

Senior Thesis Paper Guide

Watertown High School

Contemporary Literature Version

~2009-2010~

T. Piscatelli, 2009

Expanded upon STP Guide T. Piscatelli, 2008

T. Piscatelli and M. Peters, 2007, modified from Humanities Version, Honig and Regan 2007

T. Piscatelli, 2006

Expanded upon STP Guide Tinamarie Piscatelli, 2005, STP Guide, Vivienne Mulhall, Monica Hiller, 2003, STP Guide Joanna Honig, Karen Harris, and Hiller, 2001, 2000, 1999, and STP Guide, Honig and Harris, 1996

A Note About Using The STP Guide

This guide is intended to outline the steps that you will take to write your Senior Thesis Paper (STP). The STP is a graduation requirement at Watertown High School. **You are responsible for following the guidelines, formats, and information exactly as included in the guide.** This information will supplement the work you do with your class and teacher. Keep this guide with you during class and at home.

What is a Senior Thesis Paper?

In order to graduate from WHS, you must first receive a passing grade on your final STP. In addition to the individual requirements of each teacher, the following minimum standards must be met by all students:

The Senior Thesis Paper must:

- include a minimum of six (6) typed (12pt. Times New Roman Font), double-spaced pages of thesis development (writing that supports your thesis).
- make consistent, in-depth, informed reference to one work of fiction (Level 1)
- make consistent, in-depth, informed reference to at least **three secondary sources** on your contemporary issue (non-fiction).
- be completed and submitted by **January 8, 2010**.
- be the student's original work.
- count as 50% of the student's second term grade.
- include a title page.
- include a Works Cited page.
- feature a thesis and author that meets with the teacher's approval (see your English teacher and/or your support or ELL teacher).
- be orally defended by the student within the classroom context when completed.

Due Dates

You must adhere to each due date that your teacher sets for each step of the STP process, including deadlines for planning, research, and writing. Typically, you will receive a deadline and a grade for each step of the STP process including:

- ☞ Selecting primary source(s).
- ☞ Gathering primary source(s).
- ☞ Generating ideas for thinking and writing about literature.
- ☞ Reading your novel(s).
- ☞ Taking notes on your novel(s).
- ☞ Drafting and revising a thesis statement.
- ☞ Finding and using secondary sources.
- ☞ Taking notes on your secondary sources.
- ☞ Outlining your STP.
- ☞ Writing a draft and integrating quotes.
- ☞ Drafting revisions of your STP.
- ☞ Completing the final version of your STP.
- ☞ Completing a Works Cited page.
- ☞ Defending your STP (oral defense).

The Steps Explained

Step 1 -- Selecting and gathering primary source(s) (novel(s)).

A primary source is simply the work you are reading, researching, and writing about in your STP. Your primary sources for the STP will be the one fiction novel(s) you choose.

You will receive a list of suggested authors/literature at a later date.

-- Finding your novel(s).

You have many options for authors to use. Find and choose work(s) that suit your tastes and interests and fulfill your teacher's requirements. If you do your legwork now, you will find enjoyable work(s) that are interesting and satisfying to research. Buy the novel(s) either new or used at a bookstore; you'll need to own the book(s) so that you can work with them, write in them, and refer to them over the course of the first two terms.

- ☞ ***CHOOSE AND READ YOUR FICTION NOVEL.***
- ☞ ***DETERMINE CONTEMPORARY ISSUES THAT EMERGE IN FICTION NOVEL.***
- ☞ ***COMPLETE A SEARCH, USING KEYWORDS RELATED TO THE CONTEMPORARY ISSUE ON WHICH YOU WISH TO FOCUS, TO FIND RELATED SECONDARY SOURCES.***

Things to consider when choosing your fiction:

- Choose a writer whose work you like and/or admire.
- Choose a novel that makes you ask questions.
- Choose a writer whose work you “get,” but challenges you.
- Don’t choose an author because his/her novels are short—short *does not* always mean easy (many times short works are more difficult)!

Step 2 -- Generating ideas for thinking and writing about literature (Generating your thesis statement).

