

# Howard County Middle School Writing Stylebook



HOWARD COUNTY  
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

# INTRODUCTION

The *Howard County Middle School Writing Stylebook* is designed to guide and standardize writing and to supplement classroom instruction throughout the county at the middle school level for students and teachers.

It incorporates strategies from the *6+1 Traits of Writing* by Ruth Culham, a publication used by teachers and students in the HCPSS writing program, *The Big6™ Information Literacy Strategies* as well as information from the Maryland State Department of Education's Voluntary State Curriculum. It is also an outgrowth of the Writing Charts developed by the HCPSS Elementary and the Secondary Language Arts Offices.

The development of this document was a team effort of the Secondary Language Arts Office and the Middle School Instructional Team Leaders.

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## "What should my assignment look like when I hand it in?"

Before you hand in your work, you need to do a final check on your presentation or the *form and layout* of a piece of writing as well as its *clarity*. Presentation is the final step before publishing. Below are the guidelines you will follow before turning in or publishing *every* assignment.

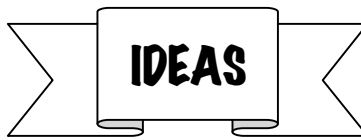
- All assignments will have a ***name, date, class period,*** and ***subject*** in the upper **right** hand corner.
- All assignments will have a **title** written or typed on the **top line in the center**.
- All assignments *not* typed will be completed on loose-leaf paper, not torn from a journal or spiral notebook.
- All paragraphs will be indented appropriately (see Organization page).

- All typed assignments will follow this format: **double spaced, left-justify, at least Times or Times New Roman in 12 pt. font size.**
- All final drafts hand written will be legibly written in **dark blue or black ink** on the **front** of the looseleaf page **only**.

### **Avoid:**

- Creases, tears, folds in assignments
- Instant Messaging language
- Fonts that do not recognize upper and lower case letters

**Remember to take pride in each of your assignments; they are an expression of who you are. What do you want your work to say about YOU.**



## **“I have nothing to write about!”**

Does this sound familiar? On this page, you will find fabulous ways to *find* ideas, *focus* your ideas, and *elaborate* on your ideas to help readers experience the heart of your message!

### **“I don't know what to write!”**

- Design a WEB or a LIST to help you think of topics.
- Keep a journal of interesting events that you've witnessed or experienced.
- Generate a list of your favorites: music, foods, friends, games, sports, books, etc.
- Check out an organizer on the “Organization” page to help you narrow a topic.

### **“What do you mean my ideas are all over the place?”**

- Highlight key information in a text, including your own, that is ESSENTIAL to the topic.
- Shrink a memory down to five minutes or less and focus just on “exploding the moment.”
- Cross out any words or phrases that do not relate directly to your topic.
- Use transitions to connect each of your ideas to the topic.

### **“What does *expand* mean anyway?”**

- In a story, make sure your nouns are linked to descriptive adjectives, and your verbs are linked to lively adverbs.
- If you give an example from a text, connect it to the topic by asking yourself, “What does this have to do with my topic?” Write your answer after the example.
- Add details to the setting, character, and plot of a story to make the reader picture what you are picturing. (see Word Choice page)

# ORGANIZATION



## “How do I organize my writing?”

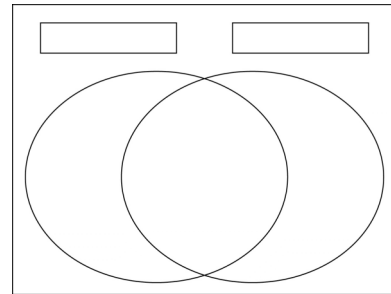
Writing needs structure. After gathering your ideas, you need to put them together. These pages will GET YOUR WRITING *ORGANIZED!*

### “How do I start?”

Use an *organizer* that FITS the topic.

#### **Venn Diagram**

Use for compare/contrast, drawing attention to similarities and differences

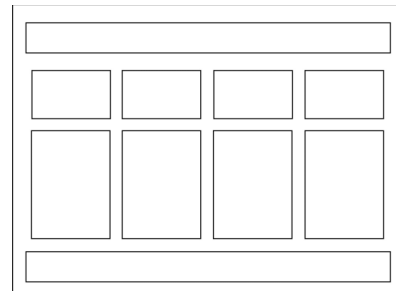


#### **Main Idea Table**

Use for thinking from idea to example OR example to idea.

