



Providence Grove High School Research Paper Guidelines

Providence Grove High School
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All research papers written at Providence Grove High School must adhere to the guidelines established by the Modern Language Association in the 8th edition of its *MLA Handbook*.

Modern Language Association of America. *MLA Handbook*. 8th ed., MLA, 2016.

Scaffold of Progressive Research Skills

The following research skills will be taught at each grade level in the PGHS English Department:

ENGLISH I

- format for documenting sources in MLA-8 style
- format of note cards
- overview of outlining skills and format
- creation of note cards using paraphrasing, summarizing, and direct quotations

ENGLISH II

- review of all 9th-grade research skills
- development of essential questions
- development of thesis statements
- development of an MLA outline
- *standard*: presentation of research with a works-cited page
- *honors*: completion of a mini research paper (including an outline, in-text documentation, and a works-cited page)

ENGLISH III

- review of all 9th- and 10th-grade research skills
- completion of a 3- to 4-page research paper (including note cards, an outline, internal documentation, and a works-cited page)

ENGLISH IV

- review of all 9th-, 10th-, and 11th-grade research skills
- completion of a 3- to 5-page research paper (including note cards, an outline, internal documentation, and a works-cited page)

PGHS uses the 8th edition of *MLA Handbook* for all research paper formats (www.mlahandbook.org).

The Online Writing Lab at Purdue University (owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/search.php) is an excellent resource which offers comprehensive examples of internal documentations and works-cited entries in MLA-8 format.

Essential Question and Thesis

After you have selected the general topic for your research paper, your teacher will require that you develop an essential question to help you focus your research.

What is an ESSENTIAL QUESTION?

The essential question narrows your topic and makes it more specific. The essential question should focus on a specific angle or a specific aspect of the topic which you wish to study. **In short, the essential question is what you SPECIFICALLY want to learn / know / prove about your topic.**

EXAMPLE

TOPIC: *rap music*

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: *What are the positive influences of listening to rap music?*

Other possible essential questions for a research paper on rap music could be:

- How can rap music be used as a form of anger management therapy for young adults?
- How does rap music promote and glorify a sense of materialism in American society?
- What are the links between rap music and rising gun violence in America?

What is a THESIS STATEMENT?

The thesis statement states the focus of your research paper and tells the reader what your research paper is going to be about. **Basically, the thesis statement is the answer to the essential question or the problem you have raised.**

EXAMPLE

TOPIC: *rap music*

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: *What are the positive influences of listening to rap music?*

THESIS: *Rap music draws attention to the societal issues of poverty, racism, and gang norms and violence.*

Outline

Although not all teachers and college professors require that an outline accompany a research paper, the PGHS English department feels that an outline is a great organizational tool which helps students keep their research organized, focused, and connected to the thesis statement.

Title of the Research Paper
Essential Question:
Thesis:
I.
A.
B.
II.
A.
B.
III.
A.
B.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE OUTLINE

1. The outline is double-spaced.
2. There is no page number (header) on the outline page.
3. Roman numerals represent the main sections of the paper—not the paragraphs within the paper. A's and B's represent paragraphs within each main section of the paper.
4. Form Roman numerals using capital / uppercase I's and V's.

Sample Outline

The Positive Effects of Rap Music on Modern American Culture

Essential Question: What are the positive influences of listening to rap music?

Thesis: Rap music draws attention to the societal issues of poverty, racism, and gang norms and violence.

