

# HOW TO WRITE A TERM PAPER

## Writing Guide and Style Sheet

**Seminar für Englische Philologie**  
**Anglistische Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft/**  
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# 1 Formal Outline

## 1.1 Title Page

- Upper section: university, semester, title of class, module, instructor's name
- Middle section: title of paper
- Lower section: author's name, course of studies, semesters studied, address, e-mail, date of submission, student registration number

## 1.2 Table of Contents

- May be counted either as page 1 or as page 0 (either way, the number does not show)
- May have the following structure (note: these are NOT actual chapter titles)
- The Bibliography and the Statement of Authorship are NOT assigned a chapter number

1. Introduction	1
2. Main Part I	2
2.1 First Argument	2
2.2 Second Argument	4
3. Main Part II	6
3.1 First Argument	8
3.2 Second Argument	10
4. Conclusion	12
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**NOTE:** Please note that this is merely an example. You may structure your paper in many different ways, but please remember

- ✓ to avoid over-fragmentation (one or two paragraphs hardly constitute a (sub)chapter)
- ✓ to make clear connections between chapters
- ✓ to explain at the beginning of each chapter what its main argument is and to draw intermediary conclusions at its end
- ✓ to justify the choice and active use of theoretical or historical concepts in your analysis (you should write a historical or theoretical chapter in which you introduce such concepts)

## 1.3 Layout Term Paper

**NOTE:** Please consult the module catalogue for your course of study to check the exam options and conditions offered for your module. This paper's advice focuses on term papers. Some of it may work for other exam options, but it is important you do separate research or ask your lecturer.

- **font:** Times New Roman or Arial
- **size:** 12 for main text, 12 for indented quotes (indentation: 2,54 cm)
- **spacing:** 1,5-space for the main text, 1,0 for indented quotes
- **margins:** 2,5 cm on the left, right, top, and bottom (though some lecturers will ask you to leave 4-5 cm either left or right)

#### 1.4 Bibliography or Works Cited

- You have to include a list of each work cited in your paper.
- If you want to include sources you have consulted but not actually cited, you may list them under the heading “Works Consulted”.
- The entries are listed alphabetically by the author’s last name, works by the same author are sorted by title (For details, see “Documentation of Sources”).

## 2 Topic Finding, Research Questions, and Thesis Statement

Choose your topic according to individual preferences (interests, abilities, knowledge) and the topic of the seminar (general topic, in-class discussions, questions raised, critical and theoretical texts discussed, notes taken during the seminar). You need to know what you want to write about and be as specific as possible. If you decide on a certain text, for example, you do not need to include all the information you consider relevant about the work in general, but rather narrow down or limit your scope in a practical and specific sense, meaning only include information that is relevant to your thesis. Move away from the holistic ‘Referat’ approach to developing your own thesis with which you read the text.

Remember, go **from broad to narrow!**

#### Examples:

Take a look at the following examples of how to go from a broad idea to a specific approach and title:

- Victorian Imperialism
- Late 19th-Century Victorian Imperialism
- Representations of Imperialism in Late 19th-Century Literature
- Representations of Imperialism in Late 19th-Century Novels
- Representations of Imperialism in R.L. Stevenson’s *Treasure Island* (1883)

If you wish to write about Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, it would not make a lot of sense to call the paper simply “Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*” because it would be much too unspecific and

you would never be able to cover all aspects that can be found in the novel. Instead, think about aspects or elements in a text that you find relevant and interesting or a theoretical approach with which you want to read the text. Examples of more specific titles are:

- “The family ideal in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*”
- “Education in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* and Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*”
- “Mirroring and Doppelgänger in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*”

If you are not sure whether you have sufficiently narrowed down your topic, the following three questions may help:

- a) **What?** – What is the topic of your paper? What are you dealing with?
- b) **How?** – What methods do you use for your analysis?
- c) **In what order?** – In what order do you present the main arguments of your paper?

## 2.1 Research Questions

Your research question(s) must be complex, not a yes or no question. These are the main questions you pursue in your paper. They serve as a sort of ‘roadmap’ through your paper.

**NOTE:** Your research questions are part of academic reasoning and your line of argumentation.

There is no need to announce that “these were the questions I asked myself”.

Your research question(s) should fulfil several criteria:

- a) should be relevant and provocative of thought
- b) should be doable within the space of the paper and with the resources you have at hand
- c) should be related to your course of study / the subject you have been studying in your class.
- d) should be related to the literature (and culture) itself. Avoid questions such as “What were the causes for Irish migration to North America?” in a literature paper about a novel that narrates the lives of fictional Irish immigrants in the mid-19th century. Instead, ask a research question about the literary representation of migration in the novel (e.g., “What elements of the process of migration does the story highlight?”, “In what ways is this plot typical of a migration novel and in what ways does it depart from it?”). Always try to bring it back to the primary text(s)!
- e) should be narrowed down, for instance to one major aspect of your topic
- f) should be specific enough for it to lead to more than a descriptive paper, but to an argumentative one instead (e.g., instead of asking, “How is the industrial city portrayed in the novel?”, you might ask, “What imagery is used to describe the industrial city in the novel and to what effect?”)

