Mallard's sister, tells her that her husband has died, Mrs. Mallard weeps and wildly throws herself into her sister's arms (145). I consider this a completely fake act because, truthfully, Mrs. Mallard is happy that her husband has died. After she has performed this act, she leaves Josephine and Richards and goes into her room. While in her room, she whispers to herself, "Free, free, free," (146). It's ironic that one minute she is crying over her husband's death and the next she is celebrating and rejoicing it. Mrs. Mallard not only fakes being hysterical about her husband's death, but she also fakes their marriage. A woman can not possibly love a man and pretend like their marriage is okay if she is joyful when the man dies. In those days, women were very loyal and true to their husbands but in these days, if women aren't happy in a relationship, they will cheat behind their husband's back. It makes you wonder if Mrs. Mallard and Richards maybe had something going on between them. Mrs. Mallard proves that women are fake by not truly loving her husband and being overdramatic at the news of her husband's death.

**Content/Support—Basic:**

The writer's support is limited or has been selected from non-academic sources. Furthermore, the writer's analysis of these sources is underdeveloped, or the sources themselves are not clearly linked to the writer's argument.

Based on this story men are dominating in relationships as. Richards was the one that was waiting for her at the bottom of the stairs. Richard wants to be with her even when he is not involved with their relationship. Including that men are in control of other men. We assume that Mrs. Mallard gets beat by her husband. "Free! Body and soul free!" (147) clearly if she was happy to see him she would not have had a heart attack. Then we cross the topic that Richards wants to be with her while he is only a colleague of Mr. Mallard. The story is interpreted that Richards told Josephine to tell Mrs. Mallard that her husband had died. Richards seems to know what is best for Mrs. Mallard by "taking" her husband away and replacing Mr. Mallard with himself. Mrs. Mallard is very vulnerable due to the fact that she lost her husband in a terrible accident.

**Content/Support—Incomplete:**

The writer's support appears to be nonexistent; consequently, the writer's argument is not valid.

Relationships are complicated. Miss Emily has troubles with men. She can't control part of it, like her dad dying. But she could control her and Homers relationship that's why she killed him. The towns people saw this totally different then Miss Emily. They were happy and thinking that she finally found someone and won't be a crazy old lady when she grows up single. (152).

**Fluency/language—Exemplary:**

Sentences in this sample reflect complex thought; the writer employs a variety of words to enhance her or his writing style and its effect on the reader.

Psyche and Ares have distinct views on the way that they think others should be treated. Psyche, for instance, is known for being one of the purest humans when she was mortal. She is beautiful but not vain, like Aphrodite. Her accepting and modest nature is highly thought of, and the goodness of her Soul quickly wins over the favor of the many gods and goddesses that she comes into contact with. Everybody loves her, whether it is from her physical beauty or the beauty of her disposition. She always seems to be obedient, and modestly caters to what is best for others. Ares, on the other hand, is cruel and selfish. Being a war god, he is generally prepared for battle, or is otherwise hoping to do others harm. A common description of his temperament is “raring for a fight regardless of the consequences” (Regula). He often acts vainly, and is openly impulsive; quick to invoke anger, neither caring whom he is fighting or who wins the battle. He endangers his own men as swiftly as his enemies.

**Fluency/language—Effective:**

Most sentences in this same reflect complex thought; the writer has attempted to use a variety of words to enhance her or his writing style, but the result can be distracting to the reader.

There are many contributing factors to their deaths but adult interference plays a much bigger role than any other factors. Friar Laurence has a great deal of pressure on his shoulders for marrying the couple and not properly following through with his plans. Secondly, Lord Capulet thinks of himself as a big authority and everyone should really listen to orders. This causes great stress to Juliet and she believes he is attempting to control every decision she tries to make. Finally, Tybalt causes the banishment of Romeo from Verona which leads to a much bigger problem to Romeo and Juliet. All of these examples cause Juliet to make poor judgment calls which sadly leads to the couple's death. In "Romeo and Juliet" there were many adults that caused Romeo and Juliet's death and those characters are Friar Laurence, Lord Capulet, and Tybalt.

**Fluency/language—Basic:**

Few sentences in this sample reflect complex thought; the writer relies on very basic vocabulary, forcing the reader to make guesses about what the writer means to say.

First, let's talk about lighting. Burton uses lighting techniques throughout his films frequently. His techniques go from low key to high key, bottom or side lighting to front or back lighting. In the movie Corpse Bride, Burton used a lot of low key to show how creepy the city was. He could always use low key for that creepy side of the story, but like I said, that doesn't mean the characters are evil. Tim Burton tries to trick you a little so watch out! In the movie Big Fish, he uses low key and high key lighting because he is trying to show that there's going to be some problems between the family.

