

English Composition II

English Composition II

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PART I
ASSESSMENTS

I. Essay Prompts

Module 1:

Response Essay

-Read variety of texts (fiction & nonfiction), summarize, and identify commonalities

Module 2:

Synthesis Essay

-Students will generate topics based on the literature read in Module 1 & find sources/articles that relate to a topic they are interested in.

Module 3:

Group Annotated Bibliography

-Based on related topics from Module 2, students will form groups to conduct more research via Internet & library databases to create an annotated bibliography.

Module 4:

Argument Essay (Rogerian or Classical)

-Students will write individual paper using sources found during the research for Module

PART II

INTRODUCTION: LET'S
READ, SUMMARIZE, &
RESPOND! (FICTION)

2.

“Two Ways of Seeing A River” by Mark Twain

The face of the water, in time, became a wonderful book—a book that was a dead language to the uneducated passenger, but which told its mind to me without reserve, delivering its most cherished secrets as clearly as if it uttered them with a voice. And it was not a book to be read once and thrown aside, for it had a new story to tell every day. Throughout the long twelve hundred miles there was never a page that was void of interest, never one that you could leave unread without loss, never one that you would want to skip, thinking you could find higher enjoyment in some other thing. There never was so wonderful a book written by man; never one whose interest was so absorbing, so unflagging, so sparkingly renewed with every reperusal. The passenger who could not read it was charmed with a peculiar sort of faint dimple on its surface (on the rare occasions when he did not overlook it altogether); but to the pilot that was an *italicized* passage; indeed, it was more than that, it was a legend of the largest capitals, with a string of shouting exclamation points at the end of it; for it meant that a wreck or a rock was buried there that could tear the life out of the strongest vessel that ever floated. It is the faintest and simplest expression the water ever makes, and the most hideous to a pilot's eye. In truth, the passenger who could not read this book saw nothing but all manner of pretty pictures in it painted by the sun and shaded by the clouds, whereas to the trained eye these were not pictures at all, but the grimmest and most dead-earnest of reading-matter.

Now when I had mastered the language of this water and had come to know every trifling feature that bordered the great river as familiarly as I knew the letters of the alphabet, I had made a valuable acquisition. But I had lost something, too. I had lost something which could never be restored to me while I lived. All the grace, the beauty, the poetry had gone out of the majestic river! I still keep in mind a certain wonderful sunset which I witnessed when steamboating was new to me. A broad expanse of the river was turned to blood; in the middle distance the red hue brightened into gold, through which a solitary log came floating, black and

conspicuous; in one place a long, slanting mark lay sparkling upon the water; in another the surface was broken by boiling, tumbling rings, that were as many-tinted as an opal; where the ruddy flush was faintest, was a smooth spot that was covered with graceful circles and radiating lines, ever so delicately traced; the shore on our left was densely wooded, and the somber shadow that fell from this forest was broken in one place by a long, ruffled trail that shone like silver; and high above the forest wall a clean-stemmed dead tree waved a single leafy bough that glowed like a flame in the unobstructed splendor that was flowing from the sun. There were graceful curves, reflected images, woody heights, soft distances; and over the whole scene, far and near, the dissolving lights drifted steadily, enriching it, every passing moment, with new marvels of coloring.

I stood like one bewitched. I drank it in, in a speechless rapture. The world was new to me, and I had never seen anything like this at home. But as I have said, a day came when I began to cease from noting the glories and the charms which the moon and the sun and the twilight wrought upon the river's face; another day came when I ceased altogether to note them. Then, if that sunset scene had been repeated, I should have looked upon it without rapture, and should have commented upon it, inwardly, after this fashion: This sun means that we are going to have wind to-morrow; that floating log means that the river is rising, small thanks to it; that slanting mark on the water refers to a bluff reef which is going to kill somebody's steamboat one of these nights, if it keeps on stretching out like that; those tumbling 'boils' show a dissolving bar and a changing channel there; the lines and circles in the slick water over yonder are a warning that that troublesome place is shoaling up dangerously; that silver streak in the shadow of the forest is the 'break' from a new snag, and he has located himself in the very best place he could have found to fish for steamboats; that tall dead tree, with a single living branch, is not going to last long, and then how is a body ever going to get through this blind place at night without the friendly old landmark.

No, the romance and the beauty were all gone from the river. All the value any feature of it had for me now was the amount of usefulness it could furnish toward compassing the safe piloting of a steamboat. Since those days, I have pitied doctors from my heart. What does the lovely flush in a beauty's cheek mean to a doctor but a 'break' that ripples above some deadly disease. Are not all her visible charms sown thick with what are to him the signs and symbols of hidden decay? Does he ever see her beauty at all, or doesn't he simply view her professionally, and comment upon her unwholesome condition all to himself? And doesn't he sometimes wonder whether he has gained most or lost most by learning his trade?

3. Demanding Equal Rights

This essay focuses on formal and informal efforts by various American Latino groups in the 19th and 20th centuries for full political and civic inclusion as citizens of the United States, including the development of Latino political activist groups, the struggle for civil rights, and the fight for full electoral rights for all citizens.

Over the past century and a half, diverse Latino communities have mobilized to demand civic and political inclusion, a process that has also facilitated the formation of a pan-ethnic political identity. Although there have been continuous gains, the quest for full and equal inclusion remains. The fact that the Latino population continues to grow in numbers and needs, and that this growth is often seen as a challenge to the majority population, ensures that Latinos will remain politically engaged in the pursuit of a full political voice in the upcoming decades.

Contemporary Latino politics is founded on generations of prior struggles for inclusion. These struggles have been organized around a consistent set of demands – ones that make the ongoing Latino struggle for civic and political inclusion a very American one – for equal protection of the law and the ability to participate equally in American society regardless of race or ethnicity. At the same time, like other racial/ethnic communities who are largely built on immigration, Latinos, particularly Latino immigrants, have sought to maintain transnational ties to their communities and countries of origin. This ongoing transnationalism among some immigrants has not diminished Latino efforts for inclusion in United States politics. Rather, transnational engagement often provides skills and networks that add to the resources for demanding inclusion in the U.S.

In the current essay, I will mostly focus on Mexican Americans and Mexican American organizations, particularly in the discussion of the historical roots of Latino struggles for inclusion. Mexican Americans were present in both larger numbers and higher concentrations than other Latino communities earlier in U.S. history. The pool of issues set by these early Mexican American

organizations served, in part, as the foundation for pan-ethnic Latino organizing in the 1960s and beyond.

I will also focus primarily on collective efforts for inclusion; it is this collective demand and voice *as Latinos* that defines the Latino politics discussed in this essay. Prior to the contemporary era, collective efforts primarily took the form of community-based, civic, and trade union organizing. In the current era (the period after the civil rights revolution of the 1960s), electoral politics and voting added to the palette of collective political activities. This focus on collective activities is not to minimize the role of key individuals. Instead, it emerges from the recognition that the story of Latino political inclusion stems from diverse efforts across the country and across Latino national origin groups to build a collective and inclusive political voice that could be sustained (and expanded) over time.

Colonial and Immigrant Roots of Latino Demands for Political Inclusion

Latino collective organizing to achieve a civic and political voice is a largely 20th and 21st-century phenomenon. While the Latino presence in the U.S. pre-dates these 20th-century accomplishments, prior to the current era, Latino communities lacked the group resources, leadership, and organizations to demand equal rights in U.S. society. Consequently, demands were primarily individual rather than collective. Why was this the case? The story varies somewhat by region, but the primary answer is found in the form of colonial incorporation of early U.S. Latino populations.¹ In the Southwest, for instance, the former Mexican

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subjects who became U.S. citizens at the end of the U.S.-Mexican War had few resources that could be used for political organization.³ Population concentration was low and most of the residents of the Southwest lived in a state of agricultural peonage. In the years just after the end of the U.S.-Mexican War, the former Mexican elite of landholders and civil servants could have served as an ethnic leadership. To some extent, this now Mexican American elite did share in the political leadership of the new states and territories of the U.S. Southwest, but their numbers were small. In addition, conflict quickly emerged throughout the Southwest between the former Mexican subjects and Anglo populations, many of whom were new migrants after the end of the war and who viewed the Mexican American population as racially subordinate.⁵

Consequently, in the years that followed the end of the U.S.-Mexican War, the economic and social status of much of these pre-conquest elite severely declined. Many lost their lands; others intermarried with Anglo migrants leading to the loss of ethnic identity within a generation or two. By 1900, there were few Mexican American leaders outside of the territory of New Mexico and the Mexican American community was almost entirely made up of agricultural workers and urban laborers. Neither had the resources to organize collectively nor to make more than sporadic political demands.⁷

New Mexico proves an exception to this pattern of declining political influence of pre-war elites and their children. European-

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descended whites did not migrate to the territory of New Mexico in the same numbers they did to other parts of the Southwest. As a result, the Hispano population of the territory continued to dominate state politics into the 20th century. The presence of the Hispano state leaders and their insistence on maintaining New Mexico's bilingualism, however, slowed the admission of New Mexico (and Arizona) as states.

The addition of Puerto Rico to the U.S. in 1898 did not lead to a beheading of the pre-existing elite comparable to the Mexican American experience in the Southwest.⁹ Upon the U.S. invasion of the island, Puerto Ricans lobbied for a wide range of political demands, including U.S. citizenship, admission to the union, self-government, and to a lesser extent, independence. The Jones Act of 1917, which granted a limited form of U.S. citizenship to residents of Puerto Rico, and Public Law 600, which led to limited self-government in 1952, met some of these demands. These struggles, however, did not result in the full incorporation of Puerto Ricans into the U.S. They were largely fought from Puerto Rico during this period and involved few Latinos in the U.S.

Despite the fact that there was little *collective* action to demand civic inclusion in Mexican American and Puerto Rican communities in the late 19th century, there were efforts by individuals to highlight inequalities and obstacles. Mexican Americans in the Southwest, for instance, used the federal and state courts to assert their citizenship rights. Issues before the courts included the right of Mexican immigrants to naturalize (*In re Ricardo Rodríguez* [1897]), to hold public office (*People v. de la Guerra* [1870]), and to serve on juries or to be tried by juries that included Mexican Americans (*George Carter v. Territory of New Mexico* [1859]). The courts were also the locus of Mexican American demands for the enforcement of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo's protections of the property rights

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of Mexican Americans who had owned land in the Southwest before the U.S.-Mexican War.

During this period, local political machines also courted Latino voters. This form of organization existed in New Mexico and South Texas; the New York Democratic machine intermittently sought the votes of Puerto Ricans in some elections and excluded them in others as late as the 1950s. For the most part, however, these machines engaged Latino communities to serve the ends of the political parties and Latinos had little influence on the people their votes elected. In the early period of Mexican American presence in the Southwest, some unions organized Latino workers, particularly the mining unions and the anarchists. This union outreach was the exception rather than the rule, however, and did not add to the community's public leadership. Because of their concentration and the relatively lower share of whites, Mexican Americans in New Mexico (*Hispanos*) had more collective voice in this period than did Mexican Americans in other states. Several of the territorial governors were Hispano as were many members of New Mexico's 1910 Constitutional Convention (which preceded New Mexico's 1912 statehood).

Organized Latino Voices for Civic Inclusion in the Early 20th Century: Initial Steps

At the turn of the 20th century, Latinos started to organize more broadly to meet their collective needs, including the creation of insurance pools to meet end-of-life financial needs, but these efforts were largely apolitical. Early Latino civic organizing took on a more explicitly political dimension in the late 1920s and 1930s. This era saw the formation of the first regional Mexican American civic organizations as well as labor organizing that included the first "national" Latino political movement. It was these efforts that laid the foundation for post-World War II civic and political gains. The

two organizations that formed in this era, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and *El Congreso de Pueblos que Hablan Español* The Congress of Spanish-Speaking Peoples also referred to as El Congreso, represented different segments of the Latino community, but they shared a vision for a nation in which Latino voices were not muted by discrimination and exclusion.

LULAC was established in 1929.¹¹ Its founders included the small Mexican American middle class – largely small business owners – that had emerged over the previous 20 years in small towns in Texas. The goals of the organization were both revolutionary and assimilationist. Their leadership sought to challenge and reverse the discrimination that had characterized the treatment of Mexican Americans in the Southwest since 1848. They used the tools available to them as U.S. citizens, particularly the courts, to challenge the largely unquestioned position of whites and the long-dominant policy of anti-Mexican discrimination. Their core claim was equal protection as U.S. citizens under the law.

LULAC members did distinguish themselves, however, from recent immigrants of Mexican ancestry by limiting membership to U.S. citizens and conducting meetings in English. The organization offered assistance to Mexican immigrants seeking to naturalize, but did not believe there was a political or civic equality between non-naturalized immigrants and U.S. citizens. In the 1930s, LULAC conducted voter registration drives, encouraged members to support candidates who spoke to Mexican American concerns, organized to end the poll tax, and used the courts to challenge discrimination, particularly educational discrimination. Soon after its formation, LULAC sought to organize Mexican American women. In the early 1930s, several chapters formed Ladies' Auxiliaries. In 1938, the LULAC President established the position of National

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Organizer for Women, which was later changed to the National Vice President of the organization.

Despite their somewhat narrow focus and the middle-class status of the early members, LULAC chapters quickly emerged throughout the Southwest making it the first regional Latino organization. Moreover, LULAC's leaders developed a political alliance with Lyndon Johnson who was beginning his national rise in this period.¹³ This alliance represented the first steps in building a Latino voice in national politics.

A decade after the formation of LULAC, Southern California union activists Luisa Moreno, Josefina Fierro de Bright, and Eduardo Quevedo established El Congreso.¹⁵ It too represented a necessary step in the Latino demand for civic and political inclusion. Its membership was more urban, more working-class, and arguably more Latino in that it included more non-Mexicans than LULAC. It also offered a new model for Latinos of tactical alliances with other excluded groups in U.S. society. El Congreso also recognized women as organizers and leaders in a more central way than LULAC.¹⁷ In addition, El Congreso was more short-lived. Yet, its membership and the issues that it articulated were closer to the majority of Latinos in the 1940s and beyond. Its rhetoric was more activist than that of LULAC, in large part based on its roots in the labor movement and labor's internationalism and ties to labor movements abroad in this era. The issues that it focused on – particularly the equal treatment of immigrants and citizens before the law – were ones that would have long-term resonance for Latino activism and

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that anticipated long-term changes in non-Latino attitudes in the post-war period.

At its core, however, El Congreso shared LULAC's demand for the end to anti-Latino discrimination and the elimination of barriers that denied Latinos an equal voice in U.S. society. El Congreso's vision extended to the elimination of barriers that limited civic, political, and economic opportunities for non-U.S. citizens. In addition, neither LULAC nor El Congreso was a mass organization. For most Latinos in the pre-civil rights era, the barriers that had long characterized the opportunities for Latino civic and political voice remained. Yet both organizations laid the foundation for the flowering of Latino demand making that would follow. They demonstrated that despite generations of discrimination, Latinos not only wanted a political voice, but also had the resources within the community to translate these demands into successful organization.

Latino Civic and Political Organizing in the Civil Rights Era

The 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s saw a rapid expansion in Latino demand making and the formation of diverse paths to political organizing. It also saw the foundation of Latino electoral influence. As was the case in the African American community and its civil rights movement in part of this period, leadership emerged from new segments of the population, including returning World War II and Korean War veterans and college educated young adults.¹⁹ Contesting social inequality and continuing the fight

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against discrimination became central to the nascent Latino political identity of this era. Many of the organizations that formed in this period adopted a more confrontational rhetoric than had LULAC or El Congreso. These movements were not just united by their styles. Each was motivated by a rejection of unequal treatment based on race/ethnicity. In each case, anger over state-sanctioned discrimination and denial of rights was at the core of their mobilization efforts. As will be evident, these movements appeared in all parts of the country with concentrated Latino populations. Although they did not form a national Latino movement as we understand it today, their recognition of the shared experiences of Latinos nationwide laid the foundation for the pan-ethnic Latino politics that emerged in the post-civil rights era.

Early post-World War II activism transitioned Latino politics from civic organizing to electoral mobilization. Anger over the failure of Latino candidates to be elected to local offices in California and Texas led to the formation of community organizations focused on candidate recruitment, voter registration, and voter mobilization.²¹ The result was a series of electoral “firsts” in which Latinos were elected to a specific office for the first time.

Latino youth, primarily U.S.-born young people, were among the most active. Their activism reflected Latino-specific concerns over discrimination and disparate outcomes, but also the anger of young adults in general in this era over the war in Vietnam.²³ Resentment over discriminatory public education spurred a series of walkouts (blowouts in the rhetoric of the era) in Los Angeles high schools. These spontaneous movements coalesced in organizing to reform the delivery of education and in anti-war mobilization under the

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auspices of the Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO).²⁵ Similar efforts appeared in other areas of Latino concentration in the Southwest. The Crusade for Justice, formed in Denver, focused its energies on youth more broadly including young adults in schools and in (and out of) the workplace.²⁷ At its 1969 conference, the *Plan Espiritual de Aztlán* was presented publicly for the first time. The Plan is the founding document of the *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicanos de Aztlán* (MEChA) and called for Chicano self-determination and ethnic pride. MEChA is the only national Latino student organization on college and university campuses during this period still active today.

Young adults also led new movements to challenge white-dominated political institutions. They sought election to local offices in rural Texas, demonstrated that Mexican Americans could be mobilized, and use their numbers to challenge electoral discrimination.²⁹ These local efforts in the 1960s (and the national attention they drew) led to the formation of a regional Mexican American political party – *La Raza Unida* – that convened a national convention in 1972 and ran candidates for local and state offices throughout the Southwest.³¹ Arguably, the presence of a *Raza Unida* candidate on the ballot reduced the Democratic vote sufficiently to elect the first Republican governor of Texas since the

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Civil War. Raza Unida candidates won local and a few state offices in this period.

Young Latino adults also mobilized in Puerto Rican communities, which had grown dramatically after World War II.³³ Because of the Jones Act, which provided U.S. citizenship to Puerto Ricans, and the increased demand of cheap labor after the war, hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans made their way to New York, New Jersey, Philadelphia, and Chicago, and other cities. Puerto Rican migrants who seized this opportunity tended to be unskilled laborers and, later, rural migrants pushed off the land as Puerto Rican agriculture industrialized. Like the Mexican residents of the Southwest in the years after the U.S.-Mexican War, early 20th-century Puerto Rican migrants had few economic resources and were the targets of racial and ethnic discrimination.

Perhaps the most prominent of Puerto Rican youth groups of this era was the New York-based Young Lords, which had a different emphasis than the social movement organizations in the Southwest. Puerto Rico's colonial status ensured stronger ties to the homeland than existed among most Mexican Americans in this era. As a result, The Young Lords organized around a two-prong strategy. In New York and Chicago, they challenged discriminatory practices that denied Puerto Ricans the protections of their U.S. citizenship focusing on education, public health, public safety, and representation. They also sought, ultimately less successfully, to build a new independence movement on the island and build bridges between Puerto Ricans on the Island and the mainland.³⁵

Civil rights era activism did not just appear among young adult Latinos. In New Mexico, the *Alianza de Pueblos y Pobladores* (The

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Alliance of Towns and Settlers) confronted federal and state authorities to enforce land claims by the descendants of Mexican residents of the state that had been largely neglected for the century since the ratification of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.³⁷ Activists seized the ethos of the era to reinvigorate these claims using new and much more confrontational strategies, including the occupation of a federal courthouse. The United Farmworkers made the cause of California's primarily Latino agricultural labor force into a national issue and introduced non-Latinos in many parts of the country to the second-class status routinely experienced by many Latinos.³⁹ Combating high dropout rates in Puerto Rican communities was the focus of ASPIRA, formed by Antonia Pantoja and a group of Puerto Rican educators in 1961.⁴¹ ASPIRA leaders recognized that the only way for Puerto Ricans (and, later, all Latinos) to achieve their leadership potential was to ensure educational opportunities.

The frequently confrontational style of these newly emerging organizations in this era – and their new generation of leaders – should not obscure the core of their demands. They sought full inclusion in U.S. society as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and saw, as the primary strategy to achieve that goal, the opportunity to elect the candidate of their choice to office. Although their rhetoric sometimes focused on the distinct experiences of Latinos and separateness, their demands and goals focused on the equal ability to compete in the civic and political world. In this, their pluralist

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demands were similar to those of other excluded groups in U.S. society seeking an equal voice.

The new opportunities for Latino civic organizing in the civil rights era were also not limited to challenging existing political structures from the outside. This era also saw the foundation of Latino voices within the major political parties and social institutions as well as the formation of Latino-led institutions to research, document, and articulate the Latino condition.

It was in this era that the “Latino vote” entered the rhetoric of the national parties and some elected leaders (it would be the 1980s before discussion of it became more common). John F. Kennedy relied on Mexican American votes in Texas to win the presidency in 1960; he earned these votes and probably increased the size of the Mexican American vote by running a well-financed campaign targeting Mexican Americans.⁴³ Richard Nixon made the first Republican claims on Latino votes nationally. He made some half-hearted efforts to reach out to Mexican Americans while his re-election campaign secretly funded La Raza Unida in an effort to reduce the Democratic vote. The Nixon campaign, and Republicans in general, were much more successful at winning support from Cuban Americans based in part on their strong opposition to Fidel Castro’s regime in Cuba.⁴⁵ Each of the parties and many state parties established Latino outreach offices in this era.

Building on the organizational efforts of community-based voter mobilization efforts, Latinos began to elect co-ethnics to office, including national offices, in this period. Members of Congress elected in this era – Henry B. Gonzalez (TX), Edward Roybal (CA), Kika de la Garza (TX), Herman Badillo (NY), Manuel Lujan (NM),

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and Baltasar Corrada del Río (Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico) – ensured a Latino presence in Washington and in national policy making that didn't exist before. These Latino Representatives institutionalized their presence with the formation of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus in 1976.

Latinos also built their first national advocacy institutions in the civil rights era. Most prominent among these was the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) (formed as the Southwest Conference of La Raza). This alliance of Latino community-based organizations nationally had a twin mission. First, it provided capacity building to ensure that local Latino organizations could grow and expand service provision at the local level. Second, it sought to amalgamate the needs and issues identified by these member organizations into a regional and, ultimately, national Latino agenda that would serve as the foundation for Latino advocacy at the state and national levels. This organizational Latino voice provided an external resource for Latinos and non-Latino officeholders seeking to serve Latino needs. NCLR's advocacy targeted the legislatures and executive branch agencies.⁴⁷

The Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) formed in this same period and with some of the same philanthropic supporters as NCLR targeted its energies on the courts. MALDEF and the Puerto Rican Legal Defense Fund (PRLDEF), founded four years later, ensured Latino communities would have the institutional talent to challenge discriminatory laws and practices. MALDEF's scope was broad, but it focused much of its energy on discrimination in schools, in public and private employment, in contracting, in the delivery of government services, in housing, and in employment as well as in voting rights and

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districting.⁴⁹ MALDEF's litigation on voting rights and districting ensured that Latinos could exercise their right to vote and that their votes would routinely have the opportunity to elect the candidate who received the most Latino votes. Over time, MALDEF has increasingly litigated on the rights of immigrants (a theme I return to later). ASPIRA also litigated a series of cases to ensure Puerto Rican and Latino educational access.

NCLR was by no means the only national Latino civil rights organization that formed in this era, although it probably had the broadest scope. The growing pool of Latino officeholders established the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO). Activists in Texas who had become dissatisfied with some of the rhetoric of Raza Unida formed the Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project to challenge barriers to Latino registration and voting and to register Latinos to vote, initially with a focus on urban areas where the largest concentrations of Latinos resided.⁵¹ Latino business owners created the National Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Although it often took more conservative positions on economic issues than other Latino civil rights organizations, it too challenged discrimination and barriers to the equal participation of Latinos in U.S. society. MANA, a National Latina Organization to empower Latinas through leadership development and advocacy was formed in 1974.⁵³ LULAC and the G.I. Forum, which formed after World War II to fight discrimination experienced by returning Mexican American troops, continued to serve as voices for Latinos in this era

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and became more national in scope. They focused their resources on battling educational discrimination and litigated a number of important court cases.⁵⁵

The national civil rights organizations that were founded in this period were not exclusively pan-Latino. Some organizations, formed initially to serve Mexican American communities such as NCLR or MALDEF, quickly expanded their focus to civil rights of all Latinos. Local organizations were more likely to focus primarily on the policy concerns of specific national origin groups. In the case of Puerto Rican and Cuban American communities, these community-level concerns included homeland issues as well, such as the status of Puerto Rico for Puerto Ricans or the vicissitudes of U.S.-Cuban relations for Cuban Americans.

The national Latino civil rights organizations that formed in this period reflected a new position of Latinos in U.S. society that would not have been possible had the more activist organizations not challenged local and state power structures that had denied Latinos equal protection of the laws. The national organizations were more explicitly pluralist in their rhetoric and operations, but they and the more activist organizations shared a vision of Latino empowerment by challenging barriers and expanding the Latino electoral and economic voice. Occasional activist rhetoric aside, the demands of the civil rights era focused on ensuring that the language of the 14th and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution became the practice as well as the law of the land. The new national organizations ensured a new and permanent institutional resource to articulate the demand for Latino civic and political inclusion.

The Continuing Struggle for Latino Civic Inclusion in the Contemporary United States

Despite the breakthroughs of the civil rights period, struggles for Latino inclusion continued in the post-civil rights era. These

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contemporary efforts are, in some significant ways, different from those that preceded the 1960s. The major legislative legacies of the civil rights era were federal commitments to enforce the 14th and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing equal protection of the laws and equal access to the ballot box. Civil rights and voting rights legislation created a new playing field for Latino demands for civic inclusion; the advocacy organizations that were established in the civil rights era and the steadily growing number of Latino elected and appointed officeholders ensured that Latino voices would be heard on issues of importance to the community.

The demography of the community also changed. Changes to national immigration law as well as higher than average birth rates ensured that the Latino population grew more rapidly than other groups. By 2012, Latinos numbered more than 50 million and made up more than 16 percent of the national population (compared to approximately 6 million in 1960 who made up over just 3 percent of the U.S. population). The composition of the Latino community also diversified. Dominican populations migrated in large numbers to New York and the Northeast. Salvadoran and Guatemalan migrants moved in large numbers to Southern California and Texas. Florida saw large migrations from throughout the Americas; New York became home to many Columbian, Peruvian, and Mexican migrants as well as smaller populations of migrants from throughout the Americas. The geography of Latino migration also changed with large numbers of Latinos migrating to the South and rural parts of the Midwest where Latinos had not resided in large numbers. This changing Latino demography created the potential for greater divisions in the Latino political agenda. Potential cleavages include nativity and immigrant generation, national origin, region of residence, income, and education. It also put Latino communities into contact and potential conflict with non-Hispanic white populations who had not previously encountered many Latinos in their daily lives.

The Latino fight for civic inclusion thus continues. The contemporary barriers merge long-standing discriminations with

newly emerging obstacles. Most important among these is the high share of non-U.S. citizens in the Latino population. Certainly, immigrants have always been more common in Latino than in white or black populations and non-naturalized immigrants have often faced exclusion from some forms of civic and political participation. What are new, however, are the high share of non-naturalized immigrants in the Latino (and Asian American) population and the growing share of immigrants made up of unauthorized immigrants who do not have a path to naturalization. It is, of course, difficult to present precise estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population. Yet, the best estimates suggest that of the approximately 11.5 million unauthorized immigrants resident in the U.S. in 2011, 8.9 million were Latino.⁵⁷ Whereas in the past, unauthorized migrants have been able to regularize their status over time, partisan polarization in Congress has prevented a compromise that would allow for a widespread legalization. This policy intransigence has spurred a new form of Latino civic activism among young adult undocumented migrants who migrated with their parents as young children. They have banded together as “Dreamers” tapping the nomenclature of the DREAM Act, which would offer a path to legal status to young adult unauthorized migrants who attended college or joined the U.S. military.

The future of Latino civic inclusion is not, however, just a story of ensuring that long-term unauthorized migrants are able to regularize their status (and eventually naturalize). Many long-term legal immigrants eligible for naturalization and interested in becoming U.S. citizens have not naturalized.⁵⁹ Again, there are no exact numbers, but the best estimates suggest that as many as five

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million Latino immigrants are eligible for naturalization, but have not naturalized. An additional 1.4 million will attain naturalization eligibility over the next five years (a population that will be continually replenished through new immigrants to permanent residence).⁶¹

The growth of both the legal permanent resident and unauthorized immigrant populations over the past 40 years has ensured that the share of the Latino population made up of non-naturalized immigrants grew as the number of immigrants increased in the 1970s and 1980s and will remain high for the foreseeable future. In 2008, for example, 37 percent of Latino adults were not U.S. citizens – and not eligible to vote – compared to 2 percent of non-Hispanic Whites and 6 percent of non-Hispanic blacks. In the era before high Latino migration, the immigration- and citizenship-related barriers to immigrant political voice were less absolute. Half the states allowed non-citizens to vote. The status of “unauthorized immigrant” didn’t exist until the early 20th century, when Congress began to define categories of potential immigrants who were ineligible to enter the U.S.⁶³ Increasingly, the fight for Latino civic inclusion unites immigrant and U.S. citizen Latinos in a shared agenda that seeks to protect the rights and opportunities of immigrants, regardless of status, while providing encouragement for naturalization-eligible immigrants to naturalize and vote.⁶⁵

The rapid growth in Latino migration in the contemporary era has created a new venue for political voice and activism. Immigrants

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have long sought the opportunity remain engaged in the civic life of their communities and countries of origin. Examples of these transnational connections can be found throughout the Latino experience in the U.S. (as well as those of other émigré populations). The long-standing immigrant desire to be involved in both the U.S. and the country of origin, however, is much easier to implement in the current era. Telecommunications and air travel are much cheaper than they have been in the past. The internet reduces communication costs further. Approximately 30 percent of Latino immigrants have engaged in the civic and political worlds of their communities and countries of origin, whether through membership in transnational organizations in the U.S. or through direct participation in the civic or political worlds of the country of origin. A higher share follow the politics of the country of origin.⁶⁷ These transnational connections diminish considerably in the second and later generations. Despite political transnationalism's roots in the long-standing immigrant desires to maintain a foot in the country of origin and the U.S., transnationalism as a mass phenomenon is relatively new. Countries of origin are seeking to promote long-term relationships with their émigrés.⁶⁹ To the extent that these efforts are successful, immigrant and perhaps second-generation transnational engagement will likely be a growing phenomenon in the future.

At the same time, the contemporary struggle for Latino civic and political inclusion is not simply a battle for immigrant rights.⁷¹ U.S. citizen Latinos continue to face barriers to participation, some of

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which pre-date civil rights era reforms. Voter registration requirements, for example, were originally implemented to dampen the political power of turn-of-the-twentieth-century European immigrants.⁷³ They were effective then and continue to have a disproportionate and negative impact on young, poor, and less educated adults in U.S. society. Latinos are more likely to have high shares of the population in each of these categories. The colonial legacy of Puerto Rico denies the vote to the nearly four million residents of the Island. Constitutional design features also limit Latino influence. Both the U.S. Senate and the Electoral College weight the political influence of small states over large states; Latinos are more likely to live in the large states. The legacy of past discrimination remains in legislative district designs, at-large election systems, weekday elections, and in individual biases among non-Latino voters against Latino candidates. Few Latinos are elected from non-Latino majority or plurality districts while many Latino plurality/majority districts elect non-Latino candidates.

New and arguably more subtle forms of discrimination have emerged in the post-civil rights era. At present, the most insidious of these is voter identification requirements that many states are imposing. Latinos otherwise eligible to vote are less likely to have the required forms of identification and, consequently, will be less likely to vote. Requirements such as these that require implementation in multiple sites also raise the specter of unequal application of the law, which will further dampen Latino voting.

The organizational infrastructure that emerged in the post-civil rights era continues to advocate, litigate, and organize to address these issues and to expand the Latino political voice. Latino representation at all levels of elective office has increased steadily

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over the past 30 years. It has also become more diverse.⁷⁵ Latinas make up a higher share of Latino officeholders than do white women of white officeholders. Latino officeholders increasingly also include Latinos who trace their ancestry to the countries of Latin America that began to send large numbers of migrants to the U.S. after 1960. Two Latinos serve in the U.S. Senate and twenty-four serve as voting members in the U.S. House of Representatives. Of the House members, seven are Latinas, which represents a higher share of women than for Congress as a whole. The “Latino vote” is now routinely sought in national and many state-level races. A new generation of Latino campaign professionals has emerged to ensure that any candidate who wants to seek Latino votes can reach Latino voters. The national Latino organizations have banded together since 1988 under the rubric of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda to articulate an agenda of the issues that unite Latino communities. Latino organizations also more continually offer support for Latinos seeking to naturalize. Voter registration efforts routinely expand prior to national elections. A particular target of these efforts is young adult Latinos. Voto Latino has been particularly effective at reaching young adults through popular culture. Latino community organizations and social service organizations have also expanded considerably in the post-civil rights era. Increasingly, Latino organizations and leaders are also able to use coalitional politics to achieve collective goals. These coalitions often include non-Latinos and non-Latino organizations around areas of common concern, such as immigrant rights with Asian American and Jewish organizations, civil rights and affirmative action with African American organizations, and pocketbook issues such as access to health care with unions and progressive Democrats. The size and growing political savvy of Latino communities ensures that these coalitions can be both effective at

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securing policy outcomes that benefit Latinos and providing the foundation for Latinos to develop leadership skills and seek elective office.

Conclusions

Despite changes in the structure of U.S. politics and the opportunities for Latino civic and political voice in the post-civil rights era, it is important to observe what has remained the same. The philosophy motivating mainstream Latino demands continues to be one of equal access to political rights and responsibilities. Latinos continue to need to challenge barriers to make their demands on political institutions. In 2006, in response to legislation passed in the U.S. House of Representatives making unauthorized immigrant status a crime, as many as five million people, most of whom were Latino, peacefully protested nationwide. The marchers included immigrant and native Latinos. The legacy of these marches included policy outcomes – criminalization was rejected by the Senate – and political gains. The rate of growth of the Latino electorate increased in 2008, at least in part in response to post-march drives to translate protest into votes. The Latino community was able to respond so quickly and, arguably, so effectively because institutions and organizations existed to channel anger and frustration into collective political voice. With growing numbers and increasingly sophisticated organization, Latinos continue to engage with old and new challenges, and in the process contribute to the renewing of democracy in the U.S.