As you read the novels and take notes on them, you should be thinking about the following list of general ideas (contemporary issues). These topics should help you to come up with a good thesis. *You will want to start narrowing your topics as early into the novel as you can – this will help you to choose relevant quotes for your electronic notecards.*

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

- ↔ Environmental protection (energy crises, natural resources, nuclear power)
- ↔ Politics
- ↔ Women’s issues
- ↔ Adolescent issues
- ↔ Racism
- ↔ Prejudices
- ↔ Violence
- ↔ Lotteries and gambling, casinos
- ↔ Pornography
- ↔ Internet
- ↔ Globalization
- ↔ War and conscientious objectors
- ↔ Legal issues (acts/laws passed since 1970)
- ↔ Genetic alteration and cloning
- ↔ AIDS/HIV
- ↔ Suicide
- ↔ Euthanasia
- ↔ Organ donation
- ↔ Child labor
- ↔ Travel
- ↔ Culture clashes
- ↔ Male-female relationships
- ↔ Family/generational conflict
- ↔ Initiation (childhood to adulthood, innocence to experience)
- ↔ Forms/evolution of friendships
- ↔ Self-deception and self-discovery
- ↔ Alienation from society

- ⇒ Individuality and non-conformity/rebellion
- ⇒ Aging, mortality, death
- ⇒ Portrayal of violence
- ⇒ Changing values
- ⇒ Portrayal of lower, middle, upper class/relationship between classes/money issues
- ⇒ Portrayal/evolution of father-son relationships
- ⇒ Portrayal/evolution of mother-daughter relationships
- ⇒ Portrayal of sibling relationships
- ⇒ Breaking away from the family unit
- ⇒ Portrayal of old age
- ⇒ Portrayal of an institution (marriage, school, the law, government, big business, etc.)
- ⇒ Portrayal of a utopia
- ⇒ Portrayal of love and romance
- ⇒ Use of religion and/or religious allusions
- ⇒ Sacrifice and suffering
- ⇒ Portrayal of women “breaking out”
- ⇒ Oppression (race, gender, sexual orientation, status, ethnicity, religion...)
- ⇒ Falling and regaining stature
- ⇒ Stereotypes
- ⇒ Portrayal of children/childhood/youth
- ⇒ Where the character’s dream leads them
- ⇒ Coping mechanisms used by characters
- ⇒ Abortion
- ⇒ Adoption
- ⇒ Alcoholism
- ⇒ Censorship
- ⇒ Capitol Punishment
- ⇒ Child Abuse
- ⇒ Immigration/The Immigrant experience
- ⇒ Gay rights
- ⇒ Gangs
- ⇒ Family violence
- ⇒ Obesity
- ⇒ Drug use/abuse
- ⇒ Terrorism

IF YOU HAVE A CONTEMPORARY ISSUE THAT DOES NOT APPEAR ON THIS LIST, PLEASE SEE YOUR TEACHER FOR APPROVAL.

Or...ask yourself any of the questions below to help steer you toward ideas...

- ? What is the connection between literature and contemporary issues (real life)?
- ? Does the author seem to be saying something about human nature or life or “the way things are”? What is s/he saying?
- ? What forces or circumstances make one of the characters change or act in a certain way?
- ? How does the author characterize women/men, young/old, rich/poor, etc?
(source: Sebranak, Peter. *Writers*, Inc. Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1996. 415)

Step 3 -- Taking notes on your primary source(s).

As soon as you get your novel(s) home, take a minute to make an electronic Bibliographic Card for each one. I will provide a template on my TeacherWeb site. On your electronic card(s), type the following information:

Author’s last name, first name
Book title (underlined)
Copywrite date, publisher

Create electronic Bibliographic Cards for each one of your primary sources (and secondary sources, but this guide will address that in a later section), and put them somewhere safe. You will create more notecards electronically later. **BACKUP YOUR WORK ON A TRAVELDRIVE/THUMBDRIVE/PORTABLE DRIVE – DO NOT SAVE YOUR WORK ON A SCHOOL DESKTOP.** Now you’re ready to do your first careful reading of your primary sources.