**Fluency/language—Incomplete:**

Sentences and vocabulary in this sample are basic and repetitive; some words are used inappropriately or incorrectly, which confuses or misleads the reader.

"If you enter this world knowing you are loved and you leave this world knowing the same, then everything in between can be dealt with."(Michael Jackson) What is a hero? Heroes are uncompromising, headstrong, and they care about other people. But what makes someone a hero? A hero is someone that is looked up to, someone who changes the lives of people around them in a good way. When people think of heroes, they traditionally think of firemen, policemen, and paramedics. But what about celebrities, can they be heroes? The answer to that question is simple. Yes. But heroes aren't perfect, but then again, nobody is. So why do we consider somebody not a hero if they mess up? Take Michael Jackson for example. Michael Jackson may have had some struggles with child molestation accusations, but he still did so much for the benefit of others.

**Mechanics—Exemplary:**

This passage has fewer than three errors in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, or structure.

Zeus's and Hades's personalities vary greatly from each other. Hades is a greedy and clever god who is mostly concerned with increasing his subjects (Hunt). He is also forceful and will bend others wills to get what he wants. In the story of the abduction of Persephone, Hades abducts Persephone and makes her queen of the Underworld and his bride. While she is there Hades makes her eat a pomegranate seed so Persephone then has to stay in the Underworld for four months of the year (Stewart). Zeus on the other hand, as Hesiod says Zeus is, "the lord of justice." He has a personality of steel and punishes humans for lies and breaking oaths. Yet Zeus has cheated on Hera with an innumerable number of women (Leadbetter) One woman in particular is Alcmena, Zeus has an affair with her and they create Hercules a legendary Greek hero (Hamilton, 168).

**Comment [-1]:** Missing period after (Leadbetter)

**Mechanics—Effective:**

This passage has between four and six errors in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and structure.

The temptation in the characters of “Macbeth” and **The Notebook** are very similar because they unfold future problems in the story. Macbeth is the ruler of Scotland yet he is still worried about having his crown taken away. He finds **hisself** going crazy and murders his competition. He is tempted to commit these crimes by his wife. She leads him in to thinking it won’t be alright until the other possible rulers are gone. She talks him in to it by saying how she could easily do it herself and not telling him the negatives of this crime. His **desire get him** overconfident and into a lot of trouble. In **The Notebook**, the main characters are pressured in to doing something by the other. The main actor, Noah, instantly falls in love when he looks upon the new girl in town, Allie. He wants to go on a date with her but Allie is out of his league and she continuously turns him down. When Noah sees her at a carnival he is determined to get her to go on a **dat** with him. He sees her getting on a **ferris** wheel and comes up with a plan. He jumps on the ride and when it gets to the very top he hangs off of it stating that he will let go and commit suicide unless Allie goes out with him. She is tempted into saying yes to save his life even though she really does not want to date him.

**Comment [.2]:** As a movie, this should be italicized. The title is mentioned twice, but the error will only be counted once.

**Comment [.3]:** Should be himself

**Comment [.4]:** Noun/verb disagreement.

**Comment [.5]:** This error is the same as above and will not be counted twice.

**Comment [.6]:** Should be date.

**Comment [.7]:** Should be capitalized

**Mechanics—Basic:**

This work has more than six errors in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, or structure, but readers can still understand what the writer means to say.

First of all, children and teens today are disrespectful. For example, teens and children don't say, "please" and "thank you". If someone drops something on the floor, and someone is being nice and picks it up for them, they just give a rude look and walk away. On the other hand, most teens and children take advantage of gifts they don't deserve. If someone gives them toy or even food, they usually break it or throw it away. In other words, some teens and children wants more. They get what they want, and the minute something better comes out, they want that. All in all, children and teens can be disrespectful at home, in school, and in general. In conclusion, children and teens are lazy. For instance, they just leave their mess for their parents. The following example, they ask their parents to do things when they could do them there selves. Like a teen or a child asks their mom to get them socks, they just ask that because their mom is downstairs and they are upstairs. For example, teens and children are lazy by they sit on the couch and eat junk food on a wonderful day, when they could be outside and playing with their friends. To summarize, teens and children can be lazy anytime, anywhere.

