

# REPORTS AND RESEARCH AT MILLENNIUM AND CENTENNIAL MIDDLE SCHOOLS SOUTH LYON, MICHIGAN

## Who and What

Many middle school classes use the library/media center for reports and papers. Social studies classes may research a state or country or an historical event. Science classes may research scientists, minerals, or planets, etc. The main instruction in research techniques is in the Language Arts classes. Students in Language Arts classes select specific topics, find information on their topics, read the information, take notes, organize notes, write drafts, edit, finalize the paper and list the sources of information in proper Works Cited form.

Topics usually chosen for research papers in Language Arts classes at Centennial and Millennium Middle Schools are animals, historical disasters, social issues, careers, famous people or environmental problems.



## Why

Research paper teaches:

1. Skills in locating materials and information including periodical research.
2. Skills in note taking.
3. Organizational skills.
4. Experience in translating facts and information.

## Research Paper Procedures

### PREWRITING

1. Select an appropriate topic.
2. Have your topic approved by your teacher.
3. Find sources for your topic.
4. Read and overview the material.
5. Write citation information.
6. Take notes.

### ORGANIZATION OF PREWRITING

7. Put notes in order: Outline, Cluster map, Timeline, etc.

### WRITING THE PAPER

8. Write the thesis (most students)
9. Write the rough draft

### ROUGH DRAFT RESPONSE

10. Check your paper. Have a friend or parent check your paper.

### EDITING

11. Review, rearrange and edit your paper.

### PUBLISHING

12. Write your final copy—follow your teacher's directions.
13. Give an oral presentation. (sometimes)

### SELF EVALUATION

### TEACHER EVALUATION



## Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the act of taking the ideas and writings of another and passing them off as one's own. If a student copies directly from any source of information, he/she is guilty of plagiarism.

## Note Taking:

Students will learn how to use information from books, magazines and encyclopedias. Students will take notes in phrase form. When taking phrase notes, usually students use large note cards and put several notes on one card. Sometimes students will put one note on a card, using the small 3 x 5 cards

There are several different methods of taking notes. AN IMPORTANT THING TO REMEMBER WHEN TAKING NOTES IS TO BE ABLE TO SHOW WHERE THE INFORMATION WAS OBTAINED. Sometimes students will use 5" x 7" note cards, put the source of information on the back of the note card, and on the front, put short phrase notes on each line, numbering the notes in order. Sometimes students will put one note on each card, and have a separate citation card with sources of information on it. The individual cards will have numbers or codes that refer back to the citation card indicating the source of the information for the note.

Individual teachers use methods they feel best suit their students. The reason for taking notes is to take facts about a topic and translate the facts into the student's own words.

## Sample Note Cards:

Large 5" x 7" note cards for research paper on eagles:

Front:

Eagles	Student Name
1. big powerful bird	
2. has feathers	
3. sharp, hooked beak	
4. active only during the day	
5. re-uses nests year after year	
6. eat fish	
7. mates for life	

Back:

Barghusen, Joan. <i>The Bald Eagle</i> . San Diego: Lucent, 1999. Print.
1

Large 5" x 7" note cards for paper on the Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire.

Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire of 1911

1. March 25, 1911
2. New York City
3. 10 story Asch building
4. mostly women employees
5. garment factory on the top three floors
6. about 500 workers were in the building
7. fire started on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor

Back of the above card:

or, example of separate reference card:

DeAngelis, Gina. *The Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire of 1911*. Philadelphia: Chelsea, 2000. Print.

#1

Examples of notes taken on small 3" x 5" cards for a paper on school uniforms:

#1

School Uniforms:

Officials are worried that very loose clothing could hide weapons

#1

School uniforms

The Tinker v. DesMoines Independent Community School District is a very important case involving school dress codes and students' rights.

Sample reference card for the above notes

#1

Cruz, Barbara. *School Dress Codes*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow, 2000. Print.

After the notes have been taken, an outline, or a cluster map should be planned:  
Example of an outline for an animal report:

Animal Name

I. Physical Description

- A.
- B.

II. Habitat

- A.
- B.
- C.

III. Characteristics

- A.
- B.

IV. Food/Predator/Prey

- A.
- B.

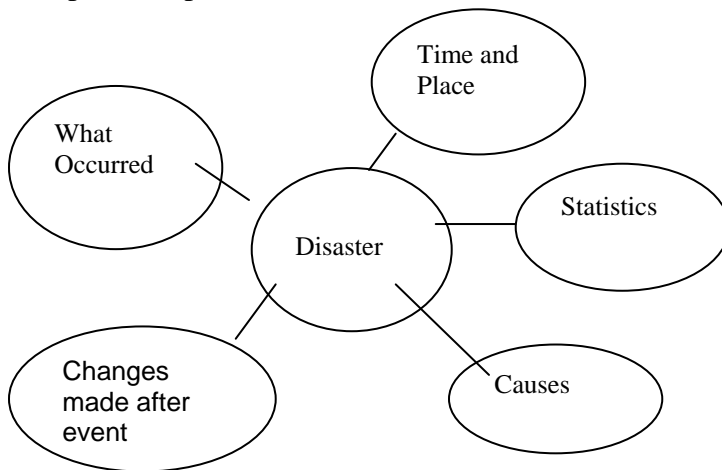
V. Reproduction and young

- A.
- B.