## 2.2 Thesis Statement

The thesis statement stands at the heart of your argumentation and everything you write is geared towards demonstrating its validity. The thesis statement is not a simple sentence but a complex statement and it might take a full paragraph to explain. It will also work better if it affords a counter-statement because otherwise it might turn out to contain a truism, that is, an obvious fact that need not be argued.

### Example:

~~“Clarissa Dalloway is a feminist”~~ “Although Woolf’s stance on feminism has been challenged by several scholars who find fault with Woolf for not joining the suffragist movement, this paper claims that she was a social feminist and that she championed women’s emancipation from Victorian gender roles. I will concentrate on the figures of Clarissa Dalloway and her daughter Elizabeth to illustrate Woolf’s call for women’s emancipation, while at the same time taking into consideration some of the ambivalences and ambiguities regarding Woolf’s view of women’s future.”

## 3 Structure and Argumentation

A term paper should adhere to logical argumentation and be consistent in its structure which follows a certain scheme.

### 3.1 Introduction

- Gives the reader a clear idea of what the paper is about
- Length: 1-2 pages
- Includes:
  - your topic and thesis statement, i.e., what you intend to examine in your paper, why is it relevant?
  - your method and structure: i.e., how you intend to conduct your analysis (approach, research questions, selected aspects for discussion and analysis, theoretical background, etc.)
  - short overview of the main trends of criticism relevant to your topic

You may begin your paper like this:

### Example:

“Criticism of Margaret Laurence’s novel *The Diviners* includes essays and books on a large variety of topics, such as metafiction, ethnicity, myth, history, the author’s Scottish background and its influence on her work, autobiographical elements, regionalism, as well

as feminist readings of her work. This paper expands on the topic of memory and imagination as it emerges from the novel. I maintain that in *The Diviners* memory is presented as an active process of recreation of past events and feelings, on the one hand, and as a process of reconstruction of place and identity, on the other.

In her memoir *Dance on the Earth* Laurence makes the distinction between those memories of her childhood of which she is herself aware and which she can actually remember experiencing, and those memories which were transmitted to her by other people (24). This distinction, however, does not allow for the claim of accuracy and objectivity in connection with either of these two kinds of memories. In *The Diviners* Morag revises her childhood with the aid of photographs. She calls the events evoked by them “totally invented memories” (Laurence, *Diviners* 18) and qualifies them as “quite untrue. Or maybe true or maybe not” (Laurence, *Diviners* 16). She can paradoxically remember composing her memories even though she is no longer able to identify the facts that have generated them.” [etc.]

### 3.2 Theoretical Framework

Here you introduce theoretical and/or historical approaches that

- support the arguments in your literary analysis
- you make use of in order to argue for the validity of your thesis statement
- you make use of in order to answer your research questions

Your theoretical framework should always be tailored to your primary text(s), research questions, and thesis statement. If you write a paper about representations of queer space in Glasgow as depicted in *Young Mungo*, there is (probably) no need to write a subchapter about the ballroom culture in 1980 in New York.

### 3.3 Literary/Textual Analysis

The main part of your paper contains the actual development of your line of argumentation. Here you bring arguments to demonstrate the thesis of your introduction and elaborate on the aspects you have mentioned in your introduction.

#### 3.3.1 Arguments

These are your own arguments supporting your thesis throughout your term paper. They can and should (occasionally) relate to other scholars' arguments, although the work you are required to do is to think of your own line of argumentation.

### Examples:

- “While X claims that..., this essay adds that ...”
- “This essay rather agrees with another claim, namely that suggested by Y ...”
- “I suggest that X does not take into account ...”
  
- “My first chapter centres around women’s relationship to public space, arguing that both Clarissa and Elizabeth are examples of the flaneuse, a figure which symbolizes women’s conquest of the public sphere. However, I suggest that there are fundamental differences in the ways in which the two female figures relate to public space.”
- “Secondly, my paper suggests that professionalism and embracing a profession play a central role in Woolf’s imagination of a future for women.”
- “The third argument refers to heteronormativity and the heterosexual marriage. These are part of patriarchal structures used to regulate society in terms of class and the economy, women’s role in it being mostly reproductive, not merely in a biological sense, but also in a social sense.” Etc.

### Examples of different approaches and/or aspects you can consider:

close readings, central scenes, episodes, characters, images that illustrate your argument(s), theoretical approaches that were talked about in class (e.g. space, feminist theory, gender, a specific genre, etc.)