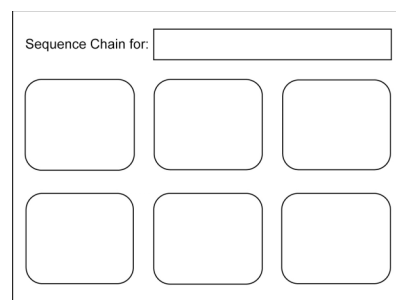
**I to E:** Write the main idea in the top space, and add supporting details in the boxes. The pillars can be used for reference pages, direct quotes, or other details.

**E to I:** Use the pillars for facts, examples, or characteristics. The boxes can be used for a summary statement, concept, or main idea. The bottom is for a concluding sentence.



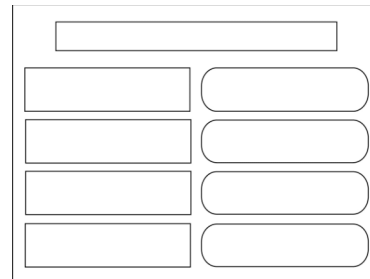
#### **Sequence Chain**

Use to display steps in a procedure, examine cause/effect relationships, and as a storyboard for time order. The open area can be used for transitions.



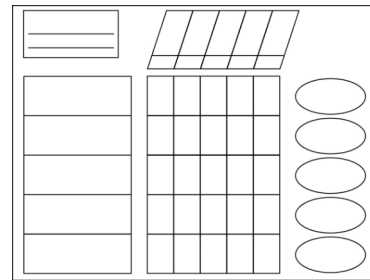
**Cause/Effect, Fact-Opinion Conflict Chart**

Use for listing facts and opinions about any topic or for cause and effect. The events can be listed in the ovals. Some events may have more than one effect.



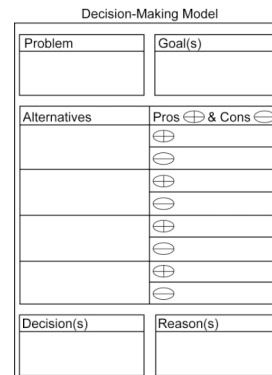
**Criteria Grid**

Use for evaluation or reporting. The spaces across the chart can be used to list criteria by which something will be judged. Small spaces under the criteria can be used to indicate scores. Spaces down the left-hand side can be used to list several items being evaluated or the results of several evaluators. Scores or checkmarks can be written on the chart. Ovals can be used to tally scores, to indicate the final ranks, or to summarize a word or phrase.



**Decision-Making Model**

Use for stating problems and goals clearly, examining alternatives, recognizing pros and cons for all alternatives, or offering reasons for decisions.



**“Now that I’m organized, what do I write first?”**

The best way to grab a reader’s attention is to use a catchy introduction.

<p>Begin with a <b>question</b> related to the topic.</p> <p>Begin with a <b>definition</b>.</p> <p>Begin with a <b>fact or statistic</b>.</p> <p>Begin with a <b>quotation</b> from the text or from a related topic.</p>	<p>Begin with an <b>anecdote</b>, a brief story that is related to the topic.</p> <p>Begin with a <b>startling statement</b>: “Man is doomed!”</p> <p>Begin by telling <b>why the subject is important</b>.</p> <p>Begin with a <b>generally accepted belief</b>.</p>
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# Transitions Chart

“How do I connect my ideas?”



