

# *TPA Style Guide*



## *Our Mission*

The mission of Tempe Preparatory Academy and Tempe Prep Junior Academy is to educate students for the lifelong pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty. TPA graduates have a foundation in the liberal arts of grammar and rhetoric, logic and mathematics, history, natural science, and philosophy. Graduates will also have practiced the fine arts of music, drawing and painting, and drama. TPA graduates are thus prepared for every career, every course of advanced or specialized study, and every kind of leisure.

**The Academies will fulfill their mission by the following means:**

- Service to a rigorous, core liberal arts curriculum in the Western tradition that is the same for all students.
- Small classes of 22 or fewer.
- Dedicated, enthusiastic, and intellectually excellent teachers who serve as models of learning and of character.
- Detailed student evaluation, with an emphasis upon written, narrative evaluation of learning rather than upon grades and percentages.
- Regular and meaningful homework assignments.
- High standards of personal conduct and comportment for students.

Though the curriculum is rigorous and expectations for students are high, the Academies are not exclusive schools strictly for the elite. Our goal is to provide an environment that allows every student who is curious and diligent the opportunity to fulfill her or his potential. The Academies offer a core curriculum in which each of the grades builds on previous grades over the student's seven-year tenure. The 11th and 12th grades in particular gather all of the previous years of liberal arts study together to offer students a critical and comprehensive understanding of the Western tradition.

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## Introduction

This style guide provides an overview of the standards of writing and formatting at TPA as well as some suggested strategies for students endeavoring to improve their writing. This guide should be used in conjunction with TPA's grammar study series, Strunk and White's *Elements of Style*, and the *Little, Brown Handbook*. Generally, the format guidelines which appear in the subsequent pages follow those of the MLA (Modern Language Association) and Chicago style manuals, and absent any alternative instructions, students should prepare all written work according to the standards outlined in this guide. Students should also be aware that individual teachers may require alternate formatting for specific assignments or may occasionally require the use of other style guides.<sup>1</sup>

During their years at TPA, students will be introduced to various types of writing styles through creative, narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive assignments, but the TPA curriculum has, as a primary focus, the analytical five-paragraph essay. The writing program overall is organized according to the Trivium, the heart of liberal arts education, with mastery of Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric as the foremost goal. Although all elements of good writing are addressed each year, the program is progressive according to the following:

I. Grammatical precision is the focus of grades 6, 7, and 8:

- Sentence structure
- Parts of speech
- Basics rules of usage
- Paragraph structure
- Introduction to thesis statements

II. Logical argumentation is the focus in grades 9 and 10:

- Development of thesis statements
- Structure of the essay
- Rhetorical Purpose and Methods of Development
- Use of textual evidence
- Mastery of grammar and mechanics

III. Rhetorical<sup>2</sup> style is the focus in grades 11 and 12:

- Development of fluid and graceful style, especially through use of transitional elements and thoughtful word choice
- Refined techniques in writing introductions and conclusions
- Advanced usage of figures of speech

IV. Senior Thesis

Having mastered elements of writing in grades 6-11, Seniors are expected to produce a Senior Thesis in which they demonstrate true craftsmanship in writing. The Thesis, then, is the culminating product of experience in the previous six years of writing and students are encouraged to explore any discipline in the liberal arts through an examination of the six great ideas of the Western tradition defined as Truth, Beauty, Goodness, Justice, Freedom, and Equality.

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<sup>1</sup> Some other commonly used style guides include: ACS (American Chemical Society), used for scientific papers; AP (Associated Press), used in journalism; APA (American Psychological Association), used in education departments and generally by the social sciences.

<sup>2</sup> As a discipline, rhetoric has been defined many ways, by many people, through many centuries. We regard rhetoric as the means for effectively illuminating the truth of logical argumentation through deliberate and refined expression, but not as a means for inflating language, buttressing weak reasoning, or using language purely for language's sake.

