

ESSAY GUIDELINES

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Different types of research projects:

Expository *Analytical* *Argumentative*

Good essays generally combine the above elements and are not merely descriptive.

What research writing is not:

- A string of quotations.
- A personal essay with no research basis.
- Entirely theoretical with no research basis.
- A collection of plagiarized information.

Choosing your topic:

Thesis vs. topic

Topic and Thesis:

All good research writing has a clearly identifiable thesis.

A topic provides you with something to talk about, a thesis makes a significant and specific statement about a subject.

A topic therefore is general, whereas a thesis is specific.

Thesis statement

This is the backbone of your essay. You should be able to state your thesis precisely in 1 or 2 sentences for any shorter essay. The thesis should be clear from your introduction, and it should express an opinion or attitude toward the topic chosen. The thesis should be evident throughout the body of the essay and should be revisited in the conclusion.

Organization

Introduction:

- Should include your thesis statement and briefly mention the points you intend to cover.
- Should catch the reader's attention.
- Should preview the main ideas and structure of the essay.

Body:

- Each of the body paragraphs help you prove your thesis by developing arguments and providing evidence and sources.
- The majority of your secondary sources will appear in the body of the essay.

Topic sentences:

- The first sentence of each body paragraph should clearly enunciate the topic of that paragraph.

Transition sentences:

- The last sentence of each paragraph should preview what is to come in the next paragraph and give some sense of why that information is coming next.

Conclusion:

- Should briefly reiterate your argument or main points.
- Do not introduce new issues in the final paragraph.

- Do not make apologies for what you haven't done or simply state what you have achieved.

Formatting:

- Title page—includes your name, the title of your paper, the course name, the lecturer's name, date of submission and word count
- Page numbers—pages should always be numbered
- Line spacing—double spacing should be followed throughout, except in footnotes and bibliographies, which should be single spaced
- Margins—Use reasonable margins, headers and footers, your work will be judged on the basis of what you have written not the number of pages you have filled.
- Paragraphs—Clearly mark paragraph breaks by indenting the first sentence. Every paragraph should be appropriately developed. Like the overall essay, paragraphs should consist of a beginning, some development and a conclusion or link to the next point you intend to make. Paragraphs consist of a minimum of five sentences.

Formatting titles:

- All titles should be properly capitalized
- Titles are either in quotation marks: "Title" or they are in italics: *Title*
- Titles in **quotation marks** include: Individual stories, poems, essays, articles
- Titles in **italics** include: Books, journals, websites, newspapers, magazines
- When using **in the text of your essay** the title of a book or the title of a text, a chapter or an article from a book, the **same rules regarding the use of italics or quotation marks apply**.

Proofreading

Always proofread your work. Do not trust computer spelling and grammar checks absolutely.

Plagiarism

If you use material from another source you must cite it correctly, if you do not you will be guilty of plagiarism. Use of source material may involve direct quotation, paraphrasing or summary. Do not read about your topic, use other's ideas and then claim you were "inspired." Keep account of the material you have used to learn about your chosen topic, take accurate notes or make photocopies so that you will be able to cite correctly. You will always need the following information about a source – a) author's name b) full title of text c) publisher, place of publication and year of publication d) whether you have taken the author's exact words or have paraphrased.

Citations

- **Paraphrase, Summary, Direct Quotations, References—all** must be referenced.
- **Use double quotation marks for direct quotations.** Do **not** use italics.
- **Context—avoid dropping in cited material without giving a context.** Usually an introductory tag i.e Shakespeare states that "... " or "According to..." is stylistically preferable to an abandoned quote or paraphrase.
- **Short quotations of poetry**—when quoting a brief extract from a poem in the text of a paragraph, indicate the line breaks by using a slash (/).

- **Block quotations**—if you quote more than three lines of a text it is customary to format as follows (In this case quotation marks are not used):

According to Frank Budgeon,

XX
 XXX
 XXX.

Citing sources

Our department uses the “Notes and Bibliography” type of Chicago Style. All of your sources should be cited using footnotes and a bibliography.