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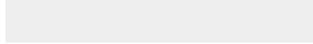
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4. A Doll's House

ACT I

[SCENE.—A room furnished comfortably and tastefully, but not extravagantly. At the back, a door to the right leads to the entrance-hall, another to the left leads to Helmer's study. Between the doors stands a piano. In the middle of the left-hand wall is a door, and beyond it a window. Near the window are a round table, arm-chairs and a small sofa. In the right-hand wall, at the farther end, another door; and on the same side, nearer the footlights, a stove, two easy chairs and a rocking-chair; between the stove and the door, a small table. Engravings on the walls; a cabinet with china and other small objects; a small book-case with well-bound books. The floors are carpeted, and a fire burns in the stove.]

It is winter. A bell rings in the hall; shortly afterwards the door is heard to open. Enter NORA, humming a tune and in high spirits. She is in outdoor dress and carries a number of parcels; these she lays on the table to the right. She leaves the outer door open after her, and through it is seen a PORTER who is carrying a Christmas Tree and a basket, which he gives to the MAID who has opened the door.]

Nora. Hide the Christmas Tree carefully, Helen. Be sure the children do not see it until this evening, when it is dressed. [To the PORTER, taking out her purse.] How much?

Porter. Sixpence.

Nora. There is a shilling. No, keep the change. [The PORTER thanks her, and goes out. NORA shuts the door. She is laughing to herself, as she takes off her hat and coat. She takes a packet of macaroons from her pocket and eats one or two; then goes cautiously to her husband's door and listens.] Yes, he is in. [Still humming, she goes to the table on the right.]

Helmer [calls out from his room]. Is that my little lark twittering out there?

Nora [busy opening some of the parcels]. Yes, it is!

Helmer. Is it my little squirrel bustling about?

Nora. Yes!

Helmer. When did my squirrel come home?

Nora. Just now. [Puts the bag of macaroons into her pocket and wipes her mouth.] Come in here, Torvald, and see what I have bought.

Helmer. Don't disturb me. [A little later, he opens the door and looks into the room, pen in hand.] Bought, did you say? All these things? Has my little spendthrift been wasting money again?

Nora. Yes but, Torvald, this year we really can let ourselves go a little. This is the first Christmas that we have not needed to economise.

Helmer. Still, you know, we can't spend money recklessly.

Nora. Yes, Torvald, we may be a wee bit more reckless now, mayn't we? Just a tiny wee bit! You are going to have a big salary and earn lots and lots of money.

Helmer. Yes, after the New Year; but then it will be a whole quarter before the salary is due.

Nora. Pooh! we can borrow until then.

Helmer. Nora! [Goes up to her and takes her playfully by the ear.] The same little featherhead! Suppose, now, that I borrowed fifty pounds today, and you spent it all in the Christmas week, and then on New Year's Eve a slate fell on my head and killed me, and—

Nora [putting her hands over his mouth]. Oh! don't say such horrid things.

Helmer. Still, suppose that happened,—what then?

Nora. If that were to happen, I don't suppose I should care whether I owed money or not.

Helmer. Yes, but what about the people who had lent it?

Nora. They? Who would bother about them? I should not know who they were.

Helmer. That is like a woman! But seriously, Nora, you know what

I think about that. No debt, no borrowing. There can be no freedom or beauty about a home life that depends on borrowing and debt. We two have kept bravely on the straight road so far, and we will go on the same way for the short time longer that there need be any struggle.

Nora [moving towards the stove]. As you please, Torvald.

Helmer [following her]. Come, come, my little skylark must not droop her wings. What is this! Is my little squirrel out of temper? [Taking out his purse.] Nora, what do you think I have got here?

Nora [turning round quickly]. Money!

Helmer. There you are. [Gives her some money.] Do you think I don't know what a lot is wanted for housekeeping at Christmas-time?

Nora [counting]. Ten shillings—a pound—two pounds! Thank you, thank you, Torvald; that will keep me going for a long time.

Helmer. Indeed it must.

Nora. Yes, yes, it will. But come here and let me show you what I have bought. And all so cheap! Look, here is a new suit for Ivar, and a sword; and a horse and a trumpet for Bob; and a doll and dolly's bedstead for Emmy,—they are very plain, but anyway she will soon break them in pieces. And here are dress-lengths and handkerchiefs for the maids; old Anne ought really to have something better.

Helmer. And what is in this parcel?

Nora [crying out]. No, no! you mustn't see that until this evening.

Helmer. Very well. But now tell me, you extravagant little person, what would you like for yourself?

Nora. For myself? Oh, I am sure I don't want anything.

Helmer. Yes, but you must. Tell me something reasonable that you would particularly like to have.

Nora. No, I really can't think of anything—unless, Torvald—

Helmer. Well?

Nora [playing with his coat buttons, and without raising her eyes to his]. If you really want to give me something, you might—you might—

Helmer. Well, out with it!

Nora [speaking quickly]. You might give me money, Torvald. Only just as much as you can afford; and then one of these days I will buy something with it.

Helmer. But, Nora—

Nora. Oh, do! dear Torvald; please, please do! Then I will wrap it up in beautiful gilt paper and hang it on the Christmas Tree. Wouldn't that be fun?

Helmer. What are little people called that are always wasting money?

Nora. Spendthrifts—I know. Let us do as you suggest, Torvald, and then I shall have time to think what I am most in want of. That is a very sensible plan, isn't it?

Helmer [smiling]. Indeed it is—that is to say, if you were really to save out of the money I give you, and then really buy something for yourself. But if you spend it all on the housekeeping and any number of unnecessary things, then I merely have to pay up again.

Nora. Oh but, Torvald—

Helmer. You can't deny it, my dear little Nora. [Puts his arm round her waist.] It's a sweet little spendthrift, but she uses up a deal of money. One would hardly believe how expensive such little persons are!

Nora. It's a shame to say that. I do really save all I can.

Helmer [laughing]. That's very true, —all you can. But you can't save anything!

Nora [smiling quietly and happily]. You haven't any idea how many expenses we skylarks and squirrels have, Torvald.

Helmer. You are an odd little soul. Very like your father. You always find some new way of wheedling money out of me, and, as soon as you have got it, it seems to melt in your hands. You never know where it has gone. Still, one must take you as you are. It is in the blood; for indeed it is true that you can inherit these things, Nora.

Nora. Ah, I wish I had inherited many of papa's qualities.

Helmer. And I would not wish you to be anything but just what

you are, my sweet little skylark. But, do you know, it strikes me that you are looking rather—what shall I say—rather uneasy today?

Nora. Do I?

Helmer. You do, really. Look straight at me.

Nora [looks at him]. Well?

Helmer [wagging his finger at her]. Hasn't Miss Sweet Tooth been breaking rules in town today?

Nora. No; what makes you think that?

Helmer. Hasn't she paid a visit to the confectioner's?

Nora. No, I assure you, Torvald—

Helmer. Not been nibbling sweets?

Nora. No, certainly not.

Helmer. Not even taken a bite at a macaroon or two?

Nora. No, Torvald, I assure you really—

Helmer. There, there, of course I was only joking.

Nora [going to the table on the right]. I should not think of going against your wishes.

Helmer. No, I am sure of that; besides, you gave me your word— [Going up to her.] Keep your little Christmas secrets to yourself, my darling. They will all be revealed tonight when the Christmas Tree is lit, no doubt.

Nora. Did you remember to invite Doctor Rank?

Helmer. No. But there is no need; as a matter of course he will come to dinner with us. However, I will ask him when he comes in this morning. I have ordered some good wine. Nora, you can't think how I am looking forward to this evening.

Nora. So am I! And how the children will enjoy themselves, Torvald!

Helmer. It is splendid to feel that one has a perfectly safe appointment, and a big enough income. It's delightful to think of, isn't it?

Nora. It's wonderful!

Helmer. Do you remember last Christmas? For a full three weeks beforehand you shut yourself up every evening until long after midnight, making ornaments for the Christmas Tree, and all the

other fine things that were to be a surprise to us. It was the dullest three weeks I ever spent!

Nora. I didn't find it dull.

Helmer [smiling]. But there was precious little result, Nora.

Nora. Oh, you shouldn't tease me about that again. How could I help the cat's going in and tearing everything to pieces?

Helmer. Of course you couldn't, poor little girl. You had the best of intentions to please us all, and that's the main thing. But it is a good thing that our hard times are over.

Nora. Yes, it is really wonderful.

Helmer. This time I needn't sit here and be dull all alone, and you needn't ruin your dear eyes and your pretty little hands—

Nora [clapping her hands]. No, Torvald, I needn't any longer, need I! It's wonderfully lovely to hear you say so! [Taking his arm.] Now I will tell you how I have been thinking we ought to arrange things, Torvald. As soon as Christmas is over—[A bell rings in the hall.] There's the bell. [She tidies the room a little.] There's some one at the door. What a nuisance!

Helmer. If it is a caller, remember I am not at home.

Maid [in the doorway]. A lady to see you, ma'am, —a stranger.

Nora. Ask her to come in.

Maid [to HELMER]. The doctor came at the same time, sir.

Helmer. Did he go straight into my room?

Maid. Yes, sir.

[HELMER goes into his room. The MAID ushers in Mrs Linde, who is in travelling dress, and shuts the door.]

Mrs Linde [in a dejected and timid voice]. How do you do, Nora?

Nora [doubtfully]. How do you do—

Mrs Linde. You don't recognise me, I suppose.

Nora. No, I don't know—yes, to be sure, I seem to—[Suddenly.] Yes! Christine! Is it really you?

Mrs Linde. Yes, it is I.

Nora. Christine! To think of my not recognising you! And yet how could I—[In a gentle voice.] How you have altered, Christine!

Mrs Linde. Yes, I have indeed. In nine, ten long years—

Nora. Is it so long since we met? I suppose it is. The last eight years have been a happy time for me, I can tell you. And so now you have come into the town, and have taken this long journey in winter—that was plucky of you.

Mrs Linde. I arrived by steamer this morning.

Nora. To have some fun at Christmas-time, of course. How delightful! We will have such fun together! But take off your things. You are not cold, I hope. [Helps her.] Now we will sit down by the stove, and be cosy. No, take this armchair; I will sit here in the rocking-chair. [Takes her hands.] Now you look like your old self again; it was only the first moment—You are a little paler, Christine, and perhaps a little thinner.

Mrs Linde. And much, much older, Nora.

Nora. Perhaps a little older; very, very little; certainly not much. [Stops suddenly and speaks seriously.] What a thoughtless creature I am, chattering away like this. My poor, dear Christine, do forgive me.

Mrs Linde. What do you mean, Nora?

Nora [gently]. Poor Christine, you are a widow.

Mrs Linde. Yes; it is three years ago now.

Nora. Yes, I knew; I saw it in the papers. I assure you, Christine, I meant ever so often to write to you at the time, but I always put it off and something always prevented me.

Mrs Linde. I quite understand, dear.

Nora. It was very bad of me, Christine. Poor thing, how you must have suffered. And he left you nothing?

Mrs Linde. No.

Nora. And no children?

Mrs Linde. No.

Nora. Nothing at all, then.

Mrs Linde. Not even any sorrow or grief to live upon.

Nora [looking incredulously at her]. But, Christine, is that possible?

Mrs Linde [smiles sadly and strokes her hair]. It sometimes happens, Nora.

Nora. So you are quite alone. How dreadfully sad that must be. I have three lovely children. You can't see them just now, for they are out with their nurse. But now you must tell me all about it.

Mrs Linde. No, no; I want to hear about you.

Nora. No, you must begin. I mustn't be selfish today; today I must only think of your affairs. But there is one thing I must tell you. Do you know we have just had a great piece of good luck?

Mrs Linde. No, what is it?

Nora. Just fancy, my husband has been made manager of the Bank!

Mrs Linde. Your husband? What good luck!

Nora. Yes, tremendous! A barrister's profession is such an uncertain thing, especially if he won't undertake unsavoury cases; and naturally Torvald has never been willing to do that, and I quite agree with him. You may imagine how pleased we are! He is to take up his work in the Bank at the New Year, and then he will have a big salary and lots of commissions. For the future we can live quite differently—we can do just as we like. I feel so relieved and so happy, Christine! It will be splendid to have heaps of money and not need to have any anxiety, won't it?

Mrs Linde. Yes, anyhow I think it would be delightful to have what one needs.

Nora. No, not only what one needs, but heaps and heaps of money.

Mrs Linde [smiling]. Nora, Nora, haven't you learned sense yet? In our schooldays you were a great spendthrift.

Nora [laughing]. Yes, that is what Torvald says now. [Wags her finger at her.] But "Nora, Nora" is not so silly as you think. We have not been in a position for me to waste money. We have both had to work.

Mrs Linde. You too?

Nora. Yes; odds and ends, needlework, crotchet-work, embroidery, and that kind of thing. [Dropping her voice.] And other things as well. You know Torvald left his office when we were married? There was no prospect of promotion there, and he had to try and earn more than before. But during the first year he over-worked himself dreadfully. You see, he had to make money every

way he could, and he worked early and late; but he couldn't stand it, and fell dreadfully ill, and the doctors said it was necessary for him to go south.

Mrs Linde. You spent a whole year in Italy, didn't you?

Nora. Yes. It was no easy matter to get away, I can tell you. It was just after Ivar was born; but naturally we had to go. It was a wonderfully beautiful journey, and it saved Torvald's life. But it cost a tremendous lot of money, Christine.

Mrs Linde. So I should think.

Nora. It cost about two hundred and fifty pounds. That's a lot, isn't it?

Mrs Linde. Yes, and in emergencies like that it is lucky to have the money.

Nora. I ought to tell you that we had it from papa.

Mrs Linde. Oh, I see. It was just about that time that he died, wasn't it?

Nora. Yes; and, just think of it, I couldn't go and nurse him. I was expecting little Ivar's birth every day and I had my poor sick Torvald to look after. My dear, kind father—I never saw him again, Christine. That was the saddest time I have known since our marriage.

Mrs Linde. I know how fond you were of him. And then you went off to Italy?

Nora. Yes; you see we had money then, and the doctors insisted on our going, so we started a month later.

Mrs Linde. And your husband came back quite well?

Nora. As sound as a bell!

Mrs Linde. But—the doctor?

Nora. What doctor?

Mrs Linde. I thought your maid said the gentleman who arrived here just as I did, was the doctor?

Nora. Yes, that was Doctor Rank, but he doesn't come here professionally. He is our greatest friend, and comes in at least once every day. No, Torvald has not had an hour's illness since then, and our children are strong and healthy and so am I. [Jumps up and claps her hands.] Christine! Christine! it's good to be alive and happy!—But

how horrid of me; I am talking of nothing but my own affairs. [Sits on a stool near her, and rests her arms on her knees.] You mustn't be angry with me. Tell me, is it really true that you did not love your husband? Why did you marry him?

Mrs Linde. My mother was alive then, and was bedridden and helpless, and I had to provide for my two younger brothers; so I did not think I was justified in refusing his offer.

Nora. No, perhaps you were quite right. He was rich at that time, then?

Mrs Linde. I believe he was quite well off. But his business was a precarious one; and, when he died, it all went to pieces and there was nothing left.

Nora. And then?—

Mrs Linde. Well, I had to turn my hand to anything I could find—first a small shop, then a small school, and so on. The last three years have seemed like one long working-day, with no rest. Now it is at an end, Nora. My poor mother needs me no more, for she is gone; and the boys do not need me either; they have got situations and can shift for themselves.

Nora. What a relief you must feel if—

Mrs Linde. No, indeed; I only feel my life unspeakably empty. No one to live for anymore. [Gets up restlessly.] That was why I could not stand the life in my little backwater any longer. I hope it may be easier here to find something which will busy me and occupy my thoughts. If only I could have the good luck to get some regular work—office work of some kind—

Nora. But, Christine, that is so frightfully tiring, and you look tired out now. You had far better go away to some watering-place.

Mrs Linde [walking to the window]. I have no father to give me money for a journey, Nora.

Nora [rising]. Oh, don't be angry with me!

Mrs Linde [going up to her]. It is you that must not be angry with me, dear. The worst of a position like mine is that it makes one so bitter. No one to work for, and yet obliged to be always on the lookout for chances. One must live, and so one becomes selfish.

When you told me of the happy turn your fortunes have taken—you will hardly believe it—I was delighted not so much on your account as on my own.

Nora. How do you mean?—Oh, I understand. You mean that perhaps Torvald could get you something to do.

Mrs Linde. Yes, that was what I was thinking of.

Nora. He must, Christine. Just leave it to me; I will broach the subject very cleverly—I will think of something that will please him very much. It will make me so happy to be of some use to you.

Mrs Linde. How kind you are, Nora, to be so anxious to help me! It is doubly kind in you, for you know so little of the burdens and troubles of life.

Nora. I—? I know so little of them?

Mrs Linde [smiling]. My dear! Small household cares and that sort of thing!—You are a child, Nora.

Nora [tosses her head and crosses the stage]. You ought not to be so superior.

Mrs Linde. No?

Nora. You are just like the others. They all think that I am incapable of anything really serious—

Mrs Linde. Come, come—

Nora.—that I have gone through nothing in this world of cares.

Mrs Linde. But, my dear Nora, you have just told me all your troubles.

Nora. Pooh!—those were trifles. [Lowering her voice.] I have not told you the important thing.

Mrs Linde. The important thing? What do you mean?

Nora. You look down upon me altogether, Christine—but you ought not to. You are proud, aren't you, of having worked so hard and so long for your mother?

Mrs Linde. Indeed, I don't look down on anyone. But it is true that I am both proud and glad to think that I was privileged to make the end of my mother's life almost free from care.

Nora. And you are proud to think of what you have done for your brothers?

Mrs Linde. I think I have the right to be.

Nora. I think so, too. But now, listen to this; I too have something to be proud and glad of.

Mrs Linde. I have no doubt you have. But what do you refer to?

Nora. Speak low. Suppose Torvald were to hear! He mustn't on any account—no one in the world must know, Christine, except you.

Mrs Linde. But what is it?

Nora. Come here. [Pulls her down on the sofa beside her.] Now I will show you that I too have something to be proud and glad of. It was I who saved Torvald's life.

Mrs Linde. "Saved"? How?

Nora. I told you about our trip to Italy. Torvald would never have recovered if he had not gone there—

Mrs Linde. Yes, but your father gave you the necessary funds.

Nora [smiling]. Yes, that is what Torvald and all the others think, but—

Mrs Linde. But—

Nora. Papa didn't give us a shilling. It was I who procured the money.

Mrs Linde. You? All that large sum?

Nora. Two hundred and fifty pounds. What do you think of that?

Mrs Linde. But, Nora, how could you possibly do it? Did you win a prize in the Lottery?

Nora [contemptuously]. In the Lottery? There would have been no credit in that.

Mrs Linde. But where did you get it from, then? Nora [humming and smiling with an air of mystery]. Hm, hm! Aha!

Mrs Linde. Because you couldn't have borrowed it.

Nora. Couldn't I? Why not?

Mrs Linde. No, a wife cannot borrow without her husband's consent.

Nora [tossing her head]. Oh, if it is a wife who has any head for business—a wife who has the wit to be a little bit clever—

Mrs Linde. I don't understand it at all, Nora.

Nora. There is no need you should. I never said I had borrowed

the money. I may have got it some other way. [Lies back on the sofa.] Perhaps I got it from some other admirer. When anyone is as attractive as I am—

Mrs Linde. You are a mad creature.

Nora. Now, you know you're full of curiosity, Christine.

Mrs Linde. Listen to me, Nora dear. Haven't you been a little bit imprudent?

Nora [sits up straight]. Is it imprudent to save your husband's life?

Mrs Linde. It seems to me imprudent, without his knowledge, to—

Nora. But it was absolutely necessary that he should not know! My goodness, can't you understand that? It was necessary he should have no idea what a dangerous condition he was in. It was to me that the doctors came and said that his life was in danger, and that the only thing to save him was to live in the south. Do you suppose I didn't try, first of all, to get what I wanted as if it were for myself? I told him how much I should love to travel abroad like other young wives; I tried tears and entreaties with him; I told him that he ought to remember the condition I was in, and that he ought to be kind and indulgent to me; I even hinted that he might raise a loan. That nearly made him angry, Christine. He said I was thoughtless, and that it was his duty as my husband not to indulge me in my whims and caprices—as I believe he called them. Very well, I thought, you must be saved—and that was how I came to devise a way out of the difficulty—

Mrs Linde. And did your husband never get to know from your father that the money had not come from him?

Nora. No, never. Papa died just at that time. I had meant to let him into the secret and beg him never to reveal it. But he was so ill then—alas, there never was any need to tell him.

Mrs Linde. And since then have you never told your secret to your husband?

Nora. Good Heavens, no! How could you think so? A man who has such strong opinions about these things! And besides, how painful and humiliating it would be for Torvald, with his manly independence, to know that he owed me anything! It would upset

our mutual relations altogether; our beautiful happy home would no longer be what it is now.

Mrs Linde. Do you mean never to tell him about it?

Nora [meditatively, and with a half smile]. Yes—someday, perhaps, after many years, when I am no longer as nice-looking as I am now. Don't laugh at me! I mean, of course, when Torvald is no longer as devoted to me as he is now; when my dancing and dressing-up and reciting have palled on him; then it may be a good thing to have something in reserve—[Breaking off.] What nonsense! That time will never come. Now, what do you think of my great secret, Christine? Do you still think I am of no use? I can tell you, too, that this affair has caused me a lot of worry. It has been by no means easy for me to meet my engagements punctually. I may tell you that there is something that is called, in business, quarterly interest, and another thing called payment in installments, and it is always so dreadfully difficult to manage them. I have had to save a little here and there, where I could, you understand. I have not been able to put aside much from my housekeeping money, for Torvald must have a good table. I couldn't let my children be shabbily dressed; I have felt obliged to use up all he gave me for them, the sweet little darlings!

Mrs Linde. So it has all had to come out of your own necessities of life, poor Nora?

Nora. Of course. Besides, I was the one responsible for it. Whenever Torvald has given me money for new dresses and such things, I have never spent more than half of it; I have always bought the simplest and cheapest things. Thank Heaven, any clothes look well on me, and so Torvald has never noticed it. But it was often very hard on me, Christine—because it is delightful to be really well dressed, isn't it?

Mrs Linde. Quite so.

Nora. Well, then I have found other ways of earning money. Last winter I was lucky enough to get a lot of copying to do; so I locked myself up and sat writing every evening until quite late at night. Many a time I was desperately tired; but all the same it was a

tremendous pleasure to sit there working and earning money. It was like being a man.

Mrs Linde. How much have you been able to pay off in that way?

Nora. I can't tell you exactly. You see, it is very difficult to keep an account of a business matter of that kind. I only know that I have paid every penny that I could scrape together. Many a time I was at my wits' end. [Smiles.] Then I used to sit here and imagine that a rich old gentleman had fallen in love with me—

Mrs Linde. What! Who was it?

Nora. Be quiet!—that he had died; and that when his will was opened it contained, written in big letters, the instruction: “The lovely Mrs Nora Helmer is to have all I possess paid over to her at once in cash.”

Mrs Linde. But, my dear Nora—who could the man be?

Nora. Good gracious, can't you understand? There was no old gentleman at all; it was only something that I used to sit here and imagine, when I couldn't think of any way of procuring money. But it's all the same now; the tiresome old person can stay where he is, as far as I am concerned; I don't care about him or his will either, for I am free from care now. [Jumps up.] My goodness, it's delightful to think of, Christine! Free from care! To be able to be free from care, quite free from care; to be able to play and romp with the children; to be able to keep the house beautifully and have everything just as Torvald likes it! And, think of it, soon the spring will come and the big blue sky! Perhaps we shall be able to take a little trip—perhaps I shall see the sea again! Oh, it's a wonderful thing to be alive and be happy. [A bell is heard in the hall.]

Mrs Linde [rising]. There is the bell; perhaps I had better go.

Nora. No, don't go; no one will come in here; it is sure to be for Torvald.

Servant [at the hall door]. Excuse me, ma'am—there is a gentleman to see the master, and as the doctor is with him—

Nora. Who is it?

Krogstad [at the door]. It is I, Mrs Helmer. [Mrs LINDE starts, trembles, and turns to the window.]

Nora [takes a step towards him, and speaks in a strained, low voice]. You? What is it? What do you want to see my husband about?

Krogstad. Bank business—in a way. I have a small post in the Bank, and I hear your husband is to be our chief now—

Nora. Then it is—

Krogstad. Nothing but dry business matters, Mrs Helmer; absolutely nothing else.

Nora. Be so good as to go into the study, then. [She bows indifferently to him and shuts the door into the hall; then comes back and makes up the fire in the stove.]

Mrs Linde. Nora—who was that man?

Nora. A lawyer, of the name of Krogstad.

Mrs Linde. Then it really was he.

Nora. Do you know the man?

Mrs Linde. I used to—many years ago. At one time he was a solicitor's clerk in our town.

Nora. Yes, he was.

Mrs Linde. He is greatly altered.

Nora. He made a very unhappy marriage.

Mrs Linde. He is a widower now, isn't he?

Nora. With several children. There now, it is burning up. [Shuts the door of the stove and moves the rocking-chair aside.]

Mrs Linde. They say he carries on various kinds of business.

Nora. Really! Perhaps he does; I don't know anything about it. But don't let us think of business; it is so tiresome.

Doctor Rank [comes out of HELMER'S study. Before he shuts the door he calls to him]. No, my dear fellow, I won't disturb you; I would rather go in to your wife for a little while. [Shuts the door and sees Mrs LINDE.] I beg your pardon; I am afraid I am disturbing you too.

Nora. No, not at all. [Introducing him]. Doctor Rank, Mrs Linde.

Rank. I have often heard Mrs Linde's name mentioned here. I think I passed you on the stairs when I arrived, Mrs Linde?

Mrs Linde. Yes, I go up very slowly; I can't manage stairs well.

Rank. Ah! some slight internal weakness?

Mrs Linde. No, the fact is I have been overworking myself.

Rank. Nothing more than that? Then I suppose you have come to town to amuse yourself with our entertainments?

Mrs Linde. I have come to look for work.

Rank. Is that a good cure for overwork?

Mrs Linde. One must live, Doctor Rank.

Rank. Yes, the general opinion seems to be that it is necessary.

Nora. Look here, Doctor Rank—you know you want to live.

Rank. Certainly. However wretched I may feel, I want to prolong the agony as long as possible. All my patients are like that. And so are those who are morally diseased; one of them, and a bad case too, is at this very moment with Helmer—

Mrs Linde [sadly]. Ah!

Nora. Whom do you mean?

Rank. A lawyer of the name of Krogstad, a fellow you don't know at all. He suffers from a diseased moral character, Mrs Helmer; but even he began talking of its being highly important that he should live.

Nora. Did he? What did he want to speak to Torvald about?

Rank. I have no idea; I only heard that it was something about the Bank.

Nora. I didn't know this—what's his name—Krogstad had anything to do with the Bank.

Rank. Yes, he has some sort of appointment there. [To Mrs Linde.] I don't know whether you find also in your part of the world that there are certain people who go zealously snuffing about to smell out moral corruption, and, as soon as they have found some, put the person concerned into some lucrative position where they can keep their eye on him. Healthy natures are left out in the cold.

Mrs Linde. Still I think the sick are those who most need taking care of.

Rank [shrugging his shoulders]. Yes, there you are. That is the sentiment that is turning Society into a sick-house.

[NORA, who has been absorbed in her thoughts, breaks out into smothered laughter and claps her hands.]

Rank. Why do you laugh at that? Have you any notion what Society really is?

Nora. What do I care about tiresome Society? I am laughing at something quite different, something extremely amusing. Tell me, Doctor Rank, are all the people who are employed in the Bank dependent on Torvald now?

Rank. Is that what you find so extremely amusing?

Nora [smiling and humming]. That's my affair! [Walking about the room.] It's perfectly glorious to think that we have—that Torvald has so much power over so many people. [Takes the packet from her pocket.] Doctor Rank, what do you say to a macaroon?

Rank. What, macaroons? I thought they were forbidden here.

Nora. Yes, but these are some Christine gave me.

Mrs Linde. What! I?—

Nora. Oh, well, don't be alarmed! You couldn't know that Torvald had forbidden them. I must tell you that he is afraid they will spoil my teeth. But, bah!—once in a way—That's so, isn't it, Doctor Rank? By your leave! [Puts a macaroon into his mouth.] You must have one too, Christine. And I shall have one, just a little one—or at most two. [Walking about.] I am tremendously happy. There is just one thing in the world now that I should dearly love to do.

Rank. Well, what is that?

Nora. It's something I should dearly love to say, if Torvald could hear me.

Rank. Well, why can't you say it?

Nora. No, I daren't; it's so shocking.

Mrs Linde. Shocking?

Rank. Well, I should not advise you to say it. Still, with us you might. What is it you would so much like to say if Torvald could hear you?

Nora. I should just love to say—Well, I'm damned!

Rank. Are you mad?

Mrs Linde. Nora, dear—!

Rank. Say it, here he is!

Nora [hiding the packet]. Hush! Hush! Hush! [HELMER comes out of his room, with his coat over his arm and his hat in his hand.]

Nora. Well, Torvald dear, have you got rid of him?

Helmer. Yes, he has just gone.

Nora. Let me introduce you—this is Christine, who has come to town.

Helmer. Christine—? Excuse me, but I don't know—

Nora. Mrs Linde, dear; Christine Linde.

Helmer. Of course. A school friend of my wife's, I presume?

Mrs Linde. Yes, we have known each other since then.

Nora. And just think, she has taken a long journey in order to see you.

Helmer. What do you mean?

Mrs Linde. No, really, I—

Nora. Christine is tremendously clever at book-keeping, and she is frightfully anxious to work under some clever man, so as to perfect herself—

Helmer. Very sensible, Mrs Linde.

Nora. And when she heard you had been appointed manager of the Bank—the news was telegraphed, you know—she travelled here as quick as she could. Torvald, I am sure you will be able to do something for Christine, for my sake, won't you?

Helmer. Well, it is not altogether impossible. I presume you are a widow, Mrs Linde?

Mrs Linde. Yes.

Helmer. And have had some experience of book-keeping?

Mrs Linde. Yes, a fair amount.

Helmer. Ah! well, it's very likely I may be able to find something for you—

Nora [clapping her hands]. What did I tell you? What did I tell you?

Helmer. You have just come at a fortunate moment, Mrs Linde.

Mrs Linde. How am I to thank you?

Helmer. There is no need. [Puts on his coat.] But today you must excuse me—

Rank. Wait a minute; I will come with you. [Brings his fur coat from the hall and warms it at the fire.]

Nora. Don't be long away, Torvald dear.

Helmer. About an hour, not more.

Nora. Are you going too, Christine?

Mrs Linde [putting on her cloak]. Yes, I must go and look for a room.

Helmer. Oh, well then, we can walk down the street together.

Nora [helping her]. What a pity it is we are so short of space here; I am afraid it is impossible for us—

Mrs Linde. Please don't think of it! Goodbye, Nora dear, and many thanks.

Nora. Goodbye for the present. Of course you will come back this evening. And you too, Dr. Rank. What do you say? If you are well enough? Oh, you must be! Wrap yourself up well. [They go to the door all talking together. Children's voices are heard on the staircase.]

Nora. There they are! There they are! [She runs to open the door. The NURSE comes in with the children.] Come in! Come in! [Stoops and kisses them.] Oh, you sweet blessings! Look at them, Christine! Aren't they darlings?

Rank. Don't let us stand here in the draught.

Helmer. Come along, Mrs Linde; the place will only be bearable for a mother now!

[RANK, HELMER, and Mrs Linde go downstairs. The NURSE comes forward with the children; NORA shuts the hall door.]

Nora. How fresh and well you look! Such red cheeks like apples and roses. [The children all talk at once while she speaks to them.] Have you had great fun? That's splendid! What, you pulled both Emmy and Bob along on the sledge? —both at once?—that was good. You are a clever boy, Ivar. Let me take her for a little, Anne. My sweet little baby doll! [Takes the baby from the MAID and dances it up and down.] Yes, yes, mother will dance with Bob too. What! Have you been snowballing? I wish I had been there too! No, no, I will take

their things off, Anne; please let me do it, it is such fun. Go in now, you look half frozen. There is some hot coffee for you on the stove.

[The NURSE goes into the room on the left. NORA takes off the children's things and throws them about, while they all talk to her at once.]

Nora. Really! Did a big dog run after you? But it didn't bite you? No, dogs don't bite nice little dolly children. You mustn't look at the parcels, Ivar. What are they? Ah, I daresay you would like to know. No, no—it's something nasty! Come, let us have a game! What shall we play at? Hide and Seek? Yes, we'll play Hide and Seek. Bob shall hide first. Must I hide? Very well, I'll hide first. [She and the children laugh and shout, and romp in and out of the room; at last NORA hides under the table, the children rush in and out for her, but do not see her; they hear her smothered laughter, run to the table, lift up the cloth and find her. Shouts of laughter. She crawls forward and pretends to frighten them. Fresh laughter. Meanwhile there has been a knock at the hall door, but none of them has noticed it. The door is half opened, and KROGSTAD appears, he waits a little; the game goes on.]

Krogstad. Excuse me, Mrs Helmer.

Nora [with a stifled cry, turns round and gets up on to her knees]. Ah! what do you want?

Krogstad. Excuse me, the outer door was ajar; I suppose someone forgot to shut it.

Nora [rising]. My husband is out, Mr. Krogstad.

Krogstad. I know that.

Nora. What do you want here, then?

Krogstad. A word with you.

Nora. With me?—[To the children, gently.] Go in to nurse. What? No, the strange man won't do mother any harm. When he has gone we will have another game. [She takes the children into the room on the left, and shuts the door after them.] You want to speak to me?

Krogstad. Yes, I do.

Nora. Today? It is not the first of the month yet.

Krogstad. No, it is Christmas Eve, and it will depend on yourself what sort of a Christmas you will spend.

Nora. What do you mean? Today it is absolutely impossible for me—

Krogstad. We won't talk about that until later on. This is something different. I presume you can give me a moment?

Nora. Yes—yes, I can—although—

Krogstad. Good. I was in Olsen's Restaurant and saw your husband going down the street—

Nora. Yes?

Krogstad. With a lady.