Warning: Do NOT just drop your transitions into your paper. Use them carefully and strategically to keep your reader interested and to keep YOU *organized!*

## Transitions that add, repeat, or intensify:

and	in other words	as a matter of fact	to conclude	also
further	to put another way	to sum up	besides	in addition
furthermore	nevertheless	too	moreover	finally
habitually	another	again	anymore	usually
first, second	after all	indeed	to repeat	in fact

## Transitions that compare, contrast, or contradict:

similarly	as well as	however	in spite of	although
then again	likewise	despite	by comparison	but
even when	regardless	whereas	unlike	rather than
nevertheless	on the contrary	yet	on the other hand	in fact

## Transitions that show a time or space relationship:

before	after	finally	earlier	soon
during	now	in time	eventually	at first
at last	the next day	beginning	ending	next
later	since	meanwhile	still	after that
following	until	from then on	beside	between
beyond	across	over	at night	into

## Transitions that limit or introduce an example:

if	to illustrate	such as	in particular	provided that
unless	when	as proof	namely	in case
that is	that	for example	for instance	

## Transitions that signal cause or result:

consequently	therefore	in effect	as a result	accordingly
thus	hence	because	for this reason	so

## Transitions that assert obvious truth:

no doubt	undoubtedly	naturally	without a doubt	doubtless
of course	surely	granted that	certainly	in fact

“When do I change paragraphs?”

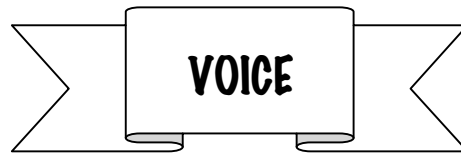
*Excellent question!*

**TIME CHANGE**

**PLACE CHANGE**

**TOPIC CHANGE**

**NEW SPEAKER**



Your clothes show others your clothing style. The music you listen to or choose not to listen to reflects your music style. Just like clothing and music, your writing also reflects your style. We call this your VOICE. If your name were not on your paper, would the reader be able to recognize the paper as your paper because your writing reflects your style? What's your style?

“How can I make my paper say, ‘This is me talking,’ without saying, ‘Look at me?’”

Your deliberate choice of words is visible in the words you choose to use or choose *not* to use to create meaning. Your sentence fluency creates the *music* in your writing; in fact, it is the natural word flow of the ideas in your sentences. These are two important traits that contribute to defining your voice.

How do you define your writing voice? Look ahead to find out!



Read this children's nursery rhyme.

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.  
All the king's horses  
And all the King's men  
Couldn't put Humpty together again.



Now, let's hear the same ideas presented differently.

1. Eggs are fragile. Unless care is taken, they can easily break. This is what happened to Humpty Dumpty. He had a terrible, outrageously unthinkable disaster. Once when he was sitting leisurely on a wall, he fell. While an enormous number of men used their equestrian talent, they were not able to save his life. Humpty died.

***The writer records the events in a factual, almost scientific manner. His/her word choices create detail and precision.*** [Fragile, easily break, enormous] ***The writer's sentence fluency reflects the writer's ability to deliberately infuse simple sentences*** [Eggs are fragile. Humpty died.] **and complex sentences** [Once when he was sitting leisurely on a wall, he fell. While an enormous number of men used their equestrian talent, they were not able to save his life]. ***The writer does not rely on one type of sentence structure to construct meaning.***

2. What a silly protein! Why in his right mind would an egg choose to sit on a wall? Anyone with a brain knows that it doesn't take much for an egg to break. Do eggs have brains? Humpty fell and scattered, shattered like an expensive piece of china dropped on a hot August sidewalk. That's exactly what happened to Humpty Dumpty when he sat on a wall. The King's men and their horses had to waste their valuable time trying to revive him. There were no winners here.

***The writer's word choice allows him/her to record the events in a way which portrays him/her as knowledgeable, insightful, descriptive, and also playful. It also appears that the writer feels comfortable taking liberties when reaching logical conclusions. Although the writer reports the facts, he/she does so with a measure of humor. The writer's sentence fluency reflects variety; in addition, the writer includes a skillful method to engage the reader and make the reader think. While a bit conversational at times, this tone is not distracting to the reader.***



## WORD CHOICE

**"How do I know which word to use?"**

**Know the difference between *connotation* and *denotation*.**

- *Connotation* is the *feeling* a word gives a reader. Ex. bony vs. slender
- *Denotation* is the actual *dictionary* definition of the word.