Footnotes Format

Microsoft Word and Apple Pages both allow you to insert footnotes automatically. The first footnote is assigned the number 1, and the others follow. **Place the number of the footnote after all punctuation at the end of the sentence or passage that contains the reference.**

Footnote format (the use of punctuation and the order of information included is of essence):

Author, *Title* (City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication), Pages.

Bibliography Format

The bibliography appears at the end of your essay and is ordered alphabetically according to the last name of the author. If no author is listed, begin each bibliographic reference with the title of the article and list these alphabetically after the list of author’s last names. If you have more than one source from the same author, include the author’s full name in the first reference, then use an indented em dash followed by a period in place of the author’s name.

Bibliography format (the use of punctuation and the order of information included is of essence):

Author. *Title*. City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.

Note: Bibliographies don’t use page numbers, unless the source is a journal, a magazine, or the chapter of a book where the page range for the cited essay/article/chapter is given.

Shortened Notes

When you cite one source more than once you will use a shortened form of the footnote. See the examples below.

PRINT BOOKS

Footnotes

1. Zadie Smith, *Swing Time* (New York: Penguin Press, 2016), 315–16.
2. Brian Grazer and Charles Fishman, *A Curious Mind: The Secret to a Bigger Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015), 12.

Shortened footnotes

3. Smith, *Swing Time*, 320.

4. Grazer and Fishman, *Curious Mind*, 37.

Bibliography entries (in alphabetical order)

Grazer, Brian, and Charles Fishman. *A Curious Mind: The Secret to a Bigger Life*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015.

Smith, Zadie. *Swing Time*. New York: Penguin Press, 2016.

CHAPTERS OR PARTS OF AN EDITED BOOK

In a note, cite specific pages. In the bibliography, include the page range for the chapter or part.

Footnotes

1. Henry David Thoreau, “Walking,” in *The Making of the American Essay*, ed. John D’Agata (Minneapolis: Graywolf Press, 2016), 177–78.

Shortened footnotes

2. Thoreau, “Walking,” 182.

Bibliography

Thoreau, Henry David. “Walking.” In *The Making of the American Essay*. Edited by John D’Agata. 167–95. Minneapolis: Graywolf Press, 2016.

TRANSLATED BOOKS

Footnotes

1. Jhumpa Lahiri, *In Other Words*, trans. Ann Goldstein (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2016), 146.

Shortened footnotes

2. Lahiri, *In Other Words*, 184.

Bibliography

Lahiri, Jhumpa. *In Other Words*. Translated by Ann Goldstein. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2016.

E-BOOKS

For books consulted online, include a URL or the name of the database. For other types of e-books, name the format. If no fixed page numbers are available, cite a section title or a chapter or other number in the notes, if any (or simply omit).

Footnotes

1. Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1851), 627, <http://mel.hofstra.edu/moby-dick-the-whale-proofs.html>.

2. Philip Kurland and Ralph Lerner, eds., *The Founders’ Constitution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), chap. 10, doc. 19, <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/>.

3. Brooke Borel, *The Chicago Guide to Fact-Checking* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 92, ProQuest Ebrary.

4. Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2007), chap. 3, Kindle.

Shortened footnotes

5. Melville, *Moby-Dick*, 627, <http://mel.hofstra.edu/moby-dick-the-whale-proofs.html>.
6. Kurland and Lerner, *Constitution*, chap. 10, doc. 19, <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/>.
7. Borel, *Chicago Guide*, 92, ProQuest Ebrary.
8. Austen, *Pride*, chap. 3, Kindle.

Bibliography

- Melville, Herman. *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1851.
<http://mel.hofstra.edu/moby-dick-the-whale-proofs.html>.
- Kurland, Philip and Ralph Lerner, eds. *The Founders' Constitution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/>.
- Borel, Brooke. *The Chicago Guide to Fact-Checking*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016. ProQuest Ebrary.
- Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. New York: Penguin Classics, 2007. Kindle.