## Writing Objectives by Grade Level

Grade <i>Types of writing; Academic focuses</i>	Grammar	Logic	Rhetoric
6 <u>Introduction to writing</u> <u>Formulating questions</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Parts of Speech</li> <li>*Sentence structure</li> <li>*Introduction of paragraphs</li> <li>*Editing<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*<i>Formulating different types of questions (e.g. comprehension, creative, discussion) to understand what critical thinking is and develop independent inquiry</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Summary</li> <li>*Vocabulary development</li> <li>*Use of metaphorical language</li> </ul>
7 <u>Examples</u> <u>Expository writing</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*<i>Parts of speech</i></li> <li>*<i>Phrases and Clauses</i></li> <li>*<i>Advanced Sentence Structure (simple; compound; complex)</i></li> <li>*<i>Developing Paragraphs</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Intro to thesis statements</li> <li>*Distinguishing between facts and opinions</li> <li>*Clarity of expression</li> <li>*Punctuation to support clear expression: end marks; commas; semicolons; colons; apostrophes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Placement of clauses and phrases within sentences (variety in style)</li> <li>*Using different words to express shades of meaning (vocabulary)</li> </ul>
8 <u>Examples</u> <u>Comp/Contrast</u> <u>Narrative writing</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*<i>Phrases and Clauses</i></li> <li>*<i>Nominative and Objective Cases</i></li> <li>*<i>Direct, Indirect Objects</i></li> <li>*<i>Use of quoted material</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Topic sentences</li> <li>*Incorporating subordinating ideas within sentences</li> <li>*Transitional words/phrases</li> <li>*Punctuation: quotation marks</li> <li>*Usage: agreement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Sentence variety for interest</li> <li>*Effective word choice</li> </ul>
9 <u>Essays: Steps</u> <u>Ways in which</u> <u>Reasons for</u> <u>Effects of</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*citation format for literature, ref. materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*<i>Methods of analysis</i></li> <li>*<i>Rhetorical purpose</i></li> <li>*<i>Thesis statements &amp; LSU test</i></li> <li>*<i>Parallelism in topic sentences</i></li> <li>*<i>Choosing citations</i></li> <li>*<i>Introductions &amp; conclusions</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*verb tense for essays</li> <li>*clarity (see Strunk &amp; White)</li> </ul>
10 <u>Ways in which</u> <u>Parts</u> <u>Compare/contrast</u>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*<i>thesis statements: LSU with complex elements</i></li> <li>*<i>Introductions and conclusions (further dev.)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*effective writing (see Strunk &amp; White)</li> </ul>
11 <u>Multi-text comparisons</u> <u>Revision</u>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*<i>Gracefulness</i></li> <li>*<i>Forcefulness</i></li> <li>*<i>Word choice (Strunk &amp; White)</i></li> <li>*<i>Elements of literary style (e.g., irony) – essay models</i></li> </ul>
12 <u>Senior Thesis</u>	Mastery of all elements of writing demonstrated through the production and defense of a Senior Thesis		

<sup>3</sup> Editing, of course, should take place at all levels and for all elements of writing. Some teachers may employ peer editing in class to help students develop awareness of particular writing issues and to aid in the rewriting process. As a community of learners, peer editing is encouraged but should not be confused with collaboration, which is not permitted. As with all assignments, students are expected to complete work on their own without outside help from parents, friends or others. Collaboration constitutes academic dishonesty.

## Manuscript Form

### *Standards for Handwritten Work*

1. **Paper:** use paper that is
  - white
  - loose-leaf (not torn out of a spiral notebook)
  - standard size (8 ½ x 11 inches)
  - college ruled (narrow)
2. **Ink:** use black or dark blue ink. Use pencil only if the teacher so directs.
3. **Heading:** place on the upper right-hand side of the page the following information:
  - Name
  - Course & Section (e.g. Humane Letters 9C)
  - Assignment Name / Topic
  - Due Date
4. **Multiple Pages:**
  - staple or paper clip pages together – do not fold the corners
  - unless otherwise directed, use only one side of the paper
5. **Write neatly and legibly.**

## Manuscript Form

### *Standards for Printed Work*

1. **Font:** 12-point, Times New Roman
2. **Margins and Layout:**
  - set margins at 1 inch all around
  - left-justify printing (full-justify only with teacher direction/permission)
  - double-space
  - skip one additional line between the heading and the first paragraph
  - do not skip additional lines between paragraphs
  - number pages sequentially, centered in the footer
  - indent paragraphs one tab stop
  - single-space block quotations according to “Chicago Style”
  - consult the *Little, Brown Handbook* for technical formatting questions
3. **Heading:** place on the upper right-hand side of the first page (see format above)
4. **Multiple Pages:** staple or paper clip pages together – do not fold the corners

## A Note on Computer Issues

In the event of a computer malfunction (e.g. loss of file, printer out of ink, alien interference), students are expected to show due diligence in submitting evidence of the completed work by the assignment due date. Students should always make sure that they back up files regularly (many computers have an automatic function for this), and in the event that a file cannot be printed, the file should be emailed in a Microsoft Word or compatible format to the teacher. If email is not possible, students should submit a handwritten copy of the entire assignment until such time as a printed copy can be produced.

