Colchester High School
Style Manual
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PARTS OF SPEECH

“Part of speech,” means the **job** a word does in a sentence. In other words, to recognize a part of speech, you must figure out what the word is **doing**.

NOUNS

A noun’s job is to name. It can name a person, place, thing, or idea.

- Yesterday, I spoke with **Esperanza**. (person)
- Let’s go to **Bayside Deli**. (place)
- May I use your **computer**? (thing)
- **Love** stinks! (idea)

There are two types of nouns: common and proper.

- A **common noun** is the **general** name of a person, place, thing or idea. A common noun is not capitalized. (friend, school, music, philosophy)
- A **proper noun** is the **specific** name of a person, place, thing, or idea. A proper noun is always capitalized. (Fred Friendly, Colchester High School, Nirvana, Buddhism)

VERBS

A verb’s job is to show action or state of being. It is the engine that drives the sentence.

- The tarantula **crawled** across her face. (action)
- She **was** terrified! (state of being)

ADJECTIVES

An adjective’s job is to describe (modify) a noun. Adjectives describe what kind, which one, how many, or how much.

- The **rusty** car fell apart. (what kind)
- Look at **that** hunk! (which one)
- We ordered **six pizzas**. (how many)
- We got **some snow** last night. (how much)

ADVERBS

An adverb’s job is to describe (modify) verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs.

- When the thunderstorm erupted, she **quickly** shut down her computer. (verb)
- The **fiery red** Camero purred down Laker Lane. (adjective)
- Romeo walked more slowly down the aisle than Juliet. (adverb)

**PREPOSITIONS**
A preposition’s job is to relate a noun to another word in the sentence.

Try this helpful hint. A preposition is any word that shows the relationship between a marble and a box.
- The marble rolled **under** the box.
- The box dropped **on** the marble.
- She hurled the box **over** the marble.

Some common prepositions: about, above, across, after, before, behind, by, beside, from, inside, past, within, without.

**INTERJECTIONS**
An interjection’s job is to express strong emotion or surprise. (A comma or an exclamation point is used to separate an interjection from the rest of the sentence.)
- **Wow**, is grammar ever fascinating to eccentric teachers like Mrs. Bahrenburg!
- **Hey**! Keep your paws off my keyboard.

**CONJUNCTIONS**
A conjunction’s job is to join words, phrases, or clauses.
- The roads were covered with snow **and** sleet. (words)
- The rocket shot off the pad, **but** crashed later. (phrases)
- I cut English class, **so** I went to prison. (clauses)

Some common conjunctions are: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so, because, unless, while.

**Keep in Mind:**
The same word can do a variety of different jobs. Therefore, the same word can, at different times, be different parts of speech—depending on the job it is doing! For example:

**VERB:** She **runs** after school.
**NOUN:** We hooked our collie on the dog **run** we had strung between two massive beech trees in our back yard.
**ADJECTIVE:** His **runny** nose disturbed his classmates.
PHRASES

A phrase is a group of related words that acts as a part of speech. There are several kinds of phrases. Below are some of the more common ones.

TYPES OF PHRASES

A noun phrase acts as a simple noun would.
- The girl in the front row is my best friend.
- I hate pizza smothered in anchovies.

A verb phrase consists of a verb and its modifiers.
- After bombing her speech, Gina quickly scurried back to her seat. (phrase describes the verb “scurried”)

An infinitive phrase is made up of an infinitive (to ______ ) and acts as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb.
- He wore sunglasses to protect his eyes while snowboarding. (adverb modifies wore)
- Did Mr. Devino give permission to use calculators?
  (adjective modifies permission)
- To err is human; to forgive, divine. (To err and to forgive, used as nouns/subjects)

A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition, its object, and any modifiers.
- Sweep out that dust bunny beneath the bed.
- Kari aced the test in spite of feeling sick that day.

A participial phrase consists of a past or present participle and its modifiers; the whole phrase acts as an adjective.
- Sweeping her off her feet, Romeo won Juliet’s heart. (describes the noun Romeo)
- Our family, tired from our long trip, unpacked our bags. (describes the noun family)
SENTENCES

A sentence expresses a complete thought. It is a group of words that has a subject (stated or understood) and a verb.