WEBSITES

If the source you are citing has a clear publication date, use that as the source's date. Otherwise, look for a revision date; many websites will make note of when they were last modified, edited, or revised. If you are using a date of revision rather than a date of publication, make that clear: "Last modified May 17, 2019." You may use both at your discretion, in which case you should distinguish between the two: "Published April 26, 2019; last modified May 17, 2019." If no date at all is available, use the date when you accessed the source to get the data: "Accessed August 7, 2019."

Footnotes

Mark Terrill, "The Business of Poetry," *Poetry Today*, accessed September 20, 2020, www.poetrytoday.com/terrill.

Shortened footnotes

Terrill, "Business."

Bibliography

Terrill, Mark. "The Business of Poetry." *Poetry Today*. Accessed September 20, 2020. www.poetrytoday.com/terrill.

JOURNAL ARTICLES, PRINT OR FROM DATABASES

In the footnote, cite specific page numbers. In the bibliography, include the page range for the whole article. For articles consulted online, include a URL or the name of the database. Many journal articles list a DOI (Digital Object Identifier). A DOI forms a permanent URL that begins <https://doi.org/>. This URL is preferable to the URL that appears in your browser's address bar.

Footnotes

1. Susan Satterfield, "Livy and the *Pax Deum*," *Classical Philology* 111, no. 2 (April 2016): 170.

2. Shao-Hsun Keng, Chun-Hung Lin, and Peter F. Orazem, “Expanding College Access in Taiwan, 1978–2014: Effects on Graduate Quality and Income Inequality,” *Journal of Human Capital* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 9–10, <https://doi.org/10.1086/690235>.
3. Peter LaSalle, “Conundrum: A Story about Reading,” *New England Review* 38, no. 1 (2017): 95, Project MUSE.

Shortened footnotes

4. Satterfield, “Livy,” 172–73.
5. Keng, Lin, and Orazem, “Expanding College Access,” 23.
6. LaSalle, “Conundrum,” 101.

Bibliography entries (in alphabetical order)

- Keng, Shao-Hsun, Chun-Hung Lin, and Peter F. Orazem. “Expanding College Access in Taiwan, 1978–2014: Effects on Graduate Quality and Income Inequality.” *Journal of Human Capital* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 1–34. <https://doi.org/10.1086/690235>.
- LaSalle, Peter. “Conundrum: A Story about Reading.” *New England Review* 38, no. 1 (2017): 95–109. Project MUSE.
- Satterfield, Susan. “Livy and the *Pax Deum*.” *Classical Philology* 111, no. 2 (April 2016): 165–76.

Multiple authors: Journal articles often list many authors. If there are four or more authors, list up to ten in the bibliography; in a footnote note, list only the first, followed by *et al.* (“and others”). For more than ten authors, list the first seven in the bibliography, followed by *et al.*

Footnotes

7. Rachel A. Bay et al., “Predicting Responses to Contemporary Environmental Change Using Evolutionary Response Architectures,” *American Naturalist* 189, no. 5 (May 2017): 465, <https://doi.org/10.1086/691233>.

Shortened footnotes

8. Bay et al., “Predicting Responses,” 466.

Bibliography

- Bay, Rachael A., Noah Rose, Rowan Barrett, Louis Bernatchez, Cameron K. Ghalambor, Jesse R. Lasky, Rachel B. Brem, Stephen R. Palumbi, and Peter Ralph. “Predicting Responses to Contemporary Environmental Change Using Evolutionary Response Architectures.” *American Naturalist* 189, no. 5 (May 2017): 463–73. <https://doi.org/10.1086/691233>.

NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE ARTICLES

Articles from newspapers or news sites, magazines, blogs, and the like are cited similarly. Page numbers, if any, can be cited in a note but are omitted from a bibliography entry. If you consulted the article online, include a URL or the name of the database.

Footnotes

1. Rebecca Mead, “The Prophet of Dystopia,” *New Yorker*, April 17, 2017, 43.

2. Farhad Manjoo, "Snap Makes a Bet on the Cultural Supremacy of the Camera," *New York Times*, March 8, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/08/technology/snap-makes-a-bet-on-the-cultural-supremacy-of-the-camera.html>.
3. Rob Pegoraro, "Apple's iPhone Is Sleek, Smart and Simple," *Washington Post*, July 5, 2007, LexisNexis Academic.
4. Tanya Pai, "The Squishy, Sugary History of Peeps," *Vox*, April 11, 2017, <http://www.vox.com/culture/2017/4/11/15209084/peeps-easter>.