## Outlining Format

Students in all grades will occasionally be required to outline texts (both primary and secondary) or to produce outlines of essays before beginning the composition process.<sup>4</sup> While students in the sixth grade focus more directly on the skill of summarizing texts, students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades will work deliberately on developing outlining skills. By the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, all students should be able to demonstrate mastery of this skill.

Although teachers may have specific requirements for specific assignments, the generally accepted outline format has four tiers of information with increasing specificity. An example follows below:

### The Revolutionary War

#### I. Causes of the War

- A. The French and Indian War
  - 1. Expenses related to border protection
    - a. Taxation of the colonies to retire war debt
    - b. Quartering of regular army soldiers
  - 2. Colonial experience with new military techniques
    - a. Rise of guerilla warfare
    - b. Rise of colonial military leaders
- B. Political Grievances
  - 1. Taxation without representation
  - 2. Increased Parliamentary Control
    - a. The Intolerable Acts
    - b. The Townshend Acts

#### II. Significant Battles

- A. New England
  - 1. Lexington and Concord
  - 2. Bunker Hill
- B. The Mid-Atlantic States
  - 1. Trenton
  - 2. Saratoga
- C. The South
  - 1. Savannah
  - 2. Charleston
- D. Naval Engagements
- E. Yorktown and the End of the War
  - 1. French Role
  - 2. Cornwallis' surrender
  - 3. The Treaty of Paris

#### III. Political Effects

- A. Implementation of the Articles of Confederation
- B. Land policies
- C. Alliances with Europe

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<sup>4</sup> If your word-processing program has a default outlining format different from the above, be sure to disable the auto-format function.

## Organization of the Five Paragraph Essay<sup>5</sup>

### Rhetorical Purpose

The *purpose* of a paper is the goal of the argument. There are several goals that can explain the purpose of a paper:

- to analyze a complexity
- to argue a point
- to explain what a thesis means
- to compare or contrast two subjects
- to interpret a passage or figure
- to support a position
- to qualify a generalization
- to consider or examine the possibilities of an event, idea, etc.
- to convince the reader of an idea

Some points to consider about rhetorical purpose:

- Defining the purpose of a paper is a critical step. It precedes the determination of a method of development (see following section). The method of development is chosen because it is the most effective way of achieving the writer's purpose. Likewise, the tone of the paper and the arrangement of information in it depend on what the purpose of the paper is.
- The purpose of a paper is often determined for the writer by the topic or question posed by the teacher, or by the nature of the assignment.
- Rhetorical purposes can overlap: a student may **support a position** by **comparing two figures**. However, one purpose will be primary and will drive the analysis.

### Methods of Development

A writer chooses a method of development as a way to expand a central idea (thesis statement, topic sentence) into a discussion. There are several methods for doing this:

- *narration* – telling a story relevant to the thesis
- *description* – recreating the sensory experience relative to the thesis
- *definition* – establishing the type of the topic by its component parts
- *examples* – listing illustrative instances of the point
- *comparison* – displaying points of similarity or difference between two subjects
- *analysis* – dividing a topic into parts. Analysis is further divisible into five types:
  - Ways in which
  - Steps
  - Parts
  - Reasons for
  - Effects of

The methods of development noted above are used in various writing exercises, such as book reports, concert reviews, and analytical essays. In Humane Letters classes, where analytical essays are the central writing exercise, the main methods of development are comparison and analysis (with its subparts). It is true that parts of the other methods will enter into the essay – i.e., elements of narration and description give background to the analysis of the events of a novel, and quoted material furnishes examples to illustrate the writer's analysis of a text. However, these other elements serve to support the comparison or analysis. Merely reciting the events of a story or describing a character are not, in themselves, the goal of an analytical essay. (Cf. "Use of Quotations" below.)

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<sup>5</sup> Much of the material in this section is adapted from the Trinity Schools Writing Manual.

## The Thesis Statement

The thesis statement is the sentence in the essay which states the essay's central idea. It is characterized by clarity and focus more than by complexity. The test of clarity is whether the thesis statement is **limited**, **specific**, and **unified** – or what may be termed the LSU “test”.