- The manatee (stated subject) floated (verb) just under the water’s surface, narrowly avoiding the loathsome powerboat.
- “Swim for your life,” shouted the horrified onlookers. (The subject, “You,” in “You swim” is understood.)

When a so-called sentence lacks a complete thought, subject, or verb it is incomplete. This is known as a sentence fragment.

- Every time I get ready to go hiking. (incomplete thought)
- Dances at the Holiday Ball. (missing a subject)
- My best friend’s next door neighbor. (missing a verb)

A run-on sentence, also known as a fused sentence, is two or more separate sentences improperly joined.

Examples of run-on sentences:

- Mohammed is my best friend he listens to all my problems.
- Napoleon didn’t fire his generals, he shot them. (comma splice)

How to correct run-on sentences, using proper punctuation.

- Mohammed is my best friend. He listens to all my problems.
- Napoleon didn’t fire his generals. He shot them. (Divide into sentences using a period and a capital letter.)
- Napoleon didn’t fire his generals; he shot them. (A semi colon may be used instead of a period. Remember NOT to capitalize the first letter that follows.)
- Napoleon didn’t fire his generals, but he shot them. (Join them with a comma and one of the “FANBOYS”—coordinating conjunctions. They are for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so.)
CLAUSES AND COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

1. Clauses:
   ○ are a group of words.
   ○ are a part of a larger sentence.
   ○ have a subject (noun, pronoun) and a predicate (verb).

2. Independent clauses could be (but aren’t) complete sentences; dependant clauses could not. A dependent clause needs to be joined with an independent clause to complete its meaning.

   Example of an independent clause in a sentence: Throughout the nineteenth century and part of the twentieth, wave after wave of immigrants arrived from Europe and Asia.

   Example of a dependent clause in a sentence: When my family went to New York last summer, we visited the Theodore Roosevelt museum.

3. Commas ALWAYS precede coordinating conjunctions (or the FANBOYS: For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So), when they join two independent clauses.

   Example of a coordinating conjunction (one of the FANBOYS) joining two independent clauses: We conquered this continent, but our habits and our fears remain.

4. If two clauses are joined by a conjunction that is not one of the FANBOYS (e.g., because, before, when, after, although, since, etc.), the conjunction is NOT preceded by a comma.

   Example of a conjunction that is not one of the FANBOYS (This kind of conjunction is called a subordinating conjunction): We dove into the pool before we looked to see if it had water in it.

5. Dependent clauses that begin a sentence are followed by a comma.

   Example of a sentence that begins with a dependent clause: Because we howled for joy, the teacher scowled at us.
AGREEMENT

The **subject** and **verb** of any clause must agree in both **person** and **number**.

**AGREEMENT IN PERSON**

There are three persons: first person (I), second person (you), and third person (she, he, it). Checking for agreement in **person** is simply a matter of reading carefully:

- **Juan** brought **his** CD player to school.
- **People** must learn to wait **their** turn in traffic jams.
- **Either Sarah or Maria** left **her** calculator on the bus.
- **One** of the boats is missing **its** oars.
- **I** admit **my** mistakes.

**AGREEMENT IN NUMBER**

A verb must agree in number (singular or plural) with its subject.

- **The manager** as well as the players **is** required to display good sportsmanship. (singular)
- **Honesty** and **compassion are** important in friendships. (plural)

Singular subjects joined by **or** or **nor** take a singular verb.

- Neither Kevin **nor** André **is** going to the concert.

The indefinite pronouns **each, either, neither, one, everybody, another, anybody, everyone, nobody, everything, somebody, and someone** are singular; they require a **singular** verb.

- **Everybody** **is** invited to the pep rally.
- **Each** of the students **is** required to bring in some cookies.
- **Someone** in this class **feels** uncomfortable.


**SIMPLE, COMPOUND, COMPLEX, AND COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCES**

**SIMPLE SENTENCES**

A simple sentence has only one independent clause; it has no dependent clauses. It may have, however, a compound subject or a compound verb.

- Simple subject and simple verb: My **dog** **bites** elderly women.
- Compound subject and simple verb: My **feet** and my **hands shake** at the sight of lizards.
- Compound subject and compound verb: Batman and Robin often **fight** and **flee** in the same movie.