-- Reading your novels.

When you read your novel(s) for the first time, you should really be of two minds: one part of you is simply reading and getting immersed in the action, language, and characters. Another, more analytical part of you is keeping an eye open for trends, ideas, themes, patterns, contemporary issues...in other words, anything that’s particular or notable about this book and/or writer. Take such notes as soon as you begin reading.

-- Taking notes as you read.

Here’s how:

1. **Highlight**—As you read, use a highlighter to mark anything that strikes you as important, unusual or part of a pattern. This can be a word/sentence/paragraph/section. You can also write notes to yourself in the margins of the pages. Remember, this is only one of the first steps. You may

not use everything you highlight since you probably don't know what your thesis statement will be just yet. You will find it helpful to keep in mind the issues on the Contemporary issues list.

2. **Review**—After you have read your novel all the way through and highlighted what you thought was important, go through and read what you have highlighted and what you have written in the margins. What do you notice?
3. **Revisit the Contemporary Issues list**—Now, you may want to revisit the Contemporary Issues pages of this guide. Do any of your highlighted material and notes seem like they could fit into any of these issues/ideas? Go back and forth between the list and your “highlighted” novel until you see a few possibilities. Now, underline those items on the list that might work for you.
4. **Choose Contemporary Issue as your focus**—Now that you have read your fiction novel and revisited the Contemporary Issues list, choose ONE contemporary issue on which you would like to focus your thesis.
5. **Write Notecards**—With a couple of possible thesis ideas in mind, you should now go through your novel(s) and write down/document the material that you still think might be important. Your teacher will require you to submit 20 notecards that cover your book **from beginning to end**. You will create your notecards in a word document, using the template found on my TeacherWeb site.

A Guide to Writing Notes for Your Novels

↪ *At the top of each notecard, write the following information (SEE SAMPLE):*

- Your first initial. Last name
- Period
- Book Title
- Author's last name

↪ *At the top of each card, you can put any one of the following (you do not need to do the same type of information for each card):*

- An important passage
- Important dialogue
- An important margin note (your words)
- Important sentences or words

Remember, as you write your notecards, you are trying to get closer to a thesis statement for your paper. Keep looking at the Contemporary Issues/ideas list as you write your notes. This will help you.

- ⇨ Also on each notecard, you should explain why you think the information at the top of the card is important. You should also refer to earlier cards if possible.

SAMPLE NOTECARD ON A NOVEL (Visual to follow)

Quote: “I’m the destructive type,” she said. “And I’m going to destroy you. They’ll put a plaque up on the wall of the building outside the room. I’m going to wake up in the night and do something to you that you’ve never even heard or imagined.”

Page 5
Topic—personality

Meaning: Catherine is talking about the way she is or, rather, the way that she has been in the past. It seems as though it is hinting that she will destroy David the way she has done other men.

Connection on page 217: Catherine has destroyed her husband. She has destroyed his work behind his back. *

*You may also make connections to other cards. You may not make connections on all cards, but you should try to do this as much as possible. Making connections is crucial to developing a good thesis.

Step 4 --Thesis Statement

Writing your Thesis Statement...

A thesis states the main argument of your paper. It usually falls at the end of the introduction and should be one to three sentences in length. Your thesis should answer the question—how does the contemporary issue emerge in the literary world and the real world? Your thesis may change as you progress through the writing of this paper. Avoid using “absolute” words like “never,” “always,” “all,” or “none.” They make your paper almost impossible to prove.

Think of your thesis in 2 parts:

Part 1-Name the author, title, and the issue at hand.

Part 2-How does the issue emerge similarly in literary world and the real world?

Sample Thesis Statement:

In F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby, characters who choose money and social status over true love find themselves in unfulfilling relationships. *In both the literary world and the real world, these unfulfilling relationships lead characters to make destructive decisions and, ultimately, are the cause of these characters' downfalls.*

Questions to ask yourself when writing this thesis:

1. Do I believe this thesis?
2. Is my thesis specific enough that I can prove it in 6-15 pages?
3. Is my thesis broad enough to gather enough secondary source evidence to prove it?
4. Is my thesis an original assertion, or just a statement of fact?
5. Could I prove this thesis if someone challenged me?
6. Do I use active verbs in my thesis (expresses, displays, etc.)?

