

GET SMART: Winning Strategies for Success

A Study Skills Handbook

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PREAMBLE

This handbook has been compiled for students and staff in an effort to promote higher standards of reading, writing, and research at North Middle School, and to ensure consistency in models of instruction throughout all three grade levels. Included are guidelines for written work, word processing, and the research process. Seventh and eighth graders who have experienced the sixth grade skills program will find new strategies in this handbook to handle more challenging material, and to enhance performance on New York State assessments. Through repetition and review of these life skills, we can help students become independent learners.

Study Smart: Winning Strategies for Success

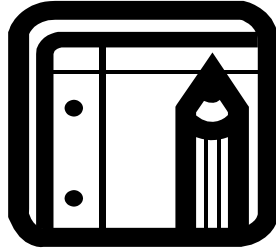
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LEARNING SKILLS



STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SUCCESS

Being prepared for class means being on time, having the right tools, and being ready to work.

Loose-leaf binder must be brought to class every day. It must be kept organized, neat, and complete. Divide it into sections according to your teachers' instructions. Make sure to date all notes. *Please note: North Middle School is a backpack free environment; therefore, morning and afternoon binders are suggested.*

Blue or black pen will be used for written work in most subject areas; math work is usually done in *pencil*. See your teacher for instructions.

Homework assignments are to be done neatly and completely. In addition, you are responsible for rereading and reviewing notes each day.

Classwork counts! Your participation in class and group activities will not only allow you to learn more, but will also make the work interesting. If you are absent from class, see your teacher about making up missed work.

Supplies needed:

Agenda Book

Loose-leaf – 3 ring binder with dividers and reinforcements

Paper – standard rule, 3 hole punch

Pencil case with 2 pens, 2 pencils, erasers, highlighters and optional markers, 12" ruler

Index cards

Homework Buddy – For each subject area, select a reliable classmate to call when you are absent. Also check to see if your teacher posts assignments online.

NORTH MIDDLE SCHOOL GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN WORK

1. Use 8 ½ “ by 11” lined looseleaf paper.
2. Place the heading on the first blue line near the left margin:
Name (John Brown)
Subject, Grade, Period (English 7 – 2)
Teacher’s Name (Ms. White)
Due Date (9/1/12)
3. Skip a line after the heading and center the title. Remember to:
 - Capitalize the first word and all other important words.
 - Underline titles of books, newspapers, magazines, plays, and films.
 - Place quotation marks around the titles of poems, short stories, and essays.
4. Skip a line after the title, and begin the body of the report on the next line.
5. Indent paragraphs one inch.
6. Use both sides of the paper unless otherwise requested.
7. Be sure to proofread your paper.
8. Remove errors neatly.
9. Use a dictionary and thesaurus.
10. Learn the following correction symbols which may be used by your teacher.

| | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|-----|---|
| cap | error in capitalization | W W | word not well chosen |
| NS | not a sentence | ¶ | new paragraph |
| RO | run-on sentence | K | awkward word or phrase |
| ^ | omitted word or phrase | P | punctuation |
| X | obvious error | SP | spelling error (word may also be circled) |
| H | illegible handwriting | | |
| ↺ | reverse order | | |

Your writing will be evaluated on the basis of context, style, and mechanics.

NORTH MIDDLE SCHOOL GUIDELINES FOR WORD PROCESSED DOCUMENTS

Unless otherwise instructed, follow all the instructions below when word processing a document.

1. Place the heading in the top left corner of the screen:

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Name | (John Brown) |
| Subject, Grade, Period | (English 7 – 2) |
| Teacher's Name | (Ms. White) |
| Date Due | (9/1/12) |
2. Press return twice after the heading.
3. Move your cursor to the body of your document. Change the line spacing to 1.5 li.
4. Center and type your title. *Capitalize* the first word of the title and all other important words. Press return twice, then left justify.
5. Begin word processing your document. Remember to:
 - Press tab once to indent the first paragraph and every new paragraph thereafter.
 - Use *italics* or *underline* titles of books, newspapers, magazines, plays, and films.
 - Place *quotation marks* around the titles of poems, short stories, and essays.
 - Put *one space* after all types of punctuation.
6. Use the spell checker to check spelling and correct errors. Use a regular dictionary to check for errors that the word processing program might miss (e.g. homonyms).
7. Use the thesaurus to find words which will enhance your writing.
8. Carefully proofread, spell, and grammar check your document. Make all necessary corrections.
9. Save and print a final draft to give to your teacher.

STUDYING AT HOME

1. Location and Equipment:

- Set aside a special place where you can study.
- Have all the necessary equipment at your place of study (e.g., index cards, rulers, pens, pencils). Have your computer handy if you need it. Use your homework organizer to set your priorities for the most effective use of study time.

2. Preparation:

- Organize your notes and work each day. Put them into proper order in your looseleaf.

3. Time:

- Spend at least 15 minutes reviewing, rereading, or rewriting material covered in class.
- Break large assignments into smaller manageable units.
- Use a calendar to organize long-term assignments.

4. Study Aids:

- Use a *highlighter* to underline key words in handouts and notes.
- Use index cards to help you study.
 - Color code index cards by subject. Write vocabulary words, concepts, phrases, dates, formulas, rules, etc. on the unlined side of the card. Write definitions, explanations, etc. on the lined side.
 - File by subject in a secure container.
- Learn to use mnemonic devices and other memory strategies.

YOUR CHECK-UP FOR SUCCESS

HOMWORK CHECKLIST

1. Before you leave school, ask yourself these questions:

- Did I write down my homework assignments completely for every class including due dates?
- Did I gather all my materials together?
- Did I number each assignment in the order of deadlines?

2. As you work on the assignment, ask the following questions:

- Do I know what I have to learn or read?
- Am I concentrating?
- Do I understand what I am reading or doing?
- Could I explain this information so someone else could understand it?

3. When you think you have finished the assignment, ask these questions:

- Have I reread the homework assignment?
- Have I completed the assignment?
 - Is my work good enough?
 - What corrections do I need to make?
 - Do I understand the material?
 - Do I understand the assignment?

REWARD YOURSELF!

PREPARING TO SUCCEED ON TESTS

What to Study, How to Study

1. What to study:

- Notes from class lessons
- Homework
- Textbook readings
- Worksheets, maps, charts, graphs, labs, diagrams, formulas
- Vocabulary words

2. How to study:

- Read all notes.
- Say notes aloud.
- Rewrite notes in a briefer form (note shrink).
- Write margin questions.
- Make flash cards for your notes and any unfamiliar vocabulary, then quiz yourself.
- Review any worksheets, maps, charts, graphs, labs, diagrams, formulas.
- Reread pages from textbook.
- Find a “study-buddy” and quiz each other.
- Create your own practice quizzes.
- Check the computer for helpful tutorials.
- ***Come for extra help!!***

3. Preparing for essay questions:

- Anticipate questions the teacher might ask.
- Sketch a variety of outline responses to model questions.
- Practice writing sample essays.

REMEMBER: If you have been reviewing your notes all along (within 24 hours of learning), you will not have much difficulty studying because the information will be in your long-term memory. Some of you will need to follow more of the above steps than others. You should, by now, have a sense of how much you need to study.

MEMORY CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to ensure that you have followed the steps for learning material.

- Have I made a list of the things I need to remember?
- Did I divide the list into small pieces to memorize?
- Did I rehearse this small group by saying the items aloud or by writing them down?
- Did I test myself to see how well I learned the group?
- Did I practice the items I missed?
- Have I gone back and tested myself?
- Have I repeated items three through six until I am sure that I have memorized my work?
- Have I allowed a few minutes each day and just before a test to refresh my memory?

MEMORY TECHNIQUES

The following are some examples of memory techniques you can use to help you review information:

- Record the information to be learned, and use it for review.
- Practice memorizing through writing and rewriting the material
- Practice memorizing by verbal rehearsal
- Use mnemonic devices to help remember subject matter.
 - For example: Order of Operations

Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally
Parenthesis, Exponents, Multiplication, Division, Addition, Subtraction

TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

Reading Passages

1. **Reading the passage successfully**
 - Requires focus and active involvement with the material
 - Must overcome distractions
 - Impossible to focus on two things at once

2. **Sources of distractions**
 - Nervousness
 - Noises in classroom
 - Problems at home
 - Passage too long, too boring, too difficult

3. **Tricks to help focus: “about-point”**
 - Read one paragraph.
 - Ask what this paragraph is **about**.
 - It is easy to focus on such a short task and to state the topic of one paragraph.
 - Label the paragraph in the margin with this topic
 - Use only a word or phrase, not a full sentence. Your label is **not** the main idea.
 - Reread all the paragraph labels when you’ve completed reading the passage .
 - Ask what the whole passage is **about**.
 - All of the paragraph topics combined will lead you to the topic of the entire passage.
 - Ask what the author’s **point** is.
 - Your answer will be the main idea of the entire passage. It will be a perfect fit, not too broad, not too narrow.
 - See page 27

4. **Three Ways to use paragraph labels**
 - To locate information in the passage.
 - Knowing where to find facts in a long passage to answer a specific question will save you time.
 - To determine the main idea of the passage.
 - The correct answer to a question concerning the main idea, the author’s purpose, or his overall approach must include the majority of the topic labels, no more, no less. Test writers try to trick you with answers that state true facts but don’t match all the labels.
 - To concentrate while reading.
 - Using the “About Point” labeling strategy keeps your mind actively engaged so you won’t fall prey to distractions.

TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

How to Answer Multiple-Choice Questions

Multiple-choice questions are either incomplete statements followed by a number of possible endings or questions followed by a list of possible answers. You have to choose which ending or answer is correct.

1. Read the questions carefully.

- Underline key words.
- Circle any **negative words** such as **not** or **except**.
- Circle any **absolute words** such as **never, always, worst, best, no, none, all, every, nobody, and everybody**. Negatives and absolutes are often misleading and frequently cause errors.

2. Try to provide your own answer without looking at the choices.

- You should go back to the passage to confirm your thoughts or find the correct response.

3. Locate the answer to a detail question in the passage.

- Use the paragraph topic labels to find the information.
- Mark the information with the number of the question.

4. Base answers to main idea questions or author's purpose questions on the complete passage.

- Don't select a **true** fact that is mentioned in only one part of the passage.
- Read all margin notes and select the answer that incorporates **most** of those topics.

5. Read all the answer choices.

- If one matches your answer, it's probably correct
- Be sure to read all the remaining choices.
- Circle **negative words** and **absolute words** to avoid careless errors.