### 3.3.2 Paragraph Writing

A paragraph is an essential unit of meaning in a longer essay/paper. Here are some important things to know about paragraphs and paragraph writing:

- A paragraph **should always consist of several sentences**: topic sentence and explanatory sentences. One or two sentences do not suffice for a stand-alone paragraph!
- **contains and elaborates on one main idea** (the gist of the paragraph) expressed in the topic sentence
- the other sentences contain arguments, examples, descriptions, explanations, illustrating the topic sentence
- the place of the topic sentence in the paragraph may vary
- the topic sentence is rather general, whereas the other sentences are meant to make its meaning more concrete, illustrating the topic sentence
- a paragraph has to be coherent in itself, but it also contributes to the coherence of the entire essay; paragraphs have to follow one another logically and apparently ‘naturally’
- if you find that the link between two paragraphs is missing, insert a transition (a sentence, a connective, another paragraph) to make the reader understand the connection (see also use of connectives below)
- an essay consists of (an) introductory paragraph/s, body paragraphs and (a)



concluding paragraph/s; in longer papers, these are the introduction, main part, and conclusion, in which each section or chapter has the structure of an essay

- please always **indent** (*einrücken*) paragraphs, **except for the first sentence/paragraph after a heading**

### Connecting Paragraphs

In order to make sure that your essay reads fluently and that your argument is well structured, use connectives or transitions to show how your ideas connect and derive logically from one another. You may also use connectives within a paragraph. Here are some of the most common connectives and conjunctive adverbs:

#### Examples:

- accordingly, as a result, consequently, subsequently, in conclusion, therefore, hence, thus, in this way, likewise
- besides, furthermore, moreover, even more, what is more, in addition, first(ly)/second(ly), etc., finally, in the first place, next, then, also
- still, nevertheless, nonetheless, however, now, even so
- for example, for instance, similarly, in other words, that is, specifically
- on the contrary, on the one hand, on the other hand, conversely, instead, otherwise
- as a matter of fact, indeed, certainly, actually, in fact, after all
- anyhow, anyway, at any rate, of course
- at the same time, meanwhile

#### How to Use Connectives:

- Connectives are used to join independent clauses within a paragraph and to create a connection between two different paragraphs, i.e. to ease the transition from one set of ideas to the other
- They help to set emphases, create contrasts, add further information, express cause and effect, describe similar situations in relation to each other, give examples for a specific purpose, or draw conclusions
- They have the same meaning and function as the coordinating conjunctions *and*, *but*, *for*, *nor*, *or*, *so*, and *yet*
- They are used instead of these in order to avoid repetition and ensure the harmonious flow of the text
- They tend to become tedious/annoying and lose all above functions if used in each and every sentence

**NOTE:** Generally, connectives have to be separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma!

#### Avoid

- **one-sentence paragraphs**
- **too many subheadings:** over-fragmentation

- **summaries:** summarise the plot only if this is indispensable to your argumentation.
- **lives and works:** include only thesis-related information
- **excessive** use of connectives

### 3.4 Conclusion

In your conclusion, you (should):

- repeat the thesis and topic statement, but should not just rehash the various arguments
- summarise the main arguments of the paper and add the results of the main part to the thesis of the introduction
- recapitulate your main arguments critically and showcase what conclusions you derive from what you have written
- consider suggestions for further research (optional)

## 4 Editing Your Paper: Language Use, Formalities, Common Mistakes

Avoid	Instead
Repetitive wording	Use synonyms, when appropriate
Starting a sentence with “but” or “and”	
“It can be said that...” “One can say that...” etc.	...just say it! e.g. “Therefore, the portrayal of character A is in line with...”
“I want to mention” “Another point I want to make” etc.	...just mention it! Use a more concrete phrasing such as, e.g., “Moreover, character ABC struggles with ...” “Furthermore, xy underscores the vulnerability of character ABC, when ...”, etc.
Speculating language (depending on the context): “This could be because...” “This could be a reason” “This could be a sign for” etc.	Be confident! You are writing an analysis, and you should have good reasons and ‘proof’ for your claims, you are not speculating.
Phrases like “I would like to analyse”	Use phrases like “in this chapter I will analyse”
Phrases such as “the term/character/the scene xy can/could be described as”	If that is the case, then describe it as such; no need to announce that. Use clear and precise phrases such as “character xy is (portrayed as) strong/sensitive/morally ambiguous” and follow up your claim with proof you identified in the text.
Contractions (e.g. don’t, can’t, I’ll, etc.)	Spell it out (e.g. do not, can not, I will, etc.)

## 4.1 Formatting

- **Each heading should be accompanied by written text!** A heading should not immediately be followed by the next (sub)heading
- **The first line of each new paragraph should be indented** ('eingerückt'), **except for the first line after a heading**
- Remember to **adjust and unify your formatting!** The space between the last paragraph of a chapter and the following heading should always be the same and not a different size each time.
- **Double quotation marks are used for direct quotes and titles of articles!** If you want to indicate that you are criticising a term, such as 'normal', use single quotation marks.
- **Use curly/smart quotation marks and apostrophes**
- Remember to adjust the title of your table of contents to English! If you use the automatically generated version in Word, often the title says "Inhaltsverzeichnis", which has to be changed to "Table of Contents"

## 4.2 Spelling

- "it's" vs. "its"
- "lose" vs. "loose" (You can lose a loose tooth/button)
- lead, led, led are the forms of "to lead"; "lead" pronounced like "led" means the toxic metal
- lay – laid – laid: "I laid the table for dinner"; "The boss laid them all off."
- lie-lay-lain: Remember the title of William Faulkner's novel *As I LAY Dying*.
- lie-lied-lied: "If someone told you that language mistakes do not matter in a paper, they lied to you."