- *Limited* characterizes the grammatical subject of the thesis statement. An essay should focus on one particular subject. It should not have multiple parts, and it must have a relatively narrow scope.
- *Specific* describes the verb of the thesis statement. The verb must be precise and meaningful. As a rule, the use of a form of the verb “to be” as the verb of the thesis statement is a sign of insufficient specificity. Action verbs, therefore, are preferable for providing force to an argument.
- *Unified* applies to the predicate of the thesis statement. The predicate should express only one idea about the subject. (The use of “and” in the predicate -“Huck Finn grows in self-awareness and in moral responsibility” - is one sign of lack of unity.)

Examples of weak and strong thesis statements:

*Weak:* In the Civil War, the North had several material advantages compared to the Southern states. (subject not limited; predicate overly broad)

*Stronger:* In the Civil War, the North's greater access to industrial resources gave it superiority over the Southern states.

*Weak:* For most of the 100 Years' War, France's preoccupation with social class was seen in several major confrontations. (verb too general and passive)

*Stronger:* For most of the 100 Years' War, France's preoccupation with social class caused disastrous defeat in several major confrontations.

*Weak:* Victor Frankenstein fails in his quest for revenge but rediscovers a sense of purpose for his life. (predicate too complex – requires dealing with several aspects of the person's character.)

*Stronger:* Although unable to defeat his Creature, Victor Frankenstein's vengeful quest gives him final mastery over himself. (Use of phrase at beginning allows writer to suggest both ideas but emphasizes one central idea: the essay is focused on Victor Frankenstein's growth in self-possession.)

## Topic Sentences

Each of the paragraphs of the analytical essay begins with a topic sentence. Like a thesis statement, a topic sentence presents a central idea – in this case, of the paragraph. Also like a thesis statement, it must meet the test of being limited, specific, and unified.

Within an essay, the topic sentences of the supporting paragraphs must be **thematically and grammatically parallel**<sup>6</sup> to the thesis statement and to each other:

- The grammatical subject of each topic sentence should be logically related to the grammatical subject of the thesis statement. The same should be true of the verb and of the predicate as a whole.
- The subject, verb, and predicate of each topic sentence should be logically related to the subject, verb, and predicate of each of the other two topic sentences.

<sup>6</sup> Some teachers may require that topic sentences be strictly grammatically parallel such that the subject and verb of the thesis are repeated as the subject and verb of each topic sentence. While this is encouraged early in the writing process, it should be discouraged in the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grades.

## Topic Sentences continued

Example of faulty parallelism:

Thesis: “Frodo Baggins’ growth in maturity develops his heroic virtue.”

Topic Sentence #1: “Frodo Baggins’ concern with comfort is weaker later in the novel.” (The verb “is” does not parallel the verb “develops” in the thesis; “Frodo’s diminished love for comfort enables perseverance” more closely links the two sentences by using active verbs.)

Topic sentence #2: “The trip to Mt. Doom requires Frodo’s conquest of fear.” (The subject of this sentence is not a quality in Frodo, whereas his qualities are the subject of the thesis statement and the previous topic sentence. “Frodo’s conquest of fear empowers his trip to Mt. Doom” maintains parallelism among the subjects.)

## Use of Quotations

Quotations should be used exclusively to support the analysis contained in the essay, not to retell a story or summarize a philosophical position. In other words, students should quote for authority and not for information.<sup>7</sup>

There are three ways in which quotations can be incorporated into an essay<sup>8</sup>:

### 1. Introduction or lead-in:

e.g. Jim Burden says, “I was something that lay under the sun and felt it, like the pumpkins, and I did not want to be anything more. I was entirely happy” (47).

### 2. Embedded (preferred style):

e.g. Jim Burden remarks that he felt like “something that lay under the sun, like the pumpkins” and “was entirely happy” (47).

### 3. Paraphrase:

e.g. Sitting in his grandmother’s garden, Jim Burden lies under the sun like a pumpkin and feels entirely happy (47).

The more seamless the division between the quotation and the student’s writing, the better the essay will flow.

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<sup>7</sup> Comment by T.J. Davis, Professor of History at Arizona State University.

<sup>8</sup> These examples are derived from Willa Cather’s novel *My Antonia*.

### Notes on Block Quotations

In general, block quotations should be used sparingly in long papers and not at all in short papers. In the event that a block quotation is necessary, it should be single spaced according to the following example:

The choice to engage or not engage the enemy, therefore, was for some at least, a function of practicality and the result of having support not only from one's comrades in arms, but also from those far away making critical decisions and putting forth critical effort in support of the soldier at the front.

