

OUTLINE & RESEARCH PAPER GUIDELINES

OUTLINE

1. **DUE:** In class, 4th week Monday, 1/26
2. **SUGGESTED LENGTH:** 2-3 pages, typed, double-spaced, 12 font, 1" margins.
3. **GRADE:** 5 Points for the outline, 15 points for the actual paper, 5 points for the oral presentation.
4. **OUTLINE MUST INCLUDE:**
 - A. Working Title of paper (should reflect thesis).
 - B. Specific thesis statement constructed to argue a point of view.
 - C. Full sentence outline of paper (**at least** 3 major points of argument or "main heads" with appropriate sub-headings). These major points and sub-headings will become your paragraph topic sentences and will then be supported by examples.
 - D. Concluding point of view.
 - E. Working Bibliography (at least 5 sources, including at least one journal article). A reminder on proper bibliographic format according to MLA style:

SAMPLE BOOK:

Mackerras, Colin, ed. Chinese Theater: From Its Origins to the Present Day. Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1983.

SAMPLE ARTICLE (how do you like this choice for professorial pomposity?)

Menta, Ed. "Beckett in a Noh Light: An Analysis of Selected Plays of Samuel Beckett Using Critical Principles of the Japanese Noh Theatre." Theatre Studies 35 (1990): 50-63.

Note spacing, punctuation, underlining, etc. For examples of citations for anthologies, Internet articles, CDs, etc., see MLA Guide to Research Papers.

5. **OUTLINE FORMAT EXAMPLE:** The following is the beginnings of an outline from an Asian Theatre research paper. There is also an Illusionism sample research paper on Closed Reserve (which I strongly suggest you read).

- TITLE: "Grotowski and the Japanese Noh: A Study in the Transformation of the Holy Actor" *
- THESIS: Both Jerzy Grotowski and the Noh, though separated by language, time, and culture, through their teachings aspire to free the actor to reach a higher level of human consciousness.
- I. The "holy actor" is defined as a union of body, mind, and spirit.
 - A. (Use quotations from both Zeami and Grotowski.)
 - II. The isolation of the single actor is significant in both forms.
 - A. Physical Training of actors is important in both traditions.
 - B. The holy actor must understand the philosophy behind the craft.

And so on.

- I'm indebted to Hillary K. Byrn, (K '94) author of this excellent research paper.

RESEARCH PAPER GUIDELINES

SUGGESTED LENGTH: at least 10 pages, excluding pages for works cited, typed, double-spaced.

DUE: no later than 5th Week Friday, Feb. 6 by 5pm. in my office. Late papers will be graded down 1 point a day (including the evening of Friday, Feb. 6 and each day of the ensuing weekend).

SOURCES: No fewer than 5, including at least one journal.

CONTENT: By now, topics should have been cleared with me, and thesis statements/outlining of subject matter should have been accomplished on the outline. Check with me if you're uncertain about this. **Make sure you have a strong thesis statement.** You have a point to prove or an argument to make which should be carried out through every paragraph topic sentence. Your research paper should not be simply a biographical or an encyclopedic or descriptive approach. Even if it is a description of a particular historical event or style, make sure you analyze the larger significance of the event or style in the context of Western Theatre. Analyze, don't just describe!

GRADE: 15 points or 15% of final grade for course (Grade will reflect form as well as content.)

FORM: Unlike the informal response papers and quizzes, your grade will reflect form (proper sentence structure, punctuation, word choices, spelling/typos, etc.) as well as content. Use MLA format for the paper. (If you need to, check the MLA Handbook for Research Papers- Call # LB 2369.G53 1988. There are copies on Closed Reserve, at the Reference Desk, and in the Reference Stacks.) Underline all play titles: Mandragola. Cite sources parenthetically: (Rudlin 241). Direct quotations from sources should, of course, be in quotation marks, **but you must also cite sources for ideas that are not your own.** You need not cite class discussion as a source. A separate title page is unnecessary. Duplicate title page format of this handout (1 in the upper right hand corner) and paginate ensuing pages with your last name and page number in the upper right corner (such as Menta 2). Use a paper clip rather than a staple! Also other side for examples of correct MLA bibliographic form.

ASSISTANCE: During 4th Week, I will meet with each student for a conference with my suggestions re: your outline and "plan of your paper." Please read over my comments **before** our appointment. If you seem to be stuck and can't or choose not to contact me, visit the ARC. If you want to submit a draft or a portion of the actual paper early, I would be happy (thrilled actually) to give feedback. I must have at least 48 hrs. turn-around time.

FINAL WORD: Write and **re-write** thoughtfully. Don't settle for dashing this off in one marathon sitting. Please proof your paper carefully for structure, clarity, spelling, typos, etc. After spending 6 weeks with this assignment, please make sure your final product is more than a rough draft!

TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR WORK!

CRITERIA: Grading Rubric for Research Papers

An "F" paper has several of the following characteristics:

- you didn't do it
- you submitted it so late you can't earn credit

A "D" paper has several of the following characteristics:

- unclear or non-existent thesis
- very poor organization, e.g., unclear paragraph topic sentences
- serious problems in sentence structure or grammar making clarity an issue
- many repeated mechanical errors (spelling, typos, etc)
- ignoring or not completing directions of assignment
- very little critical analysis or ideas, e.g., mostly description
- no use of supporting evidence from text
- no transitions
- not much research beyond required books for class

A "C" paper has several of the following characteristics:

- underdeveloped ideas
- some mechanical errors (spelling, typos, etc.)
- some problems in sentence structure or grammar
- too-general or "surface" exploration of topic
- encyclopedic or "just the facts" approach
- too-general thesis
- too-general or weak topic sentences
- too-general or uninteresting intro and conclusion
- inappropriate or uninteresting word choices
- minimal use of examples
- weak transitions
- minimal research of sources

A "B" paper has several of the following characteristics:

- good, but not absolutely thorough development of ideas
- a few mechanical errors
- minor sentence structure or grammar problems
- no clarity problems
- solid, clear thesis supported by rest of paper
- a solid argument is poised; the paper is more than just descriptive facts
- no major organizational problems
- consistent argument with solid use of evidence/examples
- solid intro and conclusion
- mostly smooth transitions, perhaps some abrupt transitions
- good use of examples

An "A" paper has the following characteristics:

- one or two mechanical errors maximum
- no serious grammar or sentence structure problems
- no clarity problems, expression of ideas is accurate and lucid
- serious exploration of topic that goes beyond too-general ideas and safe territory; instead, recombining ideas in a way that makes surprising and fresh connections
- excellent research, goes way beyond the 5 required sources
- interesting and provocative thesis. All points in essay elaborate this thesis
- smooth transitions from paragraph to paragraph and within paragraphs
- consistent argument with often easily overlooked examples or perhaps points not made in class or our class readings
- excellent use of more than 5 sources
- original ideas based upon the facts of secondary sources
- an attention grabbing intro that leads to the thesis and a conclusion that poses a new way of looking at the material