**Use figurative language to help you describe something or someone ordinary.**

- Similes, metaphors, personification, and alliteration

**Identify your topic, audience, and purpose for writing.**

- Avoid slang unless it is a character's voice.
- Use content specific vocabulary.
- Use persuasive language when appropriate.

"When I'm writing dialogue, what other words can I use besides 'said'?"					
added	agreed	babbled	boasted	commanded	claimed
decided	explained	estimated	grunted	insisted	instructed
lectured	mentioned	mumbled	nagged	objected	pleaded
reassured	requested	scolded	shrieked	stammered	taunted
urged	uttered	vowed	warned	wailed	whispered

"What are overused words?"										
a lot	bad	good	big	cool	cute	fun	great	interesting	pretty	sad
very	said	little	got	run	tell	stuff	take	things	walk	sit

**Warning:** When using a thesaurus, DON'T OVERDO IT! Readers can tell if a word is out of place, so use words that you own and that fit your style!

# Descriptive Word Charts

## “What if I can’t think of another word?”

Check a thesaurus OR check below for a new and improved word for your writing.

### SOUNDS

bang	groan	melodic	screech	thud
booming	growl	moan	shrill	thump
buzz	harsh	mute	silent	thunderous
clatter	hiss	purring	snort	voiceless
cooing	hoarse	quiet	soft	wail
crash	hushed	raspy	splash	whine
crying	husky	resonant	squeak	whispered
deafening	loud	screaming	squeal	

### TIME

ancient	daylight	late	outdated	sunrise
annual	decade	lengthy	periodic	sunset
brief	dusk	long	punctual	swift
brisk	early	modern	quick	tardy
centuries	eons	moments	rapid	twilight
continual	evening	noon	short	whirlwind
crawling	fast	noonday	slowly	years
dawn	flash	old	speedy	yearly
daybreak	intermittent	old-fashioned	sporadic	young

### TOUCH

boiling	dirty	grubby	shaggy	stinging
breezy	dry	hard	sharp	tender
bumpy	dusty	hot	silky	tight
chilly	filthy	icy	slick	uneven
cold	fluffy	loose	slimy	waxen
cool	flaky	melted	slippery	wet
creepy	fluttering	plastic	slushy	wooden
crisp	frosty	prickly	smooth	yielding

### SIGHT/APPEARANCE

adorable	crinkled	foggy	motionless	skinny
alert	crooked	fuzzy	muddy	smoggy
befuddled	crowded	glamorous	murky	sparkling
blinding	crystalline	gleaming	nervous	spotless
bright	curved	glowing	obtuse	steep
brilliant	dark	graceful	round	stormy
broad	deep	grotesque	rotund	straight
blonde	dim	hazy	pale	strange
bloody	distinct	high	poised	ubiquitous
blushing	dull	hollow	quaint	unsightly
chubby	elegant	homely	shadowy	unusual
clean	fancy	light	shady	weird
cloudy	filthy	lithe	sheer	wide
colorful	flat	low	shiny	willowy
contoured	fluffy	misty	shallow	wizened



## SENTENCE FLUENCY

### “How do I make my writing *sound* amazing?”

Have you ever closed your eyes while someone is reading a story? How does it sound? Does it flow, drawing you in, mesmerizing you with its music, or does it sound choppy and staccato? Effective writers create music with their writing, whether it is a BCR or a story. This music is *Sentence Fluency*. In order to have fluency in your writing, you need to use the skills below.

- Ⓢ Use transitions to keep your ideas moving (see Organization page).  
*Ex. In addition to solving the crime, the young detective donated his reward money to charity.*
- Ⓢ Use your subjects and predicates effectively by shifting their placement to add variety.  
*Ex. Horrified by her quiz grade, Brenda vowed to study harder.*
- Ⓢ Use adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and nouns *ON PURPOSE*  
*Ex. The swirling, cumulous clouds nervously chased the setting sun into darkness.*
- Ⓢ Combine shorter sentences using conjunctions, coordinating conjunctions with a comma, or semi-colons.  
*Ex. Bob chased a copperhead through his yard. Bob eventually captured the snake.*  
**Revision #1:** *Bob chased a copperhead through his yard and eventually captured it.*  
**Revision #2:** *Bob chased a copperhead through his yard, and he eventually caught it.*  
**Revision #3:** *Bob chased a copperhead through his yard; he eventually caught it.*
- Ⓢ Use brushstrokes like *participial phrases, appositive phrases, and absolute phrases in a variety of sentence structures like a sentence opener, a subject-verb split, and a sentence closer.*  
*Ex. Chasing a copperhead through his yard, Bob wondered whether he would capture it.*  
*Ex. Bob, an adventurous middle school student, captured a copperhead in his backyard.*  
*Ex. Bob captured the copperhead that plagued his yard, his heart pounding.*
- Ⓢ Use dialogue which sounds natural.
- Ⓢ Use words that *sound* appealing.