I. Poverty

- A. Voice for urban America
- B. Way out of poverty for rap artists

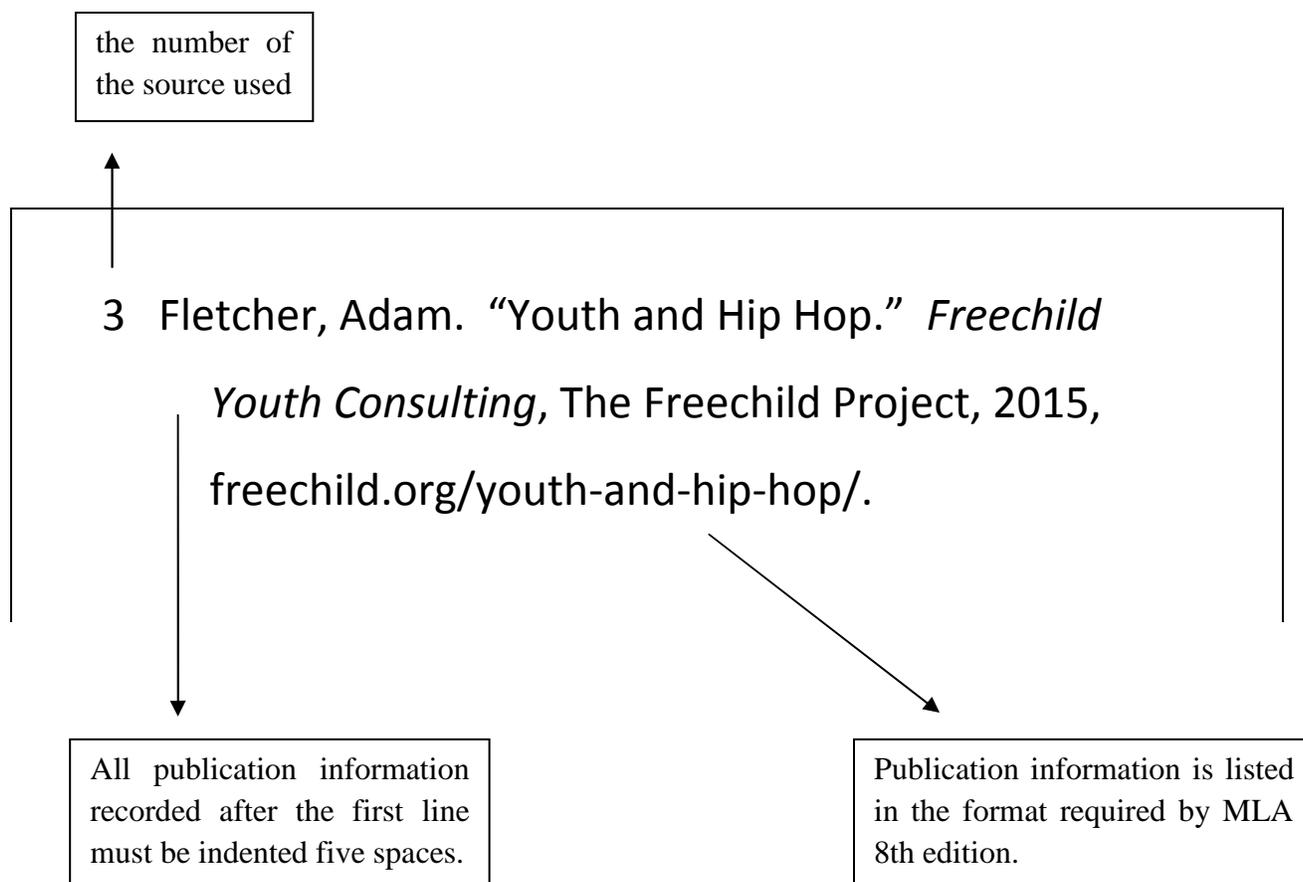
II. Racism

- A. Unification of races
- B. "Erase Racism" by Kool G Rap

III. Gang norms and violence

- A. Humanization of gang violence
- B. Investment in anti-gang preventative measures by rap artists

Recording Sources Used



GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR RECORDING SOURCES

1. Type a list of sources into a word-processing document.
2. Type ALL necessary publication information for a source BEFORE you begin taking notes.
3. Use MLA 8th-edition guidelines (*presented on the following pages*) for the types of sources you are required to use in your research paper.
4. All publication information recorded beyond the first line must be INDENTED five spaces (this is called reverse indentation or hanging indentation).
5. The list of typed sources (presented in MLA-8 format) will later become the works-cited page.

MLA-8 Format for Documenting Sources

*The next three pages provide sample formats for how to document the most common types of sources used in high school research papers. **ASK YOUR TEACHER FOR ASSISTANCE IF YOUR SOURCE DOES NOT FIT INTO ONE OF THE CATEGORIES LISTED HERE.***

There are 9 core elements about a source which you may be able to find when documenting the sources in which you find the information for your research paper. You will most likely not be able to find all 9 of these core elements, but find as many as you can and omit those which you cannot find.

