MLA FORMATTING

Use the following as a guide when writing your essay, and then use it as a checklist while editing.
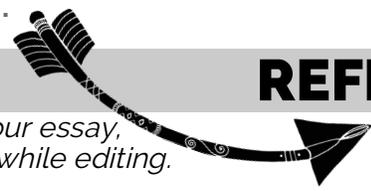
GENERAL FORMATTING

- ❑ Your essay should be typed and printed on standard white 8.5 x 11 inch paper.
- ❑ Double-space the text, and use a clear legible font (e.g. Times Roman or Cambria) in font size 12pt.
- ❑ You should have 1-inch margins on all sides of your writing.
- ❑ The first line of each paragraph needs to be indented one half-inch from the left margin.
- ❑ Left justify the text of your essay.
- ❑ Titles of books and plays should be italicized, but titles of poems and short stories should be enclosed within quotation marks.
- ❑ Do not make a title page for your paper unless specifically requested.
- ❑ On the first page of your essay, in the upper left-hand corner of the page, list your name, your teacher's name, the course, and the date (also use double-spaced text).
- ❑ Create a header that numbers all pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner.

IN TEXT CITATIONS

- ❑ Whenever you quote **a book or article**, you must include the author's name and page number in parentheses after the quotation.
  - » *… it is clear that "increased participation in class will lead to higher grades" (Smith 34).*
- ❑ Do not put a comma between the name and number in parentheses.
- ❑ If you have used the author's name in the sentence, there is no need to include it in the parentheses.
  - » *Smith points out that "increased participation in class will lead to higher grades" (34).*
- ❑ When quoting **poetry**, you must include the line number being quoted.
  - » *We see the poet's anguish when he asks "What passing bells for these who die as cattle?" (Owen 1).*
- ❑ When quoting a **play**, you must include the act, scene and line number being quoted.
  - » *…Polonius's assertion that if you are true to yourself, then "Thou canst not then be false to any man" (1.3.81) is good advice.*

WORKS CITED PAGE

- ❑ At the end of your essay you must include a Works Cited Page, documenting your sources.
- ❑ Title this page as Works Cited, and write it in the center, at the top of the page.
- ❑ Your works cited should be listed alphabetically.

How to Cite Your Sources

BOOKS

Surname, First name. *Book Title in Italics.* City of publication, name of publisher, year of publication. Medium of publication.

EXAMPLE: Smith, John. *The Art of Editing.* London, Oxford City Press, 2003. Print.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Surname, First name. "Article Title in Quotation Marks." *Journal Name* Volume (year): page numbers. *Name of the Database if Online.* Medium of publication. Day, month, year accessed.

EXAMPLE: Thomas, Rahul. "Investigating Rural Unemployment Theory." *Journal of Economics* 15.3 (1983): 135-184. *JSTOR.* Web. 3 June 2015.

WEBSITES

Author's name (if known). Title of the Website in Italics if Independent or in Quotation Marks if Part of a Larger Work. Publisher of the site (if not known use n.p). Date of publication (if not known use n.d.). Medium of publication. Day, month, year accessed.

EXAMPLE: "Health Risks Linked to Obesity". WebMD, n.d. Web. 7 April 2015.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Surname, First name. "Article Title in Quotation Marks." *Name of the Newspaper in Italics* Date of Publication: Page Number. Medium of publication.

EXAMPLE: Hall, Antonia. "Crunch Time in Colorado." *New York Times* 4 May 1998: 12. Print.

For more detailed notes, refer to the Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue University:
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/15/