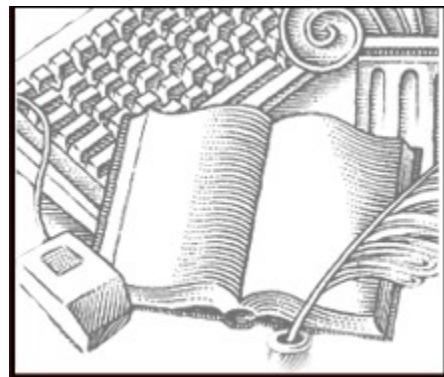


# Fairhaven High School



## Research Paper Handbook

Crafted by the FHS  
English Department



## Purpose

Fairhaven High School believes every student must be able to think critically, access information responsibly, and synthesize research logically and according to set standards.

Using a variety of methods to achieve these goals, every student at Fairhaven High School will write formal research papers for a variety of purposes in different subjects and grade levels.

## Format

Fairhaven High School adheres to the Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Sheet, which is available in *Writers Inc*, a student handbook used in all English classrooms. Although other style sheets, including APA and Turabian, are occasionally used in some history and science classes, the MLA style is the recommended school-wide format.

The following guidelines are based on MLA:

### 1. Page format

- size 12, Times New Roman font
- double-spaced
- one-inch margins
- last name and page number in upper right hand corner
- heading:

Student's name

Jane Doe

Teacher's name

Mr. Smith

Class section

English 021

Date


12 May 2006

### 2. Note cards/source cards

Source cards are used to keep track of all sources used. They will be crucial in creating the works cited page and when citing within the paper. The MLA handbook section of the *Writers Inc* gives examples of various entries.

### Source Card Sample

Source Card #



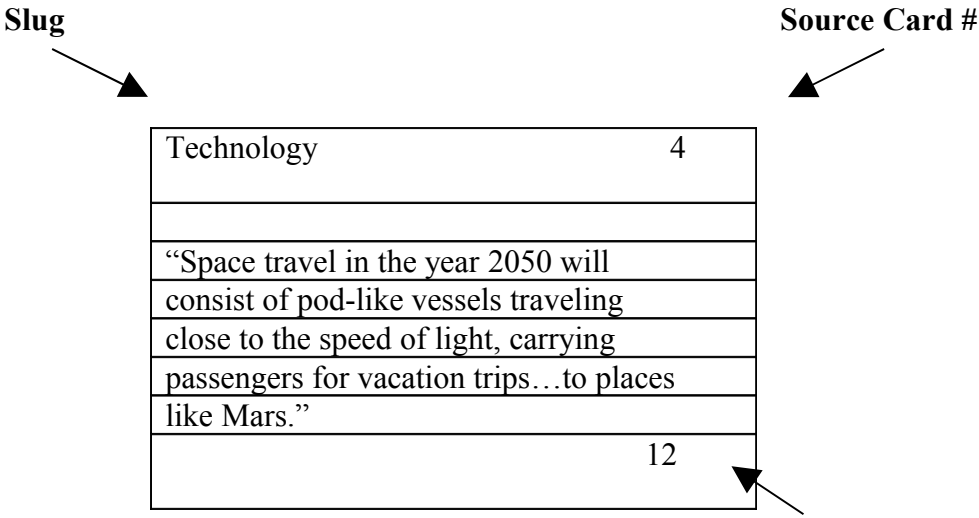
5
Zubrin, Robert J. <u>Entering Space:</u>
<u>Creating a Spacefaring Civilization.</u>
New York: Putnam, 1999.

Note cards are used to organize information found from different sources. Note cards include one piece of information and can be written in note form or direct quotations. A “Slug” is used to help categorize topics.

### Note Card Sample

Slug

Corresponding  
Source Card #



Technology	4
“Space travel in the year 2050 will consist of pod-like vessels traveling close to the speed of light, carrying passengers for vacation trips...to places like Mars.”	
	12

Page number

### 3. Outline

Once the research is complete, a phrase outline is used to organize ideas for the research paper. The MLA heading and research paper title are included on the outline and a separate set of page numbers are used. The thesis also appears immediately before the outline. Samples are available in the *Writers Inc.*

#### 4. Parenthetical documentation

MLA uses parenthetical documentation to cite sources. Parenthetical documentation puts the author's last name and page number immediately following the cited information. The MLA Handbook section of the *Writers Inc* also includes how to cite sources without authors.

##### Documentation examples:

Direct quotation with author:

Human beings have been described as "symbol-using animals" (Burke 3).

Direct quotation, no author available:

In fresco painting, "the pigments are completely fused with a damp plaster ground to become an integral part of the wall surface" ("Fresco").

Paraphrase, including author in text:

Brian Taves suggests some interesting conclusions regarding the philosophy and politics of the adventure film (153-54, 171).