6. Narrow the field of choices by a process of elimination.

- Get rid of choices you **know** are wrong.
- Eliminate choices that are contrary to facts in the passage.
- Eliminate silly answers.
- Eliminate those containing absolute words like **never, always, worst, best, no, none, all, every, nobody, and everybody.**

7. Use these tips for guessing:

- Never leave a question unanswered; guess after narrowing down the field.
- If there are two similar-looking answers in your group of choices, one of them is probably correct.
- If there are two answers that mean the same thing, neither can be correct.
- In questions where a choice is **all of the above**, this tends to be a correct answer, especially if two of the other choices are correct.
- If two choices are exact opposites, one of them is probably correct.
- If one choice is much longer than the rest, and it seems likely to be right, go with it; longer answers tend to be right more often than shorter ones.

TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

1. For Short Answer Questions:

- Answer easiest questions first.
- Underline key words to determine what the question is asking.
- Cross out items you have answered.
- Be alert for words such as “always” and “never.”
- Check your answer. Make sure you’ve answered the question completely
- If there is no penalty for guessing, answer every question.

2. For Essay Questions:

- Read each question carefully and underline key words.
- Analyze the task before beginning to write.
- Create an informal “cluster” outline of your response before starting to write.
- Strive for a focused essay, tightly organized, and supported with facts.

3. Responding to Thematic Essay Questions on Tests:

- Refer to writing sections on page 35+.
 - For analyzing the task
 - For planning your response
 - For writing your essay
- Refer to the *Reference Section* pages 96 and 97 for responding to DBQ’s.

MATH STRATEGIES

Plan for Solving Word Problems

PREVIEW

First read the problem once from beginning to end.

READ

Reread the problem slowly and carefully.

Be sure you know the meaning of all the words

Watch for keywords such as “all together,” “about,” etc.

Watch for **boldfaced** words.

PLAN

Highlight or underline the facts.

Draw a diagram, sketch a picture, or create a chart that will help visualize the problem.

Write a formula if one is to be used.

Substitute the information given into the formula.

If you are not using a formula, decide what operation or operations you will use to solve the problem

Estimate the possible answer.

SOLVE

Work the problem out. Be careful that your calculations are accurate.

Double check your computations.

CHECK

Check your results with the facts given in the problem.

- Did you answer the questions asked?
- Does the answer make sense?
- Is your answer reasonable?

READING STRATEGIES



HOW TO READ A TEXTBOOK

1. Preview the whole book

- Examine the table of contents.
- Check for a glossary.
- Look for an index.
- Note other special aids including gazetteers, atlases, and review problems.

2. Preview the chapter

- Read the title.
- Read the introductory paragraph.
- Read the boldfaced headings.
- Look at charts, pictures, graphs, tables, cartoons, etc.
- Read captions under illustrations.
- Read the concluding paragraph or summary.
- Read the questions at the end of the chapter.

3. Read the assignment

- Review the essential questions or change boldfaced headings into questions, and read for an answer.
- Note boldfaced or italicized words or phrases.
- Make a list of important terms, names, and dates. Keep an ongoing list of new vocabulary words with their meanings.
- As you finish reading a section, write a brief summary.
- Use your notes to answer the questions at the end of the chapter.
- Test yourself on the information.

HOW TO READ A CHAPTER IN A TEXTBOOK

Use this study formula: **PQ3R**

- P* = PREVIEW** Look over the assigned pages before beginning to read.
- Q* = QUESTION** Turn titles and boldfaced headings into questions or note essential questions provided.
- R* = RELATE** Think about what you already know.
- R* = READ** Actively involve yourself in the overall topic.
- ask what you'd like to know.
- R* = RESPOND** State the answers to these questions by:
- taking notes
 - paraphrasing the information
 - writing a summary of what you have read

WHEN READING IS TOUGH

Sometimes your ordinary reading style does not work. If you are not getting it, try the following techniques:

- Break the material down into smaller sections
- Look for key words, especially nouns and verbs.
- Label the topic of each paragraph. Use no more than a word or phrase.
- Read it again. Difficult reading material is often easier to understand when read a second time.
- Check for understanding. Go back to the point where your understanding broke down, and try to see that your topic heading reflects the content of each paragraph accurately.
- Read it aloud. Imagine you are trying to help someone else understand it.
- Stand up. Change positions or walk around as you read aloud.

HOW TO READ A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEXTBOOK

Use the formula: **P3R**

P = PREVIEW

Look over the chapter to be read.

Check for new vocabulary/grammatical structure/culture.

Notice what new material has been introduced.

R = RELATE

When possible, relate new vocabulary to previously learned words.

R = READ

Read each sentence from the beginning to end without looking up words

Try to guess the meaning of new words.

Look up words to verify your guesses *only after you have read each sentence* and cannot make sense of the meaning.

Read out loud: This gives you additional oral practice.

Reread the selections until you know them.

Rereading is essential.

R = REVIEW

Learn the vocabulary.

Grammatical structures and verbs given in each chapter should be memorized.

Work with another student to review.

Drill as often as necessary.

HOW TO READ A BAR GRAPH

To understand a bar graph look for the main parts.

TITLE: Look for the title at the top of the graph. This gives you the topic or subject of the graph.

LEGEND/KEY: Look for the key or legend to help you interpret the graph. The legend explains what each bar or pattern represents. Not all graphs have legends.

AXIS: Find the vertical axis. The information on this part of the graph runs from top to bottom. Note the information given on this part of the graph.



Find the horizontal axis. The information on this part of the graph runs from left to right. Read the information given on this part of the graph.

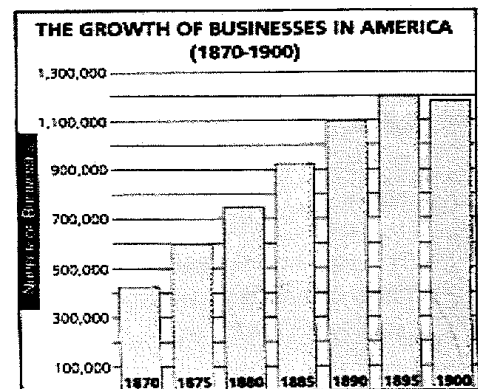


INTERPRET: To interpret the information on the graph, you must use the information on each axis to draw conclusions.

Example

1. Look at the title
2. Examine both axes.
3. To interpret the information go to the horizontal axis.

- Place your finger on the bar reading 1880.
- Run your finger up to the top of the bar.
- Next, run your finger across to the left to the vertical axis.
- Look at the number scale on the vertical axis.
- You will see that bar ends at a little more than 700,000.



Question: What have you found out from the information given on the graph?

Answer: There were approximately 750,000 businesses in America in 1880. And, if you read the entire graph, you can see how American businesses have grown from 1870 to 1900.

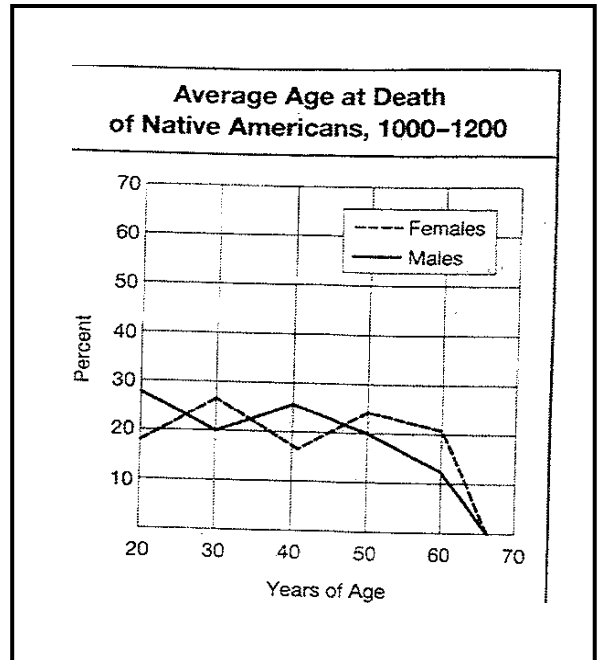
HOW TO READ A LINE GRAPH

Line graphs are particularly useful for showing change over time.

Read the labels on both the horizontal axis and the vertical axis. Then look to see how they relate to the subject of the graph.

Question: What percentage of Native American males died at age 30?

Answer: At age 30, 20% of Native American males died.



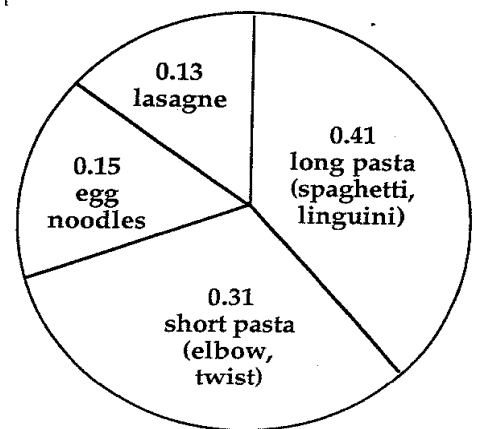
HOW TO READ A CIRCLE GRAPH

Retail Sales of Pasta

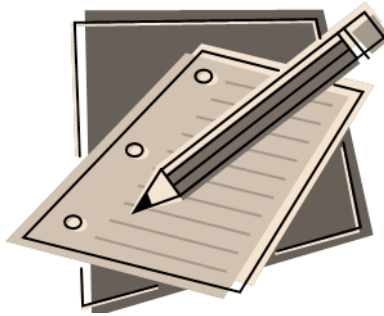
A circle graph is used to compare parts of a whole. The circle represents the whole. The circle is separated into parts of the whole.

By looking at the graph on the right, you can tell that long pasta is the most popular in retail sales because it is the largest part of the graph.

You can also tell that long pasta is the most popular because it has the largest number, 0.41 or 41% of the sales.



NOTETAKING & OUTLINING



INTRODUCTION TO NOTETAKING

As a student, you will be expected to take notes for many purposes and under many circumstances including those listed below.

Oral Sources

teacher's lectures
classmates' presentations
class discussions
preparation for tests
films in class

Written Sources

short stories
novels
essays
nonfiction texts
magazines and newspaper articles
Internet source material

Taking notes from oral sources is very different from, and often more difficult, than taking notes from written material.

HIGHLIGHTING

Highlighting is the fastest and easiest method of notetaking because it does not require forming ideas and writing. The danger is that many people tend to highlight too much of the printed material. This method can be used only with books that you own or with handout materials that you may keep.

When highlighting, it is important to **read the selection first**, then go back and **highlight the key ideas** (important names, terms, definitions, dates) that will help answer the questions you already have noted. In the margin, identify the topic of the highlighted portion. If you use this procedure, you will avoid highlighting too much.

Highlight after reading!

LISTENING

AN IMPORTANT NOTETAKING AND LEARNING SKILL

DO YOU KNOW

- As a student you will spend 55% of your time **LISTENING**.
- There is a difference between **LISTENING** and **HEARING**.
- **HEARING** occurs when the sound waves enter your ear.
- **LISTENING** occurs when you use your **BRAIN** to understand what you hear.
- The student who **LISTENS** is the student who learns.
- **LISTENING** makes learning easier.
- Half your knowledge will come from **LISTENING**.