Step 5 --Finding and Using Secondary Sources

Your secondary sources will be relevant to the Contemporary Issue on which you plan to focus. You should find 5 sources initially, as not all will be relevant to your thesis. You must **use** a minimum of 3 secondary sources in your paper.

Examples of Secondary Sources

Newspaper articles
Magazine (periodical) articles
Interviews (print, radio, television)
Educational websites
Institutional and Organizational websites
Online magazines
Documentaries
Lectures

Make an electronic Bibliographic Notecard as soon as you find each source!

You must follow the same procedure for making these Bibliographic Cards as you did with your primary source. **BACKUP YOUR WORK ON A PORTABLE DRIVE!**

Taking Notes on Your Secondary Sources

After you have gathered the secondary sources you feel are the best, begin the highlighting/notetaking process. Use your notecards for this part also.

Step 6 --Outlining your STP

The outline for your paper organizes all of the material you will include in your paper. Writing a good, effective outline requires planning and organization. If you are not great at organizing and planning, ask for help. If you spend time writing a great outline, your final paper will be *much* easier to write.

Your English teacher may want you to write more than one outline. If you follow the directions below, it should be much easier for you to get your ideas on paper.

A 3-Part Guide to Writing the Outlines for your STP

Part 1—The General Outline

After you have a thesis for your paper, you need to type a general outline. Typing this first outline and the others is crucial to saving you time later. The general outline helps you to break down your thesis into sections and asks you to decide the order in which you will discuss the novels. When you organize your outlines and write your paper, you should discuss your works in the order in which they appear in the thesis statement. There are two ways that you can organize your paper. You will write a **point-by-point** outline.

Point-by-Point Outline

If you organize your paper around a point-by-point outline, you discuss one part of your thesis at a time as it applies to your novel(s) and secondary source research.

SAMPLE POINT-BY-POINT OUTLINE

1. Introduction
 - (A) different types of material gain
 - (B) how different types of material gain lead to people's downfall
 - (C) Thesis Statement: In John Steinbeck's Of Mice and Men, characters search for happiness and/or power through material gain. This search leads to the characters' further discontent, downfall or death.
2. Characters search for happiness and/or power through material gain.
 - (A) Of Mice and Men
3. This search leads to the characters' further discontent, downfall, or death.
 - (A) Of Mice and Men
4. Conclusion

***All outlines should include an introduction and conclusion, even though you won't know at this point what you want to say in these sections of your paper. Your thesis statement should be in your introduction (C). As you probably know, introductions should transition the reader from the general topic to your specific outline. In (A) and (B) of your introduction, write down a few things you might say to transition your reader gradually to your thesis. This, as well as your thesis, may change; however, you need to begin organizing your thoughts in this format.**

NOTE: Your general outline does not require you to include any specific information from your primary or secondary sources. As the examples above demonstrate, the general outline only asks you to choose between the point-by-point and subject-by-subject approaches. If you don't understand the outline procedure, ASK YOUR TEACHER.

Part 2—The Specific Outline

Now that you have the general outline of your paper, you need to add in specific proof from your primary sources. Follow the steps below to write a specific outline.

1. Save a new version of your General Outline – you’ll want to keep the original file intact in case you need it later. Under the “file” tab, click “Save As” and name the file Specific Outline. Now you may begin adding information.
2. Next to each capital letter, you must write a specific sentence about your novel(s) that help explain the letter that they fall under. Label one sentence (1) and the other sentence (2).
3. For each number (sentence), you need to add a quote that helps you prove the statement in that sentence (1) or (2). When you have added the quotes, label each one (a) and (b). Make sure that you include an endnote that lists your author’s name and the page number of the quote.
4. After typing each quote, you need to write a (1), (2)...This section of the outline should explain the quote and how it connects to the thesis.