Convictions of duty, honor, patriotism, and ideology functioned as the principal sustaining motivations of Civil War soldiers, while the impulses of courage, self-respect, and group cohesion were the main sources of combat motivation. But without a firm base of support in the homes and communities from which these citizen soldiers came, their morale would have crumbled. (McPherson 131)

Support from, and a sustained will of, the home front is now an oft cited reason for the Union's victory, although the nature of that support and political will is still ripe for discussion.<sup>9</sup>

***N.B. The punctuation at the end of the block quotation should always appear before the parenthetical citation, which is different from the standard parenthetical citation punctuation.***

***N.B. Do not indent the block quotation when quoting a single complete paragraph or part of a paragraph. Indent only when quoting two or more complete paragraphs.***

### The Use of Ellipses...

Different teachers will likely have different preferences regarding the use of ellipses with quotations from prose texts. *The Little, Brown Handbook* contains an extensive explanation of the use of ellipses, but cautions that one should "[u]se an ellipsis mark when it is not otherwise clear that you have left out material from the source..." (425). Generally, for TPA papers, ellipses should be used only when information has been omitted from the middle of a quotation; the extensive use of ellipses has a jarring effect on the style and rhetoric of an essay.

1. Preferred:

"During the U.S. Civil War, the border states...all legally supported slavery and were essentially unaffected by the Emancipation Proclamation." (The ellipsis indicating the list of states need not appear in this context.)

2. Less effective:

"... [T]he border states...all legally supported slavery..." (In this example, a paraphrase would likely be better.)

Students should also be very careful not to omit text and use ellipses to take information out of context to erroneously support their analysis.

Original Quote: "The Blattnard is a great car if you are not looking for reliability, safety, and elegance in the vehicle you purchase."

Misuse of Ellipsis: "The Blattnard is a great car..."

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<sup>9</sup> This example is based upon material from James M. McPherson's book *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford UP, 1997).

## Introductions

- “Grabbers” are often effective for beginning an essay; however, students should be careful about the way in which they construct these.  
A grabber should rarely be a quotation from a source other than the text(s) being analyzed in the essay. Unrelated quotations, while they may express similar ideas contained in the primary text(s), detract from the value of and focus on the object(s) of analysis. If, however, a teacher permits such usage or such a grabber is integral to the nature of an assignment, the student should be certain not to take quotations out of context in order to make ideas fit together that are otherwise unrelated. Furthermore, the student must be sure to provide a full bibliographic entry for the source of the quotation and should provide some rationale in the introduction as to why the source is authoritative. In other words, students should not use quotations by people with whom they are unfamiliar.
- The best type of grabber is one in which the student has constructed a powerful statement of observation about the text(s) in question in his/her own words.
- Unless otherwise directed, students should not provide summaries of the text(s) being analyzed in the introduction (although they should always include the title and author). Students should presume that the teacher is the audience and spend the bulk of the essay analyzing and evaluating the text. Any necessary plot, contextual, or explanatory information should be interwoven with the analysis.
- To establish the essay’s purpose, students may wish to include in their introduction an essential question for discussion that leads naturally to the thesis. Obviously, the question should not be one that can be answered simply with a “yes” or “no” response.
- In the initial stages of learning how to write essays, teachers may require the students to finish an introduction with a “plan of attack” or outline of development. As students become more comfortable with writing and more sophisticated in their constructions, students should endeavor to work more deliberately on smooth transitions, eschewing the plan of attack for compelling/leading language.
- The introduction should never begin with the thesis as the first statement or end with the thesis as the last. An introduction should always have a significant lead-in to the thesis in order to provide context and purpose, and should always have a transitional element to the first body paragraph and topic sentence.

## Conclusions

- Never begin a conclusion with “In conclusion.”
- In earlier grades, students will likely use the conclusion to summarize the earlier paragraphs and establish that the thesis was successfully argued. However, by the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, students should be working toward writing more advanced conclusions. That is, the conclusion should become the focus of the paper and should add a deeper level of understanding to the thesis. Conclusions should never introduce a wholly new argument, but should highlight the deeper implications of the essay.

