

ENGL 215, March 2024

Research Essay Writing Rubric: For More Detailed Instruction and Videos See “Essay Writing” On *The Nature Of Writing* Website and the OWLPURDUE website.

## 1. MLA TITLE PAGE

## 2. INTRODUCTION

- opening one or two general sentences that introduce your thesis
- outline of 3-5 key points of your argument
- each point may take one or two sentences
- concluding sentence that summarizes your thesis
- a quotation—primary or secondary—is acceptable but not necessary
- you are not to summarize your secondary sources in the Introduction

## 3. PARAGRAPHS

- each paragraph requires a clear topic sentence, which refers back in some way to a key point made in your Introduction
- it is possible to have 2 paragraphs about a single topic, especially if you find your paragraph running past one full page. In this instance, you don’t need a new topic sentence, but a transition such as “furthermore,” “in addition,” and so on.
- maintain a relationship with your thesis. Remember, an argument is built sentence by sentence.
- paragraphs require both primary and secondary evidence
  - see “Essay Writing” in *Nature of Writing*, [OWL Purdue](#), and Moodle handouts for incorporating quotations effectively. Use a variety of ways to introduce quotations.
  - there is no set number of required in-text citations from your secondary sources for a 2000-word research essay, but a minimum of 2 from each source is expected. However, a more thoroughly researched essay will refer to each secondary source 4-7 times. **If you do not complete this minimum requirement of 2 in-text citations for each secondary source you will not receive a passing grade.**
  - References to the primary source will be numerous, potentially 3-10 times in a paragraph.
  - remember to follow MLA Style with your in-text citations, especially if you paraphrase.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

- similar to your Introduction, but shorter
- change of tone as you have now completed your argument
- do not introduce new points
- quotations are acceptable

## 5. CITATIONS

- ensure that you are using MLA Style
- include a Works Cited that documents properly your primary and secondary sources. Specifically, the citations in the Works Cited must match the in-text citations. For example, if you quote page 44 from *Girl with a Pearl Earring* (Chevalier 44), and the Works Cited states that you used the Penguin edition, then I should be able to look up your reference in my Penguin edition. You cannot rely on secondary sources for page numbers for your references to *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. Failure to do so will have a significant effect on your grade, as it falls under academic dishonesty.