HOW TO BE A GOOD LISTENER

- Get interested.
- Focus your attention.
- Avoid distractions. Listen for directions
- Listen for key words and ideas.
- Take notes to keep your mind from wandering.
- Avoid pen tapping or any activity which will create distractions for you or for others.

LISTEN CAREFULLY AND RECORD SIMPLY

- Write the general topic immediately
- Just write – don't try to learn the material.
- Write when you have heard the main point.
- Write the information in your own words.
- List details and examples under the main point.
- Listen for number words such as "first," "next."
- Listen for signal words such as "the cause."
- Draw quick sketches or diagrams if helpful.
- Always copy information written on the board.
- Use asterisks; underline important ideas.
- Draw a line for missed information.

HOW TO PARAPHRASE

- Read:** Read one paragraph.
- About:** What is the paragraph about?
What is the topic or subject?
- Point:** What is the point the author is making?
Write it in your own words.
- Write:** Write the answers to these questions in this format:
The paragraph is **about** _____(word/phrase)
The author's **point** is the _____
_____(sentence)

HOW TO SUMMARIZE

Use the Note-Shrink Strategy

1. Read the material to be summarized.
2. **Don't look at the material;** write down as many facts as you can recall.
3. Reread written material to remind you of omitted information.
4. Add to your list of notes.
5. Group notes by topic.
6. **Shrink notes** – eliminate minor notes/details.
7. For each group of notes, write a sentence about the key idea.
8. Organize these key ideas (sentences) into logical sequence.
9. Write your organized ideas into a brief paragraph (your summary).

Or Use the Graphic Organizer “Concept Map” (page 53)

1. Read material to be summarized.
2. Write **topic** of entire passage on line in center.
3. Write **key ideas** on each radiating line.
4. Write one-paragraph summary using the topic and these key ideas.

CRITERIA FOR GOOD NOTES

1. Make Your Notes Brief.

- Develop a short hand system:
 - Use signs and symbols.
 - Use standard abbreviations.
 - Telegram by leaving out unimportant words
 - Summarize information.
 - Rephrase by putting ideas into your own words.

2. Make Your Notes Easy to Read.

- Write only one idea per line.
- Use only one side of the paper.
- Leave a wide left margin.
- Use pen rather than pencil.

3. Include the following information:

- Main ideas.
- Significant details.
- Message carrying words.

CORNELL NOTETAKING FORMAT

The *Cornell Format* is a divided-page format with a built –in provision for active study.

- First you take your notes, using a dash to highlight each idea.
- Next you write questions based on your notes in the left margin.
- Then you cover your notes and quiz yourself by answering the questions in the margin.

| Study Questions | Notes |
|-----------------|-------|
| | |

CORNELL NOTETAKING FORMAT

Example

ORAL LECTURE: “Dr. Louis B. Leakey”

For 30 years, Dr. Louis B. Leakey and his wife had searched for the remains of early man. Remains of a Stone Age man had been found in Peking. Evidence showed there were men who lived before this Peking Man. However, no one had discovered the bones of a man older than the Peking Man.

The Leakey’s felt that there was an older man because tools had been made before the time of the Peking Man. They felt they could find the skulls of the men who had made those tools. They began a search for the remains of these earlier beings.

The Leakey’s centered their search for the remains of an earlier man in Tanganika, Africa. They chose this region for two reasons. Older stone tools than those found in Asia had been uncovered in Africa, and a 300-foot deep gorge leading to the oldest layer of rock in Africa is located in Tanganika.

NOTETAKING MODEL

| STUDY QUESTIONS | NOTES |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <i>study questions go here</i> | <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Dr. Louis B. Leakey*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - * & wife spnd 30 yrs. Srchng 4 remns v erly mn - remns v stone age mn found in Peking - evdnce shwd tht mn lvd b 4 Peking Man - no 1 dscvr d bones v mn older thn Peking Man - * flt .y cld find skulls v mn who made tools older thn Pking Man - start search 4 remns v erlier human bng - * look 4 remns n Tanganika, Africa - Africa chosen 4 2 reasons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - older tools found n Africa - 300 ft. gorge there has oldest layer v rock |

RULES FOR A HARVARD OUTLINE

The purpose of creating a Harvard Outline is to help organize information.

- It is necessary to outline only body paragraphs.
- When possible, Roman numerals should correspond to topic sentences.
- Use parallel construction in making your outline. For example, if you have an “A” you must have a “B.” If you have a “1” you must have a “2.”
- Capitalize the first letter of each division on the outline.
- The only time a line can be skipped is between Roman numerals.
- Each Roman numeral should have a topic heading. Be sure your topic headings do not contain any specific information. All specific information should be listed under the heading.
- Consistency in grammar is required.
- Consistency in parts of speech under each topic is required. When using phrases start with the same part of speech (e.g., each subdivision begins with the same part of speech).

A HARVARD OUTLINE

Example

Training a Dog

- I. Qualities needed for Training
 - A. Intelligence
 - B. Desire to please

- II. Some rules for training
 - A. Importance of firmness
 - B. Teaching one command at a time
 - 1. Repetition of command
 - 2. Using words of command
 - C. Praise as an incentive

- III. Obedience training
 - A. Definition
 - B. Obedience commands
 - 1. Heel
 - 2. Sit
 - 3. Lie down

- IV. The qualities of a good master

NOTETAKING AS A STUDY TOOL

BEFORE THE CLASS

- Read any assigned work before the class
- Review previous notes.
- Reflect on previous experiences and learning that may relate to the topic
- Try to recall main points of what you know.

AFTER THE CLASS

Reorganize

- Read back your notes aloud to get an overview
- Look to see how the main points relate to the details
- Turn the main points and details into questions, and write the questions in the blank space next to the notes.
- Reduce your notes by underlining key words.
- Put the key words and details into an outline.

Recite

- As you reorganize, say the information aloud.
- Test yourself by covering the notes and answering your questions.
- Use mnemonic devices, association word clues, rhymes, or any other method to memorize information.

REVIEW

REVIEW

REVIEW

REVIEW

REVIEW

WRITING



WRITING

As a middle school student, you are required to write every day, but the kinds of writing you will be asked to do will differ. Nevertheless, in all of your writing you should consider these elements:

1. Overall Development

- Have you developed your work fully?
- Does your writing demonstrate your own distinctive voice?
- Are you aware of your audience and task?
- Is your work original, insightful, and imaginative?

2. Organization

- Is your work focused?
- Does your work contain a logically ordered beginning, middle, and end?

3. Support

- Does your work contain material (facts, examples, details, explanations, etc.) that develop its main points?

4. Technical Elements

- *Sentence structure:* Are your sentences complete?
- *Word choice:* Are you using words correctly and effectively?
- *Mechanics:* Are you following rules for spelling, capitalization, and punctuation?

STEP 1: PRE-WRITING

1. Understand the task. In order to understand exactly what is being asked of you, you must:
 - Listen to your teacher’s explanation of the task.
 - Ask questions.
 - Read the question thoroughly.
 - Write down, underline, or highlight key words.
 - Take notes.
 - Pay close attention to the language of the task. (See “Terms Used in Writing Tasks.”)

TERMS USED IN WRITING TASKS

| | |
|------------|---|
| ANALYZE: | Consider a topic by examining its parts. |
| COMPARE: | Find similarities <i>and</i> differences between two or more things. |
| CONTRAST: | Find differences between two or more things. |
| DEFINE: | Give the meaning. Generally, it’s a good idea to offer an example after the definition. |
| DESCRIBE: | Tell what has happened. Give a detailed account of an event, person, or thing. |
| DISCUSS: | Examine and carefully analyze the varied aspects of an issue. |
| EVALUATE: | Present the pros and cons of various aspects of an issue, and conclude by taking a stand. |
| EXPLAIN: | State and interpret the details surrounding an object or incident. |
| SUMMARIZE: | Record the important aspects or highlights of a particular idea or incident. |
| SUPPORT: | Give concrete examples or specific factual data that prove your answer is correct. |

2. Plan your approach.

Brainstorm:

- You have at your disposal a great deal of information, experiences, and ideas. Brainstorming is an excellent way to get at them. (Try using a word web to visualize your ideas.)

Choose and Limit a Topic:

- What topic are you interested in exploring?
- Have you narrowed your topic sufficiently so that you can focus on the most important details only?

Create an Outline. Use a Graphic Organizer:

- Sometimes you will be asked to create an outline (see page 30 and 31.) At other times, a graphic organizer may suffice. Graphic organizers can help you visualize and display information (see pages 49-54.)

STEP 2: WRITING A FIRST DRAFT

Most formal writing assignments will allow you the chance to write a first draft. Here are some helpful hints for your first draft:

- Leave space between the lines of writing to enable you to make corrections. Also, leave margins on both sides of your paper.
- Don't be overly concerned with mechanics. You can always fix these errors later.
- Don't be afraid to depart from your original plan or outline.

Almost all writing contains a beginning, middle, and end, which on paper become the introduction, body, and conclusion.

The Introduction

The introduction serves two purposes:

1. to capture the reader's attention (the lead-in)
2. to express the work's main idea (thesis statement)

The Lead-in

The lead-in is a device that is very popular and effective. It:

1. catches the reader's attention.
2. announces the subject matter and tone of the essay (humorous, serious, etc.)
3. sets up, or leads into, the body or main part of the essay.

Here are some suggestions and examples of lead-ins:

1. A paradoxical or intriguing statement – Example:

“Eat two chocolate bars and call me in the morning,” said the doctor to his patient. Such advice sounds like a sugar fanatic's dream, but recent studies have indeed confirmed that chocolate positively affects depression and anxiety.

2. An arresting statistic or shocking statement – Example:

One of every seven women living in Smith County will be assaulted this year, according to a recent report prepared by the Smith County police department.

3. Question – Example:

It is twice the number of people who belong to the Southern Baptist Church, eight times the number who serve in the armed forces, and just one million short of the number who voted for Barry Goldwater for President in 1964. What is it? It's the number of people in the U.S. who smoked marijuana: a massive 26 million.

4. A quotation – Example:

"To thine own self be true" is a famous quote from Shakespeare's "Hamlet." But how many of us are really capable of honest self-analysis?

5. A relevant story, joke, or anecdote – Example:

A group of young women was questioning Saturday afternoon shoppers about their views in the 1982 defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment. One old man in overalls answered, "ERA? Well, I like it just fine. But you know, I can't pick it up on my darned radio after dark." That was the problem; too few people knew what ERA really stood for.

6. A description, often used for emotional appeal – Example:

With one eye blackened, one arm in a cast, and third-degree burns on both her legs, the pretty blond two-year old seeks corners of the room, refuses to speak, and shakes violently at the sound of loud noises. Tammy is not the victim of a war or natural disaster; rather, she is the helpless victim of her parents, one of the thousands of children who suffer daily from America's hidden crime, child abuse.