# CONVENTIONS



## “How and when do I make corrections?”

When your assignment is complete, you should read your work and allow another to read your work. Using the *6+1 Traits of Writing*, **revise** your paper.

- Are your **Ideas** narrowed and focused?
- Did you include a title, introduction, clear examples, transitions, a beginning, middle, and end?
- Did you use a variety of exciting vocabulary? Are your sentences interesting and do they flow?
- How about your **Voice**? Can you hear it when you read your work aloud?

Once you have **revised** each of the *Traits*, now it is time to check for **Conventions**, or mechanical correctness of your piece (capitalization, punctuation, spelling, usage). There are countless ways you can check your Conventions. You can self edit, peer edit, use a dictionary, thesaurus, spell checker, language handbook, grammar checker, or a style book.

There is a standard guide to edit your own or another’s writing. Use the symbols below, the universal language of editing, to highlight conventions that need to be fixed.

SYMBOL	MEANING	EXAMPLE	CORRECTION
^	Insert letters or words	Hemmingway was ^ author	Hemmingway was an author.
¶	New paragraph	He fell asleep. ¶The next morning, he jumped out of bed.	He fell asleep. The next morning, he jumped out of bed.
○ sp.	Spelling error	Wen are we going to leave?	When are we going to leave?
/	Make a capital letter lower case.	My Mom and Dad went shopping.	My mom and dad went shopping.
WC	Word Choice	I had a good trip. WC	I enjoyed a fabulous vacation.
=	Capitalize	king’s dominion is awesome.	King’s Dominion is awesome.
)	Delete a space	The side walk is cracked.	The sidewalk is cracked.
○	Add punctuation (period, comma, quotation marks, etc.).	“I’m not going to school,” he remarked.	“I’m not going to school,” he remarked.
~	Switch position of letters or words	She be will ready soon.	She will be ready soon.
~	Delete	The hail in in Vale...	The hail in Vale...
RO or ROS	Run on sentence	We took him to the store he picked up cereal and came home. RO	We took him to the store. He picked up cereal and came home.
SF or Frag	Sentence Fragment	Because we had to wash the car. SF	We were late because we had to wash the car.
NC	Not Clear	She found it under the thing. NC	She found her journal under the table.

## The Big6™ Skills

**1** *task  
definition*

**2** *information  
seeking  
strategies*

**3** *location  
and access*

**4** *use of  
information*

**5** *synthesis*

**6** *evaluation*

### What is the Big6™?

The Big6™ is an information literacy model. Some people call it a metacognitive scaffold, or an information problem solving strategy. When you apply these stages, you have an essential framework to approach any information-based question. Here are the six stages we call the BIG6. Two sub-stages are part of each main category in the Big6 model:

#### **1. Task Definition**

- 1.1 Define the information problem
- 1.2 Identify information needed in order to complete the task (to solve the information problem)

#### **2. Information Seeking Strategies**

- 2.1 Determine the range of possible sources (brainstorm)
- 2.2 Evaluate the different possible sources to determine priorities (select the best sources)

#### **3. Location and Access**

- 3.1 Locate sources (intellectually and physically)
- 3.2 Find information within sources

#### **4. Use of Information**

- 4.1 Engage (e.g., read, hear, view, touch) the information in a source
- 4.2 Extract relevant information from a source

#### **5. Synthesis**

- 5.1 Organize information from multiple sources
- 5.2 Present the information

#### **6. Evaluation**

- 6.1 Judge the product (effectiveness)
- 6.2 Judge the information problem-solving process (efficiency)

People go through these Big6 stages—consciously or not—when they seek or apply information to solve a problem or make a decision. It's not necessary to complete these stages in a linear order, and a given stage doesn't have to take a lot of time. We have found that in almost all successful problem-solving situations, all stages are addressed.