Author’s last name, author’s first name. Title of the source. Title of the container, other contributors, version, number, publisher, publication date, location.

When providing the URL or internet address for an online source, omit *http://* or *https://*.

For websites, the name of the publisher/sponsor is often located in the copyright (©) notice at the bottom of the page.

An Internet Source/Website

Author’s last name, author’s first name. “Title of the individual webpage.” *Title of the overall website*, name of any publisher/sponsor associated with the website, day mo. year of publication or update, internet address.

Rodriguez, Linda. “Why Toilet Paper Belongs to America.” *CNN*, Turner Broadcasting System, 8 July 2009, www.cnn.com/2009/LIVING/wayoflife/07/07/mf.toilet.paper.history/index.html.

An Online Magazine, Journal, or Newspaper from an Online Database (www.ncwiseowl.org)

Author's last name, author's first name. "Title of the article." *Title of the magazine*, day mo. year of publication, pg #s. *Name of the online database*, internet address.

Noonan, Peggy. "Ronald Reagan." *Time*, 13 April 1998, pp. 176-179. *Academic Search Complete*, ebscohost.com.

Author's last name, author's first name. "Title of the article." *Title of the journal*, vol. #, issue no., year, pg #s. *Name of the online database*, internet address.

Fischer, Beth A. "Toeing the Hardline? The Reagan Administration and the Ending of the Cold War." *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 112, no. 3, 1997, pp. 477-496. *Academic Search Complete*, ebscohost.com.

Author's last name, author's first name. "Title of the article." *Title of the newspaper*, day mo. year of publication, pg #s. *Name of the online database*, internet address.

Martin, Jeff. "Bringing Ronald Regan to New Generations." *USA Today*, 4 Feb. 2011, p. A4. *Newspaper Search Plus*, ebscohost.com.

An Online Magazine or Newspaper not from an Online Database

Author's last name, author's first name. "Title of the article." *Title of the magazine*, day mo. year of publication, internet address.

Gillham, Christina. "Organs: Noteworthy Problem." *Newsweek*, 22 May 2005, www.newsweek.com/organs-noteworthy-problem-119207.

Author's last name, author's first name. "Title of the article." *Title of the newspaper*, day mo. year of publication, internet address.

Collins, Glenn. "Orchestrating a Pipe Organ, Piece by Piece." *The New York Times*, 27 April 1993, www.nytimes.com/1993/04/27/arts/orchestrating-a-pipe-organ-piece-by-piece.html?pagewanted=all&mcubz=1.

An Online Book

Author's last name, author's first name. *Title of the book.* Publishing company's name, year of publication. *Name of the online database, internet address.*

Shannon, John R. *Understanding the Pipe Organ: A Guide for Students, Teachers, and Lovers of the Instrument.* McFarland & Company, 2009. *Google Books, books.google.com.*

A Book

(one, two, or three+ authors/editors)

Author's last name, first name. *Title of the book.* Publishing company's name, year of publication.

Montague, Julian. *The Stray Shopping Carts of Eastern North America: A Guide to Field Identification.* Abrams Books, 2006.

Crolius, Kendall, and Anne Montgomery. *Knitting with Dog Hair: Better a Sweater from a Dog You Know and Love than from a Sheep You'll Never Meet.* St. Martin's Griffin, 1997.

Kucharczyk, John, et al. *Nausea and Vomiting: Recent Research and Clinical Advances.* 1st ed., CRC Press, 1991.

McSweeney, Paul L.H., editor. *Cheese Problems Solved.* 1st ed., Woodhead Publishing, 2007.