Nora. What then?

Krogstad. May I make so bold as to ask if it was a Mrs Linde?

Nora. It was.

Krogstad. Just arrived in town?

Nora. Yes, today.

Krogstad. She is a great friend of yours, isn't she?

Nora. She is. But I don't see—

Krogstad. I knew her too, once upon a time.

Nora. I am aware of that.

Krogstad. Are you? So you know all about it; I thought as much. Then I can ask you, without beating about the bush—is Mrs Linde to have an appointment in the Bank?

Nora. What right have you to question me, Mr. Krogstad?—You, one of my husband's subordinates! But since you ask, you shall know. Yes, Mrs Linde is to have an appointment. And it was I who pleaded her cause, Mr. Krogstad, let me tell you that.

Krogstad. I was right in what I thought, then.

Nora [walking up and down the stage]. Sometimes one has a tiny little bit of influence, I should hope. Because one is a woman, it does not necessarily follow that—. When anyone is in a subordinate position, Mr. Krogstad, they should really be careful to avoid offending anyone who—who—

Krogstad. Who has influence?

Nora. Exactly.

Krogstad [changing his tone]. Mrs Helmer, you will be so good as to use your influence on my behalf.

Nora. What? What do you mean?

Krogstad. You will be so kind as to see that I am allowed to keep my subordinate position in the Bank.

Nora. What do you mean by that? Who proposes to take your post away from you?

Krogstad. Oh, there is no necessity to keep up the pretence of ignorance. I can quite understand that your friend is not very anxious to expose herself to the chance of rubbing shoulders with me; and I quite understand, too, whom I have to thank for being turned off.

Nora. But I assure you—

Krogstad. Very likely; but, to come to the point, the time has come when I should advise you to use your influence to prevent that.

Nora. But, Mr. Krogstad, I have no influence.

Krogstad. Haven't you? I thought you said yourself just now—

Nora. Naturally I did not mean you to put that construction on it. I! What should make you think I have any influence of that kind with my husband?

Krogstad. Oh, I have known your husband from our student days. I don't suppose he is any more unassailable than other husbands.

Nora. If you speak slightly of my husband, I shall turn you out of the house.

Krogstad. You are bold, Mrs Helmer.

Nora. I am not afraid of you any longer. As soon as the New Year comes, I shall in a very short time be free of the whole thing.

Krogstad [controlling himself]. Listen to me, Mrs Helmer. If necessary, I am prepared to fight for my small post in the Bank as if I were fighting for my life.

Nora. So it seems.

Krogstad. It is not only for the sake of the money; indeed, that weighs least with me in the matter. There is another reason—well, I may as well tell you. My position is this. I daresay you know,

like everybody else, that once, many years ago, I was guilty of an indiscretion.

Nora. I think I have heard something of the kind.

Krogstad. The matter never came into court; but every way seemed to be closed to me after that. So I took to the business that you know of. I had to do something; and, honestly, I don't think I've been one of the worst. But now I must cut myself free from all that. My sons are growing up; for their sake I must try and win back as much respect as I can in the town. This post in the Bank was like the first step up for me—and now your husband is going to kick me downstairs again into the mud.

Nora. But you must believe me, Mr. Krogstad; it is not in my power to help you at all.

Krogstad. Then it is because you haven't the will; but I have means to compel you.

Nora. You don't mean that you will tell my husband that I owe you money?

Krogstad. Hm!—suppose I were to tell him?

Nora. It would be perfectly infamous of you. [Sobbing.] To think of his learning my secret, which has been my joy and pride, in such an ugly, clumsy way—that he should learn it from you! And it would put me in a horribly disagreeable position—

Krogstad. Only disagreeable?

Nora [impetuously]. Well, do it, then!—and it will be the worse for you. My husband will see for himself what a blackguard you are, and you certainly won't keep your post then.

Krogstad. I asked you if it was only a disagreeable scene at home that you were afraid of?

Nora. If my husband does get to know of it, of course he will at once pay you what is still owing, and we shall have nothing more to do with you.

Krogstad [coming a step nearer]. Listen to me, Mrs Helmer. Either you have a very bad memory or you know very little of business. I shall be obliged to remind you of a few details.

Nora. What do you mean?

Krogstad. When your husband was ill, you came to me to borrow two hundred and fifty pounds.

Nora. I didn't know anyone else to go to.

Krogstad. I promised to get you that amount—

Nora. Yes, and you did so.

Krogstad. I promised to get you that amount, on certain conditions. Your mind was so taken up with your husband's illness, and you were so anxious to get the money for your journey, that you seem to have paid no attention to the conditions of our bargain. Therefore it will not be amiss if I remind you of them. Now, I promised to get the money on the security of a bond which I drew up.

Nora. Yes, and which I signed.

Krogstad. Good. But below your signature there were a few lines constituting your father a surety for the money; those lines your father should have signed.

Nora. Should? He did sign them.

Krogstad. I had left the date blank; that is to say, your father should himself have inserted the date on which he signed the paper. Do you remember that?

Nora. Yes, I think I remember—

Krogstad. Then I gave you the bond to send by post to your father. Is that not so?

Nora. Yes.

Krogstad. And you naturally did so at once, because five or six days afterwards you brought me the bond with your father's signature. And then I gave you the money.

Nora. Well, haven't I been paying it off regularly?

Krogstad. Fairly so, yes. But—to come back to the matter in hand—that must have been a very trying time for you, Mrs Helmer?

Nora. It was, indeed.

Krogstad. Your father was very ill, wasn't he?

Nora. He was very near his end.

Krogstad. And died soon afterwards?

Nora. Yes.

Krogstad. Tell me, Mrs Helmer, can you by any chance remember what day your father died?—on what day of the month, I mean.

Nora. Papa died on the 29th of September.

Krogstad. That is correct; I have ascertained it for myself. And, as that is so, there is a discrepancy [taking a paper from his pocket] which I cannot account for.

Nora. What discrepancy? I don't know—

Krogstad. The discrepancy consists, Mrs Helmer, in the fact that your father signed this bond three days after his death.

Nora. What do you mean? I don't understand—

Krogstad. Your father died on the 29th of September. But, look here; your father has dated his signature the 2nd of October. It is a discrepancy, isn't it? [NORA is silent.] Can you explain it to me? [NORA is still silent.] It is a remarkable thing, too, that the words "2nd of October," as well as the year, are not written in your father's handwriting but in one that I think I know. Well, of course it can be explained; your father may have forgotten to date his signature, and someone else may have dated it haphazard before they knew of his death. There is no harm in that. It all depends on the signature of the name; and that is genuine, I suppose, Mrs Helmer? It was your father himself who signed his name here?

Nora [after a short pause, throws her head up and looks defiantly at him]. No, it was not. It was I that wrote papa's name.

Krogstad. Are you aware that is a dangerous confession?

Nora. In what way? You shall have your money soon.

Krogstad. Let me ask you a question; why did you not send the paper to your father?

Nora. It was impossible; papa was so ill. If I had asked him for his signature, I should have had to tell him what the money was to be used for; and when he was so ill himself I couldn't tell him that my husband's life was in danger—it was impossible.

Krogstad. It would have been better for you if you had given up your trip abroad.

Nora. No, that was impossible. That trip was to save my husband's life; I couldn't give that up.

Krogstad. But did it never occur to you that you were committing a fraud on me?

Nora. I couldn't take that into account; I didn't trouble myself about you at all. I couldn't bear you, because you put so many heartless difficulties in my way, although you knew what a dangerous condition my husband was in.

Krogstad. Mrs Helmer, you evidently do not realise clearly what it is that you have been guilty of. But I can assure you that my one false step, which lost me all my reputation, was nothing more or nothing worse than what you have done.

Nora. You? Do you ask me to believe that you were brave enough to run a risk to save your wife's life?

Krogstad. The law cares nothing about motives.

Nora. Then it must be a very foolish law.

Krogstad. Foolish or not, it is the law by which you will be judged, if I produce this paper in court.

Nora. I don't believe it. Is a daughter not to be allowed to spare her dying father anxiety and care? Is a wife not to be allowed to save her husband's life? I don't know much about law; but I am certain that there must be laws permitting such things as that. Have you no knowledge of such laws—you who are a lawyer? You must be a very poor lawyer, Mr. Krogstad.

Krogstad. Maybe. But matters of business—such business as you and I have had together—do you think I don't understand that? Very well. Do as you please. But let me tell you this—if I lose my position a second time, you shall lose yours with me. [He bows, and goes out through the hall.]

Nora [appears buried in thought for a short time, then tosses her head]. Nonsense! Trying to frighten me like that!—I am not so silly as he thinks. [Begins to busy herself putting the children's things in order.] And yet—? No, it's impossible! I did it for love's sake.

The Children [in the doorway on the left]. Mother, the stranger man has gone out through the gate.

Nora. Yes, dears, I know. But, don't tell anyone about the stranger man. Do you hear? Not even papa.

Children. No, mother; but will you come and play again?

Nora. No, no,—not now.

Children. But, mother, you promised us.

Nora. Yes, but I can't now. Run away in; I have such a lot to do. Run away in, my sweet little darlings. [She gets them into the room by degrees and shuts the door on them; then sits down on the sofa, takes up a piece of needlework and sews a few stitches, but soon stops.] No! [Throws down the work, gets up, goes to the hall door and calls out.] Helen! bring the Tree in. [Goes to the table on the left, opens a drawer, and stops again.] No, no! it is quite impossible!

Maid [coming in with the Tree]. Where shall I put it, ma'am?

Nora. Here, in the middle of the floor.

Maid. Shall I get you anything else?

Nora. No, thank you. I have all I want. [Exit MAID.]

Nora [begins dressing the tree]. A candle here—and flowers here—The horrible man! It's all nonsense—there's nothing wrong. The tree shall be splendid! I will do everything I can think of to please you, Torvald!—I will sing for you, dance for you—[HELMER comes in with some papers under his arm.] Oh! are you back already?

Helmer. Yes. Has anyone been here?

Nora. Here? No.

Helmer. That is strange. I saw Krogstad going out of the gate.

Nora. Did you? Oh yes, I forgot, Krogstad was here for a moment.

Helmer. Nora, I can see from your manner that he has been here begging you to say a good word for him.

Nora. Yes.

Helmer. And you were to appear to do it of your own accord; you were to conceal from me the fact of his having been here; didn't he beg that of you too?

Nora. Yes, Torvald, but—

Helmer. Nora, Nora, and you would be a party to that sort of thing? To have any talk with a man like that, and give him any sort of promise? And to tell me a lie into the bargain?

Nora. A lie—?

Helmer. Didn't you tell me no one had been here? [Shakes his

finger at her.] My little songbird must never do that again. A songbird must have a clean beak to chirp with—no false notes! [Puts his arm round her waist.] That is so, isn't it? Yes, I am sure it is. [Lets her go.] We will say no more about it. [Sits down by the stove.] How warm and snug it is here! [Turns over his papers.]

Nora [after a short pause, during which she busies herself with the Christmas Tree.] Torvald!

Helmer. Yes.

Nora. I am looking forward tremendously to the fancy-dress ball at the Stenborgs' the day after tomorrow.

Helmer. And I am tremendously curious to see what you are going to surprise me with.

Nora. It was very silly of me to want to do that.

Helmer. What do you mean?

Nora. I can't hit upon anything that will do; everything I think of seems so silly and insignificant.

Helmer. Does my little Nora acknowledge that at last?

Nora [standing behind his chair with her arms on the back of it]. Are you very busy, Torvald?

Helmer. Well—

Nora. What are all those papers?

Helmer. Bank business.

Nora. Already?

Helmer. I have got authority from the retiring manager to undertake the necessary changes in the staff and in the rearrangement of the work; and I must make use of the Christmas week for that, so as to have everything in order for the new year.

Nora. Then that was why this poor Krogstad—

Helmer. Hm!

Nora [leans against the back of his chair and strokes his hair]. If you hadn't been so busy I should have asked you a tremendously big favour, Torvald.

Helmer. What is that? Tell me.

Nora. There is no one has such good taste as you. And I do so want to look nice at the fancy-dress ball. Torvald, couldn't you take me in

hand and decide what I shall go as, and what sort of a dress I shall wear?

Helmer. Aha! so my obstinate little woman is obliged to get someone to come to her rescue?

Nora. Yes, Torvald, I can't get along a bit without your help.

Helmer. Very well, I will think it over, we shall manage to hit upon something.

Nora. That is nice of you. [Goes to the Christmas Tree. A short pause.] How pretty the red flowers look-. But, tell me, was it really something very bad that this Krogstad was guilty of?

Helmer. He forged someone's name. Have you any idea what that means?

Nora. Isn't it possible that he was driven to do it by necessity?

Helmer. Yes; or, as in so many cases, by imprudence. I am not so heartless as to condemn a man altogether because of a single false step of that kind.

Nora. No, you wouldn't, would you, Torvald?

Helmer. Many a man has been able to retrieve his character, if he has openly confessed his fault and taken his punishment.

Nora. Punishment-?

Helmer. But Krogstad did nothing of that sort; he got himself out of it by a cunning trick, and that is why he has gone under altogether.

Nora. But do you think it would-?

Helmer. Just think how a guilty man like that has to lie and play the hypocrite with every one, how he has to wear a mask in the presence of those near and dear to him, even before his own wife and children. And about the children-that is the most terrible part of it all, Nora.

Nora. How?

Helmer. Because such an atmosphere of lies infects and poisons the whole life of a home. Each breath the children take in such a house is full of the germs of evil.

Nora [coming nearer him]. Are you sure of that?

Helmer. My dear, I have often seen it in the course of my life as

a lawyer. Almost everyone who has gone to the bad early in life has had a deceitful mother.

Nora. Why do you only say—mother?

Helmer. It seems most commonly to be the mother's influence, though naturally a bad father's would have the same result. Every lawyer is familiar with the fact. This Krogstad, now, has been persistently poisoning his own children with lies and dissimulation; that is why I say he has lost all moral character. [Holds out his hands to her.] That is why my sweet little Nora must promise me not to plead his cause. Give me your hand on it. Come, come, what is this? Give me your hand. There now, that's settled. I assure you it would be quite impossible for me to work with him; I literally feel physically ill when I am in the company of such people.

Nora [takes her hand out of his and goes to the opposite side of the Christmas Tree]. How hot it is in here; and I have such a lot to do.

Helmer [getting up and putting his papers in order]. Yes, and I must try and read through some of these before dinner; and I must think about your costume, too. And it is just possible I may have something ready in gold paper to hang up on the Tree. [Puts his hand on her head.] My precious little singing-bird! [He goes into his room and shuts the door after him.]

Nora [after a pause, whispers]. No, no—it isn't true. It's impossible; it must be impossible.

[The NURSE opens the door on the left.]

Nurse. The little ones are begging so hard to be allowed to come in to mamma.

Nora. No, no, no! Don't let them come in to me! You stay with them, Anne.

Nurse. Very well, ma'am. [Shuts the door.]

Nora [pale with terror]. Deprave my little children? Poison my home? [A short pause. Then she tosses her head.] It's not true. It can't possibly be true.

ACT II

[THE SAME SCENE.—THE Christmas Tree is in the corner by the piano, stripped of its ornaments and with burnt-down candle-ends on its dishevelled branches. NORA'S cloak and hat are lying on the sofa. She is alone in the room, walking about uneasily. She stops by the sofa and takes up her cloak.]

Nora [drops her cloak]. Someone is coming now! [Goes to the door and listens.] No—it is no one. Of course, no one will come today, Christmas Day—nor tomorrow either. But, perhaps—[opens the door and looks out]. No, nothing in the letterbox; it is quite empty. [Comes forward.] What rubbish! of course he can't be in earnest about it. Such a thing couldn't happen; it is impossible—I have three little children.

[Enter the NURSE from the room on the left, carrying a big cardboard box.]

Nurse. At last I have found the box with the fancy dress.

Nora. Thanks; put it on the table.

Nurse [doing so]. But it is very much in want of mending.

Nora. I should like to tear it into a hundred thousand pieces.

Nurse. What an idea! It can easily be put in order—just a little patience.

Nora. Yes, I will go and get Mrs Linde to come and help me with it.

Nurse. What, out again? In this horrible weather? You will catch cold, ma'am, and make yourself ill.

Nora. Well, worse than that might happen. How are the children?

Nurse. The poor little souls are playing with their Christmas presents, but—

Nora. Do they ask much for me?

Nurse. You see, they are so accustomed to have their mamma with them.

Nora. Yes, but, nurse, I shall not be able to be so much with them now as I was before.

Nurse. Oh well, young children easily get accustomed to anything.

Nora. Do you think so? Do you think they would forget their mother if she went away altogether?

Nurse. Good heavens!—went away altogether?

Nora. Nurse, I want you to tell me something I have often wondered about—how could you have the heart to put your own child out among strangers?

Nurse. I was obliged to, if I wanted to be little Nora's nurse.

Nora. Yes, but how could you be willing to do it?

Nurse. What, when I was going to get such a good place by it? A poor girl who has got into trouble should be glad to. Besides, that wicked man didn't do a single thing for me.

Nora. But I suppose your daughter has quite forgotten you.

Nurse. No, indeed she hasn't. She wrote to me when she was confirmed, and when she was married.

Nora [putting her arms round her neck]. Dear old Anne, you were a good mother to me when I was little.

Nurse. Little Nora, poor dear, had no other mother but me.

Nora. And if my little ones had no other mother, I am sure you would—What nonsense I am talking! [Opens the box.] Go in to them. Now I must—. You will see tomorrow how charming I shall look.

Nurse. I am sure there will be no one at the ball so charming as you, ma'am. [Goes into the room on the left.]

Nora [begins to unpack the box, but soon pushes it away from her]. If only I dared go out. If only no one would come. If only I could be sure nothing would happen here in the meantime. Stuff and nonsense! No one will come. Only I mustn't think about it. I will brush my muff. What lovely, lovely gloves! Out of my thoughts, out of my thoughts! One, two, three, four, five, six— [Screams.] Ah! there is someone coming—. [Makes a movement towards the door, but stands irresolute.]

[Enter Mrs Linde from the hall, where she has taken off her cloak and hat.]

Nora. Oh, it's you, Christine. There is no one else out there, is there? How good of you to come!

Mrs Linde. I heard you were up asking for me.

Nora. Yes, I was passing by. As a matter of fact, it is something you could help me with. Let us sit down here on the sofa. Look here. Tomorrow evening there is to be a fancy-dress ball at the Stenborgs', who live above us; and Torvald wants me to go as a Neapolitan fisher-girl, and dance the Tarantella that I learned at Capri.

Mrs Linde. I see; you are going to keep up the character.

Nora. Yes, Torvald wants me to. Look, here is the dress; Torvald had it made for me there, but now it is all so torn, and I haven't any idea—

Mrs Linde. We will easily put that right. It is only some of the trimming come unsewn here and there. Needle and thread? Now then, that's all we want.

Nora. It is nice of you.

Mrs Linde [sewing]. So you are going to be dressed up tomorrow
Nora. I will tell you what—I shall come in for a moment and see you in your fine feathers. But I have completely forgotten to thank you for a delightful evening yesterday.

Nora [gets up, and crosses the stage]. Well, I don't think yesterday was as pleasant as usual. You ought to have come to town a little earlier, Christine. Certainly Torvald does understand how to make a house dainty and attractive.

Mrs Linde. And so do you, it seems to me; you are not your father's daughter for nothing. But tell me, is Doctor Rank always as depressed as he was yesterday?

Nora. No; yesterday it was very noticeable. I must tell you that he suffers from a very dangerous disease. He has consumption of the spine, poor creature. His father was a horrible man who committed all sorts of excesses; and that is why his son was sickly from childhood, do you understand?

Mrs Linde [dropping her sewing]. But, my dearest Nora, how do you know anything about such things?

Nora [walking about]. Pooh! When you have three children, you get visits now and then from—from married women, who know something of medical matters, and they talk about one thing and another.

Mrs Linde [goes on sewing. A short silence]. Does Doctor Rank come here everyday?

Nora. Everyday regularly. He is Torvald's most intimate friend, and a great friend of mine too. He is just like one of the family.

Mrs Linde. But tell me this—is he perfectly sincere? I mean, isn't he the kind of man that is very anxious to make himself agreeable?

Nora. Not in the least. What makes you think that?

Mrs Linde. When you introduced him to me yesterday, he declared he had often heard my name mentioned in this house; but afterwards I noticed that your husband hadn't the slightest idea who I was. So how could Doctor Rank—?

Nora. That is quite right, Christine. Torvald is so absurdly fond of me that he wants me absolutely to himself, as he says. At first he used to seem almost jealous if I mentioned any of the dear folk at home, so naturally I gave up doing so. But I often talk about such things with Doctor Rank, because he likes hearing about them.

Mrs Linde. Listen to me, Nora. You are still very like a child in many things, and I am older than you in many ways and have a little more experience. Let me tell you this—you ought to make an end of it with Doctor Rank.

Nora. What ought I to make an end of?

Mrs Linde. Of two things, I think. Yesterday you talked some nonsense about a rich admirer who was to leave you money—

Nora. An admirer who doesn't exist, unfortunately! But what then?

Mrs Linde. Is Doctor Rank a man of means?

Nora. Yes, he is.

Mrs Linde. And has no one to provide for?

Nora. No, no one; but—

Mrs Linde. And comes here everyday?

Nora. Yes, I told you so.

Mrs Linde. But how can this well-bred man be so tactless?

Nora. I don't understand you at all.

Mrs Linde. Don't prevaricate, Nora. Do you suppose I don't guess who lent you the two hundred and fifty pounds?

Nora. Are you out of your senses? How can you think of such a

thing! A friend of ours, who comes here everyday! Do you realise what a horribly painful position that would be?

Mrs Linde. Then it really isn't he?

Nora. No, certainly not. It would never have entered into my head for a moment. Besides, he had no money to lend then; he came into his money afterwards.

Mrs Linde. Well, I think that was lucky for you, my dear Nora.

Nora. No, it would never have come into my head to ask Doctor Rank. Although I am quite sure that if I had asked him—

Mrs Linde. But of course you won't.

Nora. Of course not. I have no reason to think it could possibly be necessary. But I am quite sure that if I told Doctor Rank—

Mrs Linde. Behind your husband's back?

Nora. I must make an end of it with the other one, and that will be behind his back too. I must make an end of it with him.

Mrs Linde. Yes, that is what I told you yesterday, but—

Nora [walking up and down]. A man can put a thing like that straight much easier than a woman—

Mrs Linde. One's husband, yes.

Nora. Nonsense! [Standing still.] When you pay off a debt you get your bond back, don't you?

Mrs Linde. Yes, as a matter of course.

Nora. And can tear it into a hundred thousand pieces, and burn it up—the nasty dirty paper!

Mrs Linde [looks hard at her, lays down her sewing and gets up slowly]. Nora, you are concealing something from me.

Nora. Do I look as if I were?

Mrs Linde. Something has happened to you since yesterday morning. Nora, what is it?

Nora [going nearer to her]. Christine! [Listens.] Hush! there's Torvald come home. Do you mind going in to the children for the present? Torvald can't bear to see dressmaking going on. Let Anne help you.

Mrs Linde [gathering some of the things together]. Certainly—but I am not going away from here until we have had it out with one

another. [She goes into the room on the left, as HELMER comes in from the hall.]

Nora [going up to HELMER]. I have wanted you so much, Torvald dear.

Helmer. Was that the dressmaker?

Nora. No, it was Christine; she is helping me to put my dress in order. You will see I shall look quite smart.

Helmer. Wasn't that a happy thought of mine, now?

Nora. Splendid! But don't you think it is nice of me, too, to do as you wish?

Helmer. Nice?—because you do as your husband wishes? Well, well, you little rogue, I am sure you did not mean it in that way. But I am not going to disturb you; you will want to be trying on your dress, I expect.

Nora. I suppose you are going to work.

Helmer. Yes. [Shows her a bundle of papers.] Look at that. I have just been into the bank. [Turns to go into his room.]

Nora. Torvald.

Helmer. Yes.

Nora. If your little squirrel were to ask you for something very, very prettily—?

Helmer. What then?

Nora. Would you do it?

Helmer. I should like to hear what it is, first.

Nora. Your squirrel would run about and do all her tricks if you would be nice, and do what she wants.

Helmer. Speak plainly.

Nora. Your skylark would chirp about in every room, with her song rising and falling—

Helmer. Well, my skylark does that anyhow.

Nora. I would play the fairy and dance for you in the moonlight, Torvald.

Helmer. Nora—you surely don't mean that request you made to me this morning?

Nora [going near him]. Yes, Torvald, I beg you so earnestly—

Helmer. Have you really the courage to open up that question again?

Nora. Yes, dear, you must do as I ask; you must let Krogstad keep his post in the bank.

Helmer. My dear Nora, it is his post that I have arranged Mrs Linde shall have.

Nora. Yes, you have been awfully kind about that; but you could just as well dismiss some other clerk instead of Krogstad.

Helmer. This is simply incredible obstinacy! Because you chose to give him a thoughtless promise that you would speak for him, I am expected to—

Nora. That isn't the reason, Torvald. It is for your own sake. This fellow writes in the most scurrilous newspapers; you have told me so yourself. He can do you an unspeakable amount of harm. I am frightened to death of him—

Helmer. Ah, I understand; it is recollections of the past that scare you.

Nora. What do you mean?

Helmer. Naturally you are thinking of your father.

Nora. Yes—yes, of course. Just recall to your mind what these malicious creatures wrote in the papers about papa, and how horribly they slandered him. I believe they would have procured his dismissal if the Department had not sent you over to inquire into it, and if you had not been so kindly disposed and helpful to him.

Helmer. My little Nora, there is an important difference between your father and me. Your father's reputation as a public official was not above suspicion. Mine is, and I hope it will continue to be so, as long as I hold my office.

Nora. You never can tell what mischief these men may contrive. We ought to be so well off, so snug and happy here in our peaceful home, and have no cares—you and I and the children, Torvald! That is why I beg you so earnestly—

Helmer. And it is just by interceding for him that you make it impossible for me to keep him. It is already known at the Bank that

I mean to dismiss Krogstad. Is it to get about now that the new manager has changed his mind at his wife's bidding—

Nora. And what if it did?

Helmer. Of course!—if only this obstinate little person can get her way! Do you suppose I am going to make myself ridiculous before my whole staff, to let people think that I am a man to be swayed by all sorts of outside influence? I should very soon feel the consequences of it, I can tell you! And besides, there is one thing that makes it quite impossible for me to have Krogstad in the Bank as long as I am manager.

Nora. Whatever is that?

Helmer. His moral failings I might perhaps have overlooked, if necessary—

Nora. Yes, you could—couldn't you?

Helmer. And I hear he is a good worker, too. But I knew him when we were boys. It was one of those rash friendships that so often prove an incubus in afterlife. I may as well tell you plainly, we were once on very intimate terms with one another. But this tactless fellow lays no restraint on himself when other people are present. On the contrary, he thinks it gives him the right to adopt a familiar tone with me, and every minute it is "I say, Helmer, old fellow!" and that sort of thing. I assure you it is extremely painful for me. He would make my position in the Bank intolerable.

Nora. Torvald, I don't believe you mean that.

Helmer. Don't you? Why not?

Nora. Because it is such a narrow-minded way of looking at things.

Helmer. What are you saying? Narrow-minded? Do you think I am narrow-minded?

Nora. No, just the opposite, dear—and it is exactly for that reason.

Helmer. It's the same thing. You say my point of view is narrow-minded, so I must be so too. Narrow-minded! Very well—I must put an end to this. [Goes to the hall door and calls.] Helen!

Nora. What are you going to do?

Helmer [looking among his papers]. Settle it. [Enter MAID.] Look

here; take this letter and go downstairs with it at once. Find a messenger and tell him to deliver it, and be quick. The address is on it, and here is the money.

Maid. Very well, sir. [Exit with the letter.]

Helmer [putting his papers together]. Now then, little Miss Obstinate.

Nora [breathlessly]. Torvald—what was that letter?

Helmer. Krogstad's dismissal.

Nora. Call her back, Torvald! There is still time. Oh Torvald, call her back! Do it for my sake—for your own sake—for the children's sake! Do you hear me, Torvald? Call her back! You don't know what that letter can bring upon us.

Helmer. It's too late.

Nora. Yes, it's too late.

Helmer. My dear Nora, I can forgive the anxiety you are in, although really it is an insult to me. It is, indeed. Isn't it an insult to think that I should be afraid of a starving quill-driver's vengeance? But I forgive you nevertheless, because it is such eloquent witness to your great love for me. [Takes her in his arms.] And that is as it should be, my own darling Nora. Come what will, you may be sure I shall have both courage and strength if they be needed. You will see I am man enough to take everything upon myself.

Nora [in a horror-stricken voice]. What do you mean by that?

Helmer. Everything, I say—

Nora [recovering herself]. You will never have to do that.

Helmer. That's right. Well, we will share it, Nora, as man and wife should. That is how it shall be. [Caressing her.] Are you content now? There! There!—not these frightened dove's eyes! The whole thing is only the wildest fancy!—Now, you must go and play through the Tarantella and practise with your tambourine. I shall go into the inner office and shut the door, and I shall hear nothing; you can make as much noise as you please. [Turns back at the door.] And when Rank comes, tell him where he will find me. [Nods to her, takes his papers and goes into his room, and shuts the door after him.]

Nora [bewildered with anxiety, stands as if rooted to the spot, and whispers]. He was capable of doing it. He will do it. He will do it in spite of everything.—No, not that! Never, never! Anything rather than that! Oh, for some help, some way out of it! [The door-bell rings.] Doctor Rank! Anything rather than that—anything, whatever it is! [She puts her hands over her face, pulls herself together, goes to the door and opens it. RANK is standing without, hanging up his coat. During the following dialogue it begins to grow dark.]

Nora. Good day, Doctor Rank. I knew your ring. But you mustn't go in to Torvald now; I think he is busy with something.

Rank. And you?

Nora [brings him in and shuts the door after him]. Oh, you know very well I always have time for you.

Rank. Thank you. I shall make use of as much of it as I can.

Nora. What do you mean by that? As much of it as you can?

Rank. Well, does that alarm you?

Nora. It was such a strange way of putting it. Is anything likely to happen?

Rank. Nothing but what I have long been prepared for. But I certainly didn't expect it to happen so soon.

Nora [gripping him by the arm]. What have you found out? Doctor Rank, you must tell me.

Rank [sitting down by the stove]. It is all up with me. And it can't be helped.

Nora [with a sigh of relief]. Is it about yourself?

Rank. Who else? It is no use lying to one's self. I am the most wretched of all my patients, Mrs Helmer. Lately I have been taking stock of my internal economy. Bankrupt! Probably within a month I shall lie rotting in the churchyard.

Nora. What an ugly thing to say!

Rank. The thing itself is cursedly ugly, and the worst of it is that I shall have to face so much more that is ugly before that. I shall only make one more examination of myself; when I have done that, I shall know pretty certainly when it will be that the horrors of dissolution will begin. There is something I want to tell you. Helmer's refined

nature gives him an unconquerable disgust at everything that is ugly; I won't have him in my sick-room.

Nora. Oh, but, Doctor Rank—

Rank. I won't have him there. Not on any account. I bar my door to him. As soon as I am quite certain that the worst has come, I shall send you my card with a black cross on it, and then you will know that the loathsome end has begun.

Nora. You are quite absurd today. And I wanted you so much to be in a really good humour.

Rank. With death stalking beside me?—To have to pay this penalty for another man's sin? Is there any justice in that? And in every single family, in one way or another, some such inexorable retribution is being exacted—

Nora [putting her hands over her ears]. Rubbish! Do talk of something cheerful.

Rank. Oh, it's a mere laughing matter, the whole thing. My poor innocent spine has to suffer for my father's youthful amusements.

Nora [sitting at the table on the left]. I suppose you mean that he was too partial to asparagus and pate de foie gras, don't you?

Rank. Yes, and to truffles.

Nora. Truffles, yes. And oysters too, I suppose?

Rank. Oysters, of course, that goes without saying.

Nora. And heaps of port and champagne. It is sad that all these nice things should take their revenge on our bones.

Rank. Especially that they should revenge themselves on the unlucky bones of those who have not had the satisfaction of enjoying them.

Nora. Yes, that's the saddest part of it all.

Rank [with a searching look at her]. Hm!—

Nora [after a short pause]. Why did you smile?

Rank. No, it was you that laughed.

Nora. No, it was you that smiled, Doctor Rank!

Rank [rising]. You are a greater rascal than I thought.

Nora. I am in a silly mood today.

Rank. So it seems.

Nora [putting her hands on his shoulders]. Dear, dear Doctor Rank, death mustn't take you away from Torvald and me.

Rank. It is a loss you would easily recover from. Those who are gone are soon forgotten.

Nora [looking at him anxiously]. Do you believe that?

Rank. People form new ties, and then—

Nora. Who will form new ties?

Rank. Both you and Helmer, when I am gone. You yourself are already on the high road to it, I think. What did that Mrs Linde want here last night?

Nora. Oho!—you don't mean to say you are jealous of poor Christine?

Rank. Yes, I am. She will be my successor in this house. When I am done for, this woman will—

Nora. Hush! don't speak so loud. She is in that room.

Rank. Today again. There, you see.

Nora. She has only come to sew my dress for me. Bless my soul, how unreasonable you are! [Sits down on the sofa.] Be nice now, Doctor Rank, and tomorrow you will see how beautifully I shall dance, and you can imagine I am doing it all for you—and for Torvald too, of course. [Takes various things out of the box.] Doctor Rank, come and sit down here, and I will show you something.

Rank [sitting down]. What is it?

Nora. Just look at those!

Rank. Silk stockings.

Nora. Flesh-coloured. Aren't they lovely? It is so dark here now, but tomorrow—. No, no, no! you must only look at the feet. Oh well, you may have leave to look at the legs too.

Rank. Hm!—

Nora. Why are you looking so critical? Don't you think they will fit me?

Rank. I have no means of forming an opinion about that.

Nora [looks at him for a moment]. For shame! [Hits him lightly on the ear with the stockings.] That's to punish you. [Folds them up again.]

Rank. And what other nice things am I to be allowed to see?

Nora. Not a single thing more, for being so naughty. [She looks among the things, humming to herself.]

Rank [after a short silence]. When I am sitting here, talking to you as intimately as this, I cannot imagine for a moment what would have become of me if I had never come into this house.