### “Who said that, and where did you get that information?”

MLA stands for **Modern Language Association**.

**What:** It is a system for standardizing certain types of information for documentation.

**Where:** MLA in-text (or parenthetical) citations are used in the body of your paper. However, the MLA system also has a standard way of constructing the Works Cited page (or bibliography) at the end of the paper.

**References are composed of *elements*.** These are author, title, publication information, and Internet access information, if appropriate. Each element is followed by a period.

#### **Here are a few MLA rules:**

*Authors.* Authors listed in *Works Cited* are arranged alphabetically according to the author’s last name. If there are two or more authors, the first author’s name appears first according to his or her alphabetized last name. All other names follow in their normal order.

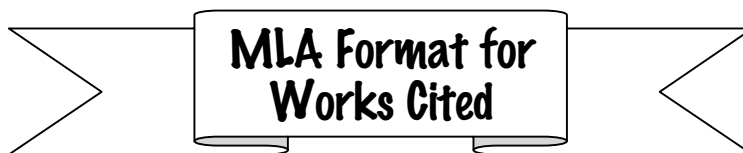
*Titles (Parts).* Articles and chapters are parts of works or volumes. Titles of parts of works are capitalized and placed in quotes — “The Title of a Journal Article.”

*Titles (Volumes).* Titles of books or the names independently published works (books, periodicals, films, etc.) are capitalized and placed in italics **not underlined** and never in quotes: *The Name of a Magazine or Title of a Book.*

*Publication Medium.* Every entry receives a medium of publication marker. Most entries will be listed as Print or Web, but other possibilities include Performance, DVD, TV, Photograph. Most of these markers will appear at the end of entries; however, markers for Web sources are followed by the date of access.

*Internet Information.* The date that an Internet source is accessed must be included. Since sites are changeable, MLA no longer requires the website’s URL address. However, if the website does not easily lead the reader to the information, writers are encouraged to provide the URL, or writers should include URLs when the teacher requests that they include them. URL citations are enclosed in angle brackets and conclude with a period. When a URL citation continues to another line, it should be separated at the single (/) or double slashes (//) in the URL.

**Some information has been adapted from the following sources:** HCPSS Office of Media and Technology and *the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed.



**MLA Format for  
Works Cited**

**Reminders:**

**You must write all information exactly as shown!**

**You must use all punctuation exactly as shown!**

**The second line must be indented!**

**Article in a Magazine or Newspaper**

Author's last name, first name. "Title of article." *Title of magazine or newspaper* day month year: pages. Print.

Isaacson, Walter. "After Williamsburg." *Time* 13 June 2008: 12-14. Print.

**Website Article (same as above) — See Website Entry for more detailed information**

Isaacson, Walter. "After Williamsburg." *Time*. Time, 13 June 2008. Web. 20 May 2009.

**Book by a Single Author**

Author's last name, first name. *Title of book*. City of publication: publisher, year of publication. Print.

Hemingway, Ernest. *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. New York: Scribner, 1940. Print.

[Note: You may shorten the name of the publisher to the main word or words.]

**Book by Two Authors**

Author #1 last name, first name, and author #2 first name, last name. *Title of book*.

City of publication: publisher, year of publication. Print.

Winkler, Anthony C., and Jo Ray McCuen. *Writing Research Papers: A Handbook*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Washington: Harcourt, 1985. Print.

**Book with an Editor**

Editor's last name, first name, ed. *Title of book*. City of publication: publisher, year of publication. Print.

Miller, James, ed. *The United States in Literature*. Oakland, CA: Scott, Foresman, 1981. Print.

[Note: If the city of publication could be confused with other cities of the same name, include the abbreviation of the state after the city.]