VI. Reasons for Endangerment

- A.
- B.

Cluster map for a report on a disaster:



There are several ways to organize the notes. One way is to color-code each note to coincide with the main topics. For example, when doing animal notes, all habitat notes would get a blue dot, all physical description notes would get a yellow dot, etc.

Another way, is to make the outline and number all the main points, then number all the notes to coincide with the main points. For example, in a disasters report, all notes pertaining to the occurrence could be #1 and all notes pertaining to the time and place could be #2, etc.

If a teacher has had the class take notes on individual cards, one note per card, the next step after deciding on the main topics would be to put the cards in stacks. Each main topic would have a stack of cards with information referring to that topic.

## The Thesis Statement

The thesis statement is a single sentence which states the central point of a research paper. This sentence identifies the subject and the writer's opinion of that subject.

Characteristics of a thesis statement:

1. It is a single declarative sentence, not a question
2. It states the writer's position or findings on a topic.
3. It states the specific focus the paper will have.
4. It suggests what the conclusion will say.
5. It does NOT begin with "The purpose of this paper is..."
6. It is not a statement of the topic
7. It does not contain multiple clauses

The THESIS tells the reader what the writer is going to tell them.

The BODY of the paper gives the reader the facts.

The LAST PARAGRAPH contains a restatement of the thesis.

## WORKS CITED OR REFERENCE LIST:

The following examples are based on the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, 2009.

A WORKS CITED or REFERENCE LIST is a list of resources used for research.

In FINAL form, the Works Cited page should be in ALPHABETICAL ORDER.

The WORKS CITED page should be in proper form. Examples of proper form follow.

**Attention should be paid to punctuation. Watch commas (,), periods (.), and *Italics*, etc.**

- Current MLA rules state that titles are now to be in *italics*. If **not** using a word processor, underlining can be substituted for italics.
- Medium of publication must now also be stated. (Print, Web, DVD, etc.)
- Students are no longer required to provide URLs for Web entries.

**REMEMBER TO ALWAYS INDENT 2<sup>ND</sup>, 3<sup>RD</sup> AND SUBSEQUENT LINES. THE FIRST LINE IS NOT INDENTED.**

For further information and rules concerning MLA formatting please refer to the following authority;

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/05/> MLA works cited - Purdue University.

## PRINT SOURCES

### 1. Book by one author:

Last Name, First Name. *Title of the Book*. (in italics) Edition. City: Publisher, Date.  
Publication medium.

Example:

Day, Nancy. *Your Travel Guide to Ancient Egypt*. Minneapolis: Runestone, 2001. Print.

### 2. Book by two authors:

Last Name, First Name, First Name, Last Name. *Title of the Book*. (in italics) Edition.  
City: Publisher, Date. Publication medium.

Example:

Collier, Bruce, James MacLachlan. *Charles Babbage and the Engines of Perfection*.  
New York: Oxford, 1998. Print.

### 3. Book with no author's name given (usually written by many authors and organized by an editor. Do not list the editor as the author.):

*Title of the Book*. (in italics) City: Publisher, Date. Publication medium.

Example:

*The Crash of 1929*. San Diego: Greenhaven, 2002. Print.

### 4. Article within a reference book with an author listed:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of the Book*. (in italics) City: Publisher, Date.  
Publication medium.

Example:

Morris, Desmond. "Giraffe." *The World of Animals*. New York: Viking, 1993. Print.

### 5. Article within a reference book with no author listed:

"Title of Article." *Title of Book*. (in italics) City: Publisher, Date. Publication medium.

Example:

"Dental Assistants." *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. Lincolnwood: VGM, 2003. Print.

6. Article from an encyclopedia or multi-volume set with an author listed (names of authors of encyclopedia articles appear in small print following the article.):

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of the Encyclopedia*. (in italics) Edition. Date.  
Publication medium.

Example:

Howe, Gordon. "Hockey." *The World Book Encyclopedia*. 2006. Print.

7. Article from an encyclopedia or multi-volume set with no author listed:

"Title of Article." *Title of Encyclopedia*. (in italics) Date. Publication medium.

Example:

"Giant Panda." *International Wildlife Encyclopedia*. 2002. Print.

8. Periodical Article (Magazine or Newspaper) in print:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine* (in italics) Day Month Year:  
Pages. Publication medium.