SAMPLE OUTLINE (POINT-BY-POINT)

1. Introduction
 - (A)-different types of material gain
 - (B)-how different types of material gain lead to people’s downfalls
 - (C)-Thesis Statement: In John Steinbeck’s Of Mice and Men characters search for happiness and/or power through material gain. This search leads to the characters’ further discontent, downfall, or death.
2. Characters search for happiness and/or power through material gain.
 - (A) Of Mice and Men
 - (1) George thinks he will find happiness if he buys a farm.
 - (a) “Someday-we’re going to get the jack together and we’re gonna have a little house and a couple of acres an’ a cow and some pigs...And when it rains in the winter we’ll just say the hell with goin’ to work, and we’ll build up a fire in the stove and set an’ listen to the rain comin’ down on the roof...”
(page 15)
 - (1) George describes the dream he and Lennie share. They want to own a farm and raise rabbits and chickens.

- (2) “When it rains...we’ll say the hell with going to work” and “we’ll build up a fire in the stove and set around it an’ listen to the rain” suggest that the farm will help Lennie and George achieve happiness, because they will not have the responsibilities they now share.
3. This search leads to the characters’ further discontent, downfall or death.
 - (A) Of Mice and Men
 - (1) Through their work to raise the money for their farm, Lennie and George come in contact with Curley’s wife. This connection will lead to Lennie’s death.
 - (a) “

NOTE: The above is only a section of an outline. You would obviously add more quotes and information. You will also add information from your second novel.

Part 3—Working Secondary Quotes into Your Outline

Your teacher may ask you to put your secondary quotes in with your second outline, or she may ask you to add them in later. In any case, you should treat secondary quotes the same way you placed and explained your primary quotes in your previous outlines.

1. Make sure you have written down all the bibliographic material necessary for your secondary quotes. Write down the exact quotes (with quotation marks) in your notes and explain why you think the quotes mean. In addition, write down how each quote connects to your thesis statement.
2. Look through your outline #2 and choose secondary quotes that connect directly to sections of your outline.
3. Find the section of your outline that deals with the specific issue of your quote.

4. Each secondary quote should be treated like a primary quote. Each secondary quote should be a small “a”, “b” or “c”. You need to decide if it should go before or after your primary quotes. The key is to place it under the section of the outline it proves.

EXAMPLE OF HOW TO WORK A SECONDARY QUOTE INTO AN OUTLINE:

Note: This is just a small section of an outline, but it does contain a primary and secondary quote.

1. Introduction

- (A) Different types of material gain
- (B) How different types of material gain lead to people’s downfalls
- (C) In John Steinbeck’s Of Mice and Men characters search for happiness and/or power through material gain. This search leads to the characters’ further discontent, downfall, or death.

2. Characters search for happiness and/or power through material gain.

(A) Of Mice and Men

(1) George thinks he will find happiness if he buys a farm.

- (a) “Someday-we’re going to get the jack together and we’re gonna have a little house and a couple of acres an’ a cow and some pigs...And when it rains in the winter we’ll just say the hell with goin’ to work, and we’ll build up a fire in the stove and set an’ listen to the rain comin’ down on the roof...”
(page 15)

(1) George describes the dream he and Lennie share. They want to own a farm and raise rabbits and chickens.

(2) “When it rains...we’ll say the hell with going to work” and “we’ll build up a fire in the stove and set around it an’ listen to the rain” suggest that the farm will help Lennie and George achieve happiness, because they will not have the responsibilities they now share.

3. This search leads to the characters’ further discontent, downfall or death.

(A) Of Mice and Men

- (1) Through their work to raise the money for their farm, Lennie and George come in contact with Curley's wife. This connection will lead to Lennie's death.
 - (a) “

- (2) In society, researchers have shown that the search for happiness through material gain can have detrimental effects on people.
 - (a) “Not only does more money not generally translate into greater happiness, but researchers like Tim Kasser and Juliet Schor have shown that the intense pursuit of wealth and material goods can actually make a person ill. In *Born to Buy*, Schor's work with ‘tweens’ (children between 8 and 12) showed that ‘[t]he more they buy into the consumer materialist messages, the worse they feel about themselves, the more depressed they are, and the more they are beset by anxiety, headaches, stomach aches and boredom’” (Dodson).
 - (1)
 - (2)

Once you have written all of your outlines, make sure you check them with your teacher before beginning to write your final draft #1.