**COMPOUND SENTENCES**

A compound sentence is made up of two independent clauses. (All clauses have both a subject and a verb, but independent clauses could stand on their own if they had to.) The clauses can be joined by a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS) or a semicolon.

- We planted a clump of birch trees near our back door, so we now have a beautiful shady area under which to sit. (coordinating conjunction: so)
- We planted a clump of birch trees near our back door; we now have a beautiful shady area under which to sit. (semicolon)

**COMPLEX SENTENCES**

A complex sentence contains one independent clause (underlined) and one or more dependent clauses (in italics). (Although a dependent clause, like all clauses, has both a subject and a verb, it needs to be joined with an independent clause to complete its meaning.)

- **Because she loved her hamster**, she cleaned its stinky cage often.

**COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCES**

A compound-complex sentence contains two or more independent clauses (underlined) and one or more dependent clauses (in italics).

- **If you are going to write**, be sure to have these style sheets handy, so you won’t be so confused.
PUNCTUATION

PERIODS
Periods end declarative sentences.

- This year’s presidential elections could prove to be the most contentious since the birth of our nation.

QUESTION MARKS
Question marks end interrogative statements.

- How are you today?

EXCLAMATION POINTS
Exclamation points end statements of excitement or enthusiasm.

- Colchester High School is awesome!

COMMAS
Commas—more than any other mark of punctuation—are a source of concern to writers because sometimes they are absolutely necessary, and at other times they are a matter of personal choice. Below are some of the more common situations that call for commas.

- Commas separate three or more items in a series.
  - This morning she wolfed down bacon, eggs, and sardines.

- Commas are used between two independent clauses joined by one of the coordinating conjunctions (a.k.a. “FANBOYS”: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so)
  - The winter is off to a slow start, but a wild blizzard is predicted for next week.

- Commas separate an explanatory phrase from the rest of the sentence. An explanatory phrase that identifies a noun or pronoun that comes before it is called an appositive phrase.
  - My mother, an expert surfer, was fond of catching the perfect South African wave.

- A comma follows an introductory dependent clause.
  - Because I feel sorry for those who cannot read, I’ve decided to volunteer at an adult literacy center.
Commas separate a series of adjectives that equally describe (modify) the same noun. Please note that no comma is used to separate the last adjective from the noun it describes.

- Beef cattle are fond of eating green, succulent, fleshy plants.

**SEMICOLONS**
A semi-colon joins two independent clauses that are not otherwise joined by a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS – For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So).

- She felt loyal to her old horse; she rode Bessie daily even when she was busy. (If you had used a coordinating conjunction, you might have written: “She felt loyal to her old horse, so she rode Bessie daily even when she was busy.”)

**COLONS**
Colons are used in a variety of situations. Below are two of the more common ones:

- Colons are used to call attention to a word, phrase, clause, or sentence.
  - The students in this class are enjoyable for many reasons, but one attribute stands out among the rest: wit.
  - Within any given period they might tell a joke, point out an ironic phrase, or laugh at themselves: all within the confines of these sterile cinderblock walls.

- A colon might introduce a list.
  - Denzel loves all his subjects this year: calculus, Shakespeare, ancient history, and biology.

**DASHES**
Dashes can serve several purposes:

- Dashes separate thoughts that interrupt a sentence.
  - The documentary provided a look at the last days of Hitler—a man who apparently had terrible table
manners—through the eyes of his final personal assistant.

Dashes prevent something from being misread with too many commas.

Greene, Dekker, Marlowe and Marston—all contemporaries of William Shakespeare—are known to have borrowed from, as well as given ideas to, the Bard of Avon.

Dashes introduce new words that summarize the preceding thought.

Folks who love putting things in alphabetical order—abecedarians—should try out for next year’s spelling bee.

APOSTROPHEs
Apostrophes have two uses:

Apostrophes form contractions.

- Do not = don’t
- You have = you’ve
- It is/has = it’s
- Will not = won’t

Apostrophes signify possession.

- The dog’s bark (singular)
- The dogs’ bark (plural)
- Simon and Garfunkel’s song (one possessive for duos)
- DePalma’s and Hitchcock’s films (both for comparisons)

QUOTATION MARKS
Quotation marks are usually used when writing dialogue, however they do have other applications.

Quotation marks signify dialogue, or words someone else has said.