Nora [smiling]. I believe you do feel thoroughly at home with us.

Rank [in a lower voice, looking straight in front of him]. And to be obliged to leave it all—

Nora. Nonsense, you are not going to leave it.

Rank [as before]. And not be able to leave behind one the slightest token of one's gratitude, scarcely even a fleeting regret—nothing but an empty place which the first comer can fill as well as any other.

Nora. And if I asked you now for a—? No!

Rank. For what?

Nora. For a big proof of your friendship—

Rank. Yes, yes!

Nora. I mean a tremendously big favour—

Rank. Would you really make me so happy for once?

Nora. Ah, but you don't know what it is yet.

Rank. No—but tell me.

Nora. I really can't, Doctor Rank. It is something out of all reason; it means advice, and help, and a favour—

Rank. The bigger a thing it is the better. I can't conceive what it is you mean. Do tell me. Haven't I your confidence?

Nora. More than anyone else. I know you are my truest and best friend, and so I will tell you what it is. Well, Doctor Rank, it is something you must help me to prevent. You know how devotedly, how inexpressibly deeply Torvald loves me; he would never for a moment hesitate to give his life for me.

Rank [leaning towards her]. Nora—do you think he is the only one—?

Nora [with a slight start]. The only one—?

Rank. The only one who would gladly give his life for your sake.

Nora [sadly]. Is that it?

Rank. I was determined you should know it before I went away, and there will never be a better opportunity than this. Now you know it, Nora. And now you know, too, that you can trust me as you would trust no one else.

Nora [rises, deliberately and quietly]. Let me pass.

Rank [makes room for her to pass him, but sits still]. Nora!

Nora [at the hall door]. Helen, bring in the lamp. [Goes over to the stove.] Dear Doctor Rank, that was really horrid of you.

Rank. To have loved you as much as anyone else does? Was that horrid?

Nora. No, but to go and tell me so. There was really no need—

Rank. What do you mean? Did you know—? [MAID enters with lamp, puts it down on the table, and goes out.] Nora—Mrs Helmer—tell me, had you any idea of this?

Nora. Oh, how do I know whether I had or whether I hadn't? I really can't tell you—To think you could be so clumsy, Doctor Rank! We were getting on so nicely.

Rank. Well, at all events you know now that you can command me, body and soul. So won't you speak out?

Nora [looking at him]. After what happened?

Rank. I beg you to let me know what it is.

Nora. I can't tell you anything now.

Rank. Yes, yes. You mustn't punish me in that way. Let me have permission to do for you whatever a man may do.

Nora. You can do nothing for me now. Besides, I really don't need any help at all. You will find that the whole thing is merely fancy on my part. It really is so—of course it is! [Sits down in the rocking-chair, and looks at him with a smile.] You are a nice sort of man, Doctor Rank!—don't you feel ashamed of yourself, now the lamp has come?

Rank. Not a bit. But perhaps I had better go—for ever?

Nora. No, indeed, you shall not. Of course you must come here just as before. You know very well Torvald can't do without you.

Rank. Yes, but you?

Nora. Oh, I am always tremendously pleased when you come.

Rank. It is just that, that put me on the wrong track. You are a riddle to me. I have often thought that you would almost as soon be in my company as in Helmer's.

Nora. Yes—you see there are some people one loves best, and others whom one would almost always rather have as companions.

Rank. Yes, there is something in that.

Nora. When I was at home, of course I loved papa best. But I always thought it tremendous fun if I could steal down into the maids' room, because they never moralised at all, and talked to each other about such entertaining things.

Rank. I see—it is their place I have taken.

Nora [jumping up and going to him]. Oh, dear, nice Doctor Rank, I never meant that at all. But surely you can understand that being with Torvald is a little like being with papa—[Enter MAID from the hall.]

Maid. If you please, ma'am. [Whispers and hands her a card.]

Nora [glancing at the card]. Oh! [Puts it in her pocket.]

Rank. Is there anything wrong?

Nora. No, no, not in the least. It is only something—it is my new dress—

Rank. What? Your dress is lying there.

Nora. Oh, yes, that one; but this is another. I ordered it. Torvald mustn't know about it—

Rank. Oho! Then that was the great secret.

Nora. Of course. Just go in to him; he is sitting in the inner room. Keep him as long as—

Rank. Make your mind easy; I won't let him escape.

[Goes into HELMER'S room.]

Nora [to the MAID]. And he is standing waiting in the kitchen?

Maid. Yes; he came up the back stairs.

Nora. But didn't you tell him no one was in?

Maid. Yes, but it was no good.

Nora. He won't go away?

Maid. No; he says he won't until he has seen you, ma'am.

Nora. Well, let him come in—but quietly. Helen, you mustn't say anything about it to anyone. It is a surprise for my husband.

Maid. Yes, ma'am, I quite understand. [Exit.]

Nora. This dreadful thing is going to happen! It will happen in spite of me! No, no, no, it can't happen—it shan't happen! [She bolts the door of HELMER'S room. The MAID opens the hall door for KROGSTAD and shuts it after him. He is wearing a fur coat, high boots and a fur cap.]

Nora [advancing towards him]. Speak low—my husband is at home.

Krogstad. No matter about that.

Nora. What do you want of me?

Krogstad. An explanation of something.

Nora. Make haste then. What is it?

Krogstad. You know, I suppose, that I have got my dismissal.

Nora. I couldn't prevent it, Mr. Krogstad. I fought as hard as I could on your side, but it was no good.

Krogstad. Does your husband love you so little, then? He knows what I can expose you to, and yet he ventures—

Nora. How can you suppose that he has any knowledge of the sort?

Krogstad. I didn't suppose so at all. It would not be the least like our dear Torvald Helmer to show so much courage—

Nora. Mr. Krogstad, a little respect for my husband, please.

Krogstad. Certainly—all the respect he deserves. But since you have kept the matter so carefully to yourself, I make bold to suppose that you have a little clearer idea, than you had yesterday, of what it actually is that you have done?

Nora. More than you could ever teach me.

Krogstad. Yes, such a bad lawyer as I am.

Nora. What is it you want of me?

Krogstad. Only to see how you were, Mrs Helmer. I have been thinking about you all day long. A mere cashier, a quill-driver, a—well, a man like me—even he has a little of what is called feeling, you know.

Nora. Show it, then; think of my little children.

Krogstad. Have you and your husband thought of mine? But never mind about that. I only wanted to tell you that you need not take this matter too seriously. In the first place there will be no accusation made on my part.

Nora. No, of course not; I was sure of that.

Krogstad. The whole thing can be arranged amicably; there is no reason why anyone should know anything about it. It will remain a secret between us three.

Nora. My husband must never get to know anything about it.

Krogstad. How will you be able to prevent it? Am I to understand that you can pay the balance that is owing?

Nora. No, not just at present.

Krogstad. Or perhaps that you have some expedient for raising the money soon?

Nora. No expedient that I mean to make use of.

Krogstad. Well, in any case, it would have been of no use to you now. If you stood there with ever so much money in your hand, I would never part with your bond.

Nora. Tell me what purpose you mean to put it to.

Krogstad. I shall only preserve it—keep it in my possession. No one who is not concerned in the matter shall have the slightest hint of it. So that if the thought of it has driven you to any desperate resolution—

Nora. It has.

Krogstad. If you had it in your mind to run away from your home—

Nora. I had.

Krogstad. Or even something worse—

Nora. How could you know that?

Krogstad. Give up the idea.

Nora. How did you know I had thought of that?

Krogstad. Most of us think of that at first. I did, too—but I hadn't the courage.

Nora [faintly]. No more had I.

Krogstad [in a tone of relief]. No, that's it, isn't it—you hadn't the courage either?

Nora. No, I haven't—I haven't.

Krogstad. Besides, it would have been a great piece of folly. Once the first storm at home is over—. I have a letter for your husband in my pocket.

Nora. Telling him everything?

Krogstad. In as lenient a manner as I possibly could.

Nora [quickly]. He mustn't get the letter. Tear it up. I will find some means of getting money.

Krogstad. Excuse me, Mrs Helmer, but I think I told you just now—

Nora. I am not speaking of what I owe you. Tell me what sum you are asking my husband for, and I will get the money.

Krogstad. I am not asking your husband for a penny.

Nora. What do you want, then?

Krogstad. I will tell you. I want to rehabilitate myself, Mrs Helmer; I want to get on; and in that your husband must help me. For the last year and a half I have not had a hand in anything dishonourable, amid all that time I have been struggling in most restricted circumstances. I was content to work my way up step by step. Now I am turned out, and I am not going to be satisfied with merely being taken into favour again. I want to get on, I tell you. I want to get into the Bank again, in a higher position. Your husband must make a place for me—

Nora. That he will never do!

Krogstad. He will; I know him; he dare not protest. And as soon as I am in there again with him, then you will see! Within a year I shall be the manager's right hand. It will be Nils Krogstad and not Torvald Helmer who manages the Bank.

Nora. That's a thing you will never see!

Krogstad. Do you mean that you will—?

Nora. I have courage enough for it now.

Krogstad. Oh, you can't frighten me. A fine, spoilt lady like you—

Nora. You will see, you will see.

Krogstad. Under the ice, perhaps? Down into the cold, coal-black water? And then, in the spring, to float up to the surface, all horrible and unrecognisable, with your hair fallen out—

Nora. You can't frighten me.

Krogstad. Nor you me. People don't do such things, Mrs Helmer. Besides, what use would it be? I should have him completely in my power all the same.

Nora. Afterwards? When I am no longer—

Krogstad. Have you forgotten that it is I who have the keeping of your reputation? [NORA stands speechlessly looking at him.] Well, now, I have warned you. Do not do anything foolish. When Helmer has had my letter, I shall expect a message from him. And be sure you remember that it is your husband himself who has forced me into such ways as this again. I will never forgive him for that. Goodbye, Mrs Helmer. [Exit through the hall.]

Nora [goes to the hall door, opens it slightly and listens.] He is going. He is not putting the letter in the box. Oh no, no! that's impossible! [Opens the door by degrees.] What is that? He is standing outside. He is not going downstairs. Is he hesitating? Can he—? [A letter drops into the box; then KROGSTAD'S footsteps are heard, until they die away as he goes downstairs. NORA utters a stifled cry, and runs across the room to the table by the sofa. A short pause.]

Nora. In the letter-box. [Steals across to the hall door.] There it lies—Torvald, Torvald, there is no hope for us now!

[Mrs Linde comes in from the room on the left, carrying the dress.]

Mrs Linde. There, I can't see anything more to mend now. Would you like to try it on—?

Nora [in a hoarse whisper]. Christine, come here.

Mrs Linde [throwing the dress down on the sofa]. What is the matter with you? You look so agitated!

Nora. Come here. Do you see that letter? There, look—you can see it through the glass in the letter-box.

Mrs Linde. Yes, I see it.

Nora. That letter is from Krogstad.

Mrs Linde. Nora—it was Krogstad who lent you the money!

Nora. Yes, and now Torvald will know all about it.

Mrs Linde. Believe me, Nora, that's the best thing for both of you.

Nora. You don't know all. I forged a name.

Mrs Linde. Good heavens—!

Nora. I only want to say this to you, Christine—you must be my witness.

Mrs Linde. Your witness? What do you mean? What am I to—?

Nora. If I should go out of my mind—and it might easily happen—

Mrs Linde. Nora!

Nora. Or if anything else should happen to me—anything, for instance, that might prevent my being here—

Mrs Linde. Nora! Nora! you are quite out of your mind.

Nora. And if it should happen that there were some one who wanted to take all the responsibility, all the blame, you understand—

Mrs Linde. Yes, yes—but how can you suppose—?

Nora. Then you must be my witness, that it is not true, Christine. I am not out of my mind at all; I am in my right senses now, and I tell you no one else has known anything about it; I, and I alone, did the whole thing. Remember that.

Mrs Linde. I will, indeed. But I don't understand all this.

Nora. How should you understand it? A wonderful thing is going to happen!

Mrs Linde. A wonderful thing?

Nora. Yes, a wonderful thing!—But it is so terrible, Christine; it mustn't happen, not for all the world.

Mrs Linde. I will go at once and see Krogstad.

Nora. Don't go to him; he will do you some harm.

Mrs Linde. There was a time when he would gladly do anything for my sake.

Nora. He?

Mrs Linde. Where does he live?

Nora. How should I know—? Yes [feeling in her pocket], here is his card. But the letter, the letter—!

Helmer [calls from his room, knocking at the door]. Nora!
Nora [cries out anxiously]. Oh, what's that? What do you want?

Helmer. Don't be so frightened. We are not coming in; you have locked the door. Are you trying on your dress?

Nora. Yes, that's it. I look so nice, Torvald.

Mrs Linde [who has read the card]. I see he lives at the corner here.

Nora. Yes, but it's no use. It is hopeless. The letter is lying there in the box.

Mrs Linde. And your husband keeps the key?

Nora. Yes, always.

Mrs Linde. Krogstad must ask for his letter back unread, he must find some pretence—

Nora. But it is just at this time that Torvald generally—

Mrs Linde. You must delay him. Go in to him in the meantime. I will come back as soon as I can. [She goes out hurriedly through the hall door.]

Nora [goes to HELMER'S door, opens it and peeps in]. Torvald!

Helmer [from the inner room]. Well? May I venture at last to come into my own room again? Come along, Rank, now you will see— [Halting in the doorway.] But what is this?

Nora. What is what, dear?

Helmer. Rank led me to expect a splendid transformation.

Rank [in the doorway]. I understood so, but evidently I was mistaken.

Nora. Yes, nobody is to have the chance of admiring me in my dress until tomorrow.

Helmer. But, my dear Nora, you look so worn out. Have you been practising too much?

Nora. No, I have not practised at all.

Helmer. But you will need to—

Nora. Yes, indeed I shall, Torvald. But I can't get on a bit without you to help me; I have absolutely forgotten the whole thing.

Helmer. Oh, we will soon work it up again.

Nora. Yes, help me, Torvald. Promise that you will! I am so nervous about it—all the people—. You must give yourself up to me entirely

this evening. Not the tiniest bit of business—you mustn't even take a pen in your hand. Will you promise, Torvald dear?

Helmer. I promise. This evening I will be wholly and absolutely at your service, you helpless little mortal. Ah, by the way, first of all I will just— [Goes towards the hall door.]

Nora. What are you going to do there?

Helmer. Only see if any letters have come.

Nora. No, no! don't do that, Torvald!

Helmer. Why not?

Nora. Torvald, please don't. There is nothing there.

Helmer. Well, let me look. [Turns to go to the letter-box. NORA, at the piano, plays the first bars of the Tarantella. HELMER stops in the doorway.] Aha!

Nora. I can't dance tomorrow if I don't practise with you.

Helmer [going up to her]. Are you really so afraid of it, dear?

Nora. Yes, so dreadfully afraid of it. Let me practise at once; there is time now, before we go to dinner. Sit down and play for me, Torvald dear; criticise me, and correct me as you play.

Helmer. With great pleasure, if you wish me to. [Sits down at the piano.]

Nora [takes out of the box a tambourine and a long variegated shawl. She hastily drapes the shawl round her. Then she springs to the front of the stage and calls out]. Now play for me! I am going to dance!

[HELMER plays and NORA dances. RANK stands by the piano behind HELMER, and looks on.]

Helmer [as he plays]. Slower, slower!

Nora. I can't do it any other way.

Helmer. Not so violently, Nora!

Nora. This is the way.

Helmer [stops playing]. No, no—that is not a bit right.

Nora [laughing and swinging the tambourine]. Didn't I tell you so?

Rank. Let me play for her.

Helmer [getting up]. Yes, do. I can correct her better then.

[RANK sits down at the piano and plays. NORA dances more and

more wildly. HELMER has taken up a position beside the stove, and during her dance gives her frequent instructions. She does not seem to hear him; her hair comes down and falls over her shoulders; she pays no attention to it, but goes on dancing. Enter Mrs Linde.]

Mrs Linde [standing as if spell-bound in the doorway]. Oh!-

Nora [as she dances]. Such fun, Christine!

Helmer. My dear darling Nora, you are dancing as if your life depended on it.

Nora. So it does.

Helmer. Stop, Rank; this is sheer madness. Stop, I tell you! [RANK stops playing, and NORA suddenly stands still. HELMER goes up to her.] I could never have believed it. You have forgotten everything I taught you.

Nora [throwing away the tambourine]. There, you see.

Helmer. You will want a lot of coaching.

Nora. Yes, you see how much I need it. You must coach me up to the last minute. Promise me that, Torvald!

Helmer. You can depend on me.

Nora. You must not think of anything but me, either today or tomorrow; you mustn't open a single letter-not even open the letter-box-

Helmer. Ah, you are still afraid of that fellow-

Nora. Yes, indeed I am.

Helmer. Nora, I can tell from your looks that there is a letter from him lying there.

Nora. I don't know; I think there is; but you must not read anything of that kind now. Nothing horrid must come between us until this is all over.

Rank [whispers to HELMER]. You mustn't contradict her.

Helmer [taking her in his arms]. The child shall have her way. But tomorrow night, after you have danced-

Nora. Then you will be free. [The MAID appears in the doorway to the right.]

Maid. Dinner is served, ma'am.

Nora. We will have champagne, Helen.

Maid. Very good, ma'am. [Exit.

Helmer. Hullo!—are we going to have a banquet?

Nora. Yes, a champagne banquet until the small hours. [Calls out.] And a few macaroons, Helen—lots, just for once!

Helmer. Come, come, don't be so wild and nervous. Be my own little skylark, as you used.

Nora. Yes, dear, I will. But go in now and you too, Doctor Rank. Christine, you must help me to do up my hair.

Rank [whispers to HELMER as they go out]. I suppose there is nothing—she is not expecting anything?

Helmer. Far from it, my dear fellow; it is simply nothing more than this childish nervousness I was telling you of. [They go into the right-hand room.]

Nora. Well!

Mrs Linde. Gone out of town.

Nora. I could tell from your face.

Mrs Linde. He is coming home tomorrow evening. I wrote a note for him.

Nora. You should have let it alone; you must prevent nothing. After all, it is splendid to be waiting for a wonderful thing to happen.

Mrs Linde. What is it that you are waiting for?

Nora. Oh, you wouldn't understand. Go in to them, I will come in a moment. [Mrs Linde goes into the dining-room. NORA stands still for a little while, as if to compose herself. Then she looks at her watch.] Five o'clock. Seven hours until midnight; and then four-and-twenty hours until the next midnight. Then the Tarantella will be over. Twenty-four and seven? Thirty-one hours to live.

Helmer [from the doorway on the right]. Where's my little skylark?

Nora [going to him with her arms outstretched]. Here she is!

ACT III

[THE SAME SCENE.—The table has been placed in the middle of the stage, with chairs around it. A lamp is burning on the table. The door into the hall stands open. Dance music is heard in the room above. Mrs Linde is sitting at the table idly turning over the leaves of a book; she tries to read, but does not seem able to collect her thoughts. Every now and then she listens intently for a sound at the outer door.]

Mrs Linde [looking at her watch]. Not yet—and the time is nearly up. If only he does not—. [Listens again.] Ah, there he is. [Goes into the hall and opens the outer door carefully. Light footsteps are heard on the stairs. She whispers.] Come in. There is no one here.

Krogstad [in the doorway]. I found a note from you at home. What does this mean?

Mrs Linde. It is absolutely necessary that I should have a talk with you.

Krogstad. Really? And is it absolutely necessary that it should be here?

Mrs Linde. It is impossible where I live; there is no private entrance to my rooms. Come in; we are quite alone. The maid is asleep, and the Helmers are at the dance upstairs.

Krogstad [coming into the room]. Are the Helmers really at a dance tonight?

Mrs Linde. Yes, why not?

Krogstad. Certainly—why not?

Mrs Linde. Now, Nils, let us have a talk.

Krogstad. Can we two have anything to talk about?

Mrs Linde. We have a great deal to talk about.

Krogstad. I shouldn't have thought so.

Mrs Linde. No, you have never properly understood me.

Krogstad. Was there anything else to understand except what was obvious to all the world—a heartless woman jilts a man when a more lucrative chance turns up?

Mrs Linde. Do you believe I am as absolutely heartless as all that? And do you believe that I did it with a light heart?

Krogstad. Didn't you?

Mrs Linde. Nils, did you really think that?

Krogstad. If it were as you say, why did you write to me as you did at the time?

Mrs Linde. I could do nothing else. As I had to break with you, it was my duty also to put an end to all that you felt for me.

Krogstad [wringing his hands]. So that was it. And all this—only for the sake of money!

Mrs Linde. You must not forget that I had a helpless mother and two little brothers. We couldn't wait for you, Nils; your prospects seemed hopeless then.

Krogstad. That may be so, but you had no right to throw me over for anyone else's sake.

Mrs Linde. Indeed I don't know. Many a time did I ask myself if I had the right to do it.

Krogstad [more gently]. When I lost you, it was as if all the solid ground went from under my feet. Look at me now—I am a shipwrecked man clinging to a bit of wreckage.

Mrs Linde. But help may be near.

Krogstad. It was near; but then you came and stood in my way.

Mrs Linde. Unintentionally, Nils. It was only today that I learned it was your place I was going to take in the Bank.

Krogstad. I believe you, if you say so. But now that you know it, are you not going to give it up to me?

Mrs Linde. No, because that would not benefit you in the least.

Krogstad. Oh, benefit, benefit—I would have done it whether or no.

Mrs Linde. I have learned to act prudently. Life, and hard, bitter necessity have taught me that.

Krogstad. And life has taught me not to believe in fine speeches.

Mrs Linde. Then life has taught you something very reasonable. But deeds you must believe in?

Krogstad. What do you mean by that?

Mrs Linde. You said you were like a shipwrecked man clinging to some wreckage.

Krogstad. I had good reason to say so.

Mrs Linde. Well, I am like a shipwrecked woman clinging to some wreckage—no one to mourn for, no one to care for.

Krogstad. It was your own choice.

Mrs Linde. There was no other choice—then.

Krogstad. Well, what now?

Mrs Linde. Nils, how would it be if we two shipwrecked people could join forces?

Krogstad. What are you saying?

Mrs Linde. Two on the same piece of wreckage would stand a better chance than each on their own.

Krogstad. Christine I...

Mrs Linde. What do you suppose brought me to town?

Krogstad. Do you mean that you gave me a thought?

Mrs Linde. I could not endure life without work. All my life, as long as I can remember, I have worked, and it has been my greatest and only pleasure. But now I am quite alone in the world—my life is so dreadfully empty and I feel so forsaken. There is not the least pleasure in working for one's self. Nils, give me someone and something to work for.

Krogstad. I don't trust that. It is nothing but a woman's overstrained sense of generosity that prompts you to make such an offer of yourself.

Mrs Linde. Have you ever noticed anything of the sort in me?

Krogstad. Could you really do it? Tell me—do you know all about my past life?

Mrs Linde. Yes.

Krogstad. And do you know what they think of me here?

Mrs Linde. You seemed to me to imply that with me you might have been quite another man.

Krogstad. I am certain of it.

Mrs Linde. Is it too late now?

Krogstad. Christine, are you saying this deliberately? Yes, I am

sure you are. I see it in your face. Have you really the courage, then-?

Mrs Linde. I want to be a mother to someone, and your children need a mother. We two need each other. Nils, I have faith in your real character-I can dare anything together with you.

Krogstad [grasps her hands]. Thanks, thanks, Christine! Now I shall find a way to clear myself in the eyes of the world. Ah, but I forgot-

Mrs Linde [listening]. Hush! The Tarantella! Go, go!

Krogstad. Why? What is it?

Mrs Linde. Do you hear them up there? When that is over, we may expect them back.

Krogstad. Yes, yes-I will go. But it is all no use. Of course you are not aware what steps I have taken in the matter of the Helmers.

Mrs Linde. Yes, I know all about that.

Krogstad. And in spite of that have you the courage to-?

Mrs Linde. I understand very well to what lengths a man like you might be driven by despair.

Krogstad. If I could only undo what I have done!

Mrs Linde. You cannot. Your letter is lying in the letter-box now.

Krogstad. Are you sure of that?

Mrs Linde. Quite sure, but-

Krogstad [with a searching look at her]. Is that what it all means?-that you want to save your friend at any cost? Tell me frankly. Is that it?

Mrs Linde. Nils, a woman who has once sold herself for another's sake, doesn't do it a second time.

Krogstad. I will ask for my letter back.

Mrs Linde. No, no.

Krogstad. Yes, of course I will. I will wait here until Helmer comes; I will tell him he must give me my letter back-that it only concerns my dismissal-that he is not to read it-

Mrs Linde. No, Nils, you must not recall your letter.

Krogstad. But, tell me, wasn't it for that very purpose that you asked me to meet you here?

Mrs Linde. In my first moment of fright, it was. But twenty-four hours have elapsed since then, and in that time I have witnessed incredible things in this house. Helmer must know all about it. This unhappy secret must be disclosed; they must have a complete understanding between them, which is impossible with all this concealment and falsehood going on.

Krogstad. Very well, if you will take the responsibility. But there is one thing I can do in any case, and I shall do it at once.

Mrs Linde [listening]. You must be quick and go! The dance is over; we are not safe a moment longer.

Krogstad. I will wait for you below.

Mrs Linde. Yes, do. You must see me back to my door...

Krogstad. I have never had such an amazing piece of good fortune in my life! [Goes out through the outer door. The door between the room and the hall remains open.]

Mrs Linde [tidying up the room and laying her hat and cloak ready]. What a difference! what a difference! Someone to work for and live for—a home to bring comfort into. That I will do, indeed. I wish they would be quick and come—[Listens.] Ah, there they are now. I must put on my things. [Takes up her hat and cloak. HELMER'S and NORA'S voices are heard outside; a key is turned, and HELMER brings NORA almost by force into the hall. She is in an Italian costume with a large black shawl around her; he is in evening dress, and a black domino which is flying open.]

Nora [hanging back in the doorway, and struggling with him]. No, no, no!—don't take me in. I want to go upstairs again; I don't want to leave so early.

Helmer. But, my dearest Nora—

Nora. Please, Torvald dear—please, please—only an hour more.

Helmer. Not a single minute, my sweet Nora. You know that was our agreement. Come along into the room; you are catching cold standing there. [He brings her gently into the room, in spite of her resistance.]

Mrs Linde. Good evening.

Nora. Christine!

Helmer. You here, so late, Mrs Linde?

Mrs Linde. Yes, you must excuse me; I was so anxious to see Nora in her dress.

Nora. Have you been sitting here waiting for me?

Mrs Linde. Yes, unfortunately I came too late, you had already gone upstairs; and I thought I couldn't go away again without having seen you.

Helmer [taking off NORA'S shawl]. Yes, take a good look at her. I think she is worth looking at. Isn't she charming, Mrs Linde?

Mrs Linde. Yes, indeed she is.

Helmer. Doesn't she look remarkably pretty? Everyone thought so at the dance. But she is terribly self-willed, this sweet little person. What are we to do with her? You will hardly believe that I had almost to bring her away by force.

Nora. Torvald, you will repent not having let me stay, even if it were only for half an hour.

Helmer. Listen to her, Mrs Linde! She had danced her Tarantella, and it had been a tremendous success, as it deserved—although possibly the performance was a trifle too realistic—a little more so, I mean, than was strictly compatible with the limitations of art. But never mind about that! The chief thing is, she had made a success—she had made a tremendous success. Do you think I was going to let her remain there after that, and spoil the effect? No, indeed! I took my charming little Capri maiden—my capricious little Capri maiden, I should say—on my arm; took one quick turn round the room; a curtsy on either side, and, as they say in novels, the beautiful apparition disappeared. An exit ought always to be effective, Mrs Linde; but that is what I cannot make Nora understand. Pooh! this room is hot. [Throws his domino on a chair, and opens the door of his room.] Hullo! it's all dark in here. Oh, of course—excuse me—. [He goes in, and lights some candles.]

Nora [in a hurried and breathless whisper]. Well?

Mrs Linde [in a low voice]. I have had a talk with him.

Nora. Yes, and—

Mrs Linde. Nora, you must tell your husband all about it.

Nora [in an expressionless voice]. I knew it.

Mrs Linde. You have nothing to be afraid of as far as Krogstad is concerned; but you must tell him.

Nora. I won't tell him.

Mrs Linde. Then the letter will.

Nora. Thank you, Christine. Now I know what I must do. Hush—!

Helmer [coming in again]. Well, Mrs Linde, have you admired her?

Mrs Linde. Yes, and now I will say goodnight.

Helmer. What, already? Is this yours, this knitting?

Mrs Linde [taking it]. Yes, thank you, I had very nearly forgotten it.

Helmer. So you knit?

Mrs Linde. Of course.

Helmer. Do you know, you ought to embroider.

Mrs Linde. Really? Why?

Helmer. Yes, it's far more becoming. Let me show you. You hold the embroidery thus in your left hand, and use the needle with the right—like this—with a long, easy sweep. Do you see?

Mrs Linde. Yes, perhaps—

Helmer. But in the case of knitting—that can never be anything but ungraceful; look here—the arms close together, the knitting-needles going up and down—it has a sort of Chinese effect—. That was really excellent champagne they gave us.

Mrs Linde. Well,—goodnight, Nora, and don't be self-willed any more.

Helmer. That's right, Mrs Linde.

Mrs Linde. Goodnight, Mr. Helmer.

Helmer [accompanying her to the door]. Goodnight, goodnight. I hope you will get home all right. I should be very happy to—but you haven't any great distance to go. Goodnight, goodnight. [She goes out; he shuts the door after her, and comes in again.] Ah!—at last we have got rid of her. She is a frightful bore, that woman.

Nora. Aren't you very tired, Torvald?

Helmer. No, not in the least.

Nora. Nor sleepy?

Helmer. Not a bit. On the contrary, I feel extraordinarily lively. And you?—you really look both tired and sleepy.

Nora. Yes, I am very tired. I want to go to sleep at once.

Helmer. There, you see it was quite right of me not to let you stay there any longer.

Nora. Everything you do is quite right, Torvald.

Helmer [kissing her on the forehead]. Now my little skylark is speaking reasonably. Did you notice what good spirits Rank was in this evening?

Nora. Really? Was he? I didn't speak to him at all.

Helmer. And I very little, but I have not for a long time seen him in such good form. [Looks for a while at her and then goes nearer to her.] It is delightful to be at home by ourselves again, to be all alone with you—you fascinating, charming little darling!

Nora. Don't look at me like that, Torvald.

Helmer. Why shouldn't I look at my dearest treasure?—at all the beauty that is mine, all my very own?

Nora [going to the other side of the table]. You mustn't say things like that to me tonight.

Helmer [following her]. You have still got the Tarantella in your blood, I see. And it makes you more captivating than ever. Listen—the guests are beginning to go now. [In a lower voice.] Nora—soon the whole house will be quiet.

Nora. Yes, I hope so.

Helmer. Yes, my own darling Nora. Do you know, when I am out at a party with you like this, why I speak so little to you, keep away from you, and only send a stolen glance in your direction now and then?—do you know why I do that? It is because I make believe to myself that we are secretly in love, and you are my secretly promised bride, and that no one suspects there is anything between us.

Nora. Yes, yes—I know very well your thoughts are with me all the time.

Helmer. And when we are leaving, and I am putting the shawl over your beautiful young shoulders—on your lovely neck—then I imagine

that you are my young bride and that we have just come from the wedding, and I am bringing you for the first time into our home—to be alone with you for the first time—quite alone with my shy little darling! All this evening I have longed for nothing but you. When I watched the seductive figures of the Tarantella, my blood was on fire; I could endure it no longer, and that was why I brought you down so early—

Nora. Go away, Torvald! You must let me go. I won't—

Helmer. What's that? You're joking, my little Nora! You won't—you won't? Am I not your husband—? [A knock is heard at the outer door.]

Nora [starting]. Did you hear—?

Helmer [going into the hall]. Who is it?

Rank [outside]. It is I. May I come in for a moment?

Helmer [in a fretful whisper]. Oh, what does he want now? [Aloud.] Wait a minute! [Unlocks the door.] Come, that's kind of you not to pass by our door.

Rank. I thought I heard your voice, and felt as if I should like to look in. [With a swift glance round.] Ah, yes!—these dear familiar rooms. You are very happy and cosy in here, you two.

Helmer. It seems to me that you looked after yourself pretty well upstairs too.

Rank. Excellently. Why shouldn't I? Why shouldn't one enjoy everything in this world?—at any rate as much as one can, and as long as one can. The wine was capital—

Helmer. Especially the champagne.

Rank. So you noticed that too? It is almost incredible how much I managed to put away!

Nora. Torvald drank a great deal of champagne tonight too.

Rank. Did he?

Nora. Yes, and he is always in such good spirits afterwards.

Rank. Well, why should one not enjoy a merry evening after a well-spent day?

Helmer. Well spent? I am afraid I can't take credit for that.

Rank [clapping him on the back]. But I can, you know!

Nora. Doctor Rank, you must have been occupied with some scientific investigation today.

Rank. Exactly.

Helmer. Just listen!—little Nora talking about scientific investigations!

Nora. And may I congratulate you on the result?

Rank. Indeed you may.

Nora. Was it favourable, then?

Rank. The best possible, for both doctor and patient—certainty.

Nora [quickly and searchingly]. Certainty?

Rank. Absolute certainty. So wasn't I entitled to make a merry evening of it after that?

Nora. Yes, you certainly were, Doctor Rank.

Helmer. I think so too, so long as you don't have to pay for it in the morning.

Rank. Oh well, one can't have anything in this life without paying for it.

Nora. Doctor Rank—are you fond of fancy-dress balls?

Rank. Yes, if there is a fine lot of pretty costumes.

Nora. Tell me—what shall we two wear at the next?

Helmer. Little featherbrain!—are you thinking of the next already?

Rank. We two? Yes, I can tell you. You shall go as a good fairy—

Helmer. Yes, but what do you suggest as an appropriate costume for that?

Rank. Let your wife go dressed just as she is in everyday life.

Helmer. That was really very prettily turned. But can't you tell us what you will be?

Rank. Yes, my dear friend, I have quite made up my mind about that.

Helmer. Well?

Rank. At the next fancy-dress ball I shall be invisible.

Helmer. That's a good joke!

Rank. There is a big black hat—have you never heard of hats that make you invisible? If you put one on, no one can see you.