## Science Department Writing

### General Lab Report Format

- All lab reports must be TYPED.
- Make sure you provide the following information on each and every lab report in the order listed:
  - Purpose** of the lab. This should be one clearly written sentence, although it may have several parts. This statement should introduce the objective of the lab and any variables (independent and dependent) that the lab is investigating. Teachers may have you include a hypothesis in this section. The purpose should be addressed in the conclusion as it is the central focus of the entire lab report.
  - Materials and equipment.** List all biological materials, chemicals and unique equipment that were used. Items such as “goggles,” “gloves,” and “brain,” are assumed and need not be listed.
  - Procedure.** The procedure should be listed according to steps: i.e. Step1: Step 2: Step 3: etc. In the conclusion, a discussion should be included concerning any changes made to the procedure while performing the experiment and how results were altered/improved. Students may use the imperative mood when writing their procedure: i.e. Step 1: Place the beaker on the scale.
  - Data Tables.** Be sure to type out a clean copy of the raw data you collected during the experiments. Also, label your data tables clearly with titles and include definitions of any variables, terms, or short hand notations:

Table 1.1  
Precipitation Reactions of Ionic Compounds

Cations				
Anions				

- Analysis.** This section should include any generalizations or patterns which emerge from the data tables presented above. This section may also include graphs, calculations, or answers to questions posed by the instructor.
  - Conclusion.** This is an extremely important part of the lab and should include references to the actual data or analysis of data as well as references to the purpose of the lab. Did you fulfill the purpose? What trends did you notice? What formulas were you able to derive/use? How does your data support your conclusion? Is there an explanation or possible explanation for the data? Was there an error factor and why do you think errors might have occurred? How could errors be avoided in the future? What are the implications of the information gleaned from the lab?
- Labs should be concise and clearly written. Grammar and spelling count.
  - The 1<sup>st</sup> person can be used in labs when appropriate and necessary. However, students should avoid using the 1<sup>st</sup> person unless absolutely necessary. You or your group is not the subject of the lab report; the data and ideas are.

## Citation Formats

### Commonly Used Citations:

Unless otherwise instructed, students should use the MLA style for parenthetical citations according to the following guidelines, noting especially the punctuation:

#### 1. Single Text

In a paper analyzing only one text, the text must be identified in the introduction and citations need only include the page number in parentheses:

e.g. John Locke asserts that, “labour, in the beginning, gave a right of property” (47).

***N.B. Do not use “pg.” or “page.”***

#### 2. Two or More Texts by Same Author

In a paper analyzing two or more texts by the same author, an abbreviation of the text’s title, if appropriate, should be used:

e.g. Commenting upon *Oedipus the King* as a prime example of Tragedy, Aristotle observes that the “deed of horror may be done, but done in ignorance” (Aristotle, *Poetics*, 47). Additionally, Aristotle also argues that, “Where there are ends apart from the actions, it is the nature of the products to be better than the activities” (Aristotle, *Ethics*, 47).<sup>10</sup>

#### 3. Two or More Texts by Different Authors

In this case, the author’s last name should be used followed by the page number of the quotation. (If two or more texts are used by the same author, the author’s last name should be used followed by an abbreviation of the title and the page number.):

e.g. Huck Finn begins to wrestle with his conscience when he asks the question, “What’s the use you learning to do right, when it’s troublesome to do right and ain’t no trouble to do wrong, and the wages is just the same?” (Twain 47). Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*, however, offers a different perspective when he comments about one who commits a crime that “[i]f he has a conscience he will suffer for his mistake. That will be punishment-as well as the prison” (Dostoevsky 47).

***N.B. There is no comma between the author’s last name and the page number.***

4. Block Quotations - Please see the notes on block quotations under the “Use of Quotations” section.

### Specialized Citations

#### 1. Poetry

To cite a poem, cite the line number(s), and, if appropriate, the section of the poem if it is divided into parts (i.e. canto, book, act, scene, etc.). Use only Arabic numerals.

e.g. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow writes, “Tell me not in mournful numbers, / Life is but an empty dream!” (lines 1-2).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *Poetics* translation by S.H. Butcher available at <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/poetics.html>, and *Nicomachean Ethics* translation by W.D. Ross available at <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.1.i.html>.

<sup>11</sup> From “A Psalm of Life”

## 2. Shakespeare

Quotations from plays should be followed by a parenthetical citation in which the act, scene, and line(s) are noted with regular Arabic (not Roman) numerals, separated by periods, and with a dash between the first and last lines if more than one line is cited. (See the examples below from *Henry V*.)

### **Example 1: citation using same format as in original text:**

...honor among his people. Before the battle of Agincourt, Westmoreland says:

O that we now had here  
But one ten thousand of those men in England  
That do no work to-day! (4.3.18-20)

Clearly, Westmoreland fears the overpowering numbers of the French and seems to resent that many of his countrymen do not realize the price that others are about to pay.

Note that in the above example, the lines "break" (end) just as they do in the play. The lines are also indented from the main body of the essay. All lines are indented at the same place. A full line of space is placed before the first line of the citation and after the last line.