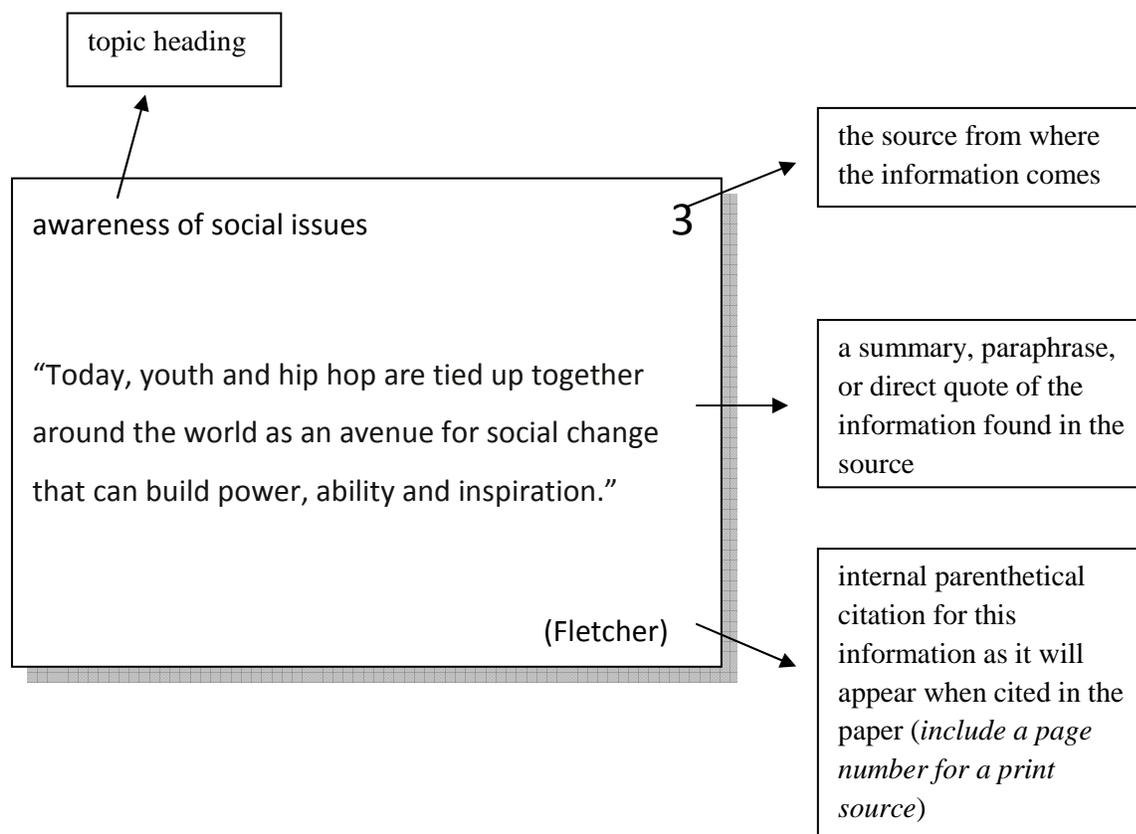
When a source has three or more authors, provide the name of the first author, and use *et al* ("and others") instead of providing the additional authors' names.

A Single Work from an Anthology (such as Opposing Viewpoints Series)

Author's last name, first name. "Title of the article." *Title of the book,* edited by editor's first name editor's last name, publishing company's name, year of publication, pg #s. **Title of the series.**

Hutchinson, Asa. "The War on Drugs is Succeeding." *The War on Drugs,* edited by Tamara L. Roleff, Greenhaven Press, 2004, pp. 17-25. Opposing Viewpoints Series.

Format of Note Cards (4x6)



GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR NOTE CARDS

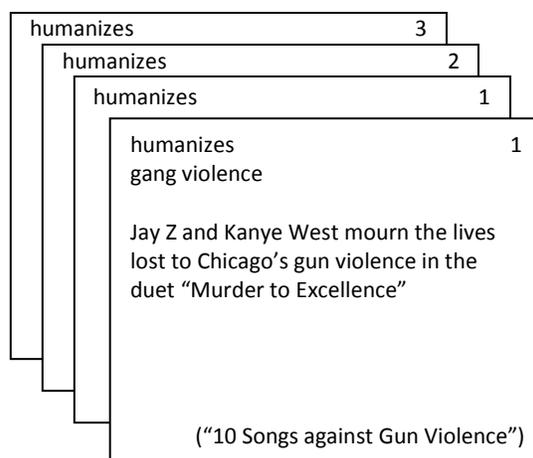
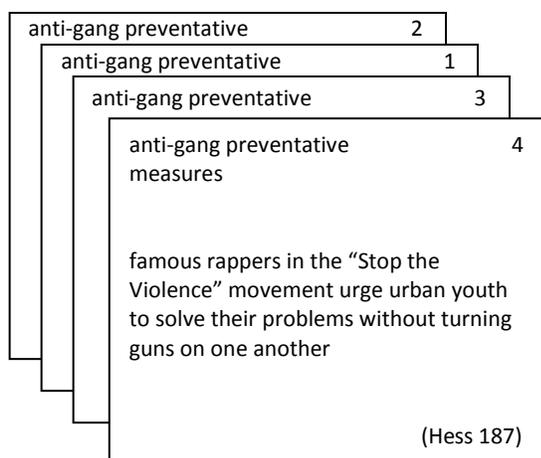
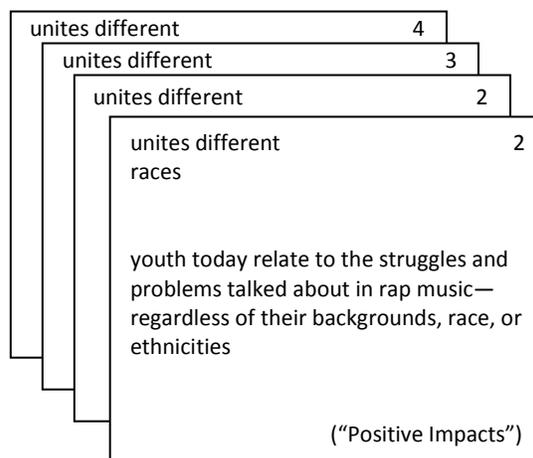
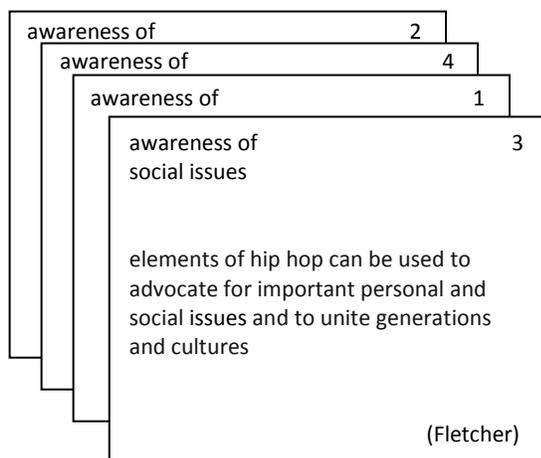
1. Write only one note per card.
2. Use lined 4 x 6 index cards to help with legibility.
3. The heading for each note card should correspond with a topic in your outline.
4. Write your source card number in upper right corner of each note card.
5. In the lower right corner, write the parenthetical citation format for the source as it will appear when it is cited in the paper (*be sure to include a page number for print sources*).
6. Kinds of notes:

SUMMARY: summarizes the general idea of a long paragraph, several paragraphs, or an entire chapter—information must be rewritten in your own words

PARAPHRASE: restates specific ideas or pieces of information from a small section of the source—information must be rewritten in your own words

QUOTATION: records information that is particularly significant or well-stated—information must be directly quoted word-for-word (use quotation marks around the quoted text)

Organizing the Note Cards by Topic



Before you begin writing your research paper, sort your note cards using the topic headings in the upper left corner. Group note cards into separate stacks based on content.

In the example above,

- all note cards which contain information about how rap music raises awareness of social issues are grouped together
- all note cards which contain information about how rap music unites different races are grouped together
- all note cards which contain information about how rap music promotes anti-gang preventative measures are grouped together
- all note cards which contain information about how rap humanizes gang violence are grouped together

Format Guidelines for Typing a Research Paper

1. **SPACING** double space the entire paper; NOTHING in a research paper is ever single-spaced
2. **MARGINS** set all margins to 1 inch
3. **FONT** use Times New Roman font, 12-point font size, and black ink
4. **PAGE NUMBERS** use a header to number each page of the research paper (*with your last name and the page number*) in the upper RIGHT corner
5. **TITLES** italicize all titles; do not underline titles
6. **NUMBERS**
 - spell out numbers which can be written in one or two words; otherwise, use numerals
(EX: *fifty-seven, 650*)
 - spell out a percentage or an amount of money if it can be done in one or two total words; otherwise, use numerals and the appropriate symbols
(EX: *sixty-three percent, 157%, five dollars, \$1250*)
7. **VOICE** write the research paper using ONLY an objective, 3rd-person voice—this means that you cannot use 1st- or 2nd-person pronouns