**Comment [.8]:** Should be indented.

**Comment [.9]:** No contractions in formal papers

**Comment [.10]:** Misplaced comma

**Comment [.11]:** Misplaced comma

**Comment [.12]:** Missing a word

**Comment [.13]:** Noun/verb agreement

**Comment [.14]:** Should be the start of a new paragraph

**Comment [.15]:** Wrong words

**Mechanics—Incomplete:**

This passage has several errors in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, or structure; these errors distract the reader from understanding what the writer means to say.

In the Odyssey, Circe is an enchantress like and yet unlike the evil stepmother in Snow White. One way that she are similar to the stepmother is that Circe fooled his men into drinking nectar made and poisoned by her. The men, token over by her sweet melodies, were drunk the moment they drunk her drink. The evil stepmother, disguised as an old woman, went to Snow's front door to give her the poisoned apple. With one bit, just like Odysseus's crew, she was drunk and passed out. But the evil stepmother's plan was to kill Snow White for her beauty. Circe just turned the men into pigs, using them for food. Eventually with the god's help, Odysseus was able to resque hisself and others and live in peace. Snow White wasn't as sucesful in getting on the stepmothers' good side. These are a few similarities and differences between the two litrary enchantress.

**Citation—Exemplary:**

This writing sample includes support that is formatted correctly within the work according to MLA guidelines; all sources are credited, and the paper includes a Works Cited page that is also formatted correctly.

When it comes to women most of them are stronger than they appear but they also have their weak moments, like everyone else. Miss Emily portrays women as strong but they have a hard time letting go. She stands her ground when buying poison: “Miss Emily just stared at him, her head tilted back in order to look him eye for eye, until he looked away and went and got the arsenic and wrapped it up” (153). After her father dies, “She told them that her father was not dead. She did that for three days, with the minister calling on her, and the doctors, trying to persuade her to let them dispose of the body” (152). Later on after Miss Emily’s death the townspeople go upstairs to the bedroom to find “the man himself lay in the bed” (157). These pieces of evidence are showing that Miss Emily has such a hard time letting go, how most women do, but they also stand their ground when they believe in something.

**Comment [.16]:** The student uses a colon correctly here to signal that the quotation supports the assertion “She stands her ground.”

**Comment [.17]:** Wonderful embedding—the quotation becomes part of the student’s argument. The student is correct not to capitalize “the” since the quotation finishes the student’s thought.

**Comment [.18]:** Parenthetical citation is accurate. Students need only the page number—unless the author has not yet been identified; if necessary, the student can include the author’s last name. (Faulkner 157). The period will always come after.

**Citation—Effective:**

This writing sample includes support, and most of it is formatted correctly within the work; most sources are credited, and the work includes a Works Cited page that is formatted correctly.

This story makes women appear to be emotionally weaker in relationships, and men to be impervious to their charm. When Ms. Emily's father dies, she becomes ill, and becomes a recluse (Faulkner 99). Also, when Ms. Emily finds out that she cannot be with Homer due to his sexuality, she kills him (154). Additionally, Ms. Emily tries to convince Homer to try and marry him by buying him expensive gifts, such as the bathroom towel set. (pg 154). Because of how Ms. Emily reacts towards Homer, and his father, it shows that women are emotional in relationships.

**Comment [.19]:** The student has correctly remembered that even a paraphrasing of the text must be cited; the parenthetical citation is correct.

**Comment [-.20]:** No "pg" is required, and the period should always come after the citation, not before.

**Citation—Basic:**

This writing sample includes support, and most of it is credited and formatted correctly; the paper includes a Works Cited page, but there are errors in formatting.

From a feminist perspective, this story shows a lot of things. One thing it shows is that men learn all of their behaviors from a patriarchal society. They did not use phones back then, instead, Richards shows up at Mrs. Mallards house and lies to her because he assumed her husband was dead when he really wasn't. (Chopin page146) Back then, men controlled relationships, and she didn't want to be with him because she yelled that she wanted to be free when she found out that he was no longer alive.(page 146). Now relationships are more mutual. Also, they used railroads in the story (page 145). but the thing is, railroads are rarely used in present.

**Comment [-.21]:** The word "page" is not necessary, and the period should come after the citation.

**Comment [-.22]:** Does not need "page." But because the student has made this mistake already, the mistake would not count again.

**Citation—Incomplete:**

This writing sample uses ideas that are not the writers, but these ideas are not credited to their appropriate sources; furthermore, the paper does not include a Works Cited page to document the missing sources.