## 4.3 Punctuation

- The key for the apostrophe is not ` or ´ (key for accents), but ' (same key as #)
- Use Anglophone quotation marks, not German ones! "This is the correct usage", „these are German quotation marks and therefore incorrect“
- **Genitive ':** child's, parents', children's; use an apostrophe in English when you form the genitive form of proper nouns: Swift's satires, Dickens' or Dickens's novels
- **Do not insert a comma before "that"** as in the German "dass" (or other adverbs and conjunctions introducing secondary clauses). In general, there is less punctuation in English, in particular commas, than in German.
- **Use a comma after connectives or transitions** (however, moreover, firstly, etc.).
- Do not use a comma if you start a sentence with the main clause (as in this sentence). If you start the sentence with the secondary clause (conditional, temporal, causal, etc.), then use a comma (as in this sentence).
- Use a comma to separate non-defining relative clauses, but do not use one for defining relative clauses.

- The strikers who were violent got arrested: defining clause (only those got arrested who were violent)
- The strikers, who were violent, got arrested: non-defining clause (they were all violent and they all got arrested)

#### 4.4 Grammar

- Be sure to check possible/correct collocations (e.g. “with/in regard to/for”?; e.g. <https://www.freecollocation.com>)
- Use “who/that” to introduce relative clauses when you refer to people; use “that/which” to refer to things. “Whose,” the genitive, is used for both, but in the case of things you can replace it with “of which”: “the house whose price we could afford”, “the house the price of which we could afford.”
- use “many”, “a large number of”, “few” and “a few” with countable nouns; “a large amount of” and “much” with non-countable nouns
- “Information,” like “homework,” does not have an “-s” plural form (“pieces of information” is used instead, or “the information we have been able to gather indicates that...”), whereas “news” does not have a singular but it is used with a singular verb: “the news is good.”
- the plural of “analysis” is “analyses,” of “thesis,” “theses”
- criterion – criteria; phenomenon – phenomena (singular – plural)
- there is a difference between “woman” and “women”: singular vs. plural

#### 4.5 Expression

- “Since” is not always the equivalent to the German “da” / “daher” / “deshalb”. It does not work in every context! <https://www.lingoda.com/blog/en/as-because-since/>
- **Use of “both”:** not “\*These books are both different,” but “These two books are different from each other”; German speakers write “These books are both different” when they actually mean that they are different from each other.
- Do not use “with” to mean “by” or “through”: “by the use of these adjectives,” or “through these adjectives” not \*with these adjectives”
- **Avoid passives:** \*It will be taken a look at ..., \*In this essay it will be inquired whether the text has been looked at from the points of view that have been explained above. These passives are, first, awkward, and, second, they make it impossible for the reader to understand who does or has done what. For instance, “\*As has been explained, these texts have been looked at from various perspectives.” By whom (you? another scholar?), where, when? Use the active voice and, consequently, underscore agency and authorship of a statement in particular if you wish to set yourself off from this position in your own essay.
- “Her own home” not “\*The own home” (‘*Germanism*’!)
- “female” as a noun is not a synonym for “woman”, but a term denoting a being of the female sex in biology
- Self-confident not \*self-conscious (‘false friend’ meaning the exact opposite of confident)

- “to coin” means indeed “*prägen*” but not the way you might think, that is, not in the sense of “to influence deeply”, but *eine Münze prägen* or *ein neues Wort / einen neuen Ausdruck prägen*. Consequently, you cannot write: “\*His parents coined the course of his life,” but “Shakespeare coined the expression ‘last but not least’.”
- “\*throughout the whole novel” is a redundant expression; “throughout” already means “in the whole”
- “into” is not the same as “in” or “in to” (to give in to s.o.’s pressure)

#### 4.6 Syntax

- \*Going out, it started to rain. (**the subject of both verbs must be the same**); \*Being a famous author, his novel sold well. (The sentence implies that the novel was a famous author itself and therefore sold well).
- \*He came home he listened to his messages on the answering machine his parents were not coming. (**run-on sentence**: several main clauses unlinked to one another; change punctuation or introduce conjunction or adverb to connect the sentences)
- \*Although there is no cause for distress. (**sentence fragment**: main clause is missing; it is probably in the preceding or following sentence, so change punctuation to complete the sentence)

#### 4.7 Content

- While you sometimes need a certain amount of ‘background knowledge’ regarding your theories and analysis, **focus** your theoretical framework **on the approaches and ideas that are most relevant** to your analysis.
- Although your **theoretical framework and your analysis** are (often) different chapters, they should **ALWAYS inform/influence** one another!
  - Your theory chapter should mainly include theories/ideas/approaches that are relevant to your literary analysis.
  - Your analysis chapter should include the theories and approaches you have outlined/defined/contextualised previously in your theoretical framework. Your theories are the tools you then use in order to successfully analyse the primary text(s).  
**Example:** If you explain what intersectionality is, you then have to use the concept in your analysis, too.
  - Your analysis can and should refer back and include citations to a) your theory and the sources presented there; and b) secondary literature on your sources.  
**Example:** If you analyse hegemonic masculinity in *Pride and Prejudice*, you have to include sources that e.g., comment on masculinity in *Pride and Prejudice*, as well.
- You do not always have to agree with other scholars’ arguments. You can also include a paper that you (vehemently) disagree with.
- You have to **contextualise your claims!** If you argue that “It is important to note that ...” or “Interestingly, these instances occur more often later in the narrative”, you have to follow up by explaining why that is important or interesting. Keep in mind questions

such as “Why is that? What does that mean? In what way does that influence the narrative? What are possible examples and how do they fit in the story? Why does this example underscore my argument?”