**Example 2: citation using continuous-citation format:** Rather than blocking the text, lines can be separated with a slash (/):

...honor among his people. Before the battle of Agincourt, Westmoreland says: "O that we now had here / But one ten thousand of those men in England / That do no work today!" (4.3.18-20). Clearly, Westmoreland fears the overpowering numbers of the French and seems to resent that many of his countrymen do not realize the price that...

Students may choose to use either format listed above.

*\* N.B. In the first example, no quotation marks are used. They are used in the second example, however, when the quotation is written in continuous lines. (See also, use of block quotations.) The words "But" and "That" in the second example begin with capital letters, just as they appear in the play. Write the words exactly as they appear in the text.*

## 3. The Bible

When citing The Bible, list the name of the book first (abbreviate any book with a title more than four letters long) followed by the chapter and verse in Arabic numerals: e.g. (Gen. 11.9).

#### 4. Internet Sites and Sources

Students should be aware that information gathered from the internet is not necessarily from an internet source. An internet source is one that was exclusively created for publication on the internet. Generally, these sites are not permitted for use in TPA papers unless the teacher directs otherwise.

If a student finds articles published by journals, newspapers, etc. using the internet, those sources are NOT internet sources and the student should treat the material according to the standards concerning non-electronic sources in the MLA manual or *Little, Brown Handbook*. The parenthetical citation should follow the standard practice, and the bibliographic entry should include a listing of the source website and a notation of the date it was accessed, as in the following example:

Linder, Douglas. *Famous American Trials: The Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti*. (University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law: 2000). Available from: <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/SaccoV.htm> (6 November 2004).

#### Capitalization with Quotations

- When a quotation is introduced with a phrase such as “*He says*”, “*She asks*,” and the like, the first letter of the quotation must be capitalized.  
e.g. Mary Bennet opines, “A person may be proud without being vain” (47).
- When embedding quoted material, either a complete sentence or fragment, into a longer sentence, if the first letter is capitalized in the original material, it is entered as a bracketed lower-case letter in the citation:

e.g. Mary Bennet shares her opinion that “[a] person may be proud without being vain” (47).<sup>12</sup>

#### Bibliographies

For assignments requiring bibliographic references, teachers should indicate a preference for a Bibliography, Selected Bibliography, Annotated Bibliography, or Works Cited page. Either MLA or Chicago style is acceptable for these reference pages. For a complete overview of these styles, please consult the *Little, Brown Handbook*.

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<sup>12</sup> Both examples are from Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*.

## Some Stylistic Principles

### Sexist Language

To avoid the appearance of gender preference in writing, many academic institutions have adopted guidelines regarding sexist language. At TPA, teachers have the prerogative to establish such guidelines for their classes. However, TPA endorses the following general principles:

- The use of “he,” “his,” etc. to refer to people in general (masculine and feminine) is acceptable.
- Similarly the use of “man” or “mankind” to refer to humanity as a whole is likewise acceptable.
- Students may use “she,” “her,” etc. if they wish, in place of the masculine.
- Students may also choose to use “he/she,” “his/her,” etc., although this is discouraged in order to avoid awkward writing.
- Whichever format students choose, it should be followed consistently within an assignment.
- The “epicene they” (i.e. “If a person wishes to avoid sexist language, *they* should follow the above directions.”) is **never** acceptable in TPA assignments as it is grammatically incorrect.

### Verb Tense in Analytical Essays

When describing the events that occur in a work of literature, or the ideas of an author of a work of philosophy, the events or ideas should generally be related in the present tense (i.e., “Raskolnikov *struggles* with having to admit his criminal responsibility to those he *considers* inferior”; “Locke *states* that the purpose of a legislature *is* the protection of property.”) However, the past tense is appropriate when two events are being described, one of which preceded the other (i.e., “Victor Frankenstein *disregards* his culpability for the tragedy that the Creature *caused*.”)

History papers should be written in the past tense.

### Active vs. Passive Voice

Generally, students should use the active voice (i.e., “Elizabeth *reads* Darcy’s letter...” ) rather than the passive voice (“Darcy’s letter *is read by* Elizabeth”) in their writing. The passive voice is preferable in some cases, but students should be cautious to avoid overusing it. The best strategy to avoid unnecessary use of passive voice is for students to consciously use action verbs and not forms of the verb “to be” whenever possible.

## Common Problems in Essay Writing

Although Strunk and White have a great deal to offer concerning common grammatical and stylistic errors, listed below are some issues TPA teachers encounter on a regular basis.