7. A factual statement or summary who-what-when-where-why lead-in – Example:

Texas's first execution by injection is scheduled for September 17, at the Huntsville unit of the State Department of Corrections, despite the protests of various human rights groups around the country.

8. An analogy or contrast – Example:

The Romans kept geese in their capitol hill to cackle alarm in the event of an attack by night. Modern Americans still need better systems of protection. According to the latest safety Council report, almost any door with standard locks can be opened easily with a common plastic credit card.

9. A personal experience – Example:

I realized times were changing for women when I overheard my six year –old nephew speaking to my sister, a prominent New York lawyer. As we left her office one evening, Tommy looked up at his mother and asked, “Mommy, can little boys grow up to be lawyers too?”

10. A catalog of relevant examples – Example:

A four hundred pound teenager quit school because no desk would hold her. A five hundred pound chef was fired because he could no longer stand on his feet. A three hundred-fifty pound truck driver broke furniture in friends’ houses. All these people are living better, happier, thinner lives, thanks to the remarkable intestinal bypass surgery first developed in 1967.

11. A statement of a problem or a popular misconception – Example:

Some people believe that poetry is written only by aging Beatniks or solemn, mournful men and women. The poetry in the school’s program is out to correct that erroneous point of view.

Important Note: Thinking of a good lead-in is often difficult when you sit down to write. Many writers, in fact, skip the lead-in until after the first draft is written. They compose the main body first, saving the lead-in and the conclusion for last.

Step 2: Writing a First Draft cont.

The Thesis Statement

Sometimes you will be asked to begin your work with a thesis statement. This is often the case for literature essays, research papers, and social studies essays. You will be writing either a theory, statement, opinion, or conclusion that needs to be supported in the body of the essay. Begin your thesis statement by restating the problem in your own words. Then state your paper's main idea.

Let's say you've been given this assignment:

What makes a character a hero? This is a question addressed by many works of fiction and non-fiction.

Choose two works you have read. For each, identify the hero, indicate the qualities that make the character heroic, and, using specific references from the works, give examples of those qualities in action.

In your answer, be sure to include:

- The author and title of the two works
- The name of the heroes
- The qualities that make those characters heroic
- Examples from the texts that show those qualities in action

(Note: First you should determine the organization of the essay. This essay will consist of four paragraphs: an introduction, a body section consisting of two paragraphs, one for each work discussed, and a conclusion.)

Your thesis statement could read like this:

Many works of literature, fiction and non-fiction, address the question of heroism. Two works that attempt to define very different kinds of heroism are The Odyssey, the epic by Homer, and No Ordinary Time, a biography of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, written by Doris Kearns Goodwin.

- Note how the first part of the thesis statement restates the problem.
- Note how the second part states the main idea of the essay.

Be aware of these “Introduction Pitfalls”:

- Keep your introduction brief and to the point.
- Don't begin with an apology or complaint. Avoid “I don't know much about Egypt, but...”
- Don't assume your reader is familiar with your subject matter. Don't write “The biggest flaw with this experiment” without first identifying the experiment!
- Avoid overused lead-ins. If teachers had a nickel for every essay that began with a dictionary definition, they could all retire to Bermuda. Find a livelier way!

The Body

The body is the heart of the essay, its most important section. If you can write a good body paragraph, you will become a very effective writer in all your subject areas.

A body paragraph contains a topic sentence, which expresses the paragraph's main idea, and supporting material, which supports or proves that main idea.

Writing a good topic sentence is a skill you should master. The topic sentence should be comprehensive enough to cover the ideas expressed in that paragraph. For example, which of these topic sentences do you think is better?

- Odysseus is a brave and intelligent man
- Odysseus qualifies as a hero because he displays courage and intelligence in facing many challenges on his return from the Trojan War.

Some tips regarding supporting material:

- Develop your ideas fully by using examples, details, reasons, etc.
- Omit material that does not address the topic sentence.
- Use transitional words and phrases to connect ideas.
- Avoid restating the plot of a work of literature.
- When writing about literature, use the present tense.
- It is better to discuss one idea fully than to discuss several ideas superficially.
- Use a clincher sentence (one that restates the main idea) to end a longer body paragraph.

Note this sample:

Odysseus qualifies as a hero because he displays courage and intelligence in facing many challenges on his return from the Trojan War. He demonstrates his intelligence in outwitting Polyphemos, the Cyclops. He cleverly tells Polyphemos that his name is “Nobody.” As a result, after he had blinded Polyphemos, the Cyclops calls for help, screaming, “Nobody has blinded me!” Naturally, Polyphemos’s neighbors then wonder why he is complaining. Odysseus, having used his intelligence to his advantage, is free to plot his escape. In a later episode, his courage is on display when he decides to rescue his troops from Circe, the supernatural witch. Because Circe has turned some of his men to swine, others are understandably terrified of returning to her lair. Odysseus, however, is unafraid. As a leader, he knows his first responsibility is to his men; he must overcome not only his own fears, but those of his troops, as well. He does so, and eventually his men are saved. Since Odysseus is a brave and intelligent character, he becomes a hero who overcomes challenges and protects his subjects.

Understand how this body paragraph works effectively:

- The topic sentence (underlined) states the idea that the rest of the paragraph will prove.
- The supporting material uses specific references from the text.
- The writer provides a transitional phrase (“in a later episode”) to shift from one idea (intelligence) to another (courage).
- Finally, a clincher sentence summarizes the paragraph’s main idea.

Step 2: Writing a First Draft cont.

The Conclusion

Like a good story, an essay should not stop in the middle. It should have a satisfying conclusion, one that gives the reader a sense of completion. Don't allow your essay to drop off or fade out at the end. The ending should be as clear, important, and interesting as the introductory paragraph. It is the last idea your reader will take from your work.

Here are a few ways you might want to end your essay:

Do's:

- A restatement of thesis and major points (for long essays only)
- A brief summary
- A result from preceding data or events
- An evaluation of the importance of the essay's ideas
- A discussion of the essay's broader implications
- A call to action
- A prediction based on the essay's argument
- A story, joke, quotation, or witticism that sums up the point of the essay.

Don'ts:

- Avoid a "mechanical" ending. Don't recap main ideas in a short essay.
- Don't introduce new points or ideas in a conclusion.
- Don't change your stance or position. Don't soften or renege on your ideas. If you've taken a position, stick to it.
- At all costs, avoid trite or overused expressions, such as "in summary," or "as you can see," or "in conclusion."

Step 3: Revising

This stage of the writing process often determines how good a piece of writing will be. Read very carefully what you have written. Give the content a good deal of thought. Don't be afraid to make major changes. Writing is a process, and changes are an inherent part of the process.

Don't be afraid to share your paper with another reader – a classmate or a teacher, for example. Use the reader's feedback in revising your work.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Did I stick to my topic? Did I include unnecessary or irrelevant material?
- Have I developed my ideas fully? What changes would clarify or improve my work?
- Do my ideas flow together smoothly? Would a different organization or sequence of ideas improve the work?
-

Proofread for style and mechanics:

- Do your sentences read clearly?
- Does the work contain sentence fragments or run-ons?
- Are sentences varied in terms of structure and beginning?
- Does the work include precise, vivid words? Now is the time to use that thesaurus.
- Do verbs agree with their subjects? Are tenses used correctly?
- Does the paper contain a minimum of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation errors? Be especially careful of commonly misspelled words, such as "there," "their," and "they're." Check the spelling of plurals and possessives.
- Does each sentence have the proper end punctuation?

Step 4: Publishing

Your final copy should be as close to perfect as you can make it. After all, your work will probably be graded, but, more important, your work is a reflection of your character. Therefore, your work should be free from careless errors or blemishes.

In addition:

- Have you used the proper heading?
- Is your work neat and legible?
- Have you used the required font and font size?
- Does the work require a cover page?
- Have you left margins on all four sides of the paper?
- Have you included all the necessary components of the assignments? (Do not hand in work that is incomplete.)

(Writing Aids – see section on graphic organizers page 47.)

WRITING



GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

Graphic organizers can help you visualize and display information. They help you organize and structure your thoughts and ideas in a different format.

Graphic organizers may be used in oral presentations, as a pre-writing format to essays, or in studying for a test. They serve as a valuable tool in critical thinking. You will benefit from the insights gained by analyzing ideas and facts in a visual presentation.

The following pages contain several different types of graphic organizers, which may be helpful to you.

Five Paragraph Thematic Essay

The lead-in could be:

*An arresting statistic
A shocking statement
A question
A quotation*

The lead-in could be:

*A description often used for emotional appeal
A factual statement
A catalog of relevant examples*

Introduction

*Begins with a lead-in about the subject
Ends with a thesis statement*

First Body Paragraph

Begin with topic sentence

Details

Second Body Paragraph

Begin with topic sentence

Details

Third Body Paragraph

Begin with topic sentence

Details

Conclusion

Restate your thesis using different words.

You could include:

- *A result from the events*
- *A call to action*
- *A prediction*

Five Paragraph Thematic Essay

Introduction

First Body Paragraph

Second Body Paragraph

Third Body Paragraph

Details

Details

Details

Conclusion

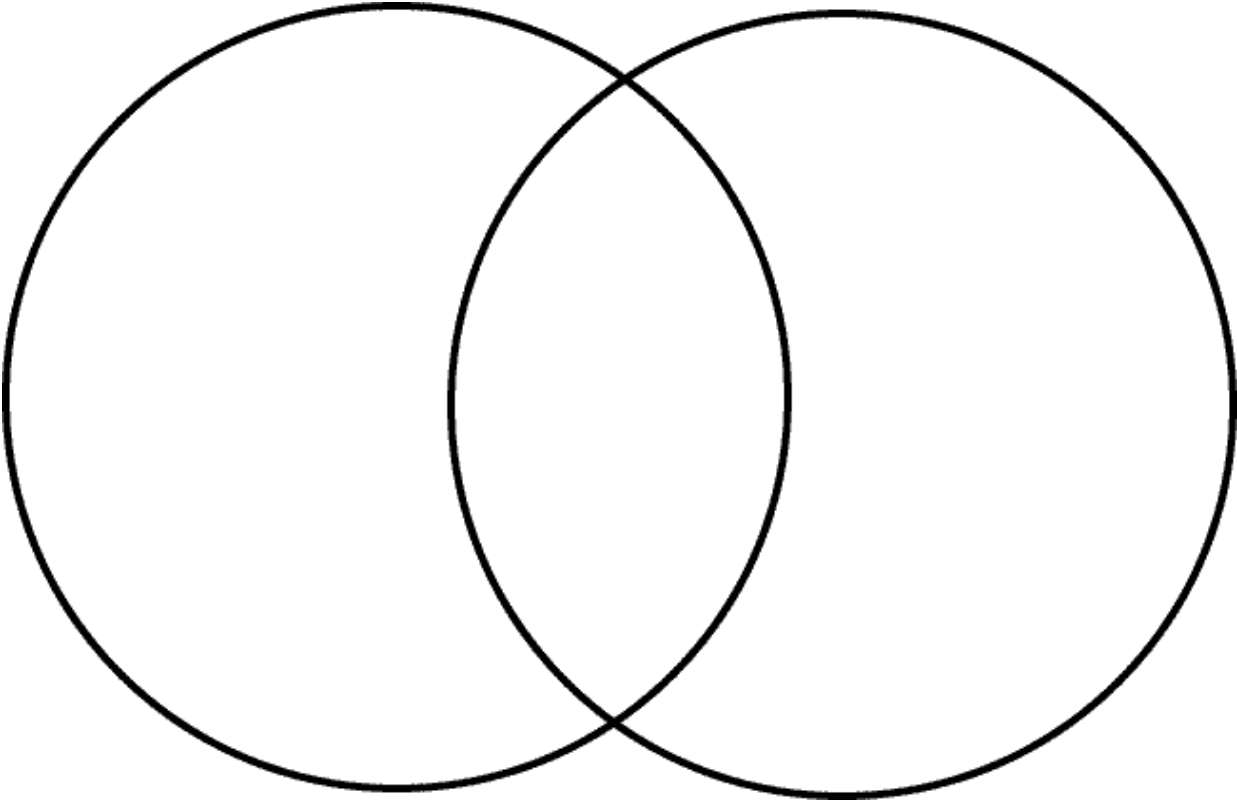
Venn Diagram for Compare/Contrast

Topic: _____

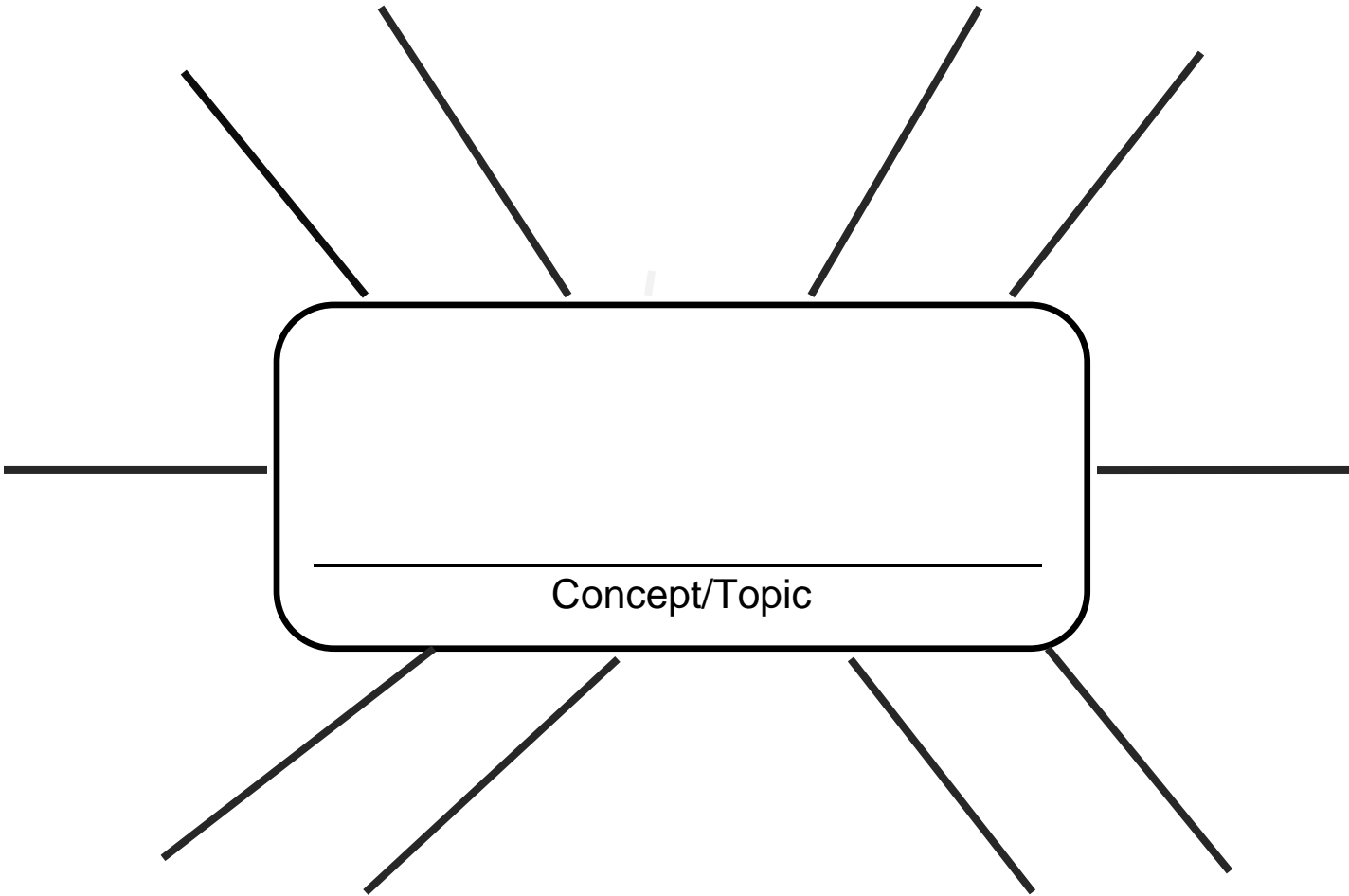
Different

Different

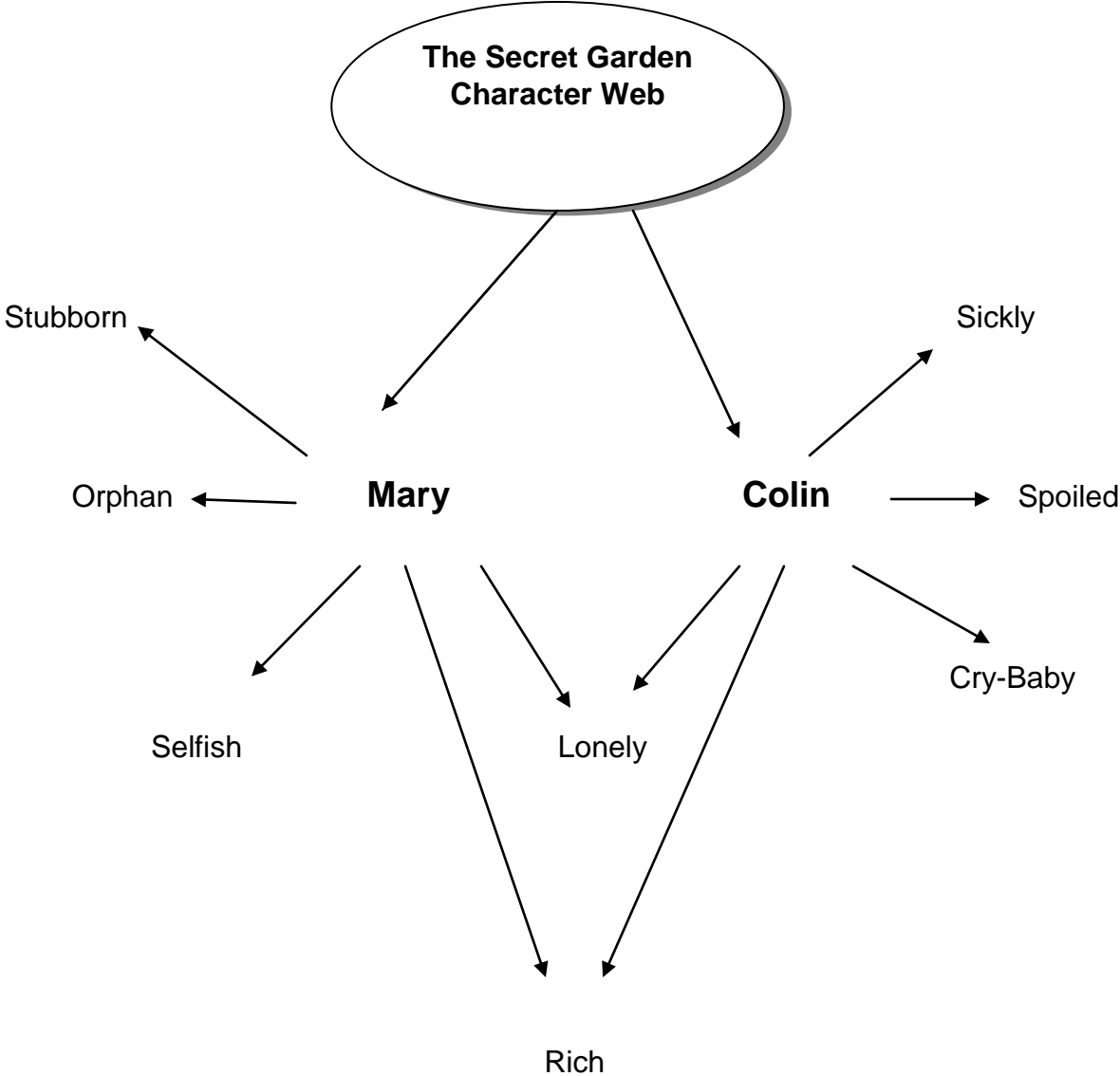
Alike



Concept Map



Character web design using
the software program,
"Inspiration"



TRANSITIONS

**Transitions tie sentences together.
Transitions tie paragraphs together.**

Transitional words and phrases are used to show place or time, to connect ideas, to introduce an illustration, or to indicate contrast.

The correct use of transitional words and phrases will result in effective and fluid essay writing.

TO SHOW TIME OR PLACE

THEN
FIRST
SECOND
NEXT
MEANWHILE
FURTHER
SOON
LATER
EVENTUALLY
TO THE LEFT
IN DUE TIME
FINALLY

ONE IDEA + ONE IDEA

AND
MOREOVER
TOO
ALSO
FURTHERMORE
IN ADDITION
IN THE SAME FASHION
FINALLY
AGAIN
SIMILARLY
LIKEWISE

TO INTRODUCE AN ILLUSTRATION OR A CONCLUSION

NAMELY
FOR EXAMPLE
FOR INSTANCE
TO ILLUSTRATE
THUS
IN SUMMARY
THAT IS

TO INDICATE CONTRAST

HOWEVER
ON THE OTHER HAND
NEVERTHELESS
ALTHOUGH
THOUGH

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT GRAMMAR AND USAGE

Q. When do I use commas?

A. Here are five of the most important rules to remember about commas. The commas indicate brief pauses between separate elements in a sentence.