#### 5. Choosing Credible Sources

When choosing sources, it is pertinent to be sure they are credible. For Internet sources, use the following checklist:

- Identify the site sponsor—individual and institution
- Check for a bibliography for the site's sources
- Are controversial issues covered equally?
- Is the research valuable?

Certain Internet sources should **NOT** be used as credible sources, including: Wikipedia, personal home pages, and any summary sites like Pink Monkey or Book Rags.

## 6. Works Cited

The Works Cited page immediately follows the last page of the research paper and is numbered accordingly. The Works Cited page is an alphabetical list of all sources actually cited in the paper, unlike a bibliography which is a list of all sources accessed.

The MLA format for works cited entries can be found in the *Writers Inc* and the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

Sample Works Cited page:

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Smith 7

### Works Cited

Astin, Alexander W. *Achieving Educational Excellence*. Washington: Jossey-Bass, 1985.

Feinberg, Joe. "Freedom and Behavior Control." *Encyclopedia of Bio-ethics*, I, 93-101. (MLA) New York: Free Press, 1992.

"Money." *Compton's Precyclopedia*. 1977 ed., X, 80-91.

"U.S. troops capture chief aide to warlord." *Hartford Courant* 22 Sept. 1993: A5.

Wiles, Maurice and Mark Santer Ed. *Documents in Early Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

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## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is any copying of someone else's work and passing it off as original. There are many levels of plagiarism, from blatant to unintentional, but *all are equally wrong*.

1. Copying word for word without documentation
2. Copying word for word without quotation marks even with documentation
3. Copying ideas or research without documentation
4. Paraphrasing into own words without documentation
5. Replacing several words with synonyms, regardless of documentation
6. Imitating style and form of original
7. Self-plagiarism—using the same paper for more than one assignment
8. Buying or borrowing a completed paper

**If a paper has been plagiarized or falsified in any manner, the student will receive a zero and other appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.**

One of the most common forms of unintentional plagiarism is incorrect **paraphrasing**. When paraphrasing from a source, completely rewrite the passage, using carefully composed sentences. The paraphrase should use original words and sentences. Use quotation marks around any key words or phrases that are taken directly from the source. A paraphrase uses roughly the same number of words and the same tone as the original and preserves the meaning of the original.

The safest practice for paraphrasing is to read a passage, then close the book and summarize what was just read.

## Requirements

Every department has their own set of requirements for research papers. The English department's research paper policy is part of the program of studies and is a requirement for graduation.

### English Department Policy on Research Papers

The research paper is an integral part of the English curriculum. In grades 9, 10, and 11 in all courses, an acceptable research paper is requisite for passing the term in which it is assigned. All seniors must submit an acceptable research paper to pass the course and to meet graduation requirements. The following guidelines apply:

Minimum number of words:

Advanced Placement	3,750
Senior Honors and Level I	1,500-2,500
Senior Level II	750-1000
Juniors	1,000-1,500
Sophomores	700-1,000
Freshmen	500-750

Grade Weight: 25-33% of the term

The English Department also encourages using a research rubric and completing a contract, which explains the terms of the research paper, for students and parents to sign.

The following is an example of a research contract:

**English: Juniors O32  
Research Paper**

We will be spending the next few weeks learning how to write a successful research paper on a literary topic. I will supply the topic; you will narrow it down into a thesis. You will have to write approximately 1000-1500 words, typed in correct MLA style format with parenthetical documentation.

We will also be going on several library trips to research and work on papers. Use this time productively or you will lose it.

If you do not complete an acceptable research paper (**including all steps in the writing process**), you will automatically fail 4<sup>th</sup> quarter English.

**What you will need to bring to class in order to be successful:**

1. One large manila envelope.
2. At least one hundred, 3x5 lined index cards.
3. One elastic band.
4. A pen to keep in the envelope.

These materials will be kept in the classroom during the research and draft stages of the writing process.

**Calendar of due dates and all requirements is attached. Final draft due on May 12, 2006.**

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1. **I understand that completing a successful 1000-1500 word research paper typed in the correct format with MLA documentation is an English department requirement for all Junior English classes.**
  2. **I understand the writing process is an essential part of writing a research paper. I understand that skipping parts of the writing process will result in an unacceptable term paper.**
  3. **I understand that late term papers will be penalized, -10 points each day late, and after four days late, automatic failure. (If you are absent from school, someone must deliver your paper to the office.)**
  4. **I understand that if I do not complete an acceptable research paper (including all steps in the writing process), I will automatically fail 4<sup>th</sup> quarter English.**
  5. **I understand that plagiarism, the copying of any materials, even in small amounts, even if paraphrased, without giving credit to the source, results in an automatic zero and further disciplinary action through the vice- principal.**
  6. **I understand that not getting this sheet signed by my guardian will result in a phone call home.**

Student's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Thank you for your help)