Helmer [suppressing a smile]. Yes, you are quite right.

Rank. But I am clean forgetting what I came for. Helmer, give me a cigar—one of the dark Havanas.

Helmer. With the greatest pleasure. [Offers him his case.]

Rank [takes a cigar and cuts off the end]. Thanks.

Nora [striking a match]. Let me give you a light.

Rank. Thank you. [She holds the match for him to light his cigar.] And now goodbye!

Helmer. Goodbye, goodbye, dear old man!

Nora. Sleep well, Doctor Rank.

Rank. Thank you for that wish.

Nora. Wish me the same.

Rank. You? Well, if you want me to sleep well! And thanks for the light. [He nods to them both and goes out.]

Helmer [in a subdued voice]. He has drunk more than he ought.

Nora [absently]. Maybe. [HELMER takes a bunch of keys out of his pocket and goes into the hall.] Torvald! what are you going to do there?

Helmer. Emptying the letter-box; it is quite full; there will be no room to put the newspaper in tomorrow morning.

Nora. Are you going to work tonight?

Helmer. You know quite well I'm not. What is this? Someone has been at the lock.

Nora. At the lock—?

Helmer. Yes, someone has. What can it mean? I should never have thought the maid—. Here is a broken hairpin. Nora, it is one of yours.

Nora [quickly]. Then it must have been the children—

Helmer. Then you must get them out of those ways. There, at last I have got it open. [Takes out the contents of the letter-box, and calls to the kitchen.] Helen!—Helen, put out the light over the front door. [Goes back into the room and shuts the door into the hall. He holds out his hand full of letters.] Look at that—look what a heap of them there are. [Turning them over.] What on earth is that?

Nora [at the window]. The letter—No! Torvald, no!

Helmer. Two cards—of Rank's.

Nora. Of Doctor Rank's?

Helmer [looking at them]. Doctor Rank. They were on the top. He must have put them in when he went out.

Nora. Is there anything written on them?

Helmer. There is a black cross over the name. Look there—what an uncomfortable idea! It looks as if he were announcing his own death.

Nora. It is just what he is doing.

Helmer. What? Do you know anything about it? Has he said anything to you?

Nora. Yes. He told me that when the cards came it would be his leave-taking from us. He means to shut himself up and die.

Helmer. My poor old friend! Certainly I knew we should not have him very long with us. But so soon! And so he hides himself away like a wounded animal.

Nora. If it has to happen, it is best it should be without a word—don't you think so, Torvald?

Helmer [walking up and down]. He had so grown into our lives. I can't think of him as having gone out of them. He, with his sufferings and his loneliness, was like a cloudy background to our sunlit happiness. Well, perhaps it is best so. For him, anyway. [Standing still.] And perhaps for us too, Nora. We two are thrown quite upon each other now.[Puts his arms round her.] My darling wife, I don't feel as if I could hold you tight enough. Do you know, Nora, I have often wished that you might be threatened by some great danger, so that I might risk my life's blood, and everything, for your sake.

Nora [disengages herself, and says firmly and decidedly]. Now you must read your letters, Torvald.

Helmer. No, no; not tonight. I want to be with you, my darling wife.

Nora. With the thought of your friend's death—

Helmer. You are right, it has affected us both. Something ugly has come between us—the thought of the horrors of death. We must try and rid our minds of that. Until then—we will each go to our own room.

Nora [hanging on his neck]. Goodnight, Torvald—Goodnight!

Helmer [kissing her on the forehead]. Goodnight, my little

singing-bird. Sleep sound, Nora. Now I will read my letters through. [He takes his letters and goes into his room, shutting the door after him.]

Nora [gropes distractedly about, seizes HELMER'S domino, throws it round her, while she says in quick, hoarse, spasmodic whispers]. Never to see him again. Never! Never! [Puts her shawl over her head.] Never to see my children again either—never again. Never! Never!—Ah! the icy, black water—the unfathomable depths—If only it were over! He has got it now—now he is reading it. Goodbye, Torvald and my children! [She is about to rush out through the hall, when HELMER opens his door hurriedly and stands with an open letter in his hand.]

Helmer. Nora!

Nora. Ah!—

Helmer. What is this? Do you know what is in this letter?

Nora. Yes, I know. Let me go! Let me get out!

Helmer [holding her back]. Where are you going?

Nora [trying to get free]. You shan't save me, Torvald!

Helmer [reeling]. True? Is this true, that I read here? Horrible! No, no—it is impossible that it can be true.

Nora. It is true. I have loved you above everything else in the world.

Helmer. Oh, don't let us have any silly excuses.

Nora [taking a step towards him]. Torvald—!

Helmer. Miserable creature—what have you done?

Nora. Let me go. You shall not suffer for my sake. You shall not take it upon yourself.

Helmer. No tragic airs, please. [Locks the hall door.] Here you shall stay and give me an explanation. Do you understand what you have done? Answer me! Do you understand what you have done?

Nora [looks steadily at him and says with a growing look of coldness in her face]. Yes, now I am beginning to understand thoroughly.

Helmer [walking about the room]. What a horrible awakening! All these eight years—she who was my joy and pride—a hypocrite, a

liar—worse, worse—a criminal! The unutterable ugliness of it all!—For shame! For shame! [NORA is silent and looks steadily at him. He stops in front of her.] I ought to have suspected that something of the sort would happen. I ought to have foreseen it. All your father's want of principle—be silent!—all your father's want of principle has come out in you. No religion, no morality, no sense of duty—. How I am punished for having winked at what he did! I did it for your sake, and this is how you repay me.

Nora. Yes, that's just it.

Helmer. Now you have destroyed all my happiness. You have ruined all my future. It is horrible to think of! I am in the power of an unscrupulous man; he can do what he likes with me, ask anything he likes of me, give me any orders he pleases—I dare not refuse. And I must sink to such miserable depths because of a thoughtless woman!

Nora. When I am out of the way, you will be free.

Helmer. No fine speeches, please. Your father had always plenty of those ready, too. What good would it be to me if you were out of the way, as you say? Not the slightest. He can make the affair known everywhere; and if he does, I may be falsely suspected of having been a party to your criminal action. Very likely people will think I was behind it all—that it was I who prompted you! And I have to thank you for all this—you whom I have cherished during the whole of our married life. Do you understand now what it is you have done for me?

Nora [coldly and quietly]. Yes.

Helmer. It is so incredible that I can't take it in. But we must come to some understanding. Take off that shawl. Take it off, I tell you. I must try and appease him some way or another. The matter must be hushed up at any cost. And as for you and me, it must appear as if everything between us were just as before—but naturally only in the eyes of the world. You will still remain in my house, that is a matter of course. But I shall not allow you to bring up the children; I dare not trust them to you. To think that I should be obliged to say so to one whom I have loved so dearly, and whom I still—. No, that

is all over. From this moment happiness is not the question; all that concerns us is to save the remains, the fragments, the appearance—

[A ring is heard at the front-door bell.]

Helmer [with a start]. What is that? So late! Can the worst—? Can he—? Hide yourself, Nora. Say you are ill.

[NORA stands motionless. HELMER goes and unlocks the hall door.]

Maid [half-dressed, comes to the door]. A letter for the mistress.

Helmer. Give it to me. [Takes the letter, and shuts the door.] Yes, it is from him. You shall not have it; I will read it myself.

Nora. Yes, read it.

Helmer [standing by the lamp]. I scarcely have the courage to do it. It may mean ruin for both of us. No, I must know. [Tears open the letter, runs his eye over a few lines, looks at a paper enclosed, and gives a shout of joy.] Nora! [She looks at him questioningly.] Nora!—No, I must read it once again—. Yes, it is true! I am saved! Nora, I am saved!

Nora. And I?

Helmer. You too, of course; we are both saved, both you and I. Look, he sends you your bond back. He says he regrets and repents—that a happy change in his life—never mind what he says! We are saved, Nora! No one can do anything to you. Oh, Nora, Nora!—no, first I must destroy these hateful things. Let me see—. [Takes a look at the bond.] No, no, I won't look at it. The whole thing shall be nothing but a bad dream to me. [Tears up the bond and both letters, throws them all into the stove, and watches them burn.] There—now it doesn't exist any longer. He says that since Christmas Eve you—. These must have been three dreadful days for you, Nora.

Nora. I have fought a hard fight these three days.

Helmer. And suffered agonies, and seen no way out but—. No, we won't call any of the horrors to mind. We will only shout with joy, and keep saying, "It's all over! It's all over!" Listen to me, Nora. You don't seem to realise that it is all over. What is this?—such a cold, set face! My poor little Nora, I quite understand; you don't feel as if you

could believe that I have forgiven you. But it is true, Nora, I swear it; I have forgiven you everything. I know that what you did, you did out of love for me.

Nora. That is true.

Helmer. You have loved me as a wife ought to love her husband. Only you had not sufficient knowledge to judge of the means you used. But do you suppose you are any the less dear to me, because you don't understand how to act on your own responsibility? No, no; only lean on me; I will advise you and direct you. I should not be a man if this womanly helplessness did not just give you a double attractiveness in my eyes. You must not think anymore about the hard things I said in my first moment of consternation, when I thought everything was going to overwhelm me. I have forgiven you, Nora; I swear to you I have forgiven you.

Nora. Thank you for your forgiveness. [She goes out through the door to the right.]

Helmer. No, don't go-. [Looks in.] What are you doing in there?

Nora [from within]. Taking off my fancy dress.

Helmer [standing at the open door]. Yes, do. Try and calm yourself, and make your mind easy again, my frightened little singing-bird. Be at rest, and feel secure; I have broad wings to shelter you under. [Walks up and down by the door.] How warm and cosy our home is, Nora. Here is shelter for you; here I will protect you like a hunted dove that I have saved from a hawk's claws; I will bring peace to your poor beating heart. It will come, little by little, Nora, believe me. Tomorrow morning you will look upon it all quite differently; soon everything will be just as it was before. Very soon you won't need me to assure you that I have forgiven you; you will yourself feel the certainty that I have done so. Can you suppose I should ever think of such a thing as repudiating you, or even reproaching you? You have no idea what a true man's heart is like, Nora. There is something so indescribably sweet and satisfying, to a man, in the knowledge that he has forgiven his wife—forgiven her freely, and with all his heart. It seems as if that had made her, as it were, doubly his own; he has given her a new life, so to speak; and

she has in a way become both wife and child to him. So you shall be for me after this, my little scared, helpless darling. Have no anxiety about anything, Nora; only be frank and open with me, and I will serve as will and conscience both to you-. What is this? Not gone to bed? Have you changed your things?

Nora [in everyday dress]. Yes, Torvald, I have changed my things now.

Helmer. But what for?—so late as this.

Nora. I shall not sleep tonight.

Helmer. But, my dear Nora—

Nora [looking at her watch]. It is not so very late. Sit down here, Torvald. You and I have much to say to one another. [She sits down at one side of the table.]

Helmer. Nora—what is this?—this cold, set face?

Nora. Sit down. It will take some time; I have a lot to talk over with you.

Helmer [sits down at the opposite side of the table]. You alarm me, Nora!—and I don't understand you.

Nora. No, that is just it. You don't understand me, and I have never understood you either—before tonight. No, you mustn't interrupt me. You must simply listen to what I say. Torvald, this is a settling of accounts.

Helmer. What do you mean by that?

Nora [after a short silence]. Isn't there one thing that strikes you as strange in our sitting here like this?

Helmer. What is that?

Nora. We have been married now eight years. Does it not occur to you that this is the first time we two, you and I, husband and wife, have had a serious conversation?

Helmer. What do you mean by serious?

Nora. In all these eight years—longer than that—from the very beginning of our acquaintance, we have never exchanged a word on any serious subject.

Helmer. Was it likely that I would be continually and forever telling you about worries that you could not help me to bear?

Nora. I am not speaking about business matters. I say that we have never sat down in earnest together to try and get at the bottom of anything.

Helmer. But, dearest Nora, would it have been any good to you?

Nora. That is just it; you have never understood me. I have been greatly wronged, Torvald—first by papa and then by you.

Helmer. What! By us two—by us two, who have loved you better than anyone else in the world?

Nora [shaking her head]. You have never loved me. You have only thought it pleasant to be in love with me.

Helmer. Nora, what do I hear you saying?

Nora. It is perfectly true, Torvald. When I was at home with papa, he told me his opinion about everything, and so I had the same opinions; and if I differed from him I concealed the fact, because he would not have liked it. He called me his doll-child, and he played with me just as I used to play with my dolls. And when I came to live with you—

Helmer. What sort of an expression is that to use about our marriage?

Nora [undisturbed]. I mean that I was simply transferred from papa's hands into yours. You arranged everything according to your own taste, and so I got the same tastes as your else I pretended to, I am really not quite sure which—I think sometimes the one and sometimes the other. When I look back on it, it seems to me as if I had been living here like a poor woman—just from hand to mouth. I have existed merely to perform tricks for you, Torvald. But you would have it so. You and papa have committed a great sin against me. It is your fault that I have made nothing of my life.

Helmer. How unreasonable and how ungrateful you are, Nora! Have you not been happy here?

Nora. No, I have never been happy. I thought I was, but it has never really been so.

Helmer. Not—not happy!

Nora. No, only merry. And you have always been so kind to me. But our home has been nothing but a playroom. I have been your doll-

wife, just as at home I was papa's doll-child; and here the children have been my dolls. I thought it great fun when you played with me, just as they thought it great fun when I played with them. That is what our marriage has been, Torvald.

Helmer. There is some truth in what you say—exaggerated and strained as your view of it is. But for the future it shall be different. Playtime shall be over, and lesson-time shall begin.

Nora. Whose lessons? Mine, or the children's?

Helmer. Both yours and the children's, my darling Nora.

Nora. Alas, Torvald, you are not the man to educate me into being a proper wife for you.

Helmer. And you can say that!

Nora. And I—how am I fitted to bring up the children?

Helmer. Nora!

Nora. Didn't you say so yourself a little while ago—that you dare not trust me to bring them up?

Helmer. In a moment of anger! Why do you pay any heed to that?

Nora. Indeed, you were perfectly right. I am not fit for the task. There is another task I must undertake first. I must try and educate myself—you are not the man to help me in that. I must do that for myself. And that is why I am going to leave you now.

Helmer [springing up]. What do you say?

Nora. I must stand quite alone, if I am to understand myself and everything about me. It is for that reason that I cannot remain with you any longer.

Helmer. Nora, Nora!

Nora. I am going away from here now, at once. I am sure Christine will take me in for the night—

Helmer. You are out of your mind! I won't allow it! I forbid you!

Nora. It is no use forbidding me anything any longer. I will take with me what belongs to myself. I will take nothing from you, either now or later.

Helmer. What sort of madness is this!

Nora. Tomorrow I shall go home—I mean, to my old home. It will be easiest for me to find something to do there.

Helmer. You blind, foolish woman!

Nora. I must try and get some sense, Torvald.

Helmer. To desert your home, your husband and your children!
And you don't consider what people will say!

Nora. I cannot consider that at all. I only know that it is necessary for me.

Helmer. It's shocking. This is how you would neglect your most sacred duties.

Nora. What do you consider my most sacred duties?

Helmer. Do I need to tell you that? Are they not your duties to your husband and your children?

Nora. I have other duties just as sacred.

Helmer. That you have not. What duties could those be?

Nora. Duties to myself.

Helmer. Before all else, you are a wife and a mother.

Nora. I don't believe that any longer. I believe that before all else I am a reasonable human being, just as you are—or, at all events, that I must try and become one. I know quite well, Torvald, that most people would think you right, and that views of that kind are to be found in books; but I can no longer content myself with what most people say, or with what is found in books. I must think over things for myself and get to understand them.

Helmer. Can you not understand your place in your own home? Have you not a reliable guide in such matters as that?—have you no religion?

Nora. I am afraid, Torvald, I do not exactly know what religion is.

Helmer. What are you saying?

Nora. I know nothing but what the clergyman said, when I went to be confirmed. He told us that religion was this, and that, and the other. When I am away from all this, and am alone, I will look into that matter too. I will see if what the clergyman said is true, or at all events if it is true for me.

Helmer. This is unheard of in a girl of your age! But if religion cannot lead you aright, let me try and awaken your conscience. I

suppose you have some moral sense? Or—answer me—am I to think you have none?

Nora. I assure you, Torvald, that is not an easy question to answer. I really don't know. The thing perplexes me altogether. I only know that you and I look at it in quite a different light. I am learning, too, that the law is quite another thing from what I supposed; but I find it impossible to convince myself that the law is right. According to it a woman has no right to spare her old dying father, or to save her husband's life. I can't believe that.

Helmer. You talk like a child. You don't understand the conditions of the world in which you live.

Nora. No, I don't. But now I am going to try. I am going to see if I can make out who is right, the world or I.

Helmer. You are ill, Nora; you are delirious; I almost think you are out of your mind.

Nora. I have never felt my mind so clear and certain as tonight.

Helmer. And is it with a clear and certain mind that you forsake your husband and your children?

Nora. Yes, it is.

Helmer. Then there is only one possible explanation.

Nora. What is that?

Helmer. You do not love me anymore.

Nora. No, that is just it.

Helmer. Nora!—and you can say that?

Nora. It gives me great pain, Torvald, for you have always been so kind to me, but I cannot help it. I do not love you any more.

Helmer [regaining his composure]. Is that a clear and certain conviction too?

Nora. Yes, absolutely clear and certain. That is the reason why I will not stay here any longer.

Helmer. And can you tell me what I have done to forfeit your love?

Nora. Yes, indeed I can. It was tonight, when the wonderful thing did not happen; then I saw you were not the man I had thought you were.

Helmer. Explain yourself better. I don't understand you.

Nora. I have waited so patiently for eight years; for, goodness knows, I knew very well that wonderful things don't happen every day. Then this horrible misfortune came upon me; and then I felt quite certain that the wonderful thing was going to happen at last. When Krogstad's letter was lying out there, never for a moment did I imagine that you would consent to accept this man's conditions. I was so absolutely certain that you would say to him: Publish the thing to the whole world. And when that was done—

Helmer. Yes, what then?—when I had exposed my wife to shame and disgrace?

Nora. When that was done, I was so absolutely certain, you would come forward and take everything upon yourself, and say: I am the guilty one.

Helmer. Nora—!

Nora. You mean that I would never have accepted such a sacrifice on your part? No, of course not. But what would my assurances have been worth against yours? That was the wonderful thing which I hoped for and feared; and it was to prevent that, that I wanted to kill myself.

Helmer. I would gladly work night and day for you, Nora—bear sorrow and want for your sake. But no man would sacrifice his honour for the one he loves.

Nora. It is a thing hundreds of thousands of women have done.

Helmer. Oh, you think and talk like a heedless child.

Nora. Maybe. But you neither think nor talk like the man I could bind myself to. As soon as your fear was over—and it was not fear for what threatened me, but for what might happen to you—when the whole thing was past, as far as you were concerned it was exactly as if nothing at all had happened. Exactly as before, I was your little skylark, your doll, which you would in future treat with doubly gentle care, because it was so brittle and fragile. [Getting up.] Torvald—it was then it dawned upon me that for eight years I had been living here with a strange man, and had borne him three children—. Oh, I can't bear to think of it! I could tear myself into little bits!

Helmer [sadly]. I see, I see. An abyss has opened between us—there is no denying it. But, Nora, would it not be possible to fill it up?

Nora. As I am now, I am no wife for you.

Helmer. I have it in me to become a different man.

Nora. Perhaps—if your doll is taken away from you.

Helmer. But to part!—to part from you! No, no, Nora, I can't understand that idea.

Nora [going out to the right]. That makes it all the more certain that it must be done. [She comes back with her cloak and hat and a small bag which she puts on a chair by the table.]

Helmer. Nora, Nora, not now! Wait until tomorrow.

Nora [putting on her cloak]. I cannot spend the night in a strange man's room.

Helmer. But can't we live here like brother and sister—?

Nora [putting on her hat]. You know very well that would not last long. [Puts the shawl round her.] Goodbye, Torvald. I won't see the little ones. I know they are in better hands than mine. As I am now, I can be of no use to them.

Helmer. But some day, Nora—some day?

Nora. How can I tell? I have no idea what is going to become of me.

Helmer. But you are my wife, whatever becomes of you.

Nora. Listen, Torvald. I have heard that when a wife deserts her husband's house, as I am doing now, he is legally freed from all obligations towards her. In any case, I set you free from all your obligations. You are not to feel yourself bound in the slightest way, any more than I shall. There must be perfect freedom on both sides. See, here is your ring back. Give me mine.

Helmer. That too?

Nora. That too.

Helmer. Here it is.

Nora. That's right. Now it is all over. I have put the keys here. The maids know all about everything in the house—better than I do. Tomorrow, after I have left her, Christine will come here and pack

up my own things that I brought with me from home. I will have them sent after me.

Helmer. All over! All over!—Nora, shall you never think of me again?

Nora. I know I shall often think of you, the children, and this house.

Helmer. May I write to you, Nora?

Nora. No—never. You must not do that.

Helmer. But at least let me send you—

Nora. Nothing—nothing—

Helmer. Let me help you if you are in want.

Nora. No. I can receive nothing from a stranger.

Helmer. Nora—can I never be anything more than a stranger to you?

Nora [taking her bag]. Ah, Torvald, the most wonderful thing of all would have to happen.

Helmer. Tell me what that would be!

Nora. Both you and I would have to be so changed that—. Oh, Torvald, I don't believe any longer in wonderful things happening.

Helmer. But I will believe in it. Tell me! So changed that—?

Nora. That our life together would be a real wedlock. Goodbye. [She goes out through the hall.]

Helmer [sinks down on a chair at the door and buries his face in his hands]. Nora! Nora! [Looks round, and rises.] Empty. She is gone. [A hope flashes across his mind.] The most wonderful thing of all—?

[The sound of a door shutting is heard from below.]

5. The Yellow Wallpaper

It is very seldom that mere ordinary people like John and myself secure ancestral halls for the summer.

A colonial mansion, a hereditary estate, I would say a haunted house, and reach the height of romantic felicity—but that would be asking too much of fate!

Still I will proudly declare that there is something queer about it.

Else, why should it be let so cheaply? And why have stood so long untenanted?

John laughs at me, of course, but one expects that in marriage.

John is practical in the extreme. He has no patience with faith, an intense horror of superstition, and he scoffs openly at any talk of things not to be felt and seen and put down in figures.

John is a physician, and PERHAPS—I would not say it to a living soul, of course, but this is dead paper and a great relief to my mind)—PERHAPS that is one reason I do not get well faster.

You see he does not believe I am sick!

And what can one do?

If a physician of high standing, and one's own husband, assures friends and relatives that there is really nothing the matter with one but temporary nervous depression—a slight hysterical tendency—what is one to do?

My brother is also a physician, and also of high standing, and he says the same thing.

So I take phosphates or phosphites—whichever it is, and tonics, and journeys, and air, and exercise, and am absolutely forbidden to “work” until I am well again.

Personally, I disagree with their ideas.

Personally, I believe that congenial work, with excitement and change, would do me good.

But what is one to do?

I did write for a while in spite of them; but it DOES exhaust me

a good deal—having to be so sly about it, or else meet with heavy opposition.

I sometimes fancy that in my condition if I had less opposition and more society and stimulus—but John says the very worst thing I can do is to think about my condition, and I confess it always makes me feel bad.

So I will let it alone and talk about the house.

The most beautiful place! It is quite alone, standing well back from the road, quite three miles from the village. It makes me think of English places that you read about, for there are hedges and walls and gates that lock, and lots of separate little houses for the gardeners and people.

There is a DELICIOUS garden! I never saw such a garden—large and shady, full of box-bordered paths, and lined with long grape-covered arbors with seats under them.

There were greenhouses, too, but they are all broken now.

There was some legal trouble, I believe, something about the heirs and coheirs; anyhow, the place has been empty for years.

That spoils my ghostliness, I am afraid, but I don't care—there is something strange about the house—I can feel it.

I even said so to John one moonlight evening, but he said what I felt was a DRAUGHT, and shut the window.

I get unreasonably angry with John sometimes. I'm sure I never used to be so sensitive. I think it is due to this nervous condition.

But John says if I feel so, I shall neglect proper self-control; so I take pains to control myself—before him, at least, and that makes me very tired.

I don't like our room a bit. I wanted one downstairs that opened on the piazza and had roses all over the window, and such pretty old-fashioned chintz hangings! but John would not hear of it.

He said there was only one window and not room for two beds, and no near room for him if he took another.

He is very careful and loving, and hardly lets me stir without special direction.

I have a schedule prescription for each hour in the day; he takes all care from me, and so I feel basely ungrateful not to value it more.

He said we came here solely on my account, that I was to have perfect rest and all the air I could get. "Your exercise depends on your strength, my dear," said he, "and your food somewhat on your appetite; but air you can absorb all the time." So we took the nursery at the top of the house.

It is a big, airy room, the whole floor nearly, with windows that look all ways, and air and sunshine galore. It was nursery first and then playroom and gymnasium, I should judge; for the windows are barred for little children, and there are rings and things in the walls.

The paint and paper look as if a boys' school had used it. It is stripped off—the paper—in great patches all around the head of my bed, about as far as I can reach, and in a great place on the other side of the room low down. I never saw a worse paper in my life.

One of those sprawling flamboyant patterns committing every artistic sin.

It is dull enough to confuse the eye in following, pronounced enough to constantly irritate and provoke study, and when you follow the lame uncertain curves for a little distance they suddenly commit suicide—plunge off at outrageous angles, destroy themselves in unheard of contradictions.

The color is repellent, almost revolting; a smouldering unclean yellow, strangely faded by the slow-turning sunlight.

It is a dull yet lurid orange in some places, a sickly sulphur tint in others.

No wonder the children hated it! I should hate it myself if I had to live in this room long.

There comes John, and I must put this away,—he hates to have me write a word.

We have been here two weeks, and I haven't felt like writing before, since that first day.

I am sitting by the window now, up in this atrocious nursery, and there is nothing to hinder my writing as much as I please, save lack of strength.

John is away all day, and even some nights when his cases are serious.

I am glad my case is not serious!

But these nervous troubles are dreadfully depressing.

John does not know how much I really suffer. He knows there is no REASON to suffer, and that satisfies him.

Of course it is only nervousness. It does weigh on me so not to do my duty in any way!

I meant to be such a help to John, such a real rest and comfort, and here I am a comparative burden already!

Nobody would believe what an effort it is to do what little I am able,—to dress and entertain, and order things.

It is fortunate Mary is so good with the baby. Such a dear baby!

And yet I CANNOT be with him, it makes me so nervous.

I suppose John never was nervous in his life. He laughs at me so about this wall-paper!

At first he meant to repaper the room, but afterwards he said that I was letting it get the better of me, and that nothing was worse for a nervous patient than to give way to such fancies.

He said that after the wall-paper was changed it would be the heavy bedstead, and then the barred windows, and then that gate at the head of the stairs, and so on.

“You know the place is doing you good,” he said, “and really, dear, I don’t care to renovate the house just for a three months’ rental.”

“Then do let us go downstairs,” I said, “there are such pretty rooms there.”

Then he took me in his arms and called me a blessed little goose, and said he would go down to the cellar, if I wished, and have it whitewashed into the bargain.

But he is right enough about the beds and windows and things.

It is an airy and comfortable room as any one need wish, and, of course, I would not be so silly as to make him uncomfortable just for a whim.

I’m really getting quite fond of the big room, all but that horrid paper.

Out of one window I can see the garden, those mysterious deepshaded arbors, the riotous old-fashioned flowers, and bushes and gnarly trees.

Out of another I get a lovely view of the bay and a little private wharf belonging to the estate. There is a beautiful shaded lane that runs down there from the house. I always fancy I see people walking in these numerous paths and arbors, but John has cautioned me not to give way to fancy in the least. He says that with my imaginative power and habit of story-making, a nervous weakness like mine is sure to lead to all manner of excited fancies, and that I ought to use my will and good sense to check the tendency. So I try.

I think sometimes that if I were only well enough to write a little it would relieve the press of ideas and rest me.

But I find I get pretty tired when I try.

It is so discouraging not to have any advice and companionship about my work. When I get really well, John says we will ask Cousin Henry and Julia down for a long visit; but he says he would as soon put fireworks in my pillow-case as to let me have those stimulating people about now.

I wish I could get well faster.

But I must not think about that. This paper looks to me as if it KNEW what a vicious influence it had!

There is a recurrent spot where the pattern lolls like a broken neck and two bulbous eyes stare at you upside down.

I get positively angry with the impertinence of it and the everlastingness. Up and down and sideways they crawl, and those absurd, unblinking eyes are everywhere. There is one place where two breadths didn't match, and the eyes go all up and down the line, one a little higher than the other.

I never saw so much expression in an inanimate thing before, and we all know how much expression they have! I used to lie awake as a child and get more entertainment and terror out of blank walls and plain furniture than most children could find in a toy store.

I remember what a kindly wink the knobs of our big, old bureau

used to have, and there was one chair that always seemed like a strong friend.

I used to feel that if any of the other things looked too fierce I could always hop into that chair and be safe.

The furniture in this room is no worse than inharmonious, however, for we had to bring it all from downstairs. I suppose when this was used as a playroom they had to take the nursery things out, and no wonder! I never saw such ravages as the children have made here.

The wall-paper, as I said before, is torn off in spots, and it sticketh closer than a brother—they must have had perseverance as well as hatred.

Then the floor is scratched and gouged and splintered, the plaster itself is dug out here and there, and this great heavy bed which is all we found in the room, looks as if it had been through the wars.

But I don't mind it a bit—only the paper.

There comes John's sister. Such a dear girl as she is, and so careful of me! I must not let her find me writing.

She is a perfect and enthusiastic housekeeper, and hopes for no better profession. I verily believe she thinks it is the writing which made me sick!

But I can write when she is out, and see her a long way off from these windows.

There is one that commands the road, a lovely shaded winding road, and one that just looks off over the country. A lovely country, too, full of great elms and velvet meadows.

This wall-paper has a kind of sub-pattern in a different shade, a particularly irritating one, for you can only see it in certain lights, and not clearly then.

But in the places where it isn't faded and where the sun is just so—I can see a strange, provoking, formless sort of figure, that seems to skulk about behind that silly and conspicuous front design.

There's sister on the stairs!

Well, the Fourth of July is over! The people are gone and I am tired

out. John thought it might do me good to see a little company, so we just had mother and Nellie and the children down for a week.

Of course I didn't do a thing. Jennie sees to everything now.

But it tired me all the same.

John says if I don't pick up faster he shall send me to Weir Mitchell in the fall.

But I don't want to go there at all. I had a friend who was in his hands once, and she says he is just like John and my brother, only more so!

Besides, it is such an undertaking to go so far.

I don't feel as if it was worth while to turn my hand over for anything, and I'm getting dreadfully fretful and querulous.

I cry at nothing, and cry most of the time.

Of course I don't when John is here, or anybody else, but when I am alone.

And I am alone a good deal just now. John is kept in town very often by serious cases, and Jennie is good and lets me alone when I want her to.

So I walk a little in the garden or down that lovely lane, sit on the porch under the roses, and lie down up here a good deal.

I'm getting really fond of the room in spite of the wall-paper. Perhaps BECAUSE of the wall-paper.

It dwells in my mind so!

I lie here on this great immovable bed—it is nailed down, I believe—and follow that pattern about by the hour. It is as good as gymnastics, I assure you. I start, we'll say, at the bottom, down in the corner over there where it has not been touched, and I determine for the thousandth time that I WILL follow that pointless pattern to some sort of a conclusion.

I know a little of the principle of design, and I know this thing was not arranged on any laws of radiation, or alternation, or repetition, or symmetry, or anything else that I ever heard of.

It is repeated, of course, by the breadths, but not otherwise.

Looked at in one way each breadth stands alone, the bloated curves and flourishes—a kind of "debased Romanesque" with

delirium tremens—go waddling up and down in isolated columns of fatuity.

But, on the other hand, they connect diagonally, and the sprawling outlines run off in great slanting waves of optic horror, like a lot of wallowing seaweeds in full chase.

The whole thing goes horizontally, too, at least it seems so, and I exhaust myself in trying to distinguish the order of its going in that direction.

They have used a horizontal breadth for a frieze, and that adds wonderfully to the confusion.

There is one end of the room where it is almost intact, and there, when the crosslights fade and the low sun shines directly upon it, I can almost fancy radiation after all,—the interminable grotesques seem to form around a common centre and rush off in headlong plunges of equal distraction.

It makes me tired to follow it. I will take a nap I guess.

I don't know why I should write this.

I don't want to.

I don't feel able.

And I know John would think it absurd. But I **MUST** say what I feel and think in some way—it is such a relief!

But the effort is getting to be greater than the relief.

Half the time now I am awfully lazy, and lie down ever so much.

John says I musn't lose my strength, and has me take cod liver oil and lots of tonics and things, to say nothing of ale and wine and rare meat.

Dear John! He loves me very dearly, and hates to have me sick. I tried to have a real earnest reasonable talk with him the other day, and tell him how I wish he would let me go and make a visit to Cousin Henry and Julia.

But he said I wasn't able to go, nor able to stand it after I got there; and I did not make out a very good case for myself, for I was crying before I had finished.

It is getting to be a great effort for me to think straight. Just this nervous weakness I suppose.

And dear John gathered me up in his arms, and just carried me upstairs and laid me on the bed, and sat by me and read to me till it tired my head.

He said I was his darling and his comfort and all he had, and that I must take care of myself for his sake, and keep well.

He says no one but myself can help me out of it, that I must use my will and self-control and not let any silly fancies run away with me.

There's one comfort, the baby is well and happy, and does not have to occupy this nursery with the horrid wall-paper.

If we had not used it, that blessed child would have! What a fortunate escape! Why, I wouldn't have a child of mine, an impressionable little thing, live in such a room for worlds.

I never thought of it before, but it is lucky that John kept me here after all, I can stand it so much easier than a baby, you see.

Of course I never mention it to them any more—I am too wise,—but I keep watch of it all the same.

There are things in that paper that nobody knows but me, or ever will.

Behind that outside pattern the dim shapes get clearer every day.

It is always the same shape, only very numerous.

And it is like a woman stooping down and creeping about behind that pattern. I don't like it a bit. I wonder—I begin to think—I wish John would take me away from here!

It is so hard to talk with John about my case, because he is so wise, and because he loves me so.

