

## Reminders/Tips for Essays

- 1) Be sure that your essay has an introduction (which should include your thesis statement), at least 3 support paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- 2) DO NOT USE 1<sup>st</sup> person in your essay. The tone is too informal for a formal essay. If you are stuck because of this, you may say “the reader” or “one”.
- 3) Be sure to enclose quoted material within double quotation marks and cite it!
- 4) For parenthetical citations, use the author’s last name and pg # that the material came from. Ex: (Swift 487). The parenthetical citation comes at the end of the sentence and the period comes AFTER THE CITATION. Ex: The speaker gives one benefit of his plan when he states, “For first, as I have already observed, it would greatly lessen the number of papists, . . .” (Swift 487).
- 5) No HANGING QUOTATIONS-you need to provide a lead-in for quotes. From #4 the phrase “The speaker gives one benefit of his plan when he states,” is the lead-in. This lead-in lets the reader know that you are about to give a textual quote.
- 6) For quotes with 40 or more words of prose, or more than 3 lines of poetry, you will need to utilize a block indentation. Ex. Pope shows the intricate beauty of the sylphs in the lines:

Some to the sun their insect wings unfold,

Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold.

Transparent forms too fine for mortal sight,

Their fluid bodies half dissolved in light,

Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,

Thin glittering textures of the filmy dew, . . . (Pope 498)

Ex. In prose- We see the violent intrusion of illusion on reality when:

But what had appeared to Toyo-o as imposing pillars on the front gate

of Manago’s house were sagging with rot; the roof tiles were mostly

broken, fallen to the ground. The yard was overgrown with weeds. There

were no signs of anyone living in the house. Toyo-o was amazed, to say

the least. (Akinari 639).

\*Notice how you provide a lead-in which ends in a colon or semi-colon. A simple comma will not do as these quotes are larger and require stronger punctuation. Notice also how the quoted material is indented 10 spaces and it is not enclosed in double quotation marks. There is no need for double quotation marks in a block indent because the mere fact that the quote is block indented shows the reader that this is a larger chunk of quoted material.\*

- 7) If you utilize quotes or paraphrases from introductory material in our anthology, such as the commentary or biographical information on our authors, you will use the general editor’s name in the citation. The general editor for our anthology is Sarah Lawall. Ex. It is said that Pope’s *The Rape of the Lock* “celebrates as well as criticizes” (Lawall 490).

- 8) If you have parenthetical citations, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE A WORK CITED PAGE!!! **This is a page all on its own. Do not simply tack it on after your conclusion.** You will put the words Work Cited in the center of the page at the top. Double space and then begin your entry. It should look something like this:

Work Cited

Saikaku, Ihara. "The Barrelmaker Brimful of Love".

The Norton Anthology of World Literature: 1650-1800. Vol D. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.

New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. 2002. 591-602.

\*Notice how you put the page numbers for the work as a whole at the end of the entry. This will suffice to cover all material utilized from this source. In other words, you don't have to list each page you quoted from. Also notice the hanging indentation. You will begin the first line of the entry at the left margin. Each subsequent line is indented 5 spaces until the entry is complete. When beginning the next entry (if you should have more than one entry), put the first line at the left margin.\*

- 9) Be sure to provide your own title for your essay which gives the reader an indication of what your essay is about. Don't use the title of the work being discussed as the title for your essay!!! Do not simply entitle it "A Modest Proposal" or Essay Question #2. This shows a lack of effort and creativity and will put your reader off. Also, there is no need to bold, underline, italicize, or enlarge your essay's title. Simply center it.
- 10) Be sure to have a header on each page of your essay. A header for MLA format appears in the upper right hand corner of each page and consists of your last name and the pg #. Ex: McCune 2. To insert a header, you usually go into "View" on the toolbar in some programs, "Insert" in others, hit "header/footer" and a box will appear at the top of your page. Tab over to the right margin and type your last name and the #.
- 11) If you have any further questions, or need to see an example of a MLA formatted paper, go to the Writing Center website.