NO	NO	YES	
FIRST PERSON	SECOND PERSON	THIRD PERSON	
I	you	he	its
me	your	him	they
my	yours	himself	them
myself	yourself	his	themselves
mine	yourselves	she	their
we		her	theirs
us		herself	one
our		hers	one's
ourselves		It	oneself
ours		itself	

Formatting the First Page of a Research Paper

1. Use your word processor's "INSERT" function to insert a running header (*with your last name and the page number*) in the upper RIGHT corner of each page of the research paper.
2. Stack ① your name, ② your teacher's name, ③ the course name, and ④ the date that the paper is due in the upper LEFT side of page 1. This information is double-spaced.
3. CENTER your title underneath the heading information in #2 above. Do not underline, italicize, or emphasize your title in any way. The title should be the same font and size as the rest of your research paper.

Smith 1

Eunice Q. Smith

Mr. Northman

English III

1 January 2017

The Positive Effects of Rap Music on Modern American Culture

When rock-n-roll music first appeared in the United States during the early 1950s, the older generations criticized rock music and believed that rock-n-roll was the primary cause of all of the nation's social ills. Similarly, many people presently hold the same beliefs about rap and hip hop music; however, there is a wide body of research which indicates that rap music actually has many positive effects which are often overlooked by its critics. Most notably, rap music draws attention to the societal issues of poverty, racism, and gang norms and violence.

Format for Parenthetical Documentation

You must document for a reader where ALL of the information used in your paper originated. Internal parenthetical citations correlated to a works-cited page is the procedure specified by MLA.

You must use internal parenthetical citations to document for a reader where ALL of the information used in your paper originated—regardless of whether the information has been summarized, paraphrased, or quoted.

INTERNET SOURCES

1. To document information obtained from the internet, use only the **author's last name**.

EXAMPLE:

Many young people today realize that they can use elements of hip hop music to advocate for important personal and social issues and to unite generations and cultures (Fletcher).

2. If an Internet source has no author, use only **the title of the webpage** in place of an author.

EXAMPLE:

Rap artists Jay Z and Kanye West highlight the problem of deaths which result from Chicago's gun violence in their duet "Murder to Excellence" ("10 Songs against Gun Violence").

PRINT SOURCES

To document information obtained from a print source, use the **author's last name** and the **page reference**.

EXAMPLE:

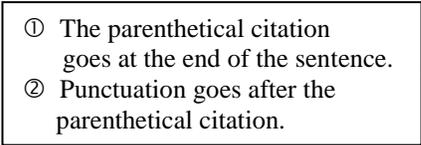
The famous rappers who have joined forces to form the Stop the Violence movement urge urban youth to solve their problems in productive ways and without turning guns on one another (Hess 187).

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

1. There is no comma between the author and the page number nor is the page number preceded by *p.* or *page*.
2. The parenthetical citation goes at the **END OF THE SENTENCE**. The end mark punctuation for the sentence goes **AFTER** the parenthetical citation.

EXAMPLE:

Many young people today realize that they can use elements of hip hop music to advocate for important personal and social issues and to unite generations and cultures (Fletcher).

- 
- ① The parenthetical citation goes at the end of the sentence.
 - ② Punctuation goes after the parenthetical citation.

3. If you have several successive sentences within the same paragraph in which information comes from the same source, you may put one parenthetical reference at the end of the last sentence containing information from that source.
4. A minimum of about 5 internal parenthetical citations per page is the *average* rule.
5. EVERY internal parenthetical citation **MUST** cross-reference with a source on the works-cited page. In other words, EVERY parenthetical citation used in the paper **MUST** have its source listed on the works-cited page.

Using Direct Quotations

Direct quotes must always be “framed”—or fit into a student’s writing—through the use of ① a *tag phrase* (also called a *speaker tag* or an *attributive tag*) and/or ② a *lead-in verb*. In other words, direct quotes must be attached to the student’s writing; a direct quote should never be used alone as a single, stand-alone sentence.