- If you claim that “scholars offer a vast range of perspectives” you have to include a few names of the scholars you are referring to as well as at least somewhat frame and define this “range of perspectives”.
- **Try not to end your paragraphs with direct quotes** too often. Occasionally, this is fine, but try to **leave your reader(s) with your own arguments** when ending a paragraph and particularly at the end of a chapter.
- **Do not stay descriptive.** Sure, sometimes it is helpful – and even necessary – to describe a setting, scene, character, etc. in detail. That alone is not enough for an analysis, however. Ask yourself what your observations mean in the context of your research questions. Address questions such as “why is this scene/character/... described in such a way? What does that mean for the narrative? Why is this important? How is this related to your theory?” Etc.
- In most cases, you do not need to announce in which chapter of a novel the scene you analyse is located (e.g. “The scene I intend to analyse is in chapter 12”). If you are analysing the narrative structure, the development of a character, or, for instance, temporal dimensions of the narrative, it can certainly be helpful to know when a specific scene takes place. However, it is often more useful to locate the scene in the context of the narrative (e.g. “After XY happened, character ABC then decided to ...”).
- When giving any sort of information ask yourself about the **relevance**. Why is this important for your argument?
- Do not voice your opinion in a direct/explicit manner in terms of whether or not you like the book you are analysing. Although you are allowed (and depending on context and your arguments even encouraged) to comment on whether or not the book does something successfully, avoid phrases such as “the book does a great job” or “I really liked the book, because...”. That is not academic writing.
- **Do not narrate your thinking/writing process.** You do not need to include your personal reasons why and when you decided to write about this topic/novel/character (e.g., “In class, I thought this was really interesting and this is why I decided to look into this subject”, “These were the questions I asked myself”, “Another aspect/relationship/character I want to take a look at is...”).
- When claiming that something is “interesting(ly)”, you have to **back that up with analytical evidence**. Moreover, try not to use that phrase too often; if something is indeed interesting to observe, then tell your reader(s) about the reasons and your arguments directly, you do not need to announce that this is interesting every (other) paragraph.
- You may use “I” in your paper, as long as it underscores your argument or guides the reader through your paper (e.g. “While scholar XY claims that ..., I argue ...”; “I will begin by outlining the main arguments of XYZ”). Avoid directly stating your own opinion (e.g. “I particularly liked this representation because...”, “I think, however, that scholar ABC was wrong”).

#### 4.8 Useful Words and Phrases

- maintain, illustrate, demonstrate
- emphasise, highlight
- scrutinise, investigate, examine
- accordingly, as a result, consequently, subsequently, in conclusion
- therefore, hence, thus, in this way, likewise
- besides, furthermore, moreover, even more, what is more, in addition
- first(ly)/second(ly), etc., finally, in the first place, next, then, also
- still, nevertheless, nonetheless, however, now, even so
- for example, for instance, similarly, in other words, that is, specifically
- on the contrary, on the one hand, on the other hand, conversely, instead
- otherwise
- as a matter of fact, indeed, certainly, actually, in fact, after all
- anyhow, anyway, at any rate, of course
- at the same time, meanwhile

#### 4.9 Abbreviations

cf.	compare (in references)
ed.	editor, edition, edited by, plural: eds.
e.g.	for example (Latin: <i>exempli gratia</i> )
et al	and others (Latin: <i>et alii/aliae</i> )
introd.	Introduction (by)
n.d.	no date of publication
n.p.	no place of publication/no publisher
n. pag.	no pagination
p., pp.	page, pages
qtd.	quoted
rev.	revised (by), revision, review, reviewed
rpt.	reprinted by, reprint
trans.	translation, translated, translator
UP	University Press

#### 4.10 Checklist: Editing the Paper

Form:

- ✓ Spelling
- ✓ Grammar

- ✓ Idiomatic expression
- ✓ References (MLA standard)
- ✓ transitions / connectives
- ✓ Correspondence Introduction – Conclusion
- ✓ Consistent use of BE/ AE?

Content:

- ✓ Have I actually used the methodology introduced in the Introduction?
- ✓ Has my working thesis changed in the meantime?
- ✓ Is my paper coherent and cohesive?
- ✓ Do I need to re-write the Introduction?
- ✓ Have I acknowledged all my sources?

Paragraphing:

- ✓ One-sentence paragraphs? EDIT! (expand to observe structure of paragraphs)
- ✓ One-page paragraphs (or longer)? EDIT! (divide into several paragraphs)
- ✓ One-paragraph chapters? EDIT! (over-fragmentation)
- ✓ Use of transitions between paragraphs? (introduce transitions/connectives for fluency)

## 5 Citations and Documentation of Sources

Plagiarism is an academic crime, practically the academic equivalent of stealing someone else's car. Authors of plagiarized papers will be automatically excluded from the class and will not receive either credits or a second chance to write another paper for that class. For this reason, you are obliged to sign the **statement of authorship** available online on the website of the SEP and attach it to your paper.