WRITING A DRAFT AND INTEGRATING QUOTES

Use your excellent outline as a step-by-step guide to writing your first draft. Your draft should include all the primary and secondary source quotes you wish to use, and should be typed and double-spaced. In other words, it should “look” like a final paper.

When you first start to write your rough draft, don't worry about the introduction and conclusion. You can begin the rough draft with your thesis statement if that makes it easier. Just make sure that you include an introduction and conclusion in the draft you pass in to your teacher. Refer to the section on How to Write Introductions and Conclusions for help with developing these sections of your paper.

If you have written your outlines well, the main thinking involved in writing the paper is done. The main thing you need to do now is integrate quotes into your paper. For the most part, you cannot just put quotes on their own. They need to be introduced and explained. Their connection to the thesis statement should be explained. The person reading your paper should understand why you include a quote when you do, without you

explicitly stating the reason for using it. For this entire paper, you should use the parenthetical citation method (see examples below).

There are three different basic types of quotes; you treat each one a little bit differently.

Partial Sentence: uses part or all of your source's sentences as part of your sentence.

Example: Toby never knows what is coming next, in part due to "Rosemary's ever-changing and fluctuating mind" (DesRosiers).

Full Sentence: uses a source's full sentence in its entirety.

Example: Toby never knows what is coming next. "We see him affected daily by Rosemary's ever-changing and fluctuating mind" (DesRosiers).

Block Quotes: used when quoting a source longer than three full typed lines.

Example:

After going through several bad decisions with Rosemary, it is clear that Toby is on his own. Yet despite his strange relationship with Rosemary, he is none the worse for wear:

While Rosemary relies on Toby for much more emotional support than perhaps is normal from a mother to her child, in his case, it ends up serving to transfer her strength and hope to him. He is used to her unorganized, haphazard way of doing things, and he has learned to cope (Norris 43).

In fact, Toby is already beginning to show his ability to adapt in the first few pages of the book. He knows nothing about where they're headed, and doesn't much seem to care.

How do you integrate quotes effectively into your paper?

To integrate quotes effectively into a paper, you need to do the following four things:

- *introduce the quote (with some context from the work, if necessary)
- *include quotes
- *explain them, and
- *connect them to your thesis

EXAMPLE OF A QUOTE THAT IS INTRODUCED AND EXPLAINED WELL:

Trust Me by John Updike tells about a man, Fred, who is unhappy in his relationship with his wife. It is a very dull and boring life and he needs some change and excitement. His wife cannot offer this to him.

But she had done him no harm—had done, one, indeed everything he had asked. Born him healthy children, created a home that could be displayed to his colleagues and friends, served as an extension to his ego... Yet, lying beside her night after night... he had become convinced that there must be a better life than this. (Updike 292)

Fred is unhappy; his marriage is superficial. His wife creates “a home that [can] be displayed to colleagues and friends” suggesting that his relationship is based on security and outward appearance, not love. He needs to keep a “happy looking” family for business reasons. He is not angry at his wife nor does he hate her; however, “he had become convinced that there must be a better life,” someone out there who could fulfill his needs. He didn’t need a woman to throw him cocktail parties; he needed a woman to love him.

Step 6 --Writing the Introduction and Conclusion to your STP

The introduction to your STP is like a map: it lets your reader know what to expect in the rest of the paper. The more organized you are before you write it, the better the introduction will be!

The key to writing a solid introduction is to WAIT until the body of paper has been written. In a paper such as your senior thesis, which is a *minimum of six pages*, the body of your paper (the supporting paragraphs) dictates what information your introduction will include.

The first step is to look at your outline. You have already written your thesis statement and have filled in the topics of your supporting paragraphs. How will you (generally) introduce your reader to the topic? Your first sentence should be general, interesting,

informative, and connect with the core subject of your paper. You want to make the reader continue reading! This will be your topic sentence.