Examples:

- **To separate words and phrases in a series:**
 - French, Italian, and Spanish are Romance languages
- **To separate two or more adjectives preceding a noun:**
 - Consider this important, necessary reading strategy to improve comprehension.
- **To separate independent clauses with coordinating conjunctions:**
 - You may take the test now, or you may wait until later.
- **To separate interrupters and introductory nouns of direct address:**
 - Yes, Dallas is the capital of Texas.
 - Dad, what's for dinner?
- **To separate items in dates and addresses:**
 - The delegates to the Constitutional Convention signed the Constitution on September 17, 1787, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Q. How do I make sure my verbs and subjects agree in a sentence?

A. Here are two of the most important rules to remember about this:

Examples:

- **A verb agrees with its subject in number:**
 - One of the chairs looks comfortable.
 - Many of the students walk to school.
- **When using either/or, neither/nor, the verb agrees with the subject closer to it:**
 - Either Susan or her brother is home.
 - Neither Susan nor her brothers are home.

Q. When and how do I write quotations?

A. Quotations are words spoken or written by someone and reported directly.

Examples:

- “Has anyone in the class spoken to Dr. Sullivan?” asked Helen Brown.
- “I did last summer,” said Mr. Green.

When a quoted sentence is divided into two parts, the second part begins with a small letter:

- “He found out,” answered Jack, “that the moon is covered by a layer of dust.”

Question marks or exclamation points are generally placed inside the quotes:

- Pauline asked, “What is your interpretation of the poem?”

Q. When should I use a semi-colon?

A. A semi-colon is used to connect two independent statements.

Example:

A semi-colon may replace “and” or “but” in compound sentences:

- I paced forward; the thoughts raced in my head.

Q. When should I use a colon?

A. A colon is used to introduce a list, an explanation, a quotation, or the body of a letter.

Example:

1. Next year we will study the following subjects: French, art, science, and math.

Q. Do I underline or use quotation marks for titles?

A. Titles of books, movies, plays, and full-length published works are underlined, if handwritten. They are set in italics if they are word processed.

Example:

The Little Prince, Scientific American, The Odd Couple

2. **Titles of essays, poems, and short stories are set off in quotation marks.**

“The Tell-Tale Heart,” “The Road Not Taken”

Q. When should I use an apostrophe?

A. The apostrophe is used:

3. To show ownership or relationship

Example:

Singular

Plural

The boy's puppy

the children's camp

Kate's painting

the travelers' luggage

4. To show where the letters have been omitted in contractions

Example:

It is

it's

who is

who's

We are

we're

she would

she'd

5. To form the plural of numbers and letters

Example:

There are three 5's in my telephone number

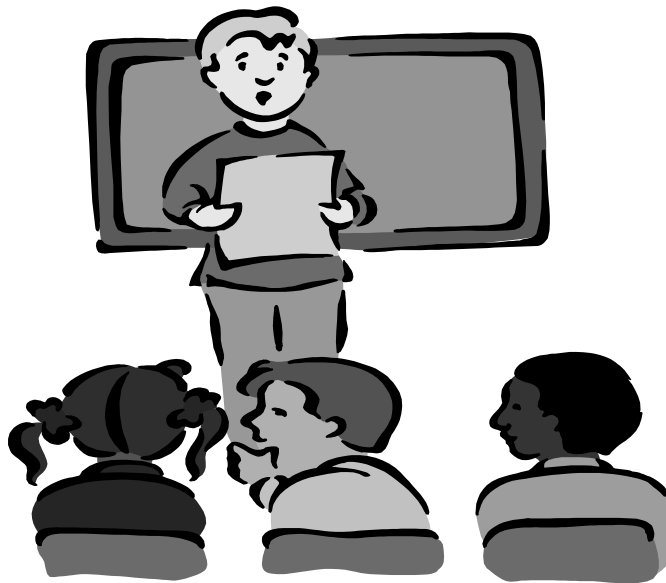
Your o's look like a's, and your u's look like n's.

6. The apostrophe should not be used:

To form plurals

To show ownership with pronouns

ORAL PRESENTATIONS AND SPEECHES



TYPES OF SPEECHES

Students speak publicly for various purposes. These are:

To inform

To persuade

To inspire

To instruct

To entertain

VISUAL AIDS TO ENHANCE ORAL PRESENTATIONS

chalk talk

posters

Demonstrations

PowerPoint presentations

handouts

slides

Smartboard presentations

videos

STEPS NECESSARY FOR EFFECTIVE SPEAKING

Oral presentations and speeches follow a process similar to writing. As in the prewriting stage, researching and organizing information are necessary steps preceding a speaking task.

A. Prepare an oral-presentation speech.

1. Select a topic
2. Carry out research.
3. Make an outline (organize information).
4. Make notes.
 - a. Important points to cover (these should be reminders only, not to be read.)
5. Practice.
 - a. Know topic and sequence.
 - b. Plan effective and interesting opening.
 - c. Practice often and in front of those who can offer constructive criticism.

B. Speak clearly and distinctly.

1. Time the length of the report
2. Enunciate clearly and crisply.
3. Use correct pronunciation.
4. Pay attention to volume, pitch, and projection.
5. Vary voice, avoid monotonous pattern.
6. Speak slowly rather than quickly, pause occasionally.
7. Use correct sentence structure.

C. Delivery

1. Look at audience (establish eye contact.)
2. Start slowly.
3. Project your voice.
4. Maintain good posture, relaxed stance.
5. Avoid mannerisms/confidence to keep attention.

INFORMATION & RESEARCH



RESEARCH PROCESS CHECKLIST

Date due

1. Brainstorm for a broad topic.
2. Get an overview of the topic. Read an encyclopedia. Find several articles either in print or online.
3. Narrow the topic (topically, chronologically, geographically). Is it a good one? Are there materials available in the time allotted?
4. Make a list of keywords and related terms.
5. Decide on questions and/or headings you want to use.
6. Explore and develop a search strategy which includes print and non-print sources.
7. Find and evaluate sources. Biased? Dated? Reliable? Point of View? Accuracy? Reputation of publisher? Qualification of writer? For articles access Infotrac, online data bases; for books search the OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog). Use internet verification criteria. Check reference material including books, encyclopedias, dictionaries, vertical files, and online sources.
8. Choose the sources you are going to use and prepare source cards for each. Use the exact format for a bibliographic entry, using a unique code for each source.
9. Take notes on index cards placing one fact on each card. Be sure to write the source code and page number of the source you used.
10. Sort note cards into a logical order. You may want to add or eliminate some cards.
11. Divide your note cards into subtopics/headings. You can color code or use colored dividers. Label each pile of cards.
12. Prepare an outline from your note cards. Include headings and subtopics.
13. Arrange source cards in alphabetical order to prepare your bibliography.

For a Written Report:

14. Write or word process a rough draft.
15. Revise the draft and check spelling.
16. Word process a bibliography.
17. Word process your final copy.

For an Oral Report:

18. Make two 3" x 5" speaker cards in outline form
19. Write a bibliography.
20. Practice your presentation.

NORTH MIDDLE SCHOOL'S CHECKLIST FOR FINDING FACTS

Use the following checklist when you search for facts in any library.

1. What kind of facts are you seeking?

- “*WHO?*” questions ask for facts about people.
- “*WHERE?*” questions ask for facts about places.
- “*WHAT?*” questions usually ask for facts about events.
- “*WHEN?*” questions ask for facts about time.
- “*HOW MUCH?*” or “*HOW MANY?*” questions ask for numbers or measurements.
- “*WHY?*” and “*HOW DO?*” questions ask for explanations.

2. Think of the keyword in your question.

- Make sure you know how to spell the keyword so that you can find it in alphabetical order in a list or index.
- Is the key word a **person**. . . **place**. . . or **thing**?

3. Where should you search for the facts?

- Are you using **references** correctly?
- Have you:
 - ___ read the preface?
 - ___ looked at directories and tables of contents?
 - ___ checked the index?
 - ___ looked up your key words?
 - ___ looked in pictures, diagrams, tables, and maps for your facts?
 - ___ used **cross-references** to lead you to more facts?
 - ___ used the **sub-headings** in long articles to see which are most likely to have the facts you want?
 - ___ followed search strings on the internet?

4. Now check on the facts you found!

- Are your facts up-to-date? Have you checked the copyright date?
- Do your facts agree?
- Do your facts come from a reliable source? Have you checked the fact?
- Recheck your online sources with another source?

Don't forget Ask a librarian for help!

KEYWORD SEARCH

Techniques for Book and Internet Searches

Research topics or problems are complex and must be broken down into their simplest parts. *Keyword* search strategy is an important first step in finding information.

Six Keyword Patterns

I. Direct Approach

Select the key word from a question or sentence that poses the research problem. The word leads directly to material needed; e.g., looking for a person under his last name.

II. Synonym

E.g., Viking → Norsemen
Buffalo Bill → Cody, William F.

III. Larger Subjects

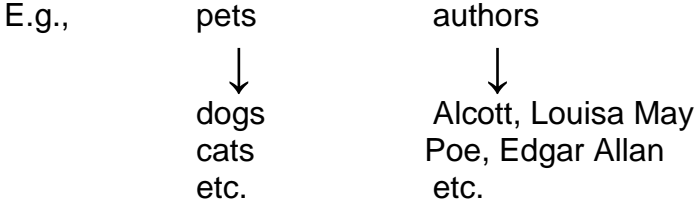
Search for more inclusive subjects than the topic sought.

E.g., Gettysburg, Battle of
↓
U.S. History – Civil War
↓
U.S. History

KEYWORD SEARCH continued

IV. Smaller Subjects

The need for this approach may be a clue that the subject is too broad.



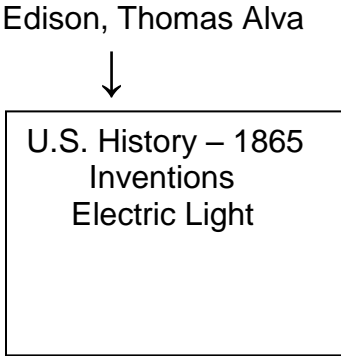
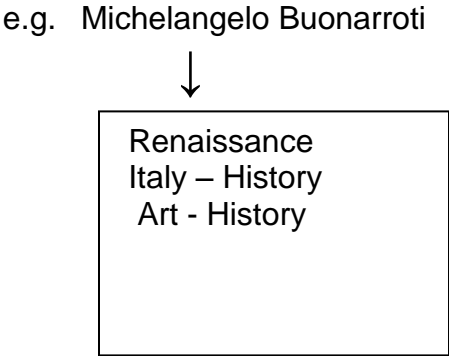
V. Intersecting Subjects

Explore both aspects of a subject that is an intersection of two or more topics.



VI. Pertaining to Time, Place, Field Words

Used for biographical information; an individual's time, place, and field of endeavor must be considered.



ONLINE CATALOGS

Searching online can be quick, fun, and informative. To access library materials, simply click on the internet icon to obtain the Great Neck Public Schools Webpage, www.greatneck.k12.ny.us.

Click on the **Follett Destiny** heading on the right. This will allow you to search the **North Middle School** collection.