Shortened footnotes

5. Mead, "Dystopia," 47.
6. Manjoo, "Snap."
7. Pegoraro, "Apple's iPhone."
8. Pai, "History of Peeps."

Bibliography entries (in alphabetical order)

- Manjoo, Farhad. "Snap Makes a Bet on the Cultural Supremacy of the Camera." *New York Times*, March 8, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/08/technology/snap-makes-a-bet-on-the-cultural-supremacy-of-the-camera.html>.
- Mead, Rebecca. "The Prophet of Dystopia." *New Yorker*, April 17, 2017.
- Pai, Tanya. "The Squishy, Sugary History of Peeps." *Vox*, April 11, 2017. <http://www.vox.com/culture/2017/4/11/15209084/peeps-easter>.
- Pegoraro, Rob. "Apple's iPhone Is Sleek, Smart and Simple." *Washington Post*, July 5, 2007. LexisNexis Academic.

BOOK REVIEWS

Footnotes

1. Michiko Kakutani, "Friendship Takes a Path That Diverges," review of *Swing Time*, by Zadie Smith, *New York Times*, November 7, 2016.

Shortened footnotes

2. Kakutani, "Friendship."

Bibliography

- Kakutani, Michiko. "Friendship Takes a Path That Diverges." Review of *Swing Time*, by Zadie Smith. *New York Times*, November 7, 2016.

INTERVIEWS

Footnotes

1. Kory Stamper, "From 'F-Bomb' to 'Photobomb,' How the Dictionary Keeps Up with English," interview by Terry Gross, *Fresh Air*, NPR, April 19, 2017, audio, 35:25, <http://www.npr.org/2017/04/19/524618639/from-f-bomb-to-photobomb-how-the-dictionary-keeps-up-with-english>.

Shortened footnotes

2. Stamper, interview.

Bibliography

Stamper, Kory. "From 'F-Bomb' to 'Photobomb,' How the Dictionary Keeps Up with English." Interview by Terry Gross. *Fresh Air*, NPR, April 19, 2017. Audio, 35:25.
<http://www.npr.org/2017/04/19/524618639/from-f-bomb-to-photobomb-how-the-dictionary-keeps-up-with-english>.

THESES OR DISSERTATIONS

Footnotes

1. Cynthia Lillian Rutz, "*King Lear* and Its Folktale Analogues" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2013), 99–100.

Shortened footnotes

2. Rutz, "*King Lear*," 158.

Bibliography

Rutz, Cynthia Lillian. "*King Lear* and Its Folktale Analogues." PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2013.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Personal communications, including email and text messages and direct messages sent through social media, are usually cited in the text or in a note only; they are rarely included in a bibliography.

Footnotes

1. Sam Gomez, Facebook message to author, August 1, 2017.

Shortened footnotes

Gomez, Facebook message.

PLAYS, INCLUDING SHAKESPEARE

According to Chicago Style, when you're citing a play, including Shakespeare, the first footnote should include act, scene, and line number, e.g. 1.1.15-20 and the first time you provide these details add the phrase, "References are to act, scene, and line." Subsequent, short form footnotes can omit the author's name if it's clear from the text.

Other important details to include are the editor and publication details. If you are using a play from an online source, such as Drama Online, you will also need to include a DOI or URL.

First Footnote

William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. Alden T. Vaughan and Virginia Mason Vaughan (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), 1.1.20-26. References are to act, scene, and line.
<https://doi.org/10.5040/9781408160183.00000045>.

Later Footnotes

The Tempest, 1.1.28-32.

Bibliography

Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Edited by Alden T. Vaughan and Virginia Mason Vaughan. Arden Shakespeare, 3rd ser. London: Bloomsbury, 2011.
<https://doi.org/10.5040/9781408160183.00000045>.