Your thesis statement will be your LAST sentence in the introduction. Think about how to connect your first sentence to your thesis: what is the subject of each supporting paragraph? The sentences between your topic and thesis sentences MUST reflect your paper's structure exactly. Your reader should be able to predict precisely how your paper will unfold: if it's not mentioned in your introduction, it can't appear in the paper!

Sample introduction (This is only a portion of an introduction. You will need more information between your first sentence and your thesis statement.)

Throughout their lives, people struggle to free themselves from restraints placed on them by patriarchal and politically repressive cultures. These people may overcome these struggles, but they may also suffer a great deal. In Julia Alvarez's Yo, and in real life, characters and people rebel against authority. Although the characters and people succeed in their rebellion, they suffer punishment or death.

The conclusion to your STP should tie the paper together. Although you want to restate your thesis in the conclusion, you want to take the paper a step further. How do you do this? You can step outside the works you've been discussing and tie the thesis to society in general. You can also ask questions along the same lines. Your teacher can work with you individually on this part of the paper if you're having difficulty. You probably don't want to write the conclusion until you've revised the rest of your paper.

Step 7 --Revising your draft and completing the final version of your STP.

You will hand in your first draft for your teacher to correct, edit, comment on, and grade. Because your teacher's comments will be exhaustive and comprehensive, you should pay close attention to each one. If you don't understand a comment, make an appointment to ask your teacher for explanation. Write your final draft of your STP with your corrected version of your first draft in front of you. **If your teacher mentioned that you need to work on a specific area of your paper (for example, integrating quotes), you should assume that you need to look through the entire paper for proper integration of quotes, not just the sections on which your teacher commented.**

You must submit two copies of your final STP – one hard copy and one emailed version. Each must include a cover page and a Works Cited page – these should be IN the emailed version of the STP, NOT emailed separately. IF YOU DO NOT CURRENTLY HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS, YOU SHOULD CREATE ONE THROUGH YAHOO, GMAIL, HOTMAIL, OR ANOTHER FREE PROVIDER – THIS EMAIL SHOULD BE ASSOCIATED WITH A SCHOOL-APPROPRIATE ADDRESS/SCREEN NAME. At the time you submit your final draft you must resubmit your graded rough draft and rubric.

The Works Cited Page

This is another name for what used to be called a “Bibliography.” This is the place where you not only “give credit” to your primary and secondary source authors, but also give your reader all the information he or she would need to locate your source for further study. It is vital that you follow the MLA Works Cited format. Please see the library website and refer to any supplemental materials provided by your teacher.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE ON PLAGIARISM

This definition of plagiarism is found in your student handbook and on the English Department Policies handout you received at the beginning of the year.

Plagiarism is defined as the act of presenting someone else’s words and/or ideas as your own, even if done unintentionally. Any student who quotes directly from any source or makes use of an idea from any source and does not credit the author of that source, who copies part or all of the work of another student, or who allows part or all of his/her work to be copied by another student, will be considered to have plagiarized. Information taken from the Internet or other electronic media without crediting the source is also a form of plagiarism. Students must credit all sources that provide useful information and enclose any word or words directly taken from a source within quotation marks. Failure to do so is a dishonorable act; academic theft in an academic institution is a serious matter and, as such, has serious consequences. A student found guilty of plagiarism may receive a grade of zero on the project, may have his course level lowered, and may also forfeit membership in the National Honor and/or Cum Laude Society. Other consequences, such as a letter of reprimand in the student’s file, exclusion from consideration for academic honors, or notations on college recommendations may also follow from an incidence of plagiarism.

Students and faculty should follow guidelines consistent with those of the Modern Language Association (MLA) (such as the *MLA Guide to Documentation*), our single school-wide standard. These guidelines are available from classroom teachers and

departments, the school library, as well as on the Watertown High School Library's web page (<http://www.watertown.k12.ma.us/whs/library/lib/citations.html>).

You should not be threatened by this; you should realize that your teachers are here to help you. If you have any questions ask them. Plagiarism is easy to avoid. Read this section carefully to familiarize yourself with how to avoid it.