The tag phrase and/or lead-in verb should ① introduce the direct quotation and ② provide both the *name* and *qualifications* of the quote’s source.

According to Adam Fletcher, founder of the Freechild Project youth advocacy program, “More than simply playing a song, hip hop can be a spine for teaching, empowering, engaging and immersing children and youth in the realities of society” (Fletcher).

The strongest method for using direction quotations in order to add authority to your writing is to embed only part of a quote into one of your own sentences.

When people face difficulties in life, rap must is valuable in that it “is a reflection of the soul and mind and is a solace for both the artists and listeners who may be struggling with the same issues” (“Positive Impacts”).

Lead-in verbs to use when “framing” a direct quote can include:

admits	defends	notes	sees
agrees	describes	observes	shows
analyzes	disagrees	points out	speculates
asks	explains	predicts	suggests
comments	finds	proposes	supposes
concedes	holds	records	thinks
concludes	illustrates	relates	warns
contends	insists	reports	writes
	maintains	says	

Use direct quotations only for content that is uniquely authoritative and strong in the original author’s own words; otherwise, paraphrase or summarize the researched information which you present in your research paper. Over-quotation of obvious content simply leads a reader to believe that a paper’s writer is not an original thinker.

The Works Cited Page

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE WORKS CITED PAGE

1. Center the words Works Cited at the top of the page.
2. The works-cited page is numbered with a running page-number header just like the other pages in the body of the research paper (Smith 6).
3. **ALPHABETIZE** the sources (by the first word in each source) which you used to research the information presented in your paper (the first word of a source may not always be an author's name).
 - Alphabetize a title which begins with a numeral as though the numeral is spelled out. So, the title "10 Songs against Gun Violence" would be alphabetized with the T's (for "ten") on the works-cited page.

"10 Songs against Gun Violence." *BET*, BET Interactive, 20 Dec. 2012, www.bet.com/music/photos/2012/12/10-anti-gun-songs.html#!121912-music-gun-control-semi-automatic.
 - Do not alphabetize leading words ("A," An," or "The"). For example, the title "The History of Rap Music" would be alphabetized by "History" rather than by "The."

"The History of Hip-Hop Music." *Pro Music Tutor*, Jem Music International, www.promusictutor.com/blog/the-history-of-hip-hop-music/.
4. **DO NOT** number the sources on the works-cited page; if you numbered your sources as you found information (source 1, source 2, source 3, etc.), delete the source numbers in the finished copy of the works-cited page.
5. All information on the works-cited page is double-spaced.
6. Use **REVERSE INDENTATION**, or hanging indentation, format for each entry. In other words, the first line of each individual works-cited entry is not indented. The second, third, fourth (and so on) lines of each individual works-cited entry are indented.
7. **EVERY** source on the works-cited page **MUST** cross-reference with the parenthetical citations in the paper. In other words, **EVERY** source listed on the works-cited page **MUST** have a parenthetical citation used somewhere in the paper.

Sample Works Cited Page

Smith 6

Works Cited

- Fletcher, Adam. "Youth and Hip Hop." *Freechild Youth Consulting*, The Freechild Project, 2015, freechild.org/youth-and-hip-hop/.
- Hess, Mickey, editor. "Stop the Violence." *Icons of Hip Hop: An Encyclopedia of the Movement, Music, and Culture*, vol. 1, Greenwood Press, 2007, p. 187. Greenwood Icons.
- "The History of Hip-Hop Music." *Pro Music Tutor*, Jem Music International, www.promusictutor.com/blog/the-history-of-hip-hop-music/.
- "Positive Impacts." *Impacts of Rap Music on Youths*. impactofrapmusiconyouths.weebly.com/positive-impacts.html.
- "10 Songs against Gun Violence." *BET*, BET Interactive, 20 Dec. 2012, www.bet.com/music/photos/2012/12/10-anti-gun-songs.html#!121912-music-gun-control-semi-automatic.
- Travis, Raphael, Jr. "Rap Music and the Empowerment of Today's Youth: Evidence in Everyday Music Listening, Music Therapy, and Commercial Rap Music." *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2013, pp. 139-167. *Academic Search Complete*, ebscohost.com.