Example:

Hamel, Owen. "Saving Salmon, Why Care?" *Science News* 8 April 2002: 8-12. Print.

9. Interview:

The name listed is the person interviewed.

Last Name, First Name. Personal interview. Date of interview.

Example:

Doe, John. Personal interview. 21 July 2001.

## ELECTRONIC SOURCES & Misc.

Students are no longer required to provide URLs for Web entries. Use the following abbreviations for information you cannot supply:

n.p. – No place of publication given

n.p. – No publisher given

n.d. – No date of publication given

n. pag. – No page numbers given

### 10. Website:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of the Article." *Website title*. (in italics) Publisher of site, Date of publication. Publication medium. Date of access.

Example: In this example, the author's name is not known.

"Chernobyl Accident." *World Nuclear Association*. Energy Solutions, Jan. 2011. Web. 11 Jan. 2011.

### 11. Magazine or Periodical Article from Electronic Database:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine*. (in italics) Day Month Year: Pages. (if magazine) Title of Database. Publication medium. Date of access.

Example:

Monastersky, Richard. "Cracking Open the Center of a Temblor." *Science News*. 30 March 1991: 199. Infotrac. Web. 12 Sept. 2003.

### 12. Electronic Encyclopedia, (CD ROM or Online):

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Encyclopedia*. (in italics) Title of Online Source, Publication date. Publication medium. Date of Access.

Example:

Cottrell, Leonard. "Pompeii." *The New Book of Knowledge*. Grolier Online. 2002. Web. 25 Aug 2003.

### 13. Internet Image, (Including a Painting, Sculpture, or Photograph):

Artist's Last Name, First Name. *Title of Work of Art*. (in italics) Date of creation. Name of Institution, and City where work is housed. *Name of Website*. (in italics) Publication medium. Date of access.

Example:

Klee, Paul. *Twittering Machine*. 1992. Museum of Modern Art, New York. *The Artchive*. Web. 22 May 2006.

14. Internet Video: (YouTube)

Author's Last Name, First Name. *Title of Video*. (in italics) Date of creation. Title of Web Site.  
Publication medium. Date of access.

Example:

Obama, Barack. "*We Have a Lot of Work to Do*." 2 Nov. 2008. YouTube. Web. 23 June 2009.

15. Digital Files (PDFs, MP3s, JPEGs, MSword, etc. )

Author's Last Name, First Name. *Title of Work*. (in italics) Name of Institution. Date of Creation.  
Publication medium. (Use *Digital File* when the medium cannot be determined.)

Example:

Beethoven, Ludwig van. *Moonlight Sonata*. Crownstar. 2006. MP3.

16. ebook:

Author's Last Name, First Name. *Full Book Title*. (in italics) Edition if stated. Volume number if stated. City: Publisher, Date. *Title of database or Website*. (in italics) Publication medium. Date of access.

Example:

Warton, Edith. *The Age of Innocence*. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1920. *World Book Advanced*. Web. 16 Jan. 2009.

17. Blog

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of individual blog entry." *Title of blog*. (in italics) Date posted.  
Publication medium. Date of access.

West, Jessamyn. "On the road." *Librarian.net*. 27 Feb. 2009. Web. 10 Mar. 2009.

18. Sound Recording: (CD, LP, Audiocassette)

Artist's (or composer's/performer's) Last Name, First Name. "Individual song title." *Album Name*. (in italics) Name of Recording Manufacturer, Publication Date. (or n.d if unknown) Publication medium.

Nirvana. "Smells Like Teen Spirit." *Nevermind*. Geffen, 1991. Audiocassette.

19. Video Recording: (DVD, VHS)

*Recording Title*. (in italics) Director's Name. Performer's names. Distributor, Release year.  
Publication medium.

*Ed Wood*. Dir. Tim Burton. Perf. Johnny Depp, Martin Landau, Sarah Jessica Parker, Patricia Arquette. Touchstone, 1994. DVD.

## Example of a “Works Cited” page

Remember, the title “Works Cited” should appear centered at the top of the page. Page should be double-spaced; including the line between the title and the first entry. Each entry is alphabetized according to Author’s last name. Each entry will begin flush with the left 1” margin and if the entry is more than one line, the subsequent lines are indented 5 spaces from the left margin. 12 point font. (Please note following examples were short and did not need an indented 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> line)

### Works Cited

Biel, Timothy. “The Deer Family.” *Zoobooks* April 2002: 2-3. Print.

Caldwell, Gloria. “Moose Facts.” *Mooseworld*. n.p. 1999. Web. 25 October 2011.

DuTemple, Lesley. *North American Moose*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda, 2001. Print.

Mech, David. “Moose.” *World Book Encyclopedia*. 2002. Print.

Ross, Judy. *Nature’s Children–Moose*. Danbury: Grolier, 1986. Print.