How to Cite Sources

By definition, all research papers must incorporate other's ideas. However, you must give credit to any source by documenting it properly both within the paper and in a Works Cited page.

For this paper, after you use a source's words or unique ideas, you will include their last name in parentheses right after their words/ideas. If there is a page number for the source material, put it after the source's last name. Then, put a period on the outside of the closing parenthesis. See the appendix for more specific information on endnotes.

Example:

In her novel, Emma, Jane Austen makes "bold use of the rising action of her plot" (Smith 45).

At the end of your paper, you'll compile and present detailed information on all the sources you used in your STP. The mechanics of how and what to include for each source depends upon what it is and where you got it. Guidelines can be found on the WHS Library Website.

How can you avoid plagiarizing? Read the following very carefully.

You should document your sources when you do any of the following things:

- *use a direct quotation
- *copy a table, chart, or diagram
- *construct a table from data provided by others
- *paraphrase a passage in your own words
- *present specific examples, figures or factual information take from a specific source and use [it] to explain or support your judgments

The following examples illustrate the problems of plagiarism:

(ORIGINAL VERSION)

“Still, the telephone was only a convenience, permitting Americans to do more casually and with less effort what they had already been doing before” (Boorstin 391).

VERSION A:

The telephone was a convenience, enabling Americans to do more casually and with less effort what they had been doing before.

This is plagiarism in its worst form. Because the writer does not indicate in the text or in a note that the words and ideas belong to Boorstin, he asks the reader to believe the words are his. He has stolen the words and ideas and attempted to cover the theft by changing or omitting an occasional word.

VERSION B:

Daniel J. Boorstin argues that the telephone was only a convenience, permitting Americans to do more casually and with less effort what they had already been doing before (391).

This version is also plagiarism. Even though the writer acknowledges her source and cites the passage obviously, she has copied the original almost word for word; yet she has supplied no quotation marks to indicate the extent of her borrowing.

VERSION C:

Daniel J. Boorstin has noted that most Americans considered the telephone as simply “a convenience,” an instrument that allowed them “to do more casually and with less effort what they had already done before” (391).

This version represents one, although not the only, satisfactory way of handling this source material. The author has identified her source at the beginning of her paragraph, thus enabling her readers to know who is being quoted, and she has provided a complete note directing them to the exact source of the statement. She has paraphrased some of Boorstin’s words and quoted others, making it perfectly clear to the reader which words are hers and which belong to Boorstin.

Work Cited: McCrimmon, James. Writing with a Purpose. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.

THE GOOD NEWS AND THE BAD NEWS ABOUT INTERNET RESEARCH

The good news is that the Internet puts at our hands more and more information, and makes researching from home easier than ever.

The bad news is that the Internet puts at our hands a lot of unreliable information along with good, legitimate information. Because the Internet is growing and evolving so rapidly, academics everywhere are scrambling to figure out a definitive way to determine what's a "good" Internet site, and what's not.

Because you are writing a research paper, you must find facts and well-argued opinions from experts who know what they're talking about. You cannot use unsupported claims written by an amateur (keep in mind that ANYONE can have a site on the Web. Just because a site looks good doesn't mean the information presented is true or reliable).

Here are some guidelines to help you navigate the internet, but if you have any doubt about the legitimacy of any information you get off the Web, see your teacher before you rely on its information.

Reliable sites have all of the following characteristics:

A U T H O R I T Y. Make sure the site...

- 👍 Lists the author prominently and clearly
- 👍 Has an author whose credentials are clear and appropriate (professional writer, professor, etc.)
- 👍 Has an address that includes one of the following:
 - **.edu (American Educational Institutes)**
 - **.com (Commercial or Company Sites)—not always unbiased**
 - **.org (A Group or Organization)**
 - **.gov (U.S. Government Resources)**

OR, the source comes directly from a newspaper, periodical, professional journal or the CLC...

A C C U R A C Y. Make sure the site...

- 👍 Is clearly dated
- 👍 Lists the sources of any claims or facts clearly
- 👍 Is free of grammatical or mechanical errors
- 👍 Makes it clear who is accountable for the accuracy of the content