But I tried it last night.

It was moonlight. The moon shines in all around just as the sun does.

I hate to see it sometimes, it creeps so slowly, and always comes in by one window or another.

John was asleep and I hated to waken him, so I kept still and watched the moonlight on that undulating wall-paper till I felt creepy.

The faint figure behind seemed to shake the pattern, just as if she wanted to get out.

I got up softly and went to feel and see if the paper DID move, and when I came back John was awake.

“What is it, little girl?” he said. “Don’t go walking about like that—you’ll get cold.”

I thought it was a good time to talk, so I told him that I really was not gaining here, and that I wished he would take me away.

“Why darling!” said he, “our lease will be up in three weeks, and I can’t see how to leave before.

“The repairs are not done at home, and I cannot possibly leave town just now. Of course if you were in any danger, I could and would, but you really are better, dear, whether you can see it or not. I am a doctor, dear, and I know. You are gaining flesh and color, your appetite is better, I feel really much easier about you.”

“I don’t weigh a bit more,” said I, “nor as much; and my appetite may be better in the evening when you are here, but it is worse in the morning when you are away!”

“Bless her little heart!” said he with a big hug, “she shall be as sick as she pleases! But now let’s improve the shining hours by going to sleep, and talk about it in the morning!”

“And you won’t go away?” I asked gloomily.

“Why, how can I, dear? It is only three weeks more and then we will take a nice little trip of a few days while Jennie is getting the house ready. Really dear you are better!”

“Better in body perhaps—” I began, and stopped short, for he sat up straight and looked at me with such a stern, reproachful look that I could not say another word.

“My darling,” said he, “I beg of you, for my sake and for our child’s sake, as well as for your own, that you will never for one instant let that idea enter your mind! There is nothing so dangerous, so fascinating, to a temperament like yours. It is a false and foolish fancy. Can you not trust me as a physician when I tell you so?”

So of course I said no more on that score, and we went to sleep before long. He thought I was asleep first, but I wasn’t, and lay there

for hours trying to decide whether that front pattern and the back pattern really did move together or separately.

On a pattern like this, by daylight, there is a lack of sequence, a defiance of law, that is a constant irritant to a normal mind.

The color is hideous enough, and unreliable enough, and infuriating enough, but the pattern is torturing.

You think you have mastered it, but just as you get well underway in following, it turns a back-somersault and there you are. It slaps you in the face, knocks you down, and tramples upon you. It is like a bad dream.

The outside pattern is a florid arabesque, reminding one of a fungus. If you can imagine a toadstool in joints, an interminable string of toadstools, budding and sprouting in endless convolutions—why, that is something like it.

That is, sometimes!

There is one marked peculiarity about this paper, a thing nobody seems to notice but myself, and that is that it changes as the light changes.

When the sun shoots in through the east window—I always watch for that first long, straight ray—it changes so quickly that I never can quite believe it.

That is why I watch it always.

By moonlight—the moon shines in all night when there is a moon—I wouldn't know it was the same paper.

At night in any kind of light, in twilight, candle light, lamplight, and worst of all by moonlight, it becomes bars! The outside pattern I mean, and the woman behind it is as plain as can be.

I didn't realize for a long time what the thing was that showed behind, that dim sub-pattern, but now I am quite sure it is a woman.

By daylight she is subdued, quiet. I fancy it is the pattern that keeps her so still. It is so puzzling. It keeps me quiet by the hour.

I lie down ever so much now. John says it is good for me, and to sleep all I can.

Indeed he started the habit by making me lie down for an hour after each meal.

It is a very bad habit I am convinced, for you see I don't sleep.
And that cultivates deceit, for I don't tell them I'm awake—O no!
The fact is I am getting a little afraid of John.

He seems very queer sometimes, and even Jennie has an inexplicable look.

It strikes me occasionally, just as a scientific hypothesis,—that perhaps it is the paper!

I have watched John when he did not know I was looking, and come into the room suddenly on the most innocent excuses, and I've caught him several times LOOKING AT THE PAPER! And Jennie too. I caught Jennie with her hand on it once.

She didn't know I was in the room, and when I asked her in a quiet, a very quiet voice, with the most restrained manner possible, what she was doing with the paper—she turned around as if she had been caught stealing, and looked quite angry—asked me why I should frighten her so!

Then she said that the paper stained everything it touched, that she had found yellow smooches on all my clothes and John's, and she wished we would be more careful!

Did not that sound innocent? But I know she was studying that pattern, and I am determined that nobody shall find it out but myself!

Life is very much more exciting now than it used to be. You see I have something more to expect, to look forward to, to watch. I really do eat better, and am more quiet than I was.

John is so pleased to see me improve! He laughed a little the other day, and said I seemed to be flourishing in spite of my wall-paper.

I turned it off with a laugh. I had no intention of telling him it was BECAUSE of the wall-paper—he would make fun of me. He might even want to take me away.

I don't want to leave now until I have found it out. There is a week more, and I think that will be enough.

I'm feeling ever so much better! I don't sleep much at night, for it is so interesting to watch developments; but I sleep a good deal in the daytime.

In the daytime it is tiresome and perplexing.

There are always new shoots on the fungus, and new shades of yellow all over it. I cannot keep count of them, though I have tried conscientiously.

It is the strangest yellow, that wall-paper! It makes me think of all the yellow things I ever saw—not beautiful ones like buttercups, but old foul, bad yellow things.

But there is something else about that paper—the smell! I noticed it the moment we came into the room, but with so much air and sun it was not bad. Now we have had a week of fog and rain, and whether the windows are open or not, the smell is here.

It creeps all over the house.

I find it hovering in the dining-room, skulking in the parlor, hiding in the hall, lying in wait for me on the stairs.

It gets into my hair.

Even when I go to ride, if I turn my head suddenly and surprise it—there is that smell!

Such a peculiar odor, too! I have spent hours in trying to analyze it, to find what it smelled like.

It is not bad—at first, and very gentle, but quite the subtlest, most enduring odor I ever met.

In this damp weather it is awful, I wake up in the night and find it hanging over me.

It used to disturb me at first. I thought seriously of burning the house—to reach the smell.

But now I am used to it. The only thing I can think of that it is like is the COLOR of the paper! A yellow smell.

There is a very funny mark on this wall, low down, near the mopboard. A streak that runs round the room. It goes behind every piece of furniture, except the bed, a long, straight, even SMOOCH, as if it had been rubbed over and over.

I wonder how it was done and who did it, and what they did it for. Round and round and round—round and round and round—it makes me dizzy!

I really have discovered something at last.

Through watching so much at night, when it changes so, I have finally found out.

The front pattern DOES move—and no wonder! The woman behind shakes it!

Sometimes I think there are a great many women behind, and sometimes only one, and she crawls around fast, and her crawling shakes it all over.

Then in the very bright spots she keeps still, and in the very shady spots she just takes hold of the bars and shakes them hard.

And she is all the time trying to climb through. But nobody could climb through that pattern—it strangles so; I think that is why it has so many heads.

They get through, and then the pattern strangles them off and turns them upside down, and makes their eyes white!

If those heads were covered or taken off it would not be half so bad.

I think that woman gets out in the daytime!

And I'll tell you why—privately—I've seen her!

I can see her out of every one of my windows!

It is the same woman, I know, for she is always creeping, and most women do not creep by daylight.

I see her on that long road under the trees, creeping along, and when a carriage comes she hides under the blackberry vines.

I don't blame her a bit. It must be very humiliating to be caught creeping by daylight!

I always lock the door when I creep by daylight. I can't do it at night, for I know John would suspect something at once.

And John is so queer now, that I don't want to irritate him. I wish he would take another room! Besides, I don't want anybody to get that woman out at night but myself.

I often wonder if I could see her out of all the windows at once.

But, turn as fast as I can, I can only see out of one at one time.

And though I always see her, she MAY be able to creep faster than I can turn!

I have watched her sometimes away off in the open country, creeping as fast as a cloud shadow in a high wind.

If only that top pattern could be gotten off from the under one! I mean to try it, little by little.

I have found out another funny thing, but I shan't tell it this time! It does not do to trust people too much.

There are only two more days to get this paper off, and I believe John is beginning to notice. I don't like the look in his eyes.

And I heard him ask Jennie a lot of professional questions about me. She had a very good report to give.

She said I slept a good deal in the daytime.

John knows I don't sleep very well at night, for all I'm so quiet!

He asked me all sorts of questions, too, and pretended to be very loving and kind.

As if I couldn't see through him!

Still, I don't wonder he acts so, sleeping under this paper for three months.

It only interests me, but I feel sure John and Jennie are secretly affected by it.

Hurrah! This is the last day, but it is enough. John is to stay in town over night, and won't be out until this evening.

Jennie wanted to sleep with me—the sly thing! but I told her I should undoubtedly rest better for a night all alone.

That was clever, for really I wasn't alone a bit! As soon as it was moonlight and that poor thing began to crawl and shake the pattern, I got up and ran to help her.

I pulled and she shook, I shook and she pulled, and before morning we had peeled off yards of that paper.

A strip about as high as my head and half around the room.

And then when the sun came and that awful pattern began to laugh at me, I declared I would finish it to-day!

We go away to-morrow, and they are moving all my furniture down again to leave things as they were before.

Jennie looked at the wall in amazement, but I told her merrily that I did it out of pure spite at the vicious thing.

She laughed and said she wouldn't mind doing it herself, but I must not get tired.

How she betrayed herself that time!

But I am here, and no person touches this paper but me—not ALIVE!

She tried to get me out of the room—it was too patent! But I said it was so quiet and empty and clean now that I believed I would lie down again and sleep all I could; and not to wake me even for dinner—I would call when I woke.

So now she is gone, and the servants are gone, and the things are gone, and there is nothing left but that great bedstead nailed down, with the canvas mattress we found on it.

We shall sleep downstairs to-night, and take the boat home tomorrow.

I quite enjoy the room, now it is bare again.

How those children did tear about here!

This bedstead is fairly gnawed!

But I must get to work.

I have locked the door and thrown the key down into the front path.

I don't want to go out, and I don't want to have anybody come in, till John comes.

I want to astonish him.

I've got a rope up here that even Jennie did not find. If that woman does get out, and tries to get away, I can tie her!

But I forgot I could not reach far without anything to stand on!

This bed will NOT move!

I tried to lift and push it until I was lame, and then I got so angry I bit off a little piece at one corner—but it hurt my teeth.

Then I peeled off all the paper I could reach standing on the floor. It sticks horribly and the pattern just enjoys it! All those strangled heads and bulbous eyes and waddling fungus growths just shriek with derision!

I am getting angry enough to do something desperate. To jump

out of the window would be admirable exercise, but the bars are too strong even to try.

Besides I wouldn't do it. Of course not. I know well enough that a step like that is improper and might be misconstrued.

I don't like to LOOK out of the windows even—there are so many of those creeping women, and they creep so fast.

I wonder if they all come out of that wall-paper as I did?

But I am securely fastened now by my well-hidden rope—you don't get ME out in the road there!

I suppose I shall have to get back behind the pattern when it comes night, and that is hard!

It is so pleasant to be out in this great room and creep around as I please!

I don't want to go outside. I won't, even if Jennie asks me to.

For outside you have to creep on the ground, and everything is green instead of yellow.

But here I can creep smoothly on the floor, and my shoulder just fits in that long smooch around the wall, so I cannot lose my way.

Why there's John at the door!

It is no use, young man, you can't open it!

How he does call and pound!

Now he's crying for an axe.

It would be a shame to break down that beautiful door!

"John dear!" said I in the gentlest voice, "the key is down by the front steps, under a plantain leaf!"

That silenced him for a few moments.

Then he said—very quietly indeed, "Open the door, my darling!"

"I can't," said I. "The key is down by the front door under a plantain leaf!"

And then I said it again, several times, very gently and slowly, and said it so often that he had to go and see, and he got it of course, and came in. He stopped short by the door.

"What is the matter?" he cried. "For God's sake, what are you doing!"

I kept on creeping just the same, but I looked at him over my shoulder.

“I’ve got out at last,” said I, “in spite of you and Jane. And I’ve pulled off most of the paper, so you can’t put me back!”

Now why should that man have fainted? But he did, and right across my path by the wall, so that I had to creep over him every time!

6. The Birthmark

In the latter part of the last century there lived a man of science, an eminent proficient in every branch of natural philosophy, who not long before our story opens had made experience of a spiritual affinity more attractive than any chemical one. He had left his laboratory to the care of an assistant, cleared his fine countenance from the furnace-smoke, washed the stain of acids from his fingers, and persuaded a beautiful woman to become his wife. In those days, when the comparatively recent discovery of electricity and other kindred mysteries of Nature seemed to open paths into the region of miracle, it was not unusual for the love of science to rival the love of woman in its depth and absorbing energy. The higher intellect, the imagination, the spirit, and even the heart might all find their congenial aliment in pursuits which, as some of their ardent votaries believed, would ascend from one step of powerful intelligence to another, until the philosopher should lay his hand on the secret of creative force and perhaps make new worlds for himself. We know not whether Aylmer possessed this degree of faith in man's ultimate control over nature. He had devoted himself, however, too unreservedly to scientific studies ever to be weakened from them by any second passion. His love for his young wife might prove the stronger of the two; but it could only be by intertwining itself with his love of science and uniting the strength of the latter to his own.

Such a union accordingly took place, and was attended with truly remarkable consequences and a deeply impressive moral. One day, very soon after their marriage, Aylmer sat gazing at his wife with a trouble in his countenance that grew stronger until he spoke.

"Georgiana," said he, "has it never occurred to you that the mark upon your cheek might be removed?"

"No, indeed," said she, smiling; but, perceiving the seriousness of his manner, she blushed deeply. "To tell you the truth, it has been so

often called a charm, that I was simple enough to imagine it might be so.”

“Ah, upon another face perhaps it might,” replied her husband; “but never on yours. No, dearest Georgiana, you came so nearly perfect from the hand of Nature that this slightest possible defect, which we hesitate whether to term a defect or a beauty, shocks me, as being the visible mark of earthly imperfection.”

“Shocks you, my husband!” cried Georgiana, deeply hurt; at first reddening with momentary anger, but then bursting into tears. “Then why did you take me from my mother’s side? You cannot love what shocks you!”

To explain this conversation, it must be mentioned that in the centre of Georgiana’s left cheek there was a singular mark, deeply interwoven, as it were, with the texture and substance of her face. In the usual state of her complexion—a healthy though delicate bloom—the mark wore a tint of deeper crimson, which imperfectly defined its shape amid the surrounding rosiness. When she blushed it gradually became more indistinct, and finally vanished amid the triumphant rush of blood that bathed the whole cheek with its brilliant glow. But if any shifting emotion caused her to turn pale, there was the mark again, a crimson stain upon the snow, in what Aylmer sometimes deemed an almost fearful distinctness. Its shape bore not a little similarity to the human hand, though of the smallest pygmy size. Georgiana’s lovers were wont to say that some fairy at her birth-hour had laid her tiny hand upon the infant’s cheek, and left this impress there in token of the magic endowments that were to give her such sway over all hearts. Many a desperate swain would have risked life for the privilege of pressing his lips to the mysterious hand. It must not be concealed, however, that the impression wrought by this fairy sign-manual varied exceedingly according to the difference of temperament in the beholders. Some fastidious persons—but they were exclusively of her own sex—affirmed that the bloody hand, as they chose to call it, quite destroyed the effect of Georgiana’s beauty and rendered her countenance even hideous. But it would be as reasonable to say that one of those small blue

stains which sometimes occur in the purest statuary marble would convert the Eve of Powers[2] to a monster. Masculine observers, if the birthmark did not heighten their admiration, contented themselves with wishing it away, that the world might possess one living specimen of ideal loveliness without the semblance of a flaw. After his marriage,—for he thought little or nothing of the matter before,—Aylmer discovered that this was the case with himself.

Had she been less beautiful,—if Envy's self could have found aught else to sneer at,—he might have felt his affection heightened by the prettiness of this mimic hand, now vaguely portrayed, now lost, now stealing forth again and glimmering to and fro with every pulse of emotion that throbbed within her heart; but, seeing her otherwise so perfect, he found this one defect grow more and more intolerable with every moment of their united lives. It was the fatal flaw of humanity which Nature, in one shape or another, stamps ineffaceably on all her productions, either to imply that they are temporary and finite, or that their perfection must be wrought by toil and pain. The crimson hand expressed the ineludible gripe in which mortality clutches the highest and purest of earthly mould, degrading them into kindred with the lowest, and even with the very brutes, like whom their visible frames return to dust. In this manner, selecting it as the symbol of his wife's liability to sin, sorrow, decay, and death, Aylmer's sombre imagination was not long in rendering the birthmark a frightful object, causing him more trouble and horror than ever Georgiana's beauty, whether of soul or sense, had given him delight.

At all the seasons which should have been their happiest he invariably, and without intending it, nay, in spite of a purpose to the contrary, reverted to this one disastrous topic. Trifling as it at first appeared, it so connected itself with innumerable trains of thought and modes of feeling that it became the central point of all. With the morning twilight Aylmer opened his eyes upon his wife's face and recognized the symbol of imperfection, and when they sat together at the evening hearth his eyes wandered stealthily to her cheek, and beheld, flickering with the blaze of the wood-fire, the spectral

hand that wrote mortality where he would fain have worshipped, Georgiana soon learned to shudder at his gaze. It needed but a glance with the peculiar expression that his face often wore to change the roses of her cheek into a deathlike paleness, amid which the crimson hand was brought strongly out, like a bas-relief of ruby on the whitest marble.

Late one night, when the lights were growing dim so as hardly to betray the stain on the poor wife's cheek, she herself, for the first time, voluntarily took up the subject.

"Do you remember, my dear Aylmer," said she, with a feeble attempt at a smile, "have you any recollection of a dream last night about this odious hand?"

"None! none whatever!" replied Aylmer, starting; but then he added, in a dry, cold tone, affected for the sake of concealing the real depth of his emotion, "I might well dream of it; for, before I fell asleep, it had taken a pretty firm hold of my fancy."

"And you did dream of it?" continued Georgiana, hastily; for she dreaded lest a gush of tears should interrupt what she had to say. "A terrible dream! I wonder that you can forget it. Is it possible to forget this one expression?—'It is in her heart now; we must have it out!' Reflect, my husband; for by all means I would have you recall that dream."

The mind is in a sad state when Sleep, the all-involving, cannot confine her spectres within the dim region of her sway, but suffers them to break forth, affrighting this actual life with secrets that perchance belong to a deeper one. Aylmer now remembered his dream. He had fancied himself with his servant Aminadab attempting an operation for the removal of the birthmark; but the deeper went the knife, the deeper sank the hand, until at length its tiny grasp appeared to have caught hold of Georgiana's heart; whence, however, her husband was inexorably resolved to cut or wrench it away.

When the dream had shaped itself perfectly in his memory, Aylmer sat in his wife's presence with a guilty feeling. Truth often finds its way to the mind close muffled in robes of sleep, and then

speaks with uncompromising directness of matters in regard to which we practice an unconscious self-deception during our waking moments. Until now he had not been aware of the tyrannizing influence acquired by one idea over his mind, and of the lengths which he might find in his heart to go for the sake of giving himself peace.

“Aylmer,” resumed Georgiana, solemnly, “I know not what may be the cost to both of us to rid me of this fatal birthmark. Perhaps its removal may cause cureless deformity; or it may be the stain goes as deep as life itself. Again; do we know that there is a possibility, on any terms, of unclasping the firm gripe of this little hand which was laid upon me before I came into the world?”

“Dearest Georgiana, I have spent much thought upon the subject,” hastily interrupted Aylmer. “I am convinced of the perfect practicability of its removal.”

“If there be the remotest possibility of it,” continued Georgiana, “let the attempt be made, at whatever risk. Danger is nothing to rue; for life, while this hateful mark makes me the object of your horror and disgust,—life is a burden which I would fling down with joy. Either remove this dreadful hand, or take my wretched life! You have deep science. All the world bears witness of it. You have achieved great wonders. Cannot you remove this little, little mark, which I cover with the tips of two small fingers? Is this beyond your power, for the sake of your own peace, and to save your poor wife from madness?”

“Noblest, dearest, tenderest wife,” cried Aylmer, rapturously, “doubt not my power. I have already given this matter the deepest thought,—thought which might almost have enlightened me to create a being less perfect than yourself. Georgiana, you have led me deeper than ever into the heart of science. I feel myself fully competent to render this dear cheek as faultless as its fellow; and then, most beloved, what will be my triumph when I shall have corrected what Nature left imperfect in her fairest work! Even Pygmalion[3], when his sculptured woman assumed life, felt not greater ecstasy than mine will be.”

“It is resolved, then,” said Georgiana, faintly smiling. “And, Aylmer, spare me not, though you should find the birthmark take refuge in my heart at last.”

Her husband tenderly kissed her cheek,—her right cheek,—not that which bore the impress of the crimson hand.

The next day Aylmer apprised his wife of a plan that he had formed whereby he might have opportunity for the intense thought and constant watchfulness which the proposed operation would require, while Georgiana, likewise, would enjoy the perfect repose essential to its success. They were to seclude themselves in the extensive apartments occupied by Aylmer as a laboratory, and where, during his toilsome youth, he had made discoveries in the elemental powers of nature that had roused the admiration of all the learned societies in Europe. Seated calmly in this laboratory, the pale philosopher had investigated the secrets of the highest cloud-region and of the profoundest mines; he had satisfied himself of the causes that kindled and kept alive the fires of the volcano; and had explained the mystery of fountains, and how it is that they gush forth, some so bright and pure, and others with such rich medicinal virtues, from the dark bosom of the earth. Here, too, at an earlier period, he had studied the wonders of the human frame, and attempted to fathom the very process by which Nature assimilates all her precious influences from earth and air, and from the spiritual world, to create and foster man, her masterpiece. The latter pursuit, however, Aylmer had long laid aside in unwilling recognition of the truth—against which all seekers sooner or later stumble—that our great creative Mother, while she amuses us with apparently working in the broadest sunshine, is yet severely careful to keep her own secrets, and, in spite of her pretended openness, shows us nothing but results. She permits us, indeed, to mar, but seldom to mend, and, like a jealous patentee, on no account to make. Now, however, Aylmer resumed these half-forgotten investigations; not, of course, with such hopes or wishes as first suggested them; but because they involved much physiological truth and lay in the path of his proposed scheme for the treatment of Georgiana.

As he led her over the threshold of the laboratory Georgiana was cold and tremulous. Aylmer looked cheerfully into her face, with intent to reassure her, but was so startled with the intense glow of the birthmark upon the whiteness of her cheek that he could not restrain a strong convulsive shudder. His wife fainted.

“Aminadab! Aminadab!” shouted Aylmer, stamping violently on the floor.

Forthwith there issued from an inner apartment a man of low stature, but bulky frame, with shaggy hair hanging about his visage, which was grimed with the vapors of the furnace. This personage had been Aylmer’s under-worker during his whole scientific career, and was admirably fitted for that office by his great mechanical readiness, and the skill with which, while incapable of comprehending a single principle, he executed all the details of his master’s experiments. With his vast strength, his shaggy hair, his smoky aspect, and the indescribable earthiness that incrustated him, he seemed to represent man’s physical nature; while Aylmer’s slender figure, and pale, intellectual face, were no less apt a type of the spiritual element.

“Throw open the door of the boudoir, Aminadab,” said Aylmer, “and burn a pastil.”

“Yes, master,” answered Aminadab, looking intently at the lifeless form of Georgiana; and then he muttered to himself, “If she were my wife, I’d never part with that birthmark.”

When Georgiana recovered consciousness she found herself breathing an atmosphere of penetrating fragrance, the gentle potency of which had recalled her from her deathlike faintness. The scene around her looked like enchantment. Aylmer had converted those smoky, dingy, sombre rooms, where he had spent his brightest years in recondite[4] pursuits, into a series of beautiful apartments not unfit to be the secluded abode of a lovely woman. The walls were hung with gorgeous curtains, which imparted the combination of grandeur and grace that no other species of adornment can achieve; and, as they fell from the ceiling to the floor, their rich and ponderous folds, concealing all angles and straight lines, appeared

to shut in the scene from infinite space. For aught Georgiana knew, it might be a pavilion among the clouds. And Alymer, excluding the sunshine, which would have interfered with his chemical processes, had supplied its place with perfumed lamps, emitting flames of various hue, but all uniting in a soft, impurpled radiance. He now knelt by his wife's side, watching her earnestly, but without alarm; for he was confident in his science, and felt that he could draw a magic circle round her within which no evil might intrude.

"Where am I? Ah, I remember," said Georgiana, faintly; and she placed her hand over her cheek to hide the terrible mark from her husband's eyes.

"Fear not, dearest!" exclaimed he. "Do not shrink from me! Believe me, Georgiana, I even rejoice in this single imperfection, since it will be such a rapture to remove it."

"O, spare me!" sadly replied his wife. "Pray do not look at it again. I never can forget that convulsive shudder."

In order to soothe Georgiana, and, as it were, to release her mind from the burden of actual things, Aylmer now put in practice some of the light and playful secrets which science had taught him among its profounder lore. Airy figures, absolutely bodiless ideas, and forms of unsubstantial beauty came and danced before her, imprinting their momentary footsteps on beams of light. Though she had some indistinct idea of the method of these optical phenomena, still the illusion was almost perfect enough to warrant the belief that her husband possessed sway over the spiritual world. Then again, when she felt a wish to look forth from her seclusion, immediately, as if her thoughts were answered, the procession of external existence flitted across a screen. The scenery and the figures of actual life were perfectly represented, but with that bewitching yet indescribable difference which always makes a picture, an image, or a shadow so much more attractive than the original. When wearied of this, Aylmer bade her cast her eyes upon a vessel containing a quantity of earth. She did so with little interest at first; but was soon startled to perceive the germ of a plant shooting upward from the soil: Then came the slender stalk; the

leaves gradually unfolded themselves; and amid them was a perfect and lovely flower.

“It is magical!” cried Georgiana. “I dare not touch it.”

“Nay, pluck it,” answered Aylmer,—“pluck it, and inhale its brief perfume while you may. The flower will wither in a few moments and leave nothing save its brown seed-vessels; but thence may be perpetuated a race as ephemeral as itself.”

But Georgiana had no sooner touched the flower than the whole plant suffered a blight, its leaves turning coal black as if by the agency of fire.

“There was too powerful a stimulus,” said Aylmer, thoughtfully.

To make up for this abortive experiment, he proposed to take her portrait by a scientific process of his own invention. It was to be effected by rays of light striking upon a polished plate of metal. Georgiana assented; but, on looking at the result, was affrighted to find the features of the portrait blurred and indefinable; while the minute figure of a hand appeared where the cheek should have been. Aylmer snatched the metallic plate and threw it into a jar of corrosive[5] acid.

Soon, however, he forgot these mortifying failures. In the intervals of study and chemical experiment he came to her flushed and exhausted, but seemed invigorated by her presence, and spoke in glowing language of the resources of his art. He gave a history of the long dynasty of the alchemists, who spent so many ages in quest of the universal solvent by which the golden principle might be elicited from all things vile and base, Aylmer appeared to believe that, by the plainest scientific logic, it was altogether within the limits of possibility to discover this long-sought medium. “But,” he added, “a philosopher who should go deep enough to acquire the power would attain too lofty a wisdom to stoop to the exercise of it.” Not less singular were his opinions in regard to the elixir vitae[6]. He more than intimated that it was at his option to concoct a liquid that should prolong life for years, perhaps interminably; but that it would produce a discord in nature which all the world, and chiefly the quaffer of the immortal nostrum, would find cause to curse.

“Aylmer, are you in earnest?” asked Georgiana, looking at him with amazement and fear. “It is terrible to possess such power, or even to dream of possessing it.”

“O, do not tremble, my love,” said her husband. “I would not wrong either you or myself by working such inharmonious effects upon our lives; but I would have you consider how trifling, in comparison, is the skill requisite to remove this little hand.”

At the mention of the birthmark, Georgiana, as usual, shrank as if a red-hot iron had touched her cheek.

Again Aylmer applied himself to his labors. She could hear his voice in the distant furnace-room giving directions to Aminadab, whose harsh, uncouth, misshapen tones were audible in response, more like the grunt or growl of a brute than human speech. After hours of absence, Aylmer reappeared and proposed that she should now examine his cabinet of chemical products and natural treasures of the earth. Among the former he showed her a small vial, in which, he remarked, was contained a gentle yet most powerful fragrance, capable of impregnating all the breezes that blow across a kingdom. They were of inestimable value, the contents of that little vial; and, as he said so, he threw some of the perfume into the air and filled the room with piercing and invigorating delight.

“And what is this?” asked Georgiana, pointing to a small crystal globe containing a gold-colored liquid. “It is so beautiful to the eye that I could imagine it the elixir of life.”

“In one sense it is,” replied Aylmer; “or rather, the elixir of immortality. It is the most precious poison that ever was concocted in this world. By its aid I could apportion the lifetime of any mortal at whom you might point your finger. The strength of the dose would determine whether he were to linger out years, or drop dead in the midst of a breath. No king on his guarded throne could keep his life if I, in my private station, should deem that the welfare of millions justified me in depriving him of it.”

“Why do you keep such a terrific drug?” inquired Georgiana, in horror.

“Do not mistrust me, dearest,” said her husband, smiling; “its

virtuous potency is yet greater than its harmful one. But see! here is a powerful cosmetic. With a few drops of this in a vase of water, freckles may be washed away as easily as the hands are cleansed. A stronger infusion[7] would take the blood out of the cheek, and leave the rosiest beauty a pale ghost.”

“Is it with this lotion that you intend to bathe my cheek?” asked Georgiana, anxiously.

“O no,” hastily replied her husband; “this is merely superficial. Your case demands a remedy that shall go deeper.”

In his interviews with Georgiana, Aylmer generally made minute inquiries as to her sensations, and whether the confinement of the rooms and the temperature of the atmosphere agreed with her. These questions had such a particular drift that Georgiana began to conjecture that she was already subjected to certain physical influences, either breathed in with the fragrant air or taken with her food. She fancied likewise, but it might be altogether fancy, that there was a stirring up of her system,—a strange, indefinite sensation creeping through her veins, and tingling, half painfully, half pleurably, at her heart. Still, whenever she dared to look into the mirror, there she beheld herself pale as a white rose and with the crimson birthmark stamped upon her cheek. Not even Aylmer now hated it so much as she.

To dispel the tedium of the hours which her husband found it necessary to devote to the processes of combination and analysis, Georgiana turned over the volumes of his scientific library. In many dark old tomes she met with chapters full of romance and poetry. They were the works of the philosophers of the Middle Ages, such as Albertus Magnus[8], Cornelius Agrippa[9], Paracelsus[10], and the famous friar who created the prophetic Brazen Head. All these antique naturalists stood in advance of their centuries, yet were imbued with some of their credulity, and therefore were believed, and perhaps imagined themselves to have acquired from the investigation of nature a power above nature, and from physics a sway over the spiritual world. Hardly less curious and imaginative were the early volumes of the Transactions of the Royal Society[11],

in which the members, knowing little of the limits of natural possibility, were continually recording wonders or proposing methods whereby wonders might be wrought.

But, to Georgiana, the most engrossing volume was a large folio from her husband's own hand, in which he had recorded every experiment of his scientific career, its original aim, the methods adopted for its development, and its final success or failure, with the circumstances to which either event was attributable. The book, in truth; was both the history and emblem of his ardent, ambitious, imaginative, yet practical and laborious life. He handled physical details as if there were nothing beyond them; yet spiritualized them all, and redeemed himself from materialism by his strong and eager aspiration towards the infinite. In his grasp the veriest clod of earth assumed a soul. Georgiana, as she read, revered Aylmer and loved him more profoundly than ever, but with a less entire dependence on his judgment than heretofore. Much as he had accomplished, she could not but observe that his most splendid successes were almost invariably failures, if compared with the ideal at which he aimed. His brightest diamonds were the merest pebbles, and felt to be so by himself, in comparison with the inestimable gems which lay hidden beyond his reach. The volume, rich with achievements that had won renown for its author, was yet as melancholy a record as over mortal hand had penned. It was the sad confession and continual exemplification of the shortcomings of the composite man, the spirit burdened with clay and working in matter, and of the despair that assails the higher nature at finding itself so miserably thwarted by the earthly part. Perhaps every man of genius, in whatever sphere, might recognize the image of his own experience in Aylmer's journal.

So deeply did these reflections affect Georgiana that she laid her face upon the open volume and burst into tears. In this situation she was found by her husband.

"It is dangerous to read in a sorcerer's books," said he with a smile, though his countenance was uneasy and displeased. "Georgiana,

there are pages in that volume which I can scarcely glance over and keep my senses. Take heed lest it prove as detrimental to you.”

“It has made me worship you more than ever.” said she.

“Ah, wait for this one success,” rejoined he, “then worship me if you will. I shall deem myself hardly unworthy of it. But come. I have sought you for the luxury of your voice. Sing to me, dearest.”

So she poured out the liquid music of her voice to quench the thirst of his spirit. He then took his leave with a boyish exuberance of gayety, assuring her that her seclusion would endure but a little longer, and that the result was already certain. Scarcely had he departed when Georgiana felt irresistibly impelled to follow him. She had forgotten to inform Aylmer of a symptom which for two or three hours past had begun to excite her attention. It was a sensation in the fatal birthmark, not painful, but which induced a restlessness throughout her system. Hastening after her husband, she intruded for the first time into the laboratory.

The first thing that struck her eye was the furnace, that hot and feverish worker, with the intense glow of its fire, which by the quantities of soot clustered above it seemed to have been burning for ages. There was a distilling-apparatus in full operation. Around the room were retorts, tubes, cylinders, crucibles, and other apparatus of chemical research. An electrical machine stood ready for immediate use. The atmosphere felt oppressively close, and was tainted with gaseous odors which had been tormented forth by the processes of science. The severe and homely simplicity of the apartment, with its naked walls and brick pavement, looked strange, accustomed as Georgiana had become to the fantastic elegance of her boudoir. But what chiefly, indeed almost solely, drew her attention, was the aspect of Aylmer himself.

He was pale as death, anxious and absorbed, and hung over the furnace as if it depended upon his utmost watchfulness whether the liquid which it was distilling should be the draught of immortal happiness or misery. How different from the sanguine and joyous mien that he had assumed for Georgiana’s encouragement!