If you are unsure whether or not something constitutes plagiarism, this website can provide some insights: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/avoiding\\_plagiarism/plagiarism\\_faq.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/avoiding_plagiarism/plagiarism_faq.html). Moreover, there is a document available on the SEP website regarding plagiarism and legal contexts and consequences.

### 5.1 Documentation of Sources

For **the documentation of sources**, please follow the MLA standard. Always refer to the latest edition. Please consult the website owl purdue:

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/index.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/index.html)



Or the website of the MLA itself:

<https://style.mla.org/works-cited/citations-by-format/>

The use of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** is not generally prohibited, but must be made transparent by adding an AI statement, similar to the statement of authorship. For further details on this, please consult the department's FAQ on the use of AI or the AI policy of the Georg-August-University (here you also find an example for an **AI statement**). When in doubt, consult with your professor!

## 5.2 Citing within the Text

**All references to primary and secondary sources must be included in the text.** You must include all the information necessary for finding the quotation using parenthetical reference and the bibliography at the end of your paper! For details on this and the formal parameters, please refer to MLA citation standards.

### NOTE:

- When omitting or rephrasing parts of a direct quote, use square brackets, e.g.:  
The author claims that "she [is] very smart"
- After an in-text citation, e.g. (author 147), do not forget to add a full stop if your sentence ends with the citation.  
Example: "Texttexttext" (author 147). New sentence and another sentence.
- Make sure to use Anglophone (and not German) quotation marks!

## 5.3 In-Text Citations

All references to primary and secondary sources should be included in the text. You must include all the information necessary for finding the quotation using parenthetical reference and the bibliography at the end of your paper!

### 5.3.1 Formal Aspects of Quotations

- If you are quoting short passages up to three lines of text, try to integrate them into your own sentence.
- Use English quotation marks
- If your quotation is longer than four lines, indent it: 2,54cm, use 12 point font size and 1,5 spacing, and leave out the quotation marks.
- **Ellipsis:** If you omit words, phrases or sentences or paragraphs from a quoted passage, you have to mark the omission by using "[...]". Remember that the final sentence must still be grammatically correct and that the omission should not change the meaning of the original source. You don't need to include [...] at the beginning or end of a direct

quote.

### **5.3.2 Basic Structure of Parenthetical References**

- Bibliographical information is added at the end of your sentence in brackets (author's name page). The same applies if you are only alluding to a secondary source without actually citing it (author's name page).
- The abbreviation p. is not required before the page number.
- If your works cited contains more than one author with the same name, add the first initial in your reference. If you cite more than one work by the same author, include the shortened titles of the respective works.
- If you include the author's name in the sentence, you do not have to repeat it in the following parenthesis.
- Place the reference where a natural pause would occur (usually at the end of a sentence) and as near as possible to the quotation it belongs to.
- Place the full stop behind the parenthesis, not within.

#### **Citing Poetry:**

When citing poetry, cite the line(s) including the word line (line 24) in the first reference and afterwards only the line number (33).

#### **Citing Drama:**

When citing drama, include information concerning the act, scene and line(s): Hamlet I.5.35-37.

#### **Citing a Multivolume Work:**

If you are using several volumes, give the name of the author/editor, then the volume and page number separated by a colon. (2: 24-26). If you are using only one volume and state the volume number in your bibliography, you need to give only the page numbers in your reference.

#### **Citing a Work with an Unknown Author (listed by title in the bibliography):**

These works might for instance be articles from reference books. In this case, you give the title of the article (full if it is short, abbreviated to the first one or two words if it is longer) in quotation marks.

#### **Citing from a Web Source:**

Apply the same rules as for printed sources: If you have an author, name them. If not, give the (abbreviated) title of the article you are citing. If your source does not have page numbers, you have to give the author's name/title even if you have already mentioned it in the text.

### Examples:

#### Citing a Work by a Single Author with the Author's Name in the Reference:

At first, the audience is given a hint that a crisis occurred, or that “something happened” (Phelan 634). OR: Their narratorial pact is, on the one hand, one with the reader (cf. Rimmon-Kenan 248), but also with the other characters and their own conscience.

#### Citing a Work by a Single Author with the Author's Name in the Text:

Austen describes Sir Walter Elliot as “conceited” and “silly” (6).

#### Citing a Work by Several Authors:

“Is it crazy, neurotic, splenetic, to want to be a writer?” (Gilbert and Gubar 61).

#### Citing a Work by an Author with More than One Work:

The distinction of several levels of responsibility emerges from the identification of four “ethical locations” (Phelan, Living 23, and “Rhetorical” 632-3).

#### Citing a Work Listed by Title (Unidentifiable Author):

As a reviewer remarks in *The Spectator*, “Michael Ondaatje’s legion of admirers will not expect a novel constructed around a linear narrative, or even cohering in the developing consciousness of a central character” (“Patterns from the Past”).