**CD-ROM or DVD-ROM Publication**

Author's last name, first. "Title of article." *Title of publication*. Edition, release, or version [if relevant]. City of publication: publisher, year of publication. CD-ROM.

Garrison, David L. "Marine Biology." *2001 World Book*. Version 5.0. New York: World Book, 2001. CD-ROM.

### **Chapter, Poem, Short Story, Essay, or Title Section in a Book**

Author's last name, first name. "Title of chapter, poem, etc." *Title of book*. Editor [if applicable]. City of publication: publisher, year of copyright. Pages. Print.

Carbin, Charles. "Exercise and Fat Control." *Fitness for Life*. Ed. John Wagner. Oakland, CA: Scott, Foresman, 1979. 62-77. Print.

### **Diagrams — Maps, Charts, etc.**

Author [if known]. *Title of Diagram*. Type of Diagram. City: Publisher, Year. Print. *Washington, D.C.* Map. Chicago: Rand, 1999. Print.

### **Encyclopedia, Reference Book Entry**

Author [if known]. "Title of entry." *Title of encyclopedia*. Edition. Year. Print. "Nutrition." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. 10<sup>th</sup> edition. 2003. Print.

### **Film or Video recording**

Director's last name, first name, dir. *Title of Film or video*. Perf. lead actors. Name of Studio, date of release. Film.

Ross, Herbert, dir. *The Turning Point*. Perf. Ann Bancroft, Shirley MacLaine, Miklail Baryshnikov, and Leslie Brown. Twentieth Century-Fox, 1978. Film.

### **Interview, published or recorded**

Last name, first name of person interviewed. Interview. *Name of show where interview was conducted or publication where interview was printed*. Place interview was conducted. Date of interview. Medium.

Gordon, Suzanne. Interview. *All Things Considered*. National Public Radio. WNYC, New York. 1 June 2000. Radio.

### **Interview, personally conducted**

Last name, first name of person interviewed. Personal Interview. Date of interview. Moon, Mary. Personal Interview. 22 October 2002.

### **Website or Online Publication**

Last name, first name of author(s) [if available]. "Title of document." *Title of website*. Publisher or sponsor of site, Date of publication. Web. Date of access. <URL network address>.

"Fresco Painting." *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. Encyclopedia Britannica, 2002. Web. 8 May 2002. <<http://search.eb.com/>>.

"Chicago, Illinois." Map. *Google Maps*. Google, 20 May 2009. Web. 20 May 2009.

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

“How can I be honorable about using information I have collected for assignments?”

All of us have a responsibility to give credit to a source of information when we use it. If you don't give credit to the source (whether it is an individual or a group of people), you are presenting the information as if you created it.

This is a form of academic dishonesty with a special name—**PLAGIARISM**.

There are two types of plagiarism:

- accidental
- deliberate

**Accidental plagiarism** is often the result of sloppy work like forgetting to put quotation marks around a quote, forgetting to give credit to a source, not quoting something accurately, or giving credit to the wrong source.

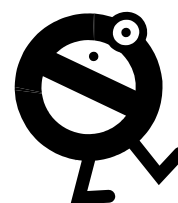
**Deliberate plagiarism** means that a person has the intention of being dishonest by buying an assignment online, copying work from another student, turning in someone else's work as his/her own, or cutting-and-pasting other people's ideas and pretending they are original.

*Be sure you understand how to give credit for information before you turn in an assignment.*

- Learn how to **paraphrase**
- Learn how to **direct quote**
- Learn how to **summarize**
- Learn how to **cite sources**

## Remember

If you copy other people's work, you are stealing. When you don't do your own work, you don't learn much, and the farther you get along in school, the harder it will get.





## MSA Reading - BCR Rubric

### Score 3

**The response demonstrates an understanding of the complexities of the text.**

- Addresses the demands of the question
- Effectively uses text-relevant<sup>1</sup> information to clarify or extend understanding

### Score 2

**The response demonstrates a general understanding of the text.**

- Partially addresses the demands of the question
- Uses text-relevant<sup>1</sup> information to show understanding

### Score 1

**The response demonstrates a minimal understanding of the text.**

- Minimally addresses the demands of the question
- Uses minimal information to show some understanding of the text in relation to the question

### Score 0

**The response is completely incorrect, irrelevant to the question, or missing.<sup>2</sup>**

Notes:

1

**Text-relevant:** This information may or may not be an exact copy (quote) of the text but is clearly related to the text and often shows an analysis and/or interpretation of important ideas. Students may incorporate information to show connections to relevant prior experience as appropriate.