“Carefully now, Aminadab; carefully, thou human machine;

carefully, thou man of clay,” muttered Aylmer, more to himself than his assistant. “Now, If there be a thought too much or too little, it is all over.”

“Ho! ho!” mumbled Aminadab. “Look, master! look!”

Aylmer raised his eyes hastily, and at first reddened, then grew paler than ever, on beholding Georgiana. He rushed towards her and seized her arm with a gripe that left the print of his fingers upon it.

“Why do you come thither? Have you no trust in your husband?” cried he, impetuously. “Would you throw the blight of that fatal birthmark over my labors? It is not well done. Go, prying woman! go!”

“Nay, Aylmer,” said Georgiana with the firmness of which she possessed no stinted endowment, “it is not you that have a right to complain. You mistrust your wife; you have concealed the anxiety with which you watch the development of this experiment. Think not so unworthily of me, my husband. Tell me all the risk we run, and fear not that I shall shrink: for my share in it is far less than your own.”

“No, no, Georgiana!” said Aylmer, impatiently; “it must not be.”

“I submit,” replied she, calmly. “And, Aylmer, I shall quaff whatever draught you bring me; but it will be on the same principle that would induce me to take a dose of poison if offered by your hand.”

“My noble wife,” said Aylmer, deeply moved, “I knew not the height and depth of your nature until now. Nothing shall be concealed. Know, then, that this crimson hand, superficial as it seems, has clutched its grasp into your being with a strength of which I had no previous conception. I have already administered agents powerful enough to do aught except to change your entire physical system. Only one thing remains to be tried. If that fail us we are ruined.”

“Why did you hesitate to tell me this?” asked she.

“Because, Georgiana,” said Aylmer, in a low voice, “there is danger.”

“Danger? There is but one danger,—that this horrible stigma shall be left upon my cheek!” cried Georgiana. “Remove it, remove it, whatever be the cost, or we shall both go mad!”

“Heaven knows your words are too true,” said Aylmer, sadly. “And

now, dearest, return to your boudoir. In a little while all will be tested.”

He conducted her back and took leave of her with a solemn tenderness which spoke far more than his words how much was now at stake. After his departure Georgiana became rapt in musings. She considered the character of Aylmer, and did it completer justice than at any previous moment. Her heart exulted, while it trembled, at his honorable love,—so pure and lofty that it would accept nothing less than perfection, nor miserably make itself contented with an earthlier nature than he had dreamed of. She felt how much more precious was such a sentiment than that meaner kind which would have borne with the imperfection for her sake, and have been guilty of treason to holy love by degrading its perfect idea to the level of the actual; and with her whole spirit she prayed that, for a single moment, she might satisfy his highest and deepest conception. Longer than one moment she well knew it could not be; for his spirit was ever on the march, ever ascending, and each instant required something that was beyond the scope of the instant before.

The sound of her husband’s footsteps aroused her. He bore a crystal goblet containing a liquor colorless as water, but bright enough to be the draught of immortality. Aylmer was pale; but it seemed rather the consequence of a highly wrought state of mind and tension of spirit than of fear or doubt.

“The concoction of the draught has been perfect,” said he, in answer to Georgiana’s look. “Unless all my science have deceived me, it cannot fail.”

“Save on your account, my dearest Aylmer,” observed his wife, “I might wish to put off this birthmark of mortality by relinquishing mortality itself in preference to any other mode. Life is but a sad possession to those who have attained precisely the degree of moral advancement at which I stand. Were I weaker and blinder, it might be happiness. Were I stronger, it might be endured hopefully. But, being what I find myself, methinks I am of all mortals the most fit to die.”

“You are fit for heaven without tasting death!” replied her husband. “But why do we speak of dying? The draught cannot fail. Behold its effect upon this plant.”

On the window-seat there stood a geranium diseased with yellow blotches, which had overspread all its leaves. Aylmer poured a small quantity of the liquid upon the soil in which it grew. In a little time, when the roots of the plant had taken up the moisture, the unsightly blotches began to be extinguished in a living verdure.

“There needed no proof,” said Georgiana, quietly. “Give me the goblet.

I joyfully stake all upon your word.”

“Drink, then, thou lofty creature!” exclaimed Aylmer, with fervid admiration. “There is no taint of imperfection on thy spirit. Thy sensible frame, too, shall soon be all perfect.”

She quaffed the liquid and returned the goblet to his hand.

“It is grateful,” said she, with a placid smile. “Methinks it is like water from a heavenly fountain; for it contains I know not what of unobtrusive fragrance and deliciousness. It allays a feverish thirst that had parched me for many days. Now, dearest, let me sleep. My earthly senses are closing over my spirit like the leaves around the heart of a rose at sunset.”

She spoke the last words with a gentle reluctance, as if it required almost more energy than she could command to pronounce the faint and lingering syllables. Scarcely had they loitered through her lips ere she was lost in slumber. Aylmer sat by her side, watching her aspect with the emotions proper to a man, the whole value of whose existence was involved in the process now to be tested. Mingled with this mood, however, was the philosophic investigation characteristic of the man of science. Not the minutest symptom escaped him. A heightened flush of the cheek, a slight irregularity of breath, a quiver of the eyelid, a hardly perceptible tremor through the frame,—such were the details which, as the moments passed, he wrote down, in his folio volume. Intense thought had set its stamp upon every previous page of that volume; but the thoughts of years were all concentrated upon the last.

While thus employed, he failed not to gaze often at the fatal hand, and not without a shudder. Yet once, by a strange and unaccountable impulse, he pressed it with his lips. His spirit recoiled, however, in the very act; and Georgiana, out of the midst of her deep sleep, moved uneasily, and murmured, as if in remonstrance. Again Aylmer resumed, his watch. Nor was it without avail. The crimson hand, which at first had been strongly visible upon the marble paleness of Georgiana's cheek, now grew more faintly outlined. She remained not less pale than ever; but the birthmark, with every breath that came and went, lost somewhat of its former distinctness. Its presence had been awful; its departure was more awful still. Watch the stain of the rainbow fading out of the sky, and you will know how that mysterious symbol passed away.

"By Heaven! it is well-nigh gone!" said Aylmer to himself, in almost irrepressible ecstasy. "I can scarcely trace it now. Success! success! And now it is like the faintest rose color. The lightest flush of blood across her cheek would overcome it. But she is so pale!"

He drew aside the window-curtain and suffered the light of natural day to fall into the room and rest upon her cheek. At the same time he heard a gross, hoarse chuckle, which he had long known as his servant Aminadab's expression of delight.

"Ah, clod! ah, earthly mass!" cried Aylmer, laughing in a sort of frenzy, "you have served me well! Matter and spirit—earth and heaven—have both done their part in this! Laugh, thing of the senses! You have earned the right to laugh."

These exclamations broke Georgiana's sleep. She slowly unclosed her eyes and gazed into the mirror which her husband had arranged for that purpose. A faint smile flitted over her lips when she recognized how barely perceptible was now that crimson hand which had once blazed forth with such disastrous brilliancy as to scare away all their happiness. But then her eyes sought Aylmer's face with a trouble and anxiety that he could by no means account for.

"My poor Aylmer!" murmured she.

“Poor? Nay, richest, happiest, most favored!” exclaimed he. “My peerless bride, it is successful! You are perfect!”

“My poor Aylmer,” she repeated, with a more than human tenderness, “you have aimed loftily; you have done nobly. Do not repent that, with so high and pure a feeling, you have rejected the best the earth could offer. Aylmer, dearest Aylmer, I am dying!”

Alas! it was too true! The fatal hand had grappled with the mystery of life, and was the bond by which an angelic spirit kept itself in union with a mortal frame. As the last crimson tint of the birthmark—that sole token of human imperfection—faded from her cheek, the parting breath of the now perfect woman passed into the atmosphere, and her soul, lingering a moment, near her husband, took its heavenward flight. Then a hoarse, chuckling laugh was heard again! Thus ever does the gross fatality of earth exult in its invariable triumph over the immortal essence which, in this dim sphere of half-development, demands the completeness of a higher state. Yet, had Aylmer reached a profounder wisdom, he need not thus have flung away the happiness which would have woven his mortal life of the selfsame texture with the celestial. The momentary circumstance was too strong for him; he failed to look beyond the shadowy scope of time, and, living once for all in eternity, to find the perfect future in the present.

NOTES

[1] Published in the March, 1843, number of *The Pioneer*, edited by J. R. Lowell. Republished in *Mosses from an Old Manse* in 1846.

[2] 154:29 “Eve,” of Powers. A noted American sculptor (1805–1873). “Eve,” “The Fisher Boy,” and “America” are some of his chief works.

[3] 168:28 Pygmalion. A sculptor and king of Cyprus.

[4] 181:16 *recondite*. Abstruse or secret.

[5] 168:27 *corrosive*. Destructive of tissue.

[6] 184:12 *vitae*. Of life.

[7] 166:3 *infusion*. The act of pouring in.

[8] 167:1 Albertus Magnus. A famous scholastic philosopher and member of the Dominican order (1193-1280).

[9] 167:1 Cornelius Agrippa. A German philosopher and student of alchemy and magic (1486-1535).

[10] 167:1 Paracelsus. A German-Swiss physician, and alchemist (1492-1541).

[11] 167:10 Royal Society. An association for the advancement of science, founded in London a little before 1660.

7. The Story of an Hour

Knowing that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with a heart trouble, great care was taken to break to her as gently as possible the news of her husband's death.

It was her sister Josephine who told her, in broken sentences; veiled hints that revealed in half concealing. Her husband's friend Richards was there, too, near her. It was he who had been in the newspaper office when intelligence of the railroad disaster was received, with Brently Mallard's name leading the list of "killed." He had only taken the time to assure himself of its truth by a second telegram, and had hastened to forestall any less careful, less tender friend in bearing the sad message.

She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same, with a paralyzed inability to accept its significance. She wept at once, with sudden, wild abandonment, in her sister's arms. When the storm of grief had spent itself she went away to her room alone. She would have no one follow her.

There stood, facing the open window, a comfortable, roomy armchair. Into this she sank, pressed down by a physical exhaustion that haunted her body and seemed to reach into her soul.

She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which someone was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves.

There were patches of blue sky showing here and there through the clouds that had met and piled one above the other in the west facing her window.

She sat with her head thrown back upon the cushion of the chair, quite motionless, except when a sob came up into her throat and

shook her, as a child who has cried itself to sleep continues to sob in its dreams.

She was young, with a fair, calm face, whose lines bespoke repression and even a certain strength. But now there was a dull stare in her eyes, whose gaze was fixed away off yonder on one of those patches of blue sky. It was not a glance of reflection, but rather indicated a suspension of intelligent thought.

There was something coming to her and she was waiting for it, fearfully. What was it? She did not know; it was too subtle and elusive to name. But she felt it, creeping out of the sky, reaching toward her through the sounds, the scents, the color that filled the air.

Now her bosom rose and fell tumultuously. She was beginning to recognize this thing that was approaching to possess her, and she was striving to beat it back with her will—as powerless as her two white slender hands would have been. When she abandoned herself a little whispered word escaped her slightly parted lips. She said it over and over under the breath: “free, free, free!” The vacant stare and the look of terror that had followed it went from her eyes. They stayed keen and bright. Her pulses beat fast, and the coursing blood warmed and relaxed every inch of her body.

She did not stop to ask if it were or were not a monstrous joy that held her. A clear and exalted perception enabled her to dismiss the suggestion as trivial. She knew that she would weep again when she saw the kind, tender hands folded in death; the face that had never looked save with love upon her, fixed and gray and dead. But she saw beyond that bitter moment a long procession of years to come that would belong to her absolutely. And she opened and spread her arms out to them in welcome.

There would be no one to live for during those coming years; she would live for herself. There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow-creature. A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination.

And yet she had loved him—sometimes. Often she had not. What did it matter! What could love, the unsolved mystery, count for in the face of this possession of self-assertion which she suddenly recognized as the strongest impulse of her being!

“Free! Body and soul free!” she kept whispering.

Josephine was kneeling before the closed door with her lips to the keyhole, imploring for admission. “Louise, open the door! I beg; open the door—you will make yourself ill. What are you doing, Louise? For heaven’s sake open the door.”

“Go away. I am not making myself ill.” No; she was drinking in a very elixir of life through that open window.

Her fancy was running riot along those days ahead of her. Spring days, and summer days, and all sorts of days that would be her own. She breathed a quick prayer that life might be long. It was only yesterday she had thought with a shudder that life might be long.

She arose at length and opened the door to her sister’s importunities. There was a feverish triumph in her eyes, and she carried herself unwittingly like a goddess of Victory. She clasped her sister’s waist, and together they descended the stairs. Richards stood waiting for them at the bottom.

Someone was opening the front door with a latchkey. It was Brently Mallard who entered, a little travel-stained, composedly carrying his grip-sack and umbrella. He had been far from the scene of the accident, and did not even know there had been one. He stood amazed at Josephine’s piercing cry; at Richards’ quick motion to screen him from the view of his wife.

When the doctors came they said she had died of heart disease—of the joy that kills.

8. Bernice Bobs Her Hair

I

After dark on Saturday night one could stand on the first tee of the golf-course and see the country-club windows as a yellow expanse over a very black and wavy ocean. The waves of this ocean, so to speak, were the heads of many curious caddies, a few of the more ingenious chauffeurs, the golf professional's deaf sister—and there were usually several stray, diffident waves who might have rolled inside had they so desired. This was the gallery.

The balcony was inside. It consisted of the circle of wicker chairs that lined the wall of the combination clubroom and ballroom. At these Saturday-night dances it was largely feminine; a great babel of middle-aged ladies with sharp eyes and icy hearts behind lorgnettes and large bosoms. The main function of the balcony was critical, it occasionally showed grudging admiration, but never approval, for it is well known among ladies over thirty-five that when the younger set dance in the summer-time it is with the very worst intentions in the world, and if they are not bombarded with stony eyes stray couples will dance weird barbaric interludes in the corners, and the more popular, more dangerous, girls will sometimes be kissed in the parked limousines of unsuspecting dowagers.

But, after all, this critical circle is not close enough to the stage to see the actors' faces and catch the subtler byplay. It can only frown and lean, ask questions and make satisfactory deductions from its set of postulates, such as the one which states that every young man with a large income leads the life of a hunted partridge. It never really appreciates the drama of the shifting, semi-cruel world of adolescence. No; boxes, orchestra-circle, principals, and chorus be represented by the medley of faces and voices that sway to the plaintive African rhythm of Dyer's dance orchestra.

From sixteen-year-old Otis Ormonde, who has two more years at Hill School, to G. Reece Stoddard, over whose bureau at home hangs a Harvard law diploma; from little Madeleine Hogue, whose hair still feels strange and uncomfortable on top of her head, to Bessie MacRae, who has been the life of the party a little too long—more than ten years—the medley is not only the centre of the stage but contains the only people capable of getting an unobstructed view of it.

With a flourish and a bang the music stops. The couples exchange artificial, effortless smiles, facetiously repeat “*la-de-da-da dum-dum*,” and then the clatter of young feminine voices soars over the burst of clapping.

A few disappointed stags caught in midfloor as they had been about to cut in subsided listlessly back to the walls, because this was not like the riotous Christmas dances—these summer hops were considered just pleasantly warm and exciting, where even the younger marrieds rose and performed ancient waltzes and terrifying fox trots to the tolerant amusement of their younger brothers and sisters.

Warren McIntyre, who casually attended Yale, being one of the unfortunate stags, felt in his dinner-coat pocket for a cigarette and strolled out onto the wide, semidark veranda, where couples were scattered at tables, filling the lantern-hung night with vague words and hazy laughter. He nodded here and there at the less absorbed and as he passed each couple some half-forgotten fragment of a story played in his mind, for it was not a large city and every one was Who’s Who to every one else’s past. There, for example, were Jim Strain and Ethel Demorest, who had been privately engaged for three years. Every one knew that as soon as Jim managed to hold a job for more than two months she would marry him. Yet how bored they both looked, and how wearily Ethel regarded Jim sometimes, as if she wondered why she had trained the vines of her affection on such a wind-shaken poplar.

Warren was nineteen and rather pitying with those of his friends who hadn’t gone East to college. But, like most boys, he bragged

tremendously about the girls of his city when he was away from it. There was Genevieve Ormonde, who regularly made the rounds of dances, house-parties, and football games at Princeton, Yale, Williams, and Cornell; there was black-eyed Roberta Dillon, who was quite as famous to her own generation as Hiram Johnson or Ty Cobb; and, of course, there was Marjorie Harvey, who besides having a fairylike face and a dazzling, bewildering tongue was already justly celebrated for having turned five cart-wheels in succession during the last pump-and-slipper dance at New Haven.

Warren, who had grown up across the street from Marjorie, had long been “crazy about her.” Sometimes she seemed to reciprocate his feeling with a faint gratitude, but she had tried him by her infallible test and informed him gravely that she did not love him. Her test was that when she was away from him she forgot him and had affairs with other boys. Warren found this discouraging, especially as Marjorie had been making little trips all summer, and for the first two or three days after each arrival home he saw great heaps of mail on the Harveys’ hall table addressed to her in various masculine handwritings. To make matters worse, all during the month of August she had been visited by her cousin Bernice from Eau Claire, and it seemed impossible to see her alone. It was always necessary to hunt round and find some one to take care of Bernice. As August waned this was becoming more and more difficult.

Much as Warren worshipped Marjorie he had to admit that Cousin Bernice was sorta dopeless. She was pretty, with dark hair and high color, but she was no fun on a party. Every Saturday night he danced a long arduous duty dance with her to please Marjorie, but he had never been anything but bored in her company.

“Warren”—a soft voice at his elbow broke in upon his thoughts, and he turned to see Marjorie, flushed and radiant as usual. She laid a hand on his shoulder and a glow settled almost imperceptibly over him.

“Warren,” she whispered “do something for me—dance with Bernice. She’s been stuck with little Otis Ormonde for almost an hour.”

Warren's glow faded.

"Why—sure," he answered half-heartedly.

"You don't mind, do you? I'll see that you don't get stuck."

"Sall right."

Marjorie smiled—that smile that was thanks enough.

"You're an angel, and I'm obliged loads."

With a sigh the angel glanced round the veranda, but Bernice and Otis were not in sight. He wandered back inside, and there in front of the women's dressing-room he found Otis in the centre of a group of young men who were convulsed with laughter. Otis was brandishing a piece of timber he had picked up, and discoursing volubly.

"She's gone in to fix her hair," he announced wildly. "I'm waiting to dance another hour with her."

Their laughter was renewed.

"Why don't some of you cut in?" cried Otis resentfully. "She likes more variety."

"Why, Otis," suggested a friend "you've just barely got used to her."

"Why the two-by-four, Otis?" inquired Warren, smiling.

"The two-by-four? Oh, this? This is a club. When she comes out I'll hit her on the head and knock her in again."

Warren collapsed on a settee and howled with glee.

"Never mind, Otis," he articulated finally. "I'm relieving you this time."

Otis simulated a sudden fainting attack and handed the stick to Warren.

"If you need it, old man," he said hoarsely.

No matter how beautiful or brilliant a girl may be, the reputation of not being frequently cut in on makes her position at a dance unfortunate. Perhaps boys prefer her company to that of the butterflies with whom they dance a dozen times an but, youth in this jazz-nourished generation is temperamentally restless, and the idea of fox-trotting more than one full fox trot with the same girl is distasteful, not to say odious. When it comes to several dances and

the intermissions between she can be quite sure that a young man, once relieved, will never tread on her wayward toes again.

Warren danced the next full dance with Bernice, and finally, thankful for the intermission, he led her to a table on the veranda. There was a moment's silence while she did unimpressive things with her fan.

"It's hotter here than in Eau Claire," she said.

Warren stifled a sigh and nodded. It might be for all he knew or cared. He wondered idly whether she was a poor conversationalist because she got no attention or got no attention because she was a poor conversationalist.

"You going to be here much longer?" he asked and then turned rather red. She might suspect his reasons for asking.

"Another week," she answered, and stared at him as if to lunge at his next remark when it left his lips.

Warren fidgeted. Then with a sudden charitable impulse he decided to try part of his line on her. He turned and looked at her eyes.

"You've got an awfully kissable mouth," he began quietly.

This was a remark that he sometimes made to girls at college proms when they were talking in just such half dark as this. Bernice distinctly jumped. She turned an ungraceful red and became clumsy with her fan. No one had ever made such a remark to her before.

"Fresh!"—the word had slipped out before she realized it, and she bit her lip. Too late she decided to be amused, and offered him a flustered smile.

Warren was annoyed. Though not accustomed to have that remark taken seriously, still it usually provoked a laugh or a paragraph of sentimental banter. And he hated to be called fresh, except in a joking way. His charitable impulse died and he switched the topic.

"Jim Strain and Ethel Demorest sitting out as usual," he commented.

This was more in Bernice's line, but a faint regret mingled with her relief as the subject changed. Men did not talk to her about kissable

mouths, but she knew that they talked in some such way to other girls.

“Oh, yes,” she said, and laughed. “I hear they’ve been mooning around for years without a red penny. Isn’t it silly?”

Warren’s disgust increased. Jim Strain was a close friend of his brother’s, and anyway he considered it bad form to sneer at people for not having money. But Bernice had had no intention of sneering. She was merely nervous.

II

When Marjorie and Bernice reached home at half after midnight they said good night at the top of the stairs. Though cousins, they were not intimates. As a matter of fact Marjorie had no female intimates—she considered girls stupid. Bernice on the contrary all through this parent-arranged visit had rather longed to exchange those confidences flavored with giggles and tears that she considered an indispensable factor in all feminine intercourse. But in this respect she found Marjorie rather cold; felt somehow the same difficulty in talking to her that she had in talking to men. Marjorie never giggled, was never frightened, seldom embarrassed, and in fact had very few of the qualities which Bernice considered appropriately and blessedly feminine.

As Bernice busied herself with tooth-brush and paste this night she wondered for the hundredth time why she never had any attention when she was away from home. That her family were the wealthiest in Eau Claire; that her mother entertained tremendously, gave little diners for her daughter before all dances and bought her a car of her own to drive round in, never occurred to her as factors in her home-town social success. Like most girls she had been brought up on the warm milk prepared by Annie Fellows Johnston and on novels in which the female was beloved because of

certain mysterious womanly qualities, always mentioned but never displayed.

Bernice felt a vague pain that she was not at present engaged in being popular. She did not know that had it not been for Marjorie's campaigning she would have danced the entire evening with one man; but she knew that even in Eau Claire other girls with less position and less pulchritude were given a much bigger rush. She attributed this to something subtly unscrupulous in those girls. It had never worried her, and if it had her mother would have assured her that the other girls cheapened themselves and that men really respected girls like Bernice.

She turned out the light in her bathroom, and on an impulse decided to go in and chat for a moment with her aunt Josephine, whose light was still on. Her soft slippers bore her noiselessly down the carpeted hall, but hearing voices inside she stopped near the partly open door. Then she caught her own name, and without any definite intention of eavesdropping lingered—and the thread of the conversation going on inside pierced her consciousness sharply as if it had been drawn through with a needle.

"She's absolutely hopeless!" It was Marjorie's voice. "Oh, I know what you're going to say! So many people have told you how pretty and sweet she is, and how she can cook! What of it? She has a bum time. Men don't like her."

"What's a little cheap popularity?"

Mrs. Harvey sounded annoyed.

"It's everything when you're eighteen," said Marjorie emphatically. "I've done my best. I've been polite and I've made men dance with her, but they just won't stand being bored. When I think of that gorgeous coloring wasted on such a ninny, and think what Martha Carey could do with it—oh!"

"There's no courtesy these days."

Mrs. Harvey's voice implied that modern situations were too much for her. When she was a girl all young ladies who belonged to nice families had glorious times.

"Well," said Marjorie, "no girl can permanently bolster up a lame-

duck visitor, because these days it's every girl for herself. I've even tried to drop hints about clothes and things, and she's been furious—given me the funniest looks. She's sensitive enough to know she's not getting away with much, but I'll bet she consoles herself by thinking that she's very virtuous and that I'm too gay and fickle and will come to a bad end. All unpopular girls think that way. Sour grapes! Sarah Hopkins refers to Genevieve and Roberta and me as gardenia girls! I'll bet she'd give ten years of her life and her European education to be a gardenia girl and have three or four men in love with her and be cut in on every few feet at dances."

"It seems to me," interrupted Mrs. Harvey rather wearily, "that you ought to be able to do something for Bernice. I know she's not very vivacious."

Marjorie groaned.

"Vivacious! Good grief! I've never heard her say anything to a boy except that it's hot or the floor's crowded or that she's going to school in New York next year. Sometimes she asks them what kind of car they have and tells them the kind she has. Thrilling!"

There was a short silence and then Mrs. Harvey took up her refrain:

"All I know is that other girls not half so sweet and attractive get partners. Martha Carey, for instance, is stout and loud, and her mother is distinctly common. Roberta Dillon is so thin this year that she looks as though Arizona were the place for her. She's dancing herself to death."

"But, mother," objected Marjorie impatiently, "Martha is cheerful and awfully witty and an awfully slick girl, and Roberta's a marvellous dancer. She's been popular for ages!"

Mrs. Harvey yawned.

"I think it's that crazy Indian blood in Bernice," continued Marjorie. "Maybe she's a reversion to type. Indian women all just sat round and never said anything."

"Go to bed, you silly child," laughed Mrs. Harvey. "I wouldn't have told you that if I'd thought you were going to remember it. And I think most of your ideas are perfectly idiotic," she finished sleepily.

There was another silence, while Marjorie considered whether or not convincing her mother was worth the trouble. People over forty can seldom be permanently convinced of anything. At eighteen our convictions are hills from which we look; at forty-five they are caves in which we hide.

Having decided this, Marjorie said good night. When she came out into the hall it was quite empty.

III

While Marjorie was breakfasting late next day Bernice came into the room with a rather formal good morning, sat down opposite, stared intently over and slightly moistened her lips.

“What’s on your mind?” inquired Marjorie, rather puzzled.

Bernice paused before she threw her hand-grenade.

“I heard what you said about me to your mother last night.”

Marjorie was startled, but she showed only a faintly heightened color and her voice was quite even when she spoke.

“Where were you?”

“In the hall. I didn’t mean to listen—at first.”

After an involuntary look of contempt Marjorie dropped her eyes and became very interested in balancing a stray corn-flake on her finger.

“I guess I’d better go back to Eau Claire—if I’m such a nuisance.” Bernice’s lower lip was trembling violently and she continued on a wavering note: “I’ve tried to be nice, and—and I’ve been first neglected and then insulted. No one ever visited me and got such treatment.”

Marjorie was silent.

“But I’m in the way, I see. I’m a drag on you. Your friends don’t like me.” She paused, and then remembered another one of her grievances. “Of course I was furious last week when you tried to hint

to me that that dress was unbecoming. Don't you think I know how to dress myself?"

"No," murmured less than half-aloud.

"What?"

"I didn't hint anything," said Marjorie succinctly. "I said, as I remember, that it was better to wear a becoming dress three times straight than to alternate it with two frights."

"Do you think that was a very nice thing to say?"

"I wasn't trying to be nice." Then after a pause: "When do you want to go?"

Bernice drew in her breath sharply.

"Oh!" It was a little half-cry.

Marjorie looked up in surprise.

"Didn't you say you were going?"

"Yes, but——"

"Oh, you were only bluffing!"

They stared at each other across the breakfast-table for a moment. Misty waves were passing before Bernice's eyes, while Marjorie's face wore that rather hard expression that she used when slightly intoxicated undergraduate's were making love to her.

"So you were bluffing," she repeated as if it were what she might have expected.

Bernice admitted it by bursting into tears. Marjorie's eyes showed boredom.

"You're my cousin," sobbed Bernice. "I'm v-v-visiting you. I was to stay a month, and if I go home my mother will know and she'll wah-wonder——"

Marjorie waited until the shower of broken words collapsed into little snuffles.

"I'll give you my month's allowance," she said coldly, "and you can spend this last week anywhere you want. There's a very nice hotel——"

Bernice's sobs rose to a flute note, and rising of a sudden she fled from the room.

An hour later, while Marjorie was in the library absorbed in

composing one of those non-committal marvelously elusive letters that only a young girl can write, Bernice reappeared, very red-eyed, and consciously calm. She cast no glance at Marjorie but took a book at random from the shelf and sat down as if to read. Marjorie seemed absorbed in her letter and continued writing. When the clock showed noon Bernice closed her book with a snap.

“I suppose I’d better get my railroad ticket.”

This was not the beginning of the speech she had rehearsed upstairs, but as Marjorie was not getting her cues—wasn’t urging her to be reasonable; it’s an a mistake—it was the best opening she could muster.

“Just wait till I finish this letter,” said Marjorie without looking round. “I want to get it off in the next mail.”

After another minute, during which her pen scratched busily, she turned round and relaxed with an air of “at your service.” Again Bernice had to speak.

“Do you want me to go home?”

“Well,” said Marjorie, considering, “I suppose if you’re not having a good time you’d better go. No use being miserable.”

“Don’t you think common kindness—?”

“Oh, please don’t quote ‘Little Women!’” cried Marjorie impatiently. “That’s out of style.”

“You think so?”

“Heavens, yes! What modern girl could live like those inane females?”

“They were the models for our mothers.”

Marjorie laughed.

“Yes, they were—not! Besides, our mothers were all very well in their way, but they know very little about their daughters’ problems.”

Bernice drew herself up.

“Please don’t talk about my mother.”

Marjorie laughed.

“I don’t think I mentioned her.”

Bernice felt that she was being led away from her subject.

“Do you think you’ve treated me very well?”

"I've done my best. You're rather hard material to work with."

The lids of Bernice's eyes reddened.

"I think you're hard and selfish, and you haven't a feminine quality in you."

"Oh, my Lord!" cried Marjorie in desperation "You little nut! Girls like you are responsible for all the tiresome colorless marriages; all those ghastly inefficiencies that pass as feminine qualities. What a blow it must be when a man with imagination marries the beautiful bundle of clothes that he's been building ideals round, and finds that she's just a weak, whining, cowardly mass of affectations!"

Bernice's mouth had slipped half open.

"The womanly woman!" continued Marjorie. "Her whole early life is occupied in whining criticisms of girls like me who really do have a good time."

Bernice's jaw descended farther as Marjorie's voice rose.

"There's some excuse for an ugly girl whining. If I'd been irretrievably ugly I'd never have forgiven my parents for bringing me into the world. But you're starting life without any handicap—" Marjorie's little fist clinched, "If you expect me to weep with you you'll be disappointed. Go or stay, just as you like." And picking up her letters she left the room.

Bernice claimed a headache and failed to appear at luncheon. They had a *matinée* date for the afternoon, but the headache persisting, Marjorie made explanation to a not very downcast boy. But when she returned late in the afternoon she found Bernice with a strangely set face waiting for her in her bedroom.

"I've decided," began Bernice without preliminaries, "that maybe you're right about things—possibly not. But if you'll tell me why your friends aren't—aren't interested in me I'll see if I can do what you want me to."

Marjorie was at the mirror shaking down her hair.

"Do you mean it?"

"Yes."

"Without reservations? Will you do exactly what I say?"

"Well, I—"

“Well nothing! Will you do exactly as I say?”

“If they’re sensible things.”

“They’re not! You’re no case for sensible things.”

“Are you going to make—to recommend—?”

“Yes, everything. If I tell you to take boxing-lessons you’ll have to do it. Write home and tell your mother you’re going’ to stay another two weeks.

“If you’ll tell me—?”

“All right—I’ll just give you a few examples now. First you have no ease of manner. Why? Because you’re never sure about your personal appearance. When a girl feels that she’s perfectly groomed and dressed she can forget that part of her. That’s charm. The more parts of yourself you can afford to forget the more charm you have.”

“Don’t I look all right?”

“No; for instance you never take care of your eyebrows. They’re black and lustrous, but by leaving them straggly they’re a blemish. They’d be beautiful if you’d take care of them in one-tenth the time you take doing nothing. You’re going to brush them so that they’ll grow straight.”

Bernice raised the brows in question.

“Do you mean to say that men notice eyebrows?”

“Yes—subconsciously. And when you go home you ought to have your teeth straightened a little. It’s almost imperceptible, still—?”

“But I thought,” interrupted Bernice in bewilderment, “that you despised little dainty feminine things like that.”

“I hate dainty minds,” answered Marjorie. “But a girl has to be dainty in person. If she looks like a million dollars she can talk about Russia, ping-pong, or the League of Nations and get away with it.”

“What else?”

“Oh, I’m just beginning! There’s your dancing.”

“Don’t I dance all right?”

“No, you don’t—you lean on a man; yes, you do—ever so slightly. I noticed it when we were dancing together yesterday. And you dance standing up straight instead of bending over a little. Probably some old lady on the side-line once told you that you looked so dignified

that way. But except with a very small girl it's much harder on the man, and he's the one that counts."

"Go on." Bernice's brain was reeling.

"Well, you've got to learn to be nice to men who are sad birds. You look as if you'd been insulted whenever you're thrown with any except the most popular boys. Why, Bernice, I'm cut in on every few feet—and who does most of it? Why, those very sad birds. No girl can afford to neglect them. They're the big part of any crowd. Young boys too shy to talk are the very best conversational practice. Clumsy boys are the best dancing practice. If you can follow them and yet look graceful you can follow a baby tank across a barb-wire sky-scraper."

Bernice sighed profoundly, but Marjorie was not through.

"If you go to a dance and really amuse, say, three sad birds that dance with you; if you talk so well to them that they forget they're stuck with you, you've done something. They'll come back next time, and gradually so many sad birds will dance with you that the attractive boys will see there's no danger of being stuck—then they'll dance with you."

"Yes," agreed Bernice faintly. "I think I begin to see."

"And finally," concluded Marjorie, "poise and charm will just come. You'll wake up some morning knowing you've attained it and men will know it too."

Bernice rose.

"It's been awfully kind of you—but nobody's ever talked to me like this before, and I feel sort of startled."

Marjorie made no answer but gazed pensively at her own image in the mirror.

"You're a peach to help me," continued Bernice.

Still Marjorie did not answer, and Bernice thought she had seemed too grateful.

"I know you don't like sentiment," she said timidly.

Marjorie turned to her quickly.

"Oh, I wasn't thinking about that. I was considering whether we hadn't better bob your hair."

