Research and Report Writing
Expectations for Students

In order to promote good writing habits, research and report writing is essential within all academic areas in our district. To provide continuity of the process, Hardyston Township School District follows the style features of MLA (Modern Language Association), which is followed by many high schools, colleges, and universities. It provides a unified base for scholarly writing and documentation, giving students a standard form for research and report writing. According to the Modern Language Association website,

"What Is MLA Style?

All fields of research agree on the need to document scholarly borrowings, but documentation conventions vary because of the different needs of scholarly disciplines. MLA style for documentation is widely used in the humanities, especially in writing on language and literature. Generally simpler and more concise than other styles, MLA style features brief parenthetical citations in the text keyed to an alphabetical list of works cited that appears at the end of the work.

MLA style has been widely adopted by schools, academic departments, and instructors for over half a century. The association's guidelines are also used by over 1,100 scholarly and literary journals, newsletters, and magazines and by many university and commercial presses. The MLA's guidelines are followed throughout North America and in Brazil, China, India, Japan, Taiwan, and other countries around the world."

From elementary school through middle school, students should follow the MLA style methods for documentation of reports or research. Please refer to the preceding guides for the basics on final submission; those guides follow MLA style standards.

Dependent on the writing or report, teachers will give a guide for final submission and indicate to students to use either a standard heading or a title page; most reports should not need a title page.

Here is a sample first page for a general report/research assignment:

Student information should be double-spaced along the left margin.

Page numbers should appear in the upper right hand corner of each page; this can easily be done with the "header" feature in most word processing systems.

The title should be centered, followed by the body of the paper.

The full paper should observe one inch margins, have double line spaces, and use a standard print font, no smaller than size 11 or larger than size 12.

Student's last name #

Student's Name
Teacher's Name
Subject / Class
Date assignment is due

Title of Report/ Research/ Essay Topic

(indent for first paragraph)

Here is a sample title page:

Title should be centered, using size 12 font and single spaced. Caps are not necessary.
Unless directed, students should not place illustrations on a title page.

Title of Report (Research Topic)
{Subtopic, if needed)

Student's Name
Teacher's Name
Subject/Grade Level
Due Date

The student's name should appear here, along with the teacher's name, subject/grade level, and date the assignment is due.

Please note:
The full paper should observe one inch margins, have double line spaces, and use a standard print font, no smaller than size 11 or larger than size 12.

Students should always document information. Both Elementary and Middle School students are expected to include a bibliography for any report or research writing. The standard for a bibliography would be to arrange sources in alphabetical order, generally by the last name of the author/contributor, followed by source information. If no author, then arrange by title and then source information. Please note the first line begins at the margin, the second line is indented by five spaces. Individual entries are single spaced, with double spacing between each entry. Examples of the most commonly used types for documenting sources follow.

For books:
Author's last name, first. *Title of the Book.*
        Where it was published: Who Published. Recent copyright date. Source type.
(example)
Andrlik, Todd. *Reporting the Revolutionary War: Before it was history, it was news.*
        Illinois: Sourcebooks, Inc. 2012.   Print.

For Encyclopedias:
Author's /editor's last name, first name. "Title of Article." *Title/Name of Encyclopedia.*
        Where it was published : Who Published. Recent copyright date. Source type.
(example)
Love, Carrie; Caroline Stamps, and Ben Morgan, ed. "What is a plant?" *First Science Encyclopedia.*
        New York: DK Publishing. 2008. Print.

For On-line/Internet sources:

Last name, First name. "Article Title." Website Title. Publisher of Website, Day Month Year article was published. Web.
Day Month Year article was accessed. <URL>.

(example)

Van Deusen, Amy. "The Types of Gymnastics." *About.com.Gymnastics*. About.com 2013. 24 August 2013.
http://gymnastics.about.com/od/gymnastics101/a/gymtypes.htm

Sample Bibliography page:

<div style="border:1px solid">

Bibliography

Andrlik, Todd. *Reporting the Revolutionary War: Before it was history, it was news.*
Illinois: Sourcebooks, Inc. 2012. Print.

Love, Carrie; Caroline Stamps, and Ben Morgan, ed. "What is a plant?" *First Science Encyclopedia.*
New York: DK Publishing. 2008. Print.

Van Deusen, Amy. "The Types of Gymnastics." *About.com.Gymnastics*. About.com 2013. 24 August 2013.
http://gymnastics.about.com/od/gymnastics101/a/gymtypes.htm Internet.

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Students in grades seven and eight will learn proper parenthetical citations, along with creating annotated bibliographies. Additional information and samples will be added to these guides as needed over the course of the year. Please refer to the following, excellent web sources for information regarding documentation and format:

Modern Language Association

Students and parents will find general information regarding style of documentation and updates to the Handbook.
http://www.mla.org

The Purdue Online Writing Lab

This site has examples of the documentation styles for all of the scholarly organizations, including MLA.
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/