In addition to being connected to many symbols and themes in the novel, Janie's three husbands represent three very different stages in her life. The short marriage with Logan portrays a sort of coming of age and serves as a springboard for the rest of her life. Then along came Jody, a rich black man wanting a "big voice" in something, anything really. The simple fact that Janie is willing to ignore her grandmother's teachings and leave even a loveless marriage with Logan shows that she has taken a huge step towards knowing herself and not just following orders. After Jody dies, Janie's last husband takes her with him to live in the Glades. Teacake seems to Janie to be the perfect husband her grandmother told her about; Protective, loving, and loyal. However, she does not end her journey with teacake. She is forced to kill him or lose her own life. Being able to end teacakes life in order to save her own, even if he was sick, shows the great changes in Janie from perfect obedience to her grandmother, to becoming her own woman.

**Comment [-.23]:** It is unclear what information the student has paraphrased or taken from the original text because no citations are present.

**Comment [-.24]:** Missing parenthetical citation.

**Comment [-.25]:** This would be an appropriate place to quote source material or at least cite where it came from.

## Guide to MLA Citations: In Text and Works Cited

Hacker, Diana and Barbara Fister. "MLA List of Works Cited." *Research and Documentation Online 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Bedford/St. Martins, n.d. Web. 17 Jun. 2011.

Hacker, Diana and Barbara Fister. "MLA In-Text Citations." *Research and Documentation Online 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Bedford/St. Martins, n.d. Web. 17 Jun. 2011.

### In-Text Citations

#### Basic Rules for Citing Print and Online Sources in the Paper

The MLA system of in-text citations, which depends heavily on authors' names and page numbers, was created with print sources in mind. Although many online sources have unclear authorship and lack page numbers, the basic rules are the same for both print and online sources.

- Ordinarily, introduce the material being cited with a signal phrase (See underlined portion of example) that includes the author's name. In addition to preparing readers for the source, the signal phrase allows you to keep the parenthetical citation brief.

Ex: Frederick Lane reports that employers can "use a hidden video camera pointed at an employee's monitor" and even position a camera "so that a number of monitors [can] be viewed at the same time" (147).

- If a signal phrase does not name the author, put the author's last name in parentheses along with the page number. Use no punctuation between the name and the page number.

Ex: Companies can monitor employees' every keystroke without legal penalty, but they may have to combat low morale as a result (Lane 129).

#### Variations on the Basic Rules

This section describes the MLA guidelines for handling a variety of situations not covered by the basic rules. These rules for in-text citations are the same for both print and online sources.

- **2 or 3 Authors:** Name the authors in a signal phrase, as in the following example, or include their last names in the parenthetical reference.

Ex: Kizza and Ssanyu note that "employee monitoring is a dependable, capable, and very affordable process of electronically or otherwise recording all employee activities at work" and elsewhere (2).

Ex: 2 Authors: (Kizza and Ssanyu 2)

3 Authors: (Alton, Davies, and Rice 56).

- **Encyclopedia or dictionary entry:** Unless an encyclopedia or a dictionary has an author, it will be alphabetized in the list of works cited under the word or entry that you consulted. Either in your text or in your parenthetical citation, mention the word or entry. No page number is required, since readers can easily look up the word or entry.

Ex: The word crocodile has a surprisingly complex etymology (“Crocodile”).

- **Selection in an anthology:** Put the name of the author of the selection (not the editor of the anthology) in the signal phrase or the parentheses.

Ex: In “Love Is a Fallacy,” the narrator’s logical teachings disintegrate when Polly declares that she should date Petey because “[h]e’s got a raccoon coat” (Shulman 379).

- **Historical document:** For a historical document, such as the United States Constitution or the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, provide the document title, neither italicized nor in quotation marks, along with relevant article and section numbers. In parenthetical citations, use common abbreviations such as “art.” and “sec.” and abbreviations of well-known titles (US Const., art. 1, sec. 2).

Ex: While the United States Constitution provides for the formation of new states (art. 4, sec. 3), it does not explicitly allow or prohibit the secession of states.

## Works Cited

### Basic Rules for Citing Print and Online Sources in the Paper

Alphabetize entries in the list of works cited by authors’ last names (or by title if a work has no author). The author’s name is important because citations in the text of the paper refer to it and readers will be looking for it at the beginning of an entry in the alphabetized list

- **1 Author:**

|                            |              |                        |           |      |        |
|----------------------------|--------------|------------------------|-----------|------|--------|
| author: last<br>name first | title (book) | city of<br>publication | publisher | date | medium |
|----------------------------|--------------|------------------------|-----------|------|--------|

 Wood, James. *How Fiction Works*. New York: Farrar, 2008. Print.
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- **Short Work from a Website/Online Video Clip:**

author: last  
name first      video title      title of  
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