Bernice collapsed backward upon the bed.

IV

On the following Wednesday evening there was a dinner-dance at the country club. When the guests strolled in Bernice found her place-card with a slight feeling of irritation. Though at her right sat G. Reece Stoddard, a most desirable and distinguished young bachelor, the all-important left held only Charley Paulson. Charley lacked height, beauty, and social shrewdness, and in her new enlightenment Bernice decided that his only qualification to be her partner was that he had never been stuck with her. But this feeling of irritation left with the last of the soup-plates, and Marjorie's specific instruction came to her. Swallowing her pride she turned to Charley Paulson and plunged.

"Do you think I ought to bob my hair, Mr. Charley Paulson?"

Charley looked up in surprise.

"Why?"

"Because I'm considering it. It's such a sure and easy way of attracting attention."

Charley smiled pleasantly. He could not know this had been rehearsed. He replied that he didn't know much about bobbed hair. But Bernice was there to tell him.

"I want to be a society vampire, you see," she announced coolly, and went on to inform him that bobbed hair was the necessary prelude. She added that she wanted to ask his advice, because she had heard he was so critical about girls.

Charley, who knew as much about the psychology of women as he did of the mental states of Buddhist contemplatives, felt vaguely flattered.

"So I've decided," she continued, her voice rising slightly, "that early next week I'm going down to the Sevier Hotel barber-shop,

sit in the first chair, and get my hair bobbed.” She faltered noticing that the people near her had paused in their conversation and were listening; but after a confused second Marjorie’s coaching told, and she finished her paragraph to the vicinity at large. “Of course I’m charging admission, but if you’ll all come down and encourage me I’ll issue passes for the inside seats.”

There was a ripple of appreciative laughter, and under cover of it G. Reece Stoddard leaned over quickly and said close to her ear: “I’ll take a box right now.”

She met his eyes and smiled as if he had said something surprisingly brilliant.

“Do you believe in bobbed hair?” asked G. Reece in the same undertone.

“I think it’s unmoral,” affirmed Bernice gravely. “But, of course, you’ve either got to amuse people or feed ’em or shock ’em.” Marjorie had culled this from Oscar Wilde. It was greeted with a ripple of laughter from the men and a series of quick, intent looks from the girls. And then as though she had said nothing of wit or moment Bernice turned again to Charley and spoke confidentially in his ear.

“I want to ask you your opinion of several people. I imagine you’re a wonderful judge of character.”

Charley thrilled faintly—paid her a subtle compliment by overturning her water.

Two hours later, while Warren McIntyre was standing passively in the stag line abstractedly watching the dancers and wondering whither and with whom Marjorie had disappeared, an unrelated perception began to creep slowly upon him—a perception that Bernice, cousin to Marjorie, had been cut in on several times in the past five minutes. He closed his eyes, opened them and looked again. Several minutes back she had been dancing with a visiting boy, a matter easily accounted for; a visiting boy would know no better. But now she was dancing with some one else, and there was Charley Paulson headed for her with enthusiastic determination in his eye. Funny—Charley seldom danced with more than three girls an evening.

Warren was distinctly surprised when—the exchange having been effected—the man relieved proved to be none other than G. Reece Stoddard himself. And G. Reece seemed not at all jubilant at being relieved. Next time Bernice danced near, Warren regarded her intently. Yes, she was pretty, distinctly pretty; and to-night her face seemed really vivacious. She had that look that no woman, however histrionically proficient, can successfully counterfeit—she looked as if she were having a good time. He liked the way she had her hair arranged, wondered if it was brilliantine that made it glisten so. And that dress was becoming—a dark red that set off her shadowy eyes and high coloring. He remembered that he had thought her pretty when she first came to town, before he had realized that she was dull. Too bad she was dull—dull girls unbearable—certainly pretty though.

His thoughts zigzagged back to Marjorie. This disappearance would be like other disappearances. When she reappeared he would demand where she had been—would be told emphatically that it was none of his business. What a pity she was so sure of him! She basked in the knowledge that no other girl in town interested him; she defied him to fall in love with Genevieve or Roberta.

Warren sighed. The way to Marjorie's affections was a labyrinth indeed. He looked up. Bernice was again dancing with the visiting boy. Half unconsciously he took a step out from the stag line in her direction, and hesitated. Then he said to himself that it was charity. He walked toward her—collided suddenly with G. Reece Stoddard.

"Pardon me," said Warren.

But G. Reece had not stopped to apologize. He had again cut in on Bernice.

That night at one o'clock Marjorie, with one hand on the electric-light switch in the hall, turned to take a last look at Bernice's sparkling eyes.

"So it worked?"

"Oh, Marjorie, yes!" cried Bernice.

"I saw you were having a gay time."

"I did! The only trouble was that about midnight I ran short of talk.

I had to repeat myself—with different men of course. I hope they won't compare notes."

"Men don't," said Marjorie, yawning, "and it wouldn't matter if they did—they'd think you were even trickier."

She snapped out the light, and as they started up the stairs Bernice grasped the banister thankfully. For the first time in her life she had been danced tired.

"You see," said Marjorie at the top of the stairs, "one man sees another man cut in and he thinks there must be something there. Well, we'll fix up some new stuff to-morrow. Good night."

"Good night."

As Bernice took down her hair she passed the evening before her in review. She had followed instructions exactly. Even when Charley Paulson cut in for the eighth time she had simulated delight and had apparently been both interested and flattered. She had not talked about the weather or Eau Claire or automobiles or her school, but had confined her conversation to me, you, and us.

But a few minutes before she fell asleep a rebellious thought was churning drowsily in her brain—after all, it was she who had done it. Marjorie, to be sure, had given her her conversation, but then Marjorie got much of her conversation out of things she read. Bernice had bought the red dress, though she had never valued it highly before Marjorie dug it out of her trunk—and her own voice had said the words, her own lips had smiled, her own feet had danced. Marjorie nice girl—vain, though—nice evening—nice boys—like Warren—Warren—Warren—what's his name—Warren—

She fell asleep.

V

To Bernice the next week was a revelation. With the feeling that people really enjoyed looking at her and listening to her came the

foundation of self-confidence. Of course there were numerous mistakes at first. She did not know, for instance, that Draycott Deyo was studying for the ministry; she was unaware that he had cut in on her because he thought she was a quiet, reserved girl. Had she known these things she would not have treated him to the line which began "Hello, Shell Shock!" and continued with the bathtub story—"It takes a frightful lot of energy to fix my hair in the summer—there's so much of it—so I always fix it first and powder my face and put on my hat; then I get into the bathtub, and dress afterward. Don't you think that's the best plan?"

Though Draycott Deyo was in the throes of difficulties concerning baptism by immersion and might possibly have seen a connection, it must be admitted that he did not. He considered feminine bathing an immoral subject, and gave her some of his ideas on the depravity of modern society.

But to offset that unfortunate occurrence Bernice had several signal successes to her credit. Little Otis Ormonde pleaded off from a trip East and elected instead to follow her with a puppylike devotion, to the amusement of his crowd and to the irritation of G. Reece Stoddard, several of whose afternoon calls Otis completely ruined by the disgusting tenderness of the glances he bent on Bernice. He even told her the story of the two-by-four and the dressing-room to show her how frightfully mistaken he and every one else had been in their first judgment of her. Bernice laughed off that incident with a slight sinking sensation.

Of all Bernice's conversation perhaps the best known and most universally approved was the line about the bobbing of her hair.

"Oh, Bernice, when you goin' to get the hair bobbed?"

"Day after to-morrow maybe," she would reply, laughing. "Will you come and see me? Because I'm counting on you, you know."

"Will we? You know! But you better hurry up."

Bernice, whose tonsorial intentions were strictly dishonorable, would laugh again.

"Pretty soon now. You'd be surprised."

But perhaps the most significant symbol of her success was the

gray car of the hypercritical Warren McIntyre, parked daily in front of the Harvey house. At first the parlor-maid was distinctly startled when he asked for Bernice instead of Marjorie; after a week of it she told the cook that Miss Bernice had gotta holda Miss Marjorie's best fella.

And Miss Bernice had. Perhaps it began with Warren's desire to rouse jealousy in Marjorie; perhaps it was the familiar though unrecognized strain of Marjorie in Bernice's conversation; perhaps it was both of these and something of sincere attraction besides. But somehow the collective mind of the younger set knew within a week that Marjorie's most reliable beau had made an amazing face-about and was giving an indisputable rush to Marjorie's guest. The question of the moment was how Marjorie would take it. Warren called Bernice on the 'phone twice a day, sent her notes, and they were frequently seen together in his roadster, obviously engrossed in one of those tense, significant conversations as to whether or not he was sincere.

Marjorie on being twitted only laughed. She said she was mighty glad that Warren had at last found some one who appreciated him. So the younger set laughed, too, and guessed that Marjorie didn't care and let it go at that.

One afternoon when there were only three days left of her visit Bernice was waiting in the hall for Warren, with whom she was going to a bridge party. She was in rather a blissful mood, and when Marjorie—also bound for the party—appeared beside her and began casually to adjust her hat in the mirror, Bernice was utterly unprepared for anything in the nature of a clash. Marjorie did her work very coldly and succinctly in three sentences.

"You may as well get Warren out of your head," she said coldly.

"What?" Bernice was utterly astounded.

"You may as well stop making a fool of yourself over Warren McIntyre. He doesn't care a snap of his fingers about you."

For a tense moment they regarded each other—Marjorie scornful, aloof; Bernice astounded, half-angry, half-afraid. Then two cars

drove up in front of the house and there was a riotous honking. Both of them gasped faintly, turned, and side by side hurried out.

All through the bridge party Bernice strove in vain to master a rising uneasiness. She had offended Marjorie, the sphinx of sphinxes. With the most wholesome and innocent intentions in the world she had stolen Marjorie's property. She felt suddenly and horribly guilty. After the bridge game, when they sat in an informal circle and the conversation became general, the storm gradually broke. Little Otis Ormonde inadvertently precipitated it.

"When you going back to kindergarten, Otis?" some one had asked.

"Me? Day Bernice gets her hair bobbed."

"Then your education's over," said Marjorie quickly. "That's only a bluff of hers. I should think you'd have realized."

"That a fact?" demanded Otis, giving Bernice a reproachful glance.

Bernice's ears burned as she tried to think up an effectual comeback. In the face of this direct attack her imagination was paralyzed.

"There's a lot of bluffs in the world," continued Marjorie quite pleasantly. "I should think you'd be young enough to know that, Otis."

"Well," said Otis, "maybe so. But gee! With a line like Bernice's—"

"Really?" yawned Marjorie. "What's her latest bon mot?"

No one seemed to know. In fact, Bernice, having trifled with her muse's beau, had said nothing memorable of late.

"Was that really all a line?" asked Roberta curiously.

Bernice hesitated. She felt that wit in some form was demanded of her, but under her cousin's suddenly frigid eyes she was completely incapacitated.

"I don't know," she stalled.

"Splush!" said Marjorie. "Admit it!"

Bernice saw that Warren's eyes had left a ukulele he had been tinkering with and were fixed on her questioningly.

"Oh, I don't know!" she repeated steadily. Her cheeks were glowing.

"Splush!" remarked Marjorie again.

“Come through, Bernice,” urged Otis. “Tell her where to get off.” Bernice looked round again—she seemed unable to get away from Warren’s eyes.

“I like bobbed hair,” she said hurriedly, as if he had asked her a question, “and I intend to bob mine.”

“When?” demanded Marjorie.

“Any time.”

“No time like the present,” suggested Roberta.

Otis jumped to his feet.

“Good stuff!” he cried. “We’ll have a summer bobbing party. Sevier Hotel barber-shop, I think you said.”

In an instant all were on their feet. Bernice’s heart throbbed violently.

“What?” she gasped.

Out of the group came Marjorie’s voice, very clear and contemptuous.

“Don’t worry—she’ll back out!”

“Come on, Bernice!” cried Otis, starting toward the door.

Four eyes—Warren’s and Marjorie’s—stared at her, challenged her, defied her. For another second she wavered wildly.

“All right,” she said swiftly “I don’t care if I do.”

An eternity of minutes later, riding down-town through the late afternoon beside Warren, the others following in Roberta’s car close behind, Bernice had all the sensations of Marie Antoinette bound for the guillotine in a tumbrel. Vaguely she wondered why she did not cry out that it was all a mistake. It was all she could do to keep from clutching her hair with both hands to protect it from the suddenly hostile world. Yet she did neither. Even the thought of her mother was no deterrent now. This was the test supreme of her sportsmanship; her right to walk unchallenged in the starry heaven of popular girls.

Warren was moodily silent, and when they came to the hotel he drew up at the curb and nodded to Bernice to precede him out. Roberta’s car emptied a laughing crowd into the shop, which presented two bold plate-glass windows to the street.

Bernice stood on the curb and looked at the sign, Sevier Barber-Shop. It was a guillotine indeed, and the hangman was the first barber, who, attired in a white coat and smoking a cigarette, leaned nonchalantly against the first chair. He must have heard of her; he must have been waiting all week, smoking eternal cigarettes beside that portentous, too-often-mentioned first chair. Would they blindfold her? No, but they would tie a white cloth round her neck lest any of her blood—nonsense—hair—should get on her clothes.

“All right, Bernice,” said Warren quickly.

With her chin in the air she crossed the sidewalk, pushed open the swinging screen-door, and giving not a glance to the uproarious, riotous row that occupied the waiting bench, went up to the fat barber.

“I want you to bob my hair.”

The first barber’s mouth slid somewhat open. His cigarette dropped to the floor.

“Huh?”

“My hair—bob it!”

Refusing further preliminaries, Bernice took her seat on high. A man in the chair next to her turned on his side and gave her a glance, half lather, half amazement. One barber started and spoiled little Willy Schuneman’s monthly haircut. Mr. O’Reilly in the last chair grunted and swore musically in ancient Gaelic as a razor bit into his cheek. Two bootblacks became wide-eyed and rushed for her feet. No, Bernice didn’t care for a shine.

Outside a passer-by stopped and stared; a couple joined him; half a dozen small boys’ nose sprang into life, flattened against the glass; and snatches of conversation borne on the summer breeze drifted in through the screen-door.

“Lookada long hair on a kid!”

“Where’d yuh get ‘at stuff? ‘At’s a bearded lady he just finished shavin!”

But Bernice saw nothing, heard nothing. Her only living sense told her that this man in the white coat had removed one tortoise-shell comb and then another; that his fingers were fumbling clumsily with

unfamiliar hairpins; that this hair, this wonderful hair of hers, was going—she would never again feel its long voluptuous pull as it hung in a dark-brown glory down her back. For a second she was near breaking down, and then the picture before her swam mechanically into her vision—Marjorie’s mouth curling in a faint ironic smile as if to say:

“Give up and get down! You tried to buck me and I called your bluff. You see you haven’t got a prayer.”

And some last energy rose up in Bernice, for she clinched her hands under the white cloth, and there was a curious narrowing of her eyes that Marjorie remarked on to some one long afterward.

Twenty minutes later the barber swung her round to face the mirror, and she flinched at the full extent of the damage that had been wrought. Her hair was not curls and now it lay in lank lifeless blocks on both sides of her suddenly pale face. It was ugly as sin—she had known it would be ugly as sin. Her face’s chief charm had been a Madonna-like simplicity. Now that was gone and she was—well frightfully mediocre—not stagy; only ridiculous, like a Greenwich Villager who had left her spectacles at home.

As she climbed down from the chair she tried to smile—failed miserably. She saw two of the girls exchange glances; noticed Marjorie’s mouth curved in attenuated mockery—and that Warren’s eyes were suddenly very cold.

“You see,”—her words fell into an awkward pause—“I’ve done it.”

“Yes, you’ve—done it,” admitted Warren.

“Do you like it?”

There was a half-hearted “Sure” from two or three voices, another awkward pause, and then Marjorie turned swiftly and with serpentlike intensity to Warren.

“Would you mind running me down to the cleaners?” she asked. “I’ve simply got to get a dress there before supper. Roberta’s driving right home and she can take the others.”

Warren stared abstractedly at some infinite speck out the window. Then for an instant his eyes rested coldly on Bernice before they turned to Marjorie.

"Be glad to," he said slowly.

VI

Bernice did not fully realize the outrageous trap that had been set for her until she met her aunt's amazed glance just before dinner.

"Why Bernice!"

"I've bobbed it, Aunt Josephine."

"Why, child!"

"Do you like it?"

"Why Bernice!"

"I suppose I've shocked you."

"No, but what'll Mrs. Deyo think tomorrow night? Bernice, you should have waited until after the Deyo's dance—you should have waited if you wanted to do that."

"It was sudden, Aunt Josephine. Anyway, why does it matter to Mrs. Deyo particularly?"

"Why child," cried Mrs. Harvey, "in her paper on 'The Foibles of the Younger Generation' that she read at the last meeting of the Thursday Club she devoted fifteen minutes to bobbed hair. It's her pet abomination. And the dance is for you and Marjorie!"

"I'm sorry."

"Oh, Bernice, what'll your mother say? She'll think I let you do it."

"I'm sorry."

Dinner was an agony. She had made a hasty attempt with a curling-iron, and burned her finger and much hair. She could see that her aunt was both worried and grieved, and her uncle kept saying, "Well, I'll be darned!" over and over in a hurt and faintly hostile tone. And Marjorie sat very quietly, intrenched behind a faint smile, a faintly mocking smile.

Somehow she got through the evening. Three boys called; Marjorie disappeared with one of them, and Bernice made a listless

unsuccessful attempt to entertain the two others—sighed thankfully as she climbed the stairs to her room at half past ten. What a day!

When she had undressed for the night the door opened and Marjorie came in.

“Bernice,” she said “I’m awfully sorry about the Deyo dance. I’ll give you my word of honor I’d forgotten all about it.”

“Sall right,” said Bernice shortly. Standing before the mirror she passed her comb slowly through her short hair.

“I’ll take you down-town to-morrow,” continued Marjorie, “and the hairdresser’ll fix it so you’ll look slick. I didn’t imagine you’d go through with it. I’m really mighty sorry.”

“Oh, ‘sall right!”

“Still it’s your last night, so I suppose it won’t matter much.”

Then Bernice winced as Marjorie tossed her own hair over her shoulders and began to twist it slowly into two long blond braids until in her cream-colored negligée she looked like a delicate painting of some Saxon princess. Fascinated, Bernice watched the braids grow. Heavy and luxurious they were moving under the supple fingers like restive snakes—and to Bernice remained this relic and the curling-iron and a to-morrow full of eyes. She could see G. Reece Stoddard, who liked her, assuming his Harvard manner and telling his dinner partner that Bernice shouldn’t have been allowed to go to the movies so much; she could see Draycott Deyo exchanging glances with his mother and then being conscientiously charitable to her. But then perhaps by to-morrow Mrs. Deyo would have heard the news; would send round an icy little note requesting that she fail to appear—and behind her back they would all laugh and know that Marjorie had made a fool of her; that her chance at beauty had been sacrificed to the jealous whim of a selfish girl. She sat down suddenly before the mirror, biting the inside of her cheek.

“I like it,” she said with an effort. “I think it’ll be becoming.”

Marjorie smiled.

“It looks all right. For heaven’s sake, don’t let it worry you!”

“I won’t.”

“Good night Bernice.”

But as the door closed something snapped within Bernice. She sprang dynamically to her feet, clinching her hands, then swiftly and noiseless crossed over to her bed and from underneath it dragged out her suitcase. Into it she tossed toilet articles and a change of clothing. Then she turned to her trunk and quickly dumped in two drawerfulls of lingerie and stammer dresses. She moved quietly, but deadly efficiency, and in three-quarters of an hour her trunk was locked and strapped and she was fully dressed in a becoming new travelling suit that Marjorie had helped her pick out.

Sitting down at her desk she wrote a short note to Mrs. Harvey, in which she briefly outlined her reasons for going. She sealed it, addressed it, and laid it on her pillow. She glanced at her watch. The train left at one, and she knew that if she walked down to the Marborough Hotel two blocks away she could easily get a taxicab.

Suddenly she drew in her breath sharply and an expression flashed into her eyes that a practiced character reader might have connected vaguely with the set look she had worn in the barber's chair—somehow a development of it. It was quite a new look for Bernice—and it carried consequences.

She went stealthily to the bureau, picked up an article that lay there, and turning out all the lights stood quietly until her eyes became accustomed to the darkness. Softly she pushed open the door to Marjorie's room. She heard the quiet, even breathing of an untroubled conscience asleep.

She was by the bedside now, very deliberate and calm. She acted swiftly. Bending over she found one of the braids of Marjorie's hair, followed it up with her hand to the point nearest the head, and then holding it a little slack so that the sleeper would feel no pull, she reached down with the shears and severed it. With the pigtail in her hand she held her breath. Marjorie had muttered something in her sleep. Bernice deftly amputated the other braid, paused for an instant, and then flitted swiftly and silently back to her own room.

Down-stairs she opened the big front door, closed it carefully behind her, and feeling oddly happy and exuberant stepped off the porch into the moonlight, swinging her heavy grip like a shopping-

bag. After a minute's brisk walk she discovered that her left hand still held the two blond braids. She laughed unexpectedly—had to shut her mouth hard to keep from emitting an absolute peal. She was passing Warren's house now, and on the impulse she set down her baggage, and swinging the braids like piece of rope flung them at the wooden porch, where they landed with a slight thud. She laughed again, no longer restraining herself.

“Huh,” she giggled wildly. “Scalp the selfish thing!”

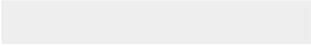
Then picking up her staircase she set off at a half-run down the moonlit street.



9. The Secret Life of Walter Mitty

Please use the link below to access the short story “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty” by James Thurber, originally published in *The New Yorker* in 1939.

[“The Secret Life of Walter Mitty” from *The New Yorker*](#)



10. How to Write a Summary

Summarizing consists of two important skills:

1. identifying the important material in the text, and
2. restating the text in your own words.

Since writing a summary consists of omitting minor information, it will always be shorter than the original text.

[Photograph of two hands writing next to each other, holding black pens and wearing white gloves](#)

How to Write a Summary

- A summary begins with an *introductory sentence* that states the text's title, author and main thesis or subject.
- A summary contains the main *thesis* (or main point of the text), restated in your own words.
- A summary is *written in your own words*. It contains few or no quotes.
- A summary is *always shorter than the original text*, often about 1/3 as long as the original. It is the ultimate “fat-free” writing. An article or paper may be summarized in a few sentences or a couple of paragraphs. A book may be summarized in an article or a short paper. A very large book may be summarized in a smaller book.
- A summary should *contain all the major points* of the original text, but should *ignore most of the fine details*, examples, illustrations or explanations.
- The backbone of any summary is formed by *critical information* (key names, dates, places, ideas, events, words and numbers). A summary must never rely on vague generalities.
- If you quote anything from the original text, even an unusual

word or a catchy phrase, you need to put whatever you quote in quotation marks (“”).

- A summary must contain only the ideas of the original text. Do not insert any of your own opinions, interpretations, deductions or comments into a summary.
- A summary, like any other writing, has to have a specific audience and purpose, and you must carefully write it to serve that audience and fulfill that specific purpose.



II. Chapter 3: Developing Assertions: From a Close Reading of Examples

3.1 A Close Reading of the Details

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand how to provide a close reading of different types of details.
2. Explain how to provide a close reading of creative works, non-fiction, and personal experiences.
3. Discuss how to extend the implications of loaded words, metaphorical language, images, and sounds.

Everywhere we turn, we hear people engaging in analysis. Sitting in a coffee shop, we overhear fellow caffeine addicts discussing diet fads, politics, and the latest blockbusters. Watching television, we listen to sports commentators discuss which team has the best chance to win the Super Bowl, comedians rip on the latest cultural trends, and talk show hosts lecture their guests on the moral repugnance of their actions. Still most of the time I find myself dissatisfied with the level of these conversations. Too many people throw out blanket judgments they can't defend while too many others mindlessly nod in agreement. If more people actually took the time to carefully examine their subjects, they might discover and articulate more satisfying and worthwhile perspectives. This chapter will help you to consider the components that make up your subject in a way that avoids the traps of a closed mind—trying to make everything fit into a ready-made interpretation—or an empty mind—giving your subject a fast read or a cursory glance.

The best way to begin your analysis is with an attentive, open mind; something that is more difficult than most of us care to admit. Our analytical muscles often grow flabby through lack of use as we rush from one task to the next, seldom pausing long enough

to consider anything around us. From an early age, overwhelmed by school, scheduled activities, and chores, we discovered that it is much easier to accept someone else's explanations than to think for ourselves. Besides, original thinking is rarely encouraged, especially in school where deviating from the teacher's perspective seldom results in good grades. It should therefore come as no surprise that the ability to slow down long enough to fully consider a subject is, for most of us, difficult, and not something that comes naturally. It is, however, definitely worthwhile to do so. Remember how Jeff, the frustrated student from [Chapter 1 "Analysis for Multiple Perspectives"](#), wasted hours staring at his computer screen because he did not think very deeply about *The Tempest* when he first read it? Paying close attention when you first encounter a subject will save you time down the road.

Learning to prioritize the details on which to focus is just as important as learning how to pay close attention to a subject. Each detail does not warrant the same amount of consideration. Consider, for example, meeting someone at a party who relates every single detail of what happened to him throughout the day (I woke up at 6:58 a.m., brushed each of my teeth, had breakfast consisting of two thirds cereal and one third milk....). Who would not try to find an excuse to move to the other side of the room? Likewise, sometimes teachers will tell students to make sure that they use plenty of concrete details in their essays. Yes, concrete details are good to include and examine, but only if they matter. You risk boring your reader if you simply include details for their own sake without exploring what makes them important. When you read this section, keep in mind that you do not have to pay equal attention to all the kinds of details presented. Instead, focus on those that are most essential to your subject and purpose.

Events, Plots, and Actions

Usually the first detail we relate when someone asks us “what’s new?” is an important event or recent action we’ve taken in our life: “I ran a marathon on Sunday, found out I got into law school, got engaged to my girlfriend.” Events and actions also tend to be the first things we consider about our subjects. Sometimes actions are overt—we see a movie about a superhero who saves a city; sometimes they’re implied—we see a painting of a distraught face and we assume that something bad must have recently happened. Events and actions tend to consume the majority of our attention, whether they happen on a small scale to us individually or on a large scale to an entire city, country, or culture.

The subject that focuses the most closely on this type of detail is, of course, history. Certain events are so central to a particular era that they are studied again and again, often with different perspectives and conclusions. Take, for example, the big event of 1492. Up until I got to college, I was told that this was the year Columbus discovered America. Later I discovered that many historians disagree with this assessment of what happened. First of all, you can’t discover a place that has already been found, yet the fact that people were living in America already was always brushed aside in my high school history texts. Given that many Native Americans had more sophisticated forms of government and agriculture than their European counterparts makes this oversight seem particularly troubling. And even if we were to revise the assessment to state “Columbus was the first European to discover America,” that too would be wrong. New discoveries of Viking settlements in southern Canada and the northern United States suggest that they beat Columbus by several decades. Understanding the event in light of these facts may cause us to revise the assessment of the event to “Columbus introduced the Americas to the people of Europe,” or, less charitably, “Columbus opened up the Americas to modern European imperialism.”

This is not to say that we should now consider Columbus a nefarious figure (at least from the Native American's point of view). He could not have anticipated the centuries of conquest that would follow his arrival. Often in history, people are caught up in forces they don't completely understand. The same holds true when you examine the actions of fictional characters. For instance, sometimes characters create the condition for their own downfall, which inspires us to learn from their mistakes. Other times, characters may act nobly yet come to bad ends anyway. Such plots may encourage us to try to change the system that rewards bad behavior and punishes good, or they might leave us feeling frustrated with the seemingly random nature of our existence.

In the first ten minutes of Mike Judge's film *Office Space*, all the actions solidify into a very definitive attitude about the problems with the modern workplace.¹ Angry music plays as we see an above shot of a typical Southern California traffic jam. We now see it from the perspective of Peter Gibbons, one of the unfortunate drivers attempting to get through the jam. He moves a couple of feet, brakes; moves a couple of more feet, brakes. He tries to switch lanes, but whenever he does the one he just left begins to move and the one into which he moved comes to a grinding halt. All this time, an elderly man with a walker, who was once behind him on an adjacent sidewalk, has caught up and passed him. Peter responds with a momentary flare of anger that ends with a sigh of resignation. After the camera switches to a few of his colleagues stuck in the same jam, we see Peter arrive at his place of work, "Initech." He sighs again with resignation as he gets the usual electrical shock from the brass doorknob that opens into a large room made up of a sea of office cubicles. Once again, the camera shot is from above, showing Peter lost among the crowd of workers.

Before he has a chance to get much work done, his boss comes by

1. Mike Judge, dir., *Office Space* (Twentieth Century Fox, 1999).

his cubicle to talk to him. He begins by asking Peter “how’s it going?” in a tone of voice that makes it clear that he doesn’t really care about the answer, and before Peter can respond the boss interrupts to chastise him for not using the correct cover sheet for the “TPS Report” he sent out the previous day. Two other bosses visit Peter repeating their predecessor’s instruction and tone. During all of this, Peter continues to reveal the same look and sigh of resignation, until finally he begs two of his friends to take a coffee break out of fear that he might “lose it.”

All of these actions inspire us to ask the question: Does it have to be this bad? I don’t think so. A more critical analysis could provide solutions to both the social and personal concerns touched on in the film. It could lead us to create much better systems of public transportation that get us to work in a more timely, less stressful manner. It could also lead bosses to discover better ways to encourage enthusiasm and dedication from their employees.

Understanding the implications of recent events and actions can be much more difficult than evaluating those that occur in the distant past or in fiction. At what point, for example, do the seemingly inappropriate actions of one country justify another to declare war on it? At what point do the actions of an individual justify another to call the police? Like everything else, most of this is a matter of interpretation, but success in professional settings often requires the ability to justify your point of view through a close reading of what actually occurred. Take for instance the proverbial story of a woman stealing a loaf of bread to feed her starving children. You could look at this action as extremely noble, as the mother puts herself in danger to keep her children healthy. The baker, however, may not share this sentiment, particularly if he too is struggling to survive.

Loaded Terms and Stock Phrases

Though actions may speak louder than words, words are what usually inspire the actions to occur in the first place. In addition, we often base what we know of the world on what people tell us rather than on our direct experiences. Thus, unless we are able to discern how language may be manipulated, we stand a good chance of being manipulated ourselves. For instance, consider how politicians often ignore their opponent's actions and simply repeat loaded terms, words infused with negative associations like “bleeding heart liberal” or “heartless conservative,” to characterize an opponent as being against the public good. I came across a particularly blatant example of this when writing my dissertation on the Red Scare in America that followed World War II. The Red Scare was a period when the fear of the spread of communism abroad inspired a great deal of domestic suspicion and conformity. In a series of pamphlets released by the House Committee on Un-American Activities (often referred to as HUAC), the members attempted to feed this fear in the manner in which they explained the nature of communism to the American public. The pamphlets were set up in a question/answer format, similar to the FAQ sections of websites today. Several of the answers attempted to show communism as a warped view from its inception by going after the man whom we often credit with inventing it: “What was Marx's idea of a Communist World?” HUAC's answer: “That the world as we know it must be destroyed—religion, family, laws, rights, everything. Anybody opposing was to be destroyed too.”² The repetition of “destroyed” clearly inspires a feeling of dread, and presents an overly simplistic, and nearly cartoonish duality: melodramatic socialist villains

2. U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Un-American Activities, *100 Things You Should Know About Communism in the USA* (80th Congress, 2d Session), 1.

twirling their mustaches while planning the destruction of their own families versus the warm-hearted capitalistic politicians in Washington who are only out to serve the public's best interests.

When loaded terms combine into stock phrases, aphorisms that people often repeat without fully considering their implications, you should be especially careful to look beyond the obvious meaning that's usually attached to them. Take the phrase, often attributed to legendary football coach Vince Lombardi: "Winning isn't everything; it's the only thing." First of all, does this mean that we can never engage in sports for fun, exercise, or friendship? On the contrary, in sports and in all of life, we often learn best from our mistakes and our failings. If we only play it safe and try to win all the time, then we don't get to experiment and discover anything new. As Thomas Edison pointed out, he had to allow himself to fail over a thousand times when trying to invent the light bulb in order to discover the right way to do it. Clearly, winning isn't the *only* thing, and I doubt that it should even be the most *important* thing, at least for most of us.

Be especially attentive when analyzing creative works to make note of any stock phrases or loaded terms the characters repeat, as it often reveals insights about how they see themselves and the world. In J.D. Salinger's novel *Catcher in the Rye*, Holden Caulfield, the troubled teenage protagonist, has just been expelled from his high school and goes to see his old history teacher, Mr. Spencer in his home. After a polite exchange, Mr. Spencer asks Holden to repeat what Dr. Thurmer, the principal, said to him just before giving him the boot:

"What did Dr. Thurmer say to you, boy? I understand you had quite a little chat?..."

"Oh...well, about Life being a game and all. And how you should play it according to the rules. He was pretty nice about it. I mean he didn't hit the ceiling or anything. He just kept talking about life being a game and all. You know."

"Life **is** a game, boy. Life is a game that one plays according to the rules."

“Yes, sir. I know it is. I know it.”³

Though Holden agrees with Mr. Spencer out of politeness, he goes on to narrate:

“Game, my ass. Some game. If you get on the side where all the hot-shots are, then it’s a game, all right—I’ll admit that. But if you get on the *other* side, where there aren’t any hot-shots, then what’s a game about it? Nothing. No game.”

What disturbs me even more about the phrase is that it leaves absolutely no room for creativity because nothing new can be brought into a world that has already been completed, making us all seem like those blue or pink pegs in the Milton/Bradley game *Life*, generic people with generic goals.

One reason that we often fall victim to erroneous conclusions is that every day we get bombarded with a form of media that pushes us to accept the most absurd phrases—advertising. Take for instance the slogan “things go better with Coke.” What “things”? If I drank a Coke while running a marathon, I might get sick. And some things that actually do go better with Coke, I could do without, such as tooth decay and weight gain. To be fair, the slogans of Coke’s chief competitor do not stand up to scrutiny either: “Pepsi, The Choice of a new generation.” Which generation? And how did they determine that it’s their choice? Often advertisers use ambiguous language like this in their slogans to deceive without lying outright. For instance, saying