You can find out how many copies of a book the Library has, as well as the status and location of all copies. You may also check the holdings of the other library catalogs within the Great Neck Public School District.

You will also be able to access the **Great Neck Public Library's** online catalog and databases. Use the following URL: www.greatnecklibrary.org

TAKING NOTES FOR RESEARCH

After locating several sources of information on a topic, you are ready to take notes. These notes will provide the basis for your outline and rough draft, so accuracy in notetaking is important.

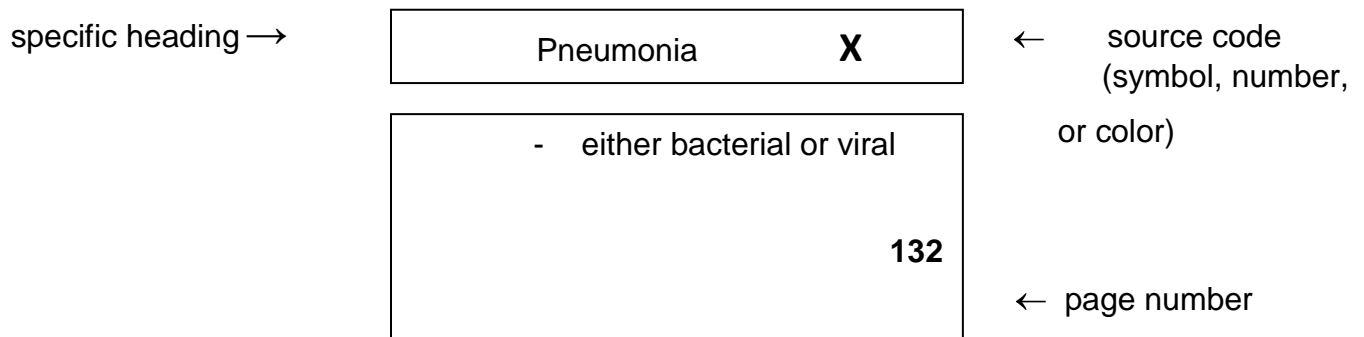
REMEMBER:

Write your notes only on one side of each note card

Each note card shall contain:

- The specific heading to which the note refers.
- Source code
- Phrase (no sentences)
- The page number on which you found the information

1. General Note Card Format – Flag your notes in phrases and pull key ideas



2. **Quotation** – one or two-sentence statements that are particularly effective in proving a point or revealing an attitude. Quotation marks must be used around all words directly copied.

| | | |
|--|-----|--------------|
| pneumonia | x | ←source code |
| “Before antibiotics were developed, bacterial pneumonia was almost always fatal. Today more than 95% of people survive.” | | |
| | 141 | ←page number |

Remember:

- One idea per card.
- Use phrases, keywords, or main idea.
- Use abbreviations where possible.
- **You must take notes. Underlining or cutting and pasting is not notetaking.**

Careful notetaking prevents plagiarism – whether intentional or unintentional.

CHECKLIST FOR NOTE CARDS

Answer the following questions:

- Do my note cards have a:
 - Flag/dash preceding each idea/fact?
 - Code indicating the source for the fact/idea?
 - Page number from that source?
 - Subtopic/heading written above the red line?
- Are my note cards legible?
- Are my notes brief?
- Do my notes make sense?
- Did I use abbreviations wherever possible?
- Do my note cards have only one fact/idea per card?
- Do my bibliography cards have only one source per card?
- Have I given each source its own code?
- Have I put quotation marks around quotes that I think I may want to use?

NOTETAKING FOR RESEARCH

Notes Should Answer Questions

Make a list of questions you want your research to answer. The facts or ideas you select for your notes should answer these questions.

The questions will help you zero in on information and to formulate answers.

Read and Think Before You Write

Not every source you look up will have useful information. Therefore, it is important to skim, read, and think before you begin to take any notes.

Summarize and Paraphrase

Do not copy the information; put it into your own words as briefly as possible. Do not write in complete sentences. However, be thorough and write enough.

One Card = One Idea

Put a single piece of information on each card, one thought, or one complete idea that helps answer a question.

BIBLIOGRAPHY CARDS

1. Copy the bibliographical information accurately from your information source using the example provided below as a guide. This information will be transferred to your bibliography page.
2. Assign a different source code to each card (for example ♦, ▲) and place it in the upper right hand corner. It can be either a symbol, number, letter, or color. That way each information source can be identified quickly. Do not write page numbers on bibliography cards.
3. **Write your name on the back of each card so, if it is misplaced, it can be returned.**
4. Many bibliography sites exist online, such as: ***easybib.com*** or ***bibme.org***. You may consult one of them to check the accuracy of your citation.

Examples of Bibliography Cards

Book – one author

| |
|--|
| X |
| Author's last name, first name, <u>Title</u> . Place: Publisher, Date. Print. |

Book – two or three authors

| |
|---|
| * |
| Hogshead, Nancy and Gerald Couzens <u>Asmatha and Exercise</u> , Boston, MA; Holt, Inc., 2010. Print. |

Book – four or more authors

| |
|--|
| ♦ |
| Blank, Henry, et al.* <u>Study Skills for the High School Student</u> , Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2007. Print. *Latin for "and others" |
| *Latin for "and others" |

Book – no author given

| |
|---|
| ▲ |
| <u>Historical Maps on File</u> . New York: Facts on File, 2009. Print. |

EXAMPLES OF BIBLIOGRAPHY CARDS continued

Pamphlet

Life Skills Ed. Inc. Hypertension. Boston,
MA: Life Skills Ed., 2006. Print.

Note: if no date is given use n.d.
Author and publisher may be the same

Editor, translator or compiler

Coming, C.T., ed. Bringing America Home.
New York: Random Press,
2009. Print.

Ed – abbr. for editor
For translator use “trans.”
For compiler use “comp.”

Article in encyclopedia signed

Green, Richard. “District Attorney.”
Encyclopedia Americana. 2005. Print.

Note: pages are omitted on your bibliography
page.

Article in encyclopedia unsigned

“Dix, Dorothy.” Encyclopedia Americana.
2005. Print.

Note: pages are omitted on your
bibliography page.

Radio or television program

Cousteau, Jacques, narr. & dir. “Diving for
Roman Plunder.” KCET, Los Angeles,
CA., Mar. 14, 2010.

Narrator, director, or writer should be supplied
if available.


Film

Ross, Herbert, dir.* The Turning Point.
With Anne Bancroft, Shirley
Maclaine. 20th Cent. Fox, 2009.

*dir. - director


EXAMPLES OF BIBIOGRAPHY CARDS continued

Newspaper



"Miss America is More Than Just a Pretty Face," USA Today, 25, Feb., 2010: sec A, pg. 11.

Personal Interview




Lunden, Joan, Good Morning America.
ABC Studios, N.Y., NY Interview
April 16, 2010.

↑

Interviewee

Internet – Author Given




Clinton, Bill, "Campaign Promises." White House Information Page.
<<http://whitehouse.gov>> (10/31/10).

↑

Date you went online

Internet – author not given



"The American Presidency." Grolier On-Line. <<http://lgi.grolier.com/Presidents/preshome.html>> (October 10, 2010).

***Remember:** The Internet is not the source of the information, but a tool for locating it.

GUIDELINES FOR BIBLIOGRAPHIES

- Use 12 pt. Palatino or Times New Roman for all of the text.
- Center the word “Bibliography” or “Works Cited” at the top of the page.
- Leave at least two lines between the word “Bibliography” and the first entry.
- Entries are arranged alphabetically by first word, excluding articles.
- First lines start at the margin
- Second, third, and subsequent lines in the same entry are indented five spaces to the right.
- Single space the entry.
- Double space between entries.
- The title of the magazine, book, or specific web page is underlined or italicized.
- The title of an article is in quotation marks.
- Do not forget the correct punctuation.
- Do not number sources.

Bibliography

"The American Presidency." Thinkquest. <<http://www.thinkquestamerica.com>> (10/10/10).

Blank, Henry et al. Study Skills for the High School Student. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2009. Print.

Carey, H. Frank. "Campaign Promises." Democratic National Committee Report. <<http://natdemcom/Relateddocs3.html>> (2/5/11).

Coming, C.T., ed. Bringing Home the Economy to Middle School Students. New York: Random House, 2006. Print.

"Diving to Save the Coral Reef." Narr. And dir. Jacques Cousteau. Discovery Education. Los Angeles, CA: March 15, 2008.

"Dix, Dorothy." Encyclopedia Americana. 2010. Print.

Green, Richard. "Obama, Barack." World Book. 2010. Print.

Historical Maps on File. New York: Facts on File, 2000. Print.

Hogshead, Nancy and Gerald Couzens. Asthma and Exercise. Mankato, MI: Lucent Press, 2009. Print.

Lee, Robert. "Leeching." WorldbookOnline. <<http://worldbook.com>> (3/24/2010).

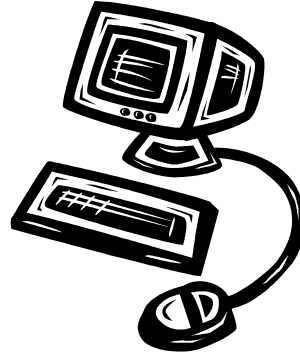
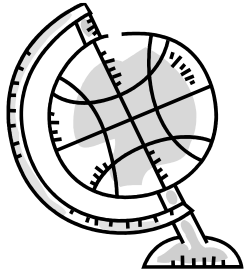
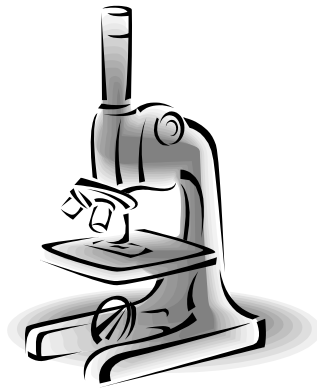
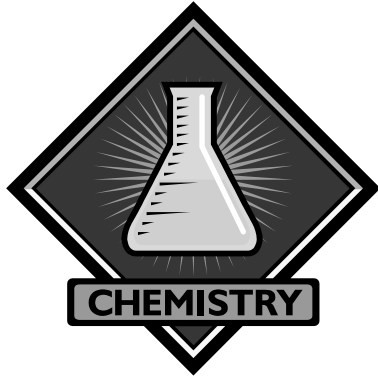
"The Library of Congress Revealed." Time. Dec, 2009: 53-54. Print.

Life Skills Ed. Inc. Hypertension. Washington, D.C.: Life Skills Ed., 2009. Print.

Westall, Robert. A Place to Hide. New York: Scholastic, 2007. Print.

Yiolenik, Bob. "Gold and Silver in New IRA's?" New York Times. May 2010: Section B 44+. Print.