#### Citing a Multivolume Work:

This anthology contains English literature from Sir Thomas More’s “Utopia” (Greenblatt A: 521-590) to Salman Rushdie (F: 2854-2863).

#### Citing Indirect Sources:

Samuel Johnson admitted that Edmund Burke was “an extraordinary man” (qtd. in Boswell 450).

#### Citing from a Web Site without Page Numbers:

At least one account of the life of Mary Shelley depicts a child who was “treated as if she were born beneath a lucky star” (Bridges).

## **5.4 Bibliography or Works Cited**

The following is a selection of some of the most frequent types of entries. For all other entries, please consult the latest edition of *The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. MLA citations are created using the following core elements: author, title of source, title of ‘container’, other contributors, version, number, publisher, publication date and location in a particular order. Apart from this, there are no set rules for each type of media, allowing an easier

citation of new media such as tweets and DVDs. Placeholders for unknown information (e.g. n.d.) are not required. The order is as follows:

Author. "Title." *Title of the container*. Other contributors, Version, Number, Publisher's name, Date of publication, Location.

- **Titles of larger works** such as books or magazines are put in *italics* and **smaller works** (works published within anthologies, books and magazines) such as poems, short stories or articles are put in "quotation marks".
- Entries are **listed alphabetically with the author's last name first**. First name follows the comma and middle name or initials after that.

Example:

Ashcroft, Bill.

Bhambhra, Gurminder K.

Woolf, Virginia.

- Like the rest of the text, the list of works cited should also be **1.5 spaced**. Do not leave extra space between listings.
- **Capitalise each word in the titles but do not capitalise articles (the, an), prepositions, or conjunctions** unless it is the first word of the title or subtitle.
- The usage of pseudonyms for authors is allowed, e.g. @username when quoting social media content
- The city of publication is omitted, unless it is of relevance to the paper (e.g. British vs. American version).
- Citing the date of an online source is optional.
- Forward slash (/) separates names of co-publishers.
- When an organisation is both author and publisher of a work, the organization's name is given only once, usually as the publisher.

### **Books:**

Lastname, Firstname. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year of Publication.

Examples:

Book by one author (monograph), primary and secondary literature:

Brontë, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*. Oxford University Press, 1999.

Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. 2nd ed. Blackwell, 1996.

Book by two authors:

Gillespie, Paula, and Neal Lerner. *The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring*. Allyn and Bacon, 2000.

Gilbert, Sandra M., and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-century Literary Imagination*. Yale UP, 2000.

Book by several authors or editors:

Ashcroft, Bill et. al. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*. Routledge, 1989.

Hill, Charles A., and Marguerite Helmers, editors. *Defining Visual Rhetorics*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004.

Two or more books by the same author are listed alphabetically by their titles:

Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. Oxford UP, 2008.

---. *The Professor*. Oxford UP, 2008.

---. *Villette*. Oxford UP, 2008.

A translated book:

i. If you want to emphasize the work, rather than the translator:

Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. Translated by Richard Howard, Vintage-Random House, 1988.

ii. If you want to emphasize the translator rather than the work:

Howard, Richard, translator. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. By Michel Foucault, Vintage-Random House, 1988.

An anthology or collection of articles:

Hill, Charles A., and Marguerite Helmers, editors. *Defining Visual Rhetorics*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004.

Peterson, Nancy J., editor. *Toni Morrison: Critical and Theoretical Approaches*. Johns Hopkins UP, 1997.

A primary text (poem, short story or essay) from an anthology or collection:

Harris, Muriel. "Talk to Me: Engaging Reluctant Writers." *A Tutor's Guide: Helping Writers One to One*, edited by Ben Rafoth, Heinemann, 2000, pp. 24-34.

Kincaid, Jamaica. "Girl." *The Vintage Book of Contemporary American Short Stories*. edited by Tobias Wolff, Vintage, 1994, pp. 306-07.

**Journal Articles:**

- When the title of a periodical (journal, magazine, newspaper) begins with an article (A, An, The), the article is now treated as part of the title: the article is italicized and its first letter capitalised.
- If an issue of a scholarly journal is dated with a month or season, the month or season is now always cited along with the year.

The basic format for entries is:

Author(s) Lastname, Firstname. "Title of Article." *Title of Periodical*, Day Month Year, pages.

Examples:

Nikolajeva, Maria. "Fairy Tale and Fantasy: from Archaic to Postmodern." *Marvels & Tales: Journal of Fairy-Tale Studies*, 17 Jan. 2003, pp. 138-156.

Poniewozik, James. "TV Makes a Too-Close Call." *Time*, 20 Nov. 2000, pp. 70-71.

**Web Sources:**

The basic format for citation of electronic sources is:

Author. "Title". *Title of container* (self-contained if book), Other contributors (translators or editors), Version (edition), Number (vol. and/or no.), Publisher, Publication Date, Location (pages, paragraphs and/or URL, DOI or permalink). *2nd container's title*, Other contributors, Version, Number, Publisher, Publication date, Location, Date of Access (if applicable). Giving the DOI is encouraged.

Examples:

*The Purdue OWL Family of Sites*. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2008, owl.english.purdue.edu/owl. Accessed 23 Apr 2008.