1. **Use of first and second person:** Unless explicitly told otherwise by a teacher, students should never use the first person (I, we, us) or second person (you) when writing essays. Analysis should be presented in the more objective third person (he, she, it, they).
2. **Contractions:** Don't use them. Contractions cause writing to sound too familiar and **colloquial**, thus weakening the weight of the argument. By extension, **colloquial** language and expressions (clichés) should be avoided at all times.
3. **Coordinating Conjunctions:** These include: and, but, or, for, nor, either, neither, yet. Never use **so** as a coordinating conjunction. It is both colloquial and weak.

Corollary: Be cautious in the use of the **semi-colon**. It may be used in place of a coordinating conjunction, but should not generally be used as a substitute for a comma. Be sure to review the specific rules concerning the semi-colon before using it.

4. **Quotation marks:** Never use quotation marks to emphasize words. This is a colloquial and sloppy use of the punctuation. Use quotation marks only when you are directly quoting a source that is associated with a specific citation.
5. **A lot** is two words.
6. **Commonly confused words:**

**Its** is the possessive form of it. **It's** is the contraction for "it is."

**Your** is second person possessive. **You're** is the contraction for "you are."

**There** is a place. **Their** is third person possessive. **They're** is the contraction for "they are."

**Who** should always be used to refer to people. People are never "**thats**" or "**whiches**".

e.g. ...the person **who** stole the saddle off the ostrich.

NOT

...the person **that** stole the saddle off the ostrich.

**That** begins a restrictive and necessary clause. **Which** begins an unrestrictive or parenthetical clause.

e.g. Arizona is the state that has a budget problem.

vs.

Arizona, which has a budget problem, is one of the states in the U.S.

7. **Would:** Never use more than one **would** in a sentence.

**Incorrect:** If you would have put the banana in your ear, you would not have heard me.

**Correct:** If you had put the banana in your ear, you would not have heard me.

8. **Vague language:** Avoid the use of words like **thing**, **aspect**, **something**, etc.

9. **Colloquialisms:** As indicated above, expressions that are commonly used in casual speech should never appear in formal writing. Clichés such as "couldn't care less", "sharp as a tack", "gave an ear full", etc. should never be used. Words such as, just, got, and like can lead subtly to informal writing and a colloquial style and should likewise be avoided.

## Commonly Used Editing Marks and Abbreviations

¶	New paragraph	cap	Capitalization
	Parallelism	coll.	Colloquialism
/	Separate with space	cs	Comma splice
^	Insert	frag	Fragment
↷	Transpose; reverse order	p	Punctuation
✂	Delete	sp	Spelling error
○	Close space	ua	Unclear antecedent (unclear use of pronoun)
agr	Agreement (subject – verb)	vt	Verb tense
awk	Awkward wording	wc	Word choice

### A Note on Plagiarism<sup>13</sup>

*Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of another person’s words, ideas, images, artwork, or other original creative material without proper citation, i.e. plagiarism is the theft of intellectual property.*

The TPA Academic Honor Code, which every student reads and signs at the beginning of the year, includes the following provisions regarding plagiarism and essay writing:

*“I will not lie, cheat, steal, or plagiarize in any of my academic endeavors.”*

*“In the case of all essays and research papers, I will carefully cite all external sources. I will not represent someone else’s work as my own. I will do my very best to learn from my teachers the clear distinctions between appropriate research and plagiarism.”*

*“The faculty on its part manifests its confidence in the honor of its students by refraining from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent dishonesty. It must be emphasized that the purpose of the Honor Code is to educate students in ethics and encourage behavior in accordance with the school’s motto of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness.”*

<sup>13</sup> From the TPA and TPJA Family Handbooks

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- Fowler, H. Ramsay and Jane E. Aaron. *The Little, Brown Handbook*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Longman, 1998.
- Lasseter, Rollin. "Notes on Teaching Composition at Trinity School," 1989.
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- Strunk, William, Jr. and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*, 4th ed. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 2000.
- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

## Suggested Reading

- Brians, Paul. *Common Errors in English Usage*. Wilsonville, OR: William, James & Co., 2003.
- Hale, Constance. *Sin and Syntax: How to Craft Wickedly Effective Prose*. New York: Broadway Books, 1999.
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- Packer, Nancy Huddleston and John Timpane. *Writing Worth Reading: A Practical Guide*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986.
- Pinney, Thomas. *A Short Handbook and Style Sheet*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc. 1977.
- Posner, Richard A. *The Little Book of Plagiarism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2007.
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