2

An exact copy (quote) or paraphrase of the question that provides no new relevant information will receive a score of "0."



## MSA Mathematics Rubrics

### ECR Rubric

#### Score 3

**The response demonstrates a comprehensive understanding and analysis of a problem.**

- Application of a reasonable strategy in the context of the problem is indicated.
- Explanation<sup>1</sup> of and/or justification<sup>2</sup> for the mathematical process(es) used to solve a problem is clear, fully developed, and logical.
- Connections and/or extensions made within mathematics or outside of mathematics are clear and stated explicitly.
- Supportive information and/or numbers are provided as appropriate.<sup>3</sup>

#### Score 2

**The response demonstrates a general understanding and analysis of a problem.**

- Application of a reasonable strategy in the context of the problem is indicated.
- Explanation<sup>1</sup> of and/or justification<sup>2</sup> for the mathematical process(es) used to solve a problem is feasible, but may be only partially developed.
- Connections and/or extensions made within mathematics or outside of mathematics are partial or overly general, or may be implied.
- Supportive information and/or numbers are provided as appropriate.<sup>3</sup>

#### Score 1

**The response demonstrates a minimal understanding and analysis of a problem.**

- Partial application of a strategy in the context of the problem is indicated.
- Explanation<sup>1</sup> of and/or justification<sup>2</sup> for the mathematical process(es) used to solve a problem is logically flawed or missing.
- Connections and/or extensions made within mathematics or outside of mathematics are flawed or missing.
- Supportive information and/or numbers may or may not be provided as appropriate.<sup>3</sup>

#### Score 0

**The response is completely incorrect, irrelevant to the problem, or missing.<sup>4</sup>**

Notes:

<sup>1</sup>

**Explanation** refers to students' ability to communicate **how** they arrived at the solution for an item using the language of mathematics.

2

**Justification** refers to students' ability to support the reasoning used to solve a problem, or to demonstrate **why** the solution is correct using mathematical concepts and principles.

3

Students need to complete rubric criteria for *explanation, justification, connections* and/or *extensions* as cued for in a given problem.

4

Merely an exact copy or paraphrase of the problem will receive a score of "0."

## BCR Rubric

### Score 2

**The response demonstrates a complete understanding and analysis of a problem.**

- Application of a reasonable strategy in the context of the problem is indicated.
- Explanation<sup>1</sup> of and/or justification<sup>2</sup> for the mathematical process(es) used to solve a problem is clear, developed, and logical.
- Connections and/or extensions made within mathematics or outside of mathematics are clear.
- Supportive information and/or numbers are provided as appropriate.<sup>3</sup>

### Score 1

**The response demonstrates a minimal understanding and analysis of a problem.**

- Partial application of a strategy in the context of the problem is indicated.
- Explanation<sup>1</sup> of and/or justification<sup>2</sup> for the mathematical process(es) used to solve a problem is partially developed, logically flawed, or missing.
- Connections and/or extensions made within mathematics or outside of mathematics are partial or overly general, or flawed.
- Supportive information and/or numbers may or may not be provided as appropriate.<sup>3</sup>

### Score 0

**The response is completely incorrect, irrelevant to the problem, or missing.<sup>4</sup>**

Notes:

1

**Explanation** refers to students' ability to communicate **how** they arrived at the solution for an item using the language of mathematics.

2

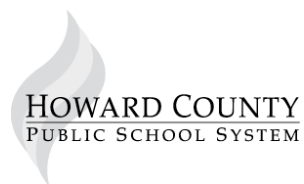
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Students need to complete rubric criteria for *explanation, justification, connections* and/or *extensions* as cued for in a given problem.

4

Merely an exact copy or paraphrase of the problem will receive a score of "0."



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