REFERENCE



DOCUMENT CHECKLIST

Whether you are creating a document at home or in school, it is important that it is formatted according to North Middle School's guidelines for word processing. As you proofread your work and prepare to hand it in, look at the checklist below to make sure you have followed all the formatting rules. *Please note: If your teacher's instructions are different from these, please follow your teacher's guidelines.*

Formatting

- My font is Palatino/Times New Roman
- My document title is *14pt*.
- My title is *boldfaced*.
- My text is *12pt*.
- My entire document has *1.5 line spacing*.
- I do not have any blank pages.

Punctuation

- All ending punctuation is next to the last letter of the last word in a sentence.
- There is *one space after all punctuation* unless I am writing in Courier or Monaco.
- The numbers one through ten are written out.
- Brackets are next to the first letter of the first word and last letter of the last word in the brackets.
- Quotation marks are next to the first letter of the first word and after the periods at the end of the quote.
- Book titles, hotel names, song titles, group names, product names are all in *italics*.

Grammar

- I spell checked.
- My tenses match.
- I capitalized all proper names.
- I made sure that I used the correct words (i.e. there/their)
- I used a thesaurus to avoid repetition of words.

Graphics

- My picture was added as a graphic
- I used *text wrap*, when I added my graphics
- I made sure my graphics do not split sentences inappropriately.

HOW TO READ A BIOGRAPHY

BIOGRAPHY – an account of a person’s life as written by another person. A biography tells about events in a person’s life focusing on his or her achievements.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY - is an account of one’s own life.

PREVIEW Read all the information on the front and back cover to learn as much information as possible about the subject.

SET YOUR **Some things you may want to know:**

PURPOSE What was the person’s goal or achievement?

Was it achieved?

How was it achieved?

Why was it important?

What was the effect?

What qualities did the person have that enabled him to achieve the goal or accomplishment?

How did time and place affect the life of this individual?

READ Read slowly and carefully to find answers to your questions.

Find details that support your answers.

RESPOND Write down the answers to your questions as you find them.

Keep a **timeline** of events.

HOW TO READ A NOVEL

BEFORE YOU READ

PREVIEW

Read all the information on the front and back of the cover

SET YOUR PURPOSE

From the information on the cover, ask the following questions:

- Who are the important characters?
- What is the main character's goal?
- What problems does the main character face in trying to reach the goal?
- Where does the story take place?
- When does the story take place?
- How will the problems be solved?

AS YOU READ

READ ACTIVELY TO

Answer your purpose questions.

Learn about your characters.

Learn how the character attempts to reach the goal.

Be alert to the way the main character is changed by events.

RESPOND

Take notes on the story events.

Write down the answers to your questions.

Use a story web to outline the story.

Summarize the events.

React to the character or events.

HOW TO READ A PLAY

PREVIEW

READ: **The title**
 Any introductory information
 The cast of characters
 The setting

QUESTION

Set your reading purpose by:

Questioning the title.
Predicting what you think the play will be about.
 or
Asking questions about the title or the characters.

READ

As you read do the following:

VISUALIZE

Try to see the scenes in your mind as if you were viewing them on stage.

Read the stage directions to understand the characters' actions.

CLARIFY

Read actively. Be certain you understand the actions, emotions, and relationships of the characters.

Read for answers to your questions.

RESPOND

STOP at the end of each scene to:

Think about what you have read.
See if your questions were answered.
Summarize what has happened in the scene.

HOW TO READ A POEM

PREVIEW

Read the title of the poem.
Think about what the title might mean.

QUESTION

Pose some questions about the title to help you read actively.

READ

- * READ THE POEM ALOUD.
- * READ THE POEM SLOWLY.
- * READ THE POEM MORE THAN ONCE.

CLARIFY

Words are important.

Look up unfamiliar words.
Look for meaning in the sound of the words.
Look for meaning in the pictures the words create.
Look for the meaning in the ideas presented in the poem.
Look for comparisons in the poem.
Listen to the music of the poem.

RESPOND

LOOK FOR THE MEANING IN THE POEM:

List words you think are important to the poem.
Re-read the stanzas, and try to put them in your own words.
Try to explain the poet's feelings about the subject of the poem.
Tell how the poem made you feel.

HOW TO READ A SHORT STORY

PREVIEW

Read the title. Read the heading, if there is one. Read the opening sentence. Look at pictures. Look for names of people and places.

QUESTIONS

Set your purpose for reading. Based on your preview, ask a question or two that you think may be important to the story.

or

PREDICT

State what you think will happen in the story.

READ

Read actively, keeping the story pattern in mind, to:

- find answers to questions
- verify your predictions.
- clarify understanding.

RESPOND

Stop your reading at intervals to:

- *think about the story*
- answer questions.
- confirm or change your predictions.
- write notes, summarize, react.

LITERARY TERMS YOU SHOULD KNOW

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| alliteration | The repetition of similar sounds at the beginning of words. “Seaweed sways and sways and swirls. . . .” |
| character | A character is a person or animal that takes part in the action of a literary work. |
| flashback | An interruption in a work to show an episode that happened at an earlier time. |
| foreshadowing | The technique of giving the reader hints of what is to come in the future. |
| imagery | The use of concrete details that appeal to the five senses. “Cold, wet leaves/Floating on moss-colored water” |
| irony | Occurs when events turn out to be the opposite of what the reader expects. |
| metaphor | A figure of speech that compares two fundamentally different things without using “like” or “as”. “You are the sunshine of my life.” |
| mood | The atmosphere and feeling a writer creates in a work through the choice of setting, imagery, details, inscriptions, and events. |
| onomatopoeia | The use of words whose sounds suggest their sense, “slushing through the melting snow.” |
| personification | A figure of speech in which human characteristics are given to non-human things , “Winter sat tight on our shoulder blades” |
| plot | The sequence of events that keeps a story moving forward to a conclusion. |
| point of view | The way in which a narrator tells a story. This determines the kind of information the reader will be given and reveals the bias of the narrator. |
| setting | The time and place in which the author places the action. |
| simile | A figure of speech involving a direct comparison between two unlike things, using “as” or “like,” “My heart is like a singing bird” |
| symbol | Something concrete, such as an object, person, place, or event, that stands for something abstract, such as idea, quality, or condition. For example, a swastika is a symbol of Nazism (and racism); a dove is a symbol of peace. |
| theme | A central message, concern, or purpose of a literary work. The theme is an important idea about life that the author wishes to share with the reader. |

GLOSSARY OF LIBRARY/REFERENCE TERMS

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Almanac | Yearly edition giving statistics, news, and information dealing with the previous year. (<i>The World Almanac</i> has the index in the front). |
| Appendix | Supplementary section of a book. |
| Atlas | Book of maps. |
| Autobiography | Account of a person's life written by that person. |
| Bibliography | List of all materials used for a project. |
| Biography | Account of a person's life written by another person. |
| Call Number | Number assigned to a book based on the subject matter. |
| Database | Collection of related information accessed by using a computer. |
| Dictionary | Book listing words and giving their meaning. |
| Encyclopedia | Series of volumes containing general information on all fields of Knowledge. |
| Fiction | Novel or short story (distinguished from non-fiction). |
| Gazetteer | List of geographical places with information about them. |
| Index | Alphabetical list of topics indicating their location in a book. |
| Internet | Information and data from all over the world available via the computer. |
| Key Word | Word that leads to more information elsewhere. |
| Nomenclature | System of names or terms. |
| Non-Fiction | All books except novels. |

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| OPAC for Windows | Online Public Access Catalog. |
| Periodical | Magazine. |
| Reference Book | Information source which does not leave the library. |
| Vertical File | Subject file of pamphlets, magazines, and newspaper articles. |
| Yearbook | Book giving information on the previous year. Also called annuals or almanacs. |



LAB REPORT FORMAT

This represents a General Guideline. Specific reports may vary in format.

Problem:

Hypothesis:

Materials Used:

Design of Experimental Procedure:

Collection of data (charts and graphs):

Results and Conclusions:

RESPONDING TO DBQ ESSAYS

1. Read the question and underline words, eras, names, issues, etc. Determine the required task.
2. Brainstorm the facts you know about the topic and time period. Write them down.
3. Analyze the documents:
 - Identify the type of document.
 - Indicate the author and time period written – what do you know about them?
 - Identify a point of view.
 - Write notes in the margins.
 - Look for relationships (similarities/differences) among the documents, and group accordingly.
4. Structure your response based on the task required in the essay. Outline your answer.
 - Political/social/economic
 - Positive/negative
 - Support/disagree
5. Write an organized essay.
 - Introductory paragraph – Develop a thesis in response to the question: What will you prove in the essay?
 - Body paragraphs – Develop information citing supporting evidence from the documents and outside historical information.
 - Concluding paragraph.

DBQ TIPS

1. **READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS.** Use the historical context and task to help your introduction.
2. Answer the short answer questions based on the documents. Read carefully, write in full sentences, and do not leave anything blank. Highlight important terms, and make notes to yourself to help you write the essay later.
3. When you are writing your document based essay **do not use I, ME, OUR, WE, US** or **YOU**. For example, *Immigrants had a difficult journey before they arrived in the United States* is appropriate. *I think immigrants had a difficult journey before they arrived in the united States* is not appropriate.
4. When documents are used, **do not quote the document**.
5. Cite the document in one of two ways: (a) Famine was the reason people left Russia in the 1920s (document 1); (b) As seen in document 1, people left Russia because of famine.
6. In your conclusion, restate the main ideas of your body paragraphs. The conclusion should be consistent with the rest of the essay.
7. Look at the instructions again.
 - Did you use the right number of documents?
 - Did you fully answer the question?
 - Do you have examples from your knowledge of social studies that are not in the documents?
 - Double check and proofread.
8. Time management is important!

RESPONDING TO DOCUMENTS

1. Read the document completely and thoroughly.
2. Read the questions that follow the document
3. Underline and note key words, names, phrases, data, and information.
 - Jot down key notes relevant to the questions.
4. Analyze the document to help answer the question.

| | |
|---|--|
| ➤ Who wrote/illustrated it? | |
| ➤ When was it created? | |
| ➤ For what purpose was it created? | |
| ➤ What does it say explicitly? | |
| ➤ Does it have an implicit meaning? | |
| ➤ How does it fit with what you already know? | |

HOW TO READ A POLITICAL CARTOON

A political cartoon is a comment on society done as a picture. It expresses an opinion on public issues in the form of a drawing.

To read and interpret a political cartoon you must:

1. Identify the symbol the artist used or identify the stereotype used



or

Identify the caricature used.



2. Read the title, caption, or text to understand the message.
3. Recognize the elements of historical or political reference.
4. To interpret the cartoon you must recognize how the symbol, caricature, or stereotype relates to the title, caption, or historical reference.

Acknowledgments

Thanks are due to the following:

Student Survival Kit: How to Succeed in Seventh Grade – North Middle School

Middle School Study Skills: A Sixth Grade Model – North Middle School

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Reference and Research – Scholastic Social Studies Skills

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Mrs. Arleen Blitz, Administrative Assistant, Library