- If you are citing an image, such as a painting, a photograph or a sculpture provide the artist's name, title or name of the work italicized, the date of creation, the institution and city where it is housed, followed by the name of the Website you found it on in italics, and the date of access.

Examples:

Goya, Francisco. *The Family of Charles IV*. 1800. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid. *Museo Nacional del Prado*, www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/art-work/the-family-of-carlos-iv/f47898fc-aa1c-48f6-a779-71759e417e74. Accessed 22 May 2006.

@Instagram account name. "Content of Tweet." *Instagram*, Date, Time, URL (omit http:// or https://).

A Work on the Web with Print Publication Data:

Dickens, Charles. *A Christmas Carol*. In *Prose. Being a Ghost Story of Christmas*. 1858. *Google Books*. Accessed 16 January 2012.

A Periodical Publication in an Online Database:

Tolson, Nancy. "Making Books Available: The Role of Early Libraries, Librarians, and Booksellers in the Promotion of African American Children's Literature." *African American Review* 32.1 (1998): 9-16. JSTOR. Accessed 5 June 2018.

## 5.5 (Finding) Sources and Citations

- Do NOT write a term paper like a text analysis at school. **Cite all texts** – the primary text as well! – according to MLA standard and the department style sheet. **Do not** write "on page xy, the character does this and that". Instead include the page numbers in your citation.
- When quoting from websites, be sure to cite the source correctly according to MLA standard (remember to add the link to the bibliography and format it correctly)
- **Dictionary definitions** sometimes are a possible entry door into a certain field, but they (alone) **are usually not sufficient sources!** You might be able to use a definition given by a dictionary in order to start defining a certain approach, but you need to support this with scientific research provided in and by articles, monographs, chapters in academic books, etc.
- **Always (!) include secondary sources dealing with your primary text(s).** If there aren't any (e.g., when analysing a very recent or niche text), try to find **a) texts that deal with the same genre, literary period, author, topic, etc.** You might not find a source on your exact text, but maybe one on e.g. representations of dragons in contemporary fantasy fiction. You can then use the arguments either to support your own claims or argue against the perspective outlined in the article. In addition (not instead!) you can also **b) look for e.g., pop cultural articles** online, but you have to **contextualise them as such.** If you want to write a paper about gender roles in *Bridgerton*, you might not find many academic sources. However, you can argue that the topic is widely discussed in popular culture and cite and contextualise the respective sources here.
- When you are researching possible sources for your paper, you WILL read some papers that are not helpful at all. They might sound promising, but then after reading it, you realise that the title was misleading, the author argues in such a way that is entirely unhelpful to your approach, etc. Unfortunately, that is just the reality of academic research. **Do not get discouraged!**
- When looking for, finding, reading, and using sources, it does not have to be the whole book/article. Sometimes you just find three sentences that perfectly highlight your approach/support your argument. You are not only allowed but encouraged to include these sources in your paper!
- When researching, you do not have to look for and find the perfect article for your topic/paper. In fact, if there is already an article dealing with the exact same argument you are making, then your paper would not be your own research and idea, would it? Keep an eye out for articles dealing with your approach, but if there is not an ideal text on e.g. "Representations of Masculinity, Queerness, and Beauty in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*", that does NOT mean your approach is not valid – on the contrary. That just means you have found a niche that you can contribute to, which is

great! Your goal is now to find research that deals with each of the terms/concepts you use/analyse or maybe overlaps of those.

- Most topics we deal with are very complex and more often than not highly debated, either in their respective fields or even across multiple different disciplines. If you want to write a (really) good paper, **you NEED TO read and include more than one source on a topic**. If e.g. researcher A claims that the second wave of (Western) feminism has not been inclusive or diverse enough, researcher B might argue that some of the most important and influential voices were those of women of colour, queer women, etc. If you only include one of the texts, you are inevitably missing the nuance of this discussion. You therefore want to include both arguments in your paper, which means that you have to have some sort of overview over the field you are working in. Reading one (or even two) source(s) is simply not enough.
- Sparknotes or similar websites are **NOT academic sources**, neither is Wikipedia! Please do not cite them.
- **Rule of thumb: use approximately as many sources as pages that you write** (e.g. ca. 10-12 pages = ca. 10-12 different sources)

## 5.6 Online Resources

Evaluating Internet Resources: <https://library.georgetown.edu/tutorials/research-guides/evaluating-internet-content>

### E-text sources:

Please use the text edition recommended by the course instructor. If you wish and are allowed to use electronic versions of primary texts, please make sure that they are authoritative, i.e., that they are provided by an institution with scholarly credentials, that the editor of the text is clearly specified and is an individual / an institution with scholarly credentials, that all the information about the respective edition is provided.

Gutenberg Project: <http://www.gutenberg.org/>

Representative Poetry Online:

<http://rpo.library.utoronto.ca/display/index.cfm>

Google Books: <http://books.google.com/books/>

18<sup>th</sup> Century Collection Online: <https://dbis.ur.de/SUBGO/resources/4855>

...or other catalogues found on university or library websites.

### Sources available on the website of the University Library:

Oxford English Dictionary Online

MLA Bibliography

JSTOR, Project MUSE