- “Where do you get off?” inquired the irate bus driver.
- According to Henry David Thoreau, “We need the tonic of wilderness.”

Quotation marks add required emphasis to stressed or problematic words.

- The word “primitive” has often been used to describe American football.
PUNCTUATING DIALOGUE

1. Indent 5 spaces (Make a new paragraph) every time a speaker changes by pressing the Tab key.

2. Use quotation marks to enclose spoken material only.

3. Begin a direct quotation with a capital letter, even when it is not the beginning of the sentence.

   Example:
   She said, “Ask your father.”

4. End a direct quotation with a comma if it is not the end of the sentence. Exceptions to this rule include questions and exclamations.

   Example:
   “Ask your father,” she said.
   “Is that your father?” she asked.
   “Just wait until your father gets home!” she yelled.

5. A direct quotation is set off from the rest of the sentence by commas.

   Example:
   “You shouldn’t have left,” said the warden, “without getting my permission.”

6. Use single quotation marks when someone is quoted within a quotation.

   Example:
   George said, “As I remember it, his exact words were, ‘Meet me at the bank.’”

7. Position of quotation marks and other hints.

   a. Always place quotation marks outside the comma, period, or question mark.

   Example: She said, “Ask your father.”
b. When a direct quotation is divided into two parts by such interrupting phrases as: he said, Dale answered, Jim replied, etc. THE SECOND PART BEGINS WITH A LOWERCASE (small) LETTER!

Example:
“I die,” he said, “worshipping the water she walks on.”

c. BUT if the second part of some dialogue is actually a new sentence (in other words, a complete one), it does begin with an upper case (capital) letter.

Example:
“The movie just started,” Jill said. “Shut up!”
TENSE

Tense addresses the time when an action happens. An action may happen in one of three times: present, past, or future.

PRESENT TENSE
- actions that happen now, habitually, or always the same.
  ➢ I sit.
  ➢ We play tennis every day.

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE TENSE
- actions in progress or of perception, using the correct form of to be and –ing.
  ➢ The president is running for reelection.
  ➢ She is feeling unlucky.

PRESENT PERFECT TENSE
- actions that happen at an unspecified time in the past which are completed or continue in the present time and are formed with have/has and the participle
  ➢ They have lived in Colchester all their lives.
  ➢ Has he worn glasses all his life?

PAST TENSE
- completed actions or conditions not continuing at present.
  ➢ I watched television all night.
  ➢ She sang until she was blue in the face.

PAST PROGRESSIVE TENSE
- an action completed in the past that occurred for a period of time or interrupted another action. It is formed with the past of to be and –ing.
  ➢ We were eating when they announced their engagement.
  ➢ I was crossing the street when I was hit by the bicyclist.

PAST PERFECT TENSE
- an action that happened before another action in the past or as part of a report. It is always formed with had and the participle.
  ➢ The teacher had given us the assignment before he left.
  ➢ She said she had gone to the concert.
FUTURE TENSE
-an action that happens beyond the present and includes the words shall or will, or their opposites.
➢ He will go to the movies this weekend.
➢ She won’t stay home this weekend.

FUTURE PERFECT TENSE
-an action which will be completed later than now and is formed with will/shall have and the participle.
➢ I will have eaten by the time you get home.
➢ She shall have waited more than an hour before her date arrives.

FUTURE PERFECT PROGRESSIVE
-an action that blends all three times: it started in the past, has continued into the present, and may continue into the future.
➢ They have been working on the project since Monday and hope to have it done by Friday.

INFINITIVE
-the lack of a tense, signified by the preposition to before an action.
➢ She wants to run for mayor.
➢ He asked me to tell you he isn’t happy.

VOICE

Voice reflects how a statement is expressed and can be either active or passive. Generally, you will want to avoid the passive voice, since the active voice is more direct. Here are some examples of active and passive voice:

ACTIVE VOICE
➢ I cooked the food.
➢ The teacher gave an assignment.

PASSIVE VOICE
➢ The food was cooked by me.
➢ An assignment was given by the teacher.
The point of view from which a story is told reflects who is telling the story and, as a result, how much information they have at their disposal:

**FIRST PERSON**
The narrator is a character in the story. This perspective uses *I, you,* and *we.* It allows the reader to know what the narrator is thinking.
- I was crushed when Suzy said she wouldn’t go to the dance with me.

**THIRD PERSON OBJECTIVE**
The story is narrated by an outside party. They report only the actions of the characters without reflection or insight.
- Bobby asked Suzy to the dance, but she declined.

**THIRD PERSON LIMITED**
The story is narrated by an outside party who has access to the thoughts, emotions, and insights of only one character.
- Bobby was crushed when Suzy said she wouldn’t go to the dance with him.

**THIRD PERSON OMNISCIENT**
The story is narrated by an outside party who has access to the thoughts, emotions, and insights of all the characters.
- Bobby was crushed when Suzy said she wouldn’t go to the dance with him, but she had already decided that she couldn’t be bothered; she desperately wanted to go with Jimmy.
Homonyms are words that sound the same but differ in spelling and meaning. Some common homonyms are:

**Their / There / They’re**
- Their computers crashed simultaneously. (ownership)
- Please put your cafeteria tray over there. (place)
- They’re going to the prom together. (contraction of “They are…”)

**It’s / Its**
- It’s supposed to snow four feet tonight! (contraction of “It is…”)
- The elephant flapped its ears. (ownership)

**Too / To / Two**
- There are too many weeds in this garden! (amount)
- Please take this ticket to the police station. (place)
- Phyllis bought two gallons of maple syrup for her brother-in-law. (number)

**Throne / Thrown**
- The queen sat on her throne. (seat for royalty)
- The ball was thrown to the first baseman. (hurled)

**Through / Threw**
- He looked through his paper one last time before submitting it. (from beginning to end)
- She threw the discus farther than Fred, the former state champ. (to hurl)

**Knew / New**
- Romeo knew he was in love the moment he saw her at the masked ball. (understood)
- Romeo’s new love for Juliet was stronger than his feelings for Rosaline. (beginning)

**Whole / Hole**
- He was so gluttonous that he shoved the whole bagel in his mouth at once! (entire)
The gravedigger stood in the **hole** as Hamlet looked on. (a deep place)

**Brake** / **Break**
- The bicycle’s front **brake** needed new pads. (stopping device)
- Let’s **break** up and just be best friends. (to split)
- Let’s take a **break** after we finish writing this style sheet. (a pause)

**Passed** / **Past**
- The Escort **passed** my ‘Vette, trailing a cloud of dust. (overcame)
- My **past** life is none of your business. (former)

**Weather**/**Whether**
- The **weather** outside is frightful. (climatic conditions)
- I can’t decide **whether** to rent or buy this movie. (conditional used to juxtapose)
**PROBLEM WORDS**

The English language is filled with tricky words. Here are a few that might trip you up:

**CAN**
- the ability to do something
  - Can you help me?

**MAY**
- asks permission or expresses a wish
  - May I help you?

**A LOT**
- many. Always written as two words.
  - A lot of cars were on the highway during the holiday season.

**ALL RIGHT**
- very well or acceptable (NOTE: ALRIGHT is not a word. It is a misspelling of the above.)
  - Everything is all right.

**AFFECT**
- to influence or act on emotions
  - The depressing movie really affected my mood.

**EFFECT**
- a result or accomplishment
  - The effects of the flood are still being felt.

**EITHER…OR**
- one or the other
  - Either Jon or Tim ate the cookie.

**NEITHER…NOR**
- not any
  - Neither elephants nor giraffes have the ability to fly.
FLAMMABLE/INFLAMMABLE
- both mean something that can catch fire

MORALS
- your personal belief structure

ETHICS
- the socially prescribed belief structure

THEN
- the next occurrence in a sequence of events
  ➢ We went to the grocery store, and then went home to cook dinner.

THAN
- used in a comparison
  ➢ He is a faster runner than Tim.

WHO
- question of person (subject)
  ➢ Who gave you the book?

WHOM
- question of person (object)
  ➢ You gave the book to whom?

WHO’S
- a contraction of who is
  ➢ Who’s that?

WHOSE
- the possessive of who
  ➢ Whose headphones are those?
**POWER VERBS**

Tired of using the same old verbs? Try some of these

- absorb
- accept
- accomplish
- achieve
- act
- activate
- administer
- admire
- aid
- analyze
- anticipate
- arrange
- assert
- assign
- attend
- buoy
- challenge
- cherish
- collaborate
- communicate
- commit
- conduct
- confirm
- confront
- consider
- construct
- contribute
- create
- debate
- decide
- deconstruct
- demonstrate
- determine
- develop
- devote
- direct
- disseminate
- distribute
- effect
- empower
- enact
- encourage
- engage
- envelop
- establish
- evaluate
- examine
- expand
- expedite
- experience
- explore
- express
- facilitate
- generate
- ignite
- implement
- improve
- incorporate
- increase
- inspire
- instigate
- instruct
- interact
- interpret
- investigate
- involve
- join
- juggle
- juxtapose
- head
- helm
- hold
- learn
- locate
- maintain
- manage
- marvel
- motivate
- observe
- operate
- organize
- overcome
- participate
- persevere
- persist
- persuade
- practice
- prepare
- preserve
- produce
- promote
- prove
- provoke
- question
- raise
- report
- resolve
- respect
- review
- revise
- select
- seek
- share
- shine
- solve
- sponsor
- state
- stimulate
- study
- succeed
- supervise
- support
- thank
- trust
- value
- verify
- witness
 BASIC LITERARY TERMS

1. **Plot**: All that “happens” in a literary work. The plan of action. The story as a series of related events.

2. **Setting**: When and where the story takes place.

3. **Characterization**: The ways the author uses to make the characters in a story “come alive.” A writer may describe a character’s thoughts, appearance, actions, speech, and the way others in the story react to her/him in order to let the reader know the character.

4. **Theme**: The author’s “message” behind the story. More accurately, it is the strand of meaning that weaves itself through the narrative.

5. **Irony**: There are three basic kinds:
   a. **Verbal**: This is related to sarcasm. It is the opposite of what is meant. (When someone slips on a banana peel: “Nice move!”)
   b. **Situational**: An event contrary to normal expectation. (Isn’t it ironic that the fireman’s house should be the one to burn down last night?)
   c. **Dramatic**: A situation that is known to the reader (viewer) but not to the characters in the literary work.

6. **Symbolism**: When an author uses something specific to stand for an idea or feeling, e.g., the darkness of night to stand for evil.

7. **Protagonist**: The main character.

8. **Antagonist**: The person (or animal) that is in conflict with the main character.

9. **Conflict**: The struggle that takes place in a literary work, e.g., a woman fights the harsh winter weather to survive an avalanche.

10. **Flashback**: A sudden return to an earlier time.
11. **Foreshadowing**: When the author gives hints of what lies ahead in the plot.
12. **Contrast**: An opposite.

13. **Imagery**: An appeal to one or more of the five senses.

14. **Figurative language**: Language that takes liberties with exactness for the sake of making meaning richer.
   a. **Simile**: A comparison of two **unlike** things using “like” or “as,” e.g., “The summer was like a brick oven.”
   b. **Metaphor**: A comparison of two unlike things not using “like” or “as,” e.g., “The pig was a garbage disposal.”
   c. **Personification**: When an object or animal is given human qualities, e.g., “The sun happily warmed the Earth.”
   d. **Hyperbole**: An extravagant exaggeration, e.g., “I could eat a horse!”

15. **Mood**: The “feeling” one gets while reading or viewing a literary work.

16. **Round character**: A realistic character who has more than one side to her/his personality. One whose complexity you recognize.

17. **Flat character**: A character who only exhibits one side to her/his personality.

18. **Biography**: A detailed, **true** history of a person that is written by someone other than that person.


20. **Fiction**: A literary work that is made up from the author’s imagination.

21. **Nonfiction**: A literary work that is entirely comprised of things that are true.

22. **Denotation**: The literal dictionary meaning of a work. The denotation of “teacher” is a person that facilitates learning.
23. **Connotation**: The associated meanings of a word. The connotations of teacher are authority, friend, enemy, helper...

24. **Dialogue**: Conversation, usually in quotation marks.

25. **Paradox**: A *seeming* contradiction, e.g., “Columbus sailed west to reach the East.”

26. **Satire**: A literary work that ridicules aspects of human behavior.
WRITING CONSIDERATIONS

TIMED WRITING
From time to time in your academic life, you will be asked to write within a time frame. This kind of writing is usually open-ended. In other words, you could write for a very long time about the subject. The problem is that you don't have forever; you have a specified amount of time.

How to approach timed writing
- First and foremost, use all the time available. When writing, keep your eye on the clock, and contract or expand your response, depending on how much time you have left.
- You should spend a bit of time before you begin writing your essay organizing your thoughts. You may want to use a brainstorm, outline, or list. Decide how to hook your readers in the beginning, what to put in the middle, and how to end it.
- Leave a few minutes at the end to reread your writing and to edit.
- Remember, you could write forever, so if you finish early, it can mean only one of two things: either you do not know nearly as much as you should, or you have chosen not to share all you know.

PLAGIARISM
To quote The American Heritage College Dictionary plagiarism is: “to use and pass off as one’s own the ideas or writings of another.” In other words plagiarism is stealing; plagiarism is a form of lying. Within the academic and professional worlds, plagiarism is always a serious offense.

Kinds of plagiarism according to Writers Inc.:
- Word-for-word plagiarism: when a writer repeats the exact words of a source without supplying the necessary credit
- Paraphrase plagiarism: when a writer says basically the same thing as the original source with just a few words changed
- Idea plagiarism: when a writer uses the ideas of another when those ideas are not common knowledge

Remember to credit information you find on the Internet, as well as that which you find in print.

To avoid plagiarism, be sure to use parenthetical documentation and to have a works cited page.
Parenthetical Documentation

1. Keep two things in mind:

   First, you need to mark direct quotations and specific, uncommon facts and ideas by linking them to the source from where they came. This is called parenthetical documentation. (Or endnotes or footnotes if you’re doing it the old-fashioned way.)

   Second, you need to create a list of those sources so that readers can locate them should they choose. This should be labeled “Works Cited” (centered, top of page). (This was formerly labeled “Bibliography.”)

2. How to parenthetically document:

   The best explanation is in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.* (Many other reference books, however, explain the MLA format.) At the end of the sentence, write the author’s last name and the page from where the information came in parentheses. Wait to place the period after you close the parentheses. For example:

   America has seen a 50% increase in reported cases of child abuse during the last ten years *(Gutkind 143).* This ensures that anyone reading your paper can flip to your works cited page and get all the information s/he needs to locate and verify your source. Let’s say you don’t have an author. Easy. Simply use a shortened version of the title in place of the author’s last name. Two sources by the same author? Use a combination of last name, shortened
title, and page number if it exists. There are many other situations you may encounter, but they’re all covered in the *MLA Handbook* and other sources.

3. What should you document? All word for word quotations. (In addition to documenting these, they **must** have quotation marks around them.) Also, any specific facts and ideas that are not common knowledge or not your own. Basically, this system aims to give credit where credit is due.

**WORKS CITED**

1. For more samples of bibliographic entries see section 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, and 4.10 of *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 4th edition*. The media center (school library) has copies on reserve.

2. Entries on a “Works Cited” page are **ALWAYS alphabetized** according to the first word of the entry. If you have an author, the first word is the author’s last name. If you don’t know the author, the first word of the entry is likely to be the first word of the title of the article or book. Don't use “a,” “an,” and “the,” to alphabetize.

3. Do **NOT** indent the first line of an entry. Any lines that follow the first line should be indented 5 spaces.


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**Books**

*Book by a single author*

Author’s last name, Author’s first name. Title of the Book. City of publication: Publisher, year of publication. Print.

Example:


*A second book by the same person*

---. Title of the Book. City of publication: Publisher, year of publication.
Example:


A book by two or more authors

Author’s last name, Author’s first name, Second author’s full name, and Third author’s full name. Title of the Book. City of publication: Publisher, year of publication. Print.

Example:


A standard reference book (encyclopedia or dictionary)

Author’s last name, Author's first name (if no name is provided, begin with article title). “Article Title.” Book Title. edition. year of publication. Print.

Examples:


Periodicals

Magazine

Author’s last name, Author’s first name. “Title of Article.” Title of Magazine day Month year: pages. Print.

Example:

**Newspaper**

Author’s last name, Author’s first name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Newspaper* [city if not in title] day Month year, edition: start page. (if continued on another page, include a plus sign) Print.

Example:


**Electronic Sources**

**Web site**

Author’s last name, Author's first name. (If author’s name not included start with title) “Title of Page (Article, poem, short story, etc.).” *Title of web site* (only if different from page title). Publisher or sponsor of the site (if not available use N.p.) Date of most recent update (if not available use N.d.). Web. Date information was retrieved.

Examples:


**Periodical publication in an online database (ProQuest)**

Use the same format as for print periodical (newspaper or magazine), dropping the word “print.” Then add: *Title of Database*. Web. Date article was accessed.
Example:


Other Sources

Face-to-face interview

Interviewee’s last name, Interviewee’s first name. Personal interview. Date of interview.

Example:


Television or Radio Program

“Title of episode or segment.” Name of writer, performers, narrator, etc. Title of Program. Title of Series, if any. Name of Network. Call letters of station, City of station. Broadcast date. Television or Radio.

Example:


Sound Recording

Composer or performer’s last name, Composer or performer’s first name. “Song Title.” Title of recording/album. Manufacturer, date of release. CD.

Example:


Film

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Title. Director. Performers. Distributor, year. Film.

Example:

Moffett’s Methods

Even the best writers often struggle with writer’s block. The following writing prompts from James Moffett’s Active Voice can help get you writing in a variety of different situations.

Group I: Revising Inner Speech

Stream of Consciousness
For fifteen minutes, write down, pell-mell, everything that comes into your head, using the first words that occur to you, and without concerning yourself about grammar, spelling, form, and continuity. This should be a kind of note taking to get down as much as you can of what you think, feel, and sense during those fifteen minutes. This will not be published, but will be important for later work.

Spontaneous Sensory Monologue
Choose a place away from school that you would like to observe, go there with paper and pencil, and write for fifteen minutes what you see, hear, and smell. Think of what you write as notes for yourself for later. Don’t worry for now about spelling or correct sentences; write in whatever way allows you to capture on paper what you observe during that time. Include your thoughts and feelings about what you observe. You may also want to say what things look, sound, or smell like.

Spontaneous Memory Monologue
Look around at your surroundings until something you see reminds you of an event, person, or place from your past. Write that down. Now what other memory does the first one remind you of? Once you get started, keep writing down your memories. Write in whatever way captures them quickly. Don’t worry about them being jumbled in time, correct spelling, or proper sentences. Jot down all you can in about fifteen minutes. These notes will be used for writing something else later. For now it is better to jot down a lot of memories than to go into detail about any of them.
Group II: Dialogues and Monologues

Oral Literature
Write down any tale, joke, saying, jingle, verse, or song you have heard by word of mouth. Make a collection by asking other people for theirs—not just classmates but older people from different backgrounds. Make a booklet mixing types, or a booklet on each type, such as yarns, sayings, or jokes. Leave blank pages for others to add theirs. Pass around.

Dialogue
Invent or reproduce a conversation between two people by writing down just what each speaker says in turn. Before each speech set the character’s name, followed by a colon. Do not use quotation marks for these speeches.

Andrew: Dad, I have to go to school early tomorrow.
Dad: Oh?

Indicate action and setting by stage directions placed between parentheses. The time, place, and circumstances should be clear from what they are saying.

Group III: Narrative into Essay

Story Starters
Get an unfinished sentence or opening from someone else and take it from there to invent the rest. “Just as Henrietta glanced up the block to see if the bus was coming, she noticed with a sudden fear a familiar figure turn into a nearby shop…”

Dreams
Jot down a dream soon afterwards so you’ll remember it better, or keep a notebook of dreams regularly. Tell the dream to a partner or group until you have it well in mind, listen to what they have to say about it, then write it as a story. If it didn’t end, or ended in a way you didn’t like, add an ending or change the original one.
EDITING SYMBOLS

- good point
- delete
- spelling error
- verb tense
- Spell out. Don't abbreviate.
- capitalization error
- punctuation error
- poor or incorrect word choice
- incorrect use of pronoun
- omission, e.g. "She to town every day."
- needless shifts -- especially in verb tense (present to past, past to present)
- not clear
- paragraph
- run on sentence, comma splice
- sentence fragment (incomplete sentence)
- subject/verb not in agreement, e.g. "A knowledge of rules help (should be "helps") your written expression.
- awkward wording
- Reverse order.
- spacing problem
- parallelism problem
- passive voice
- transition
- join word together
- split
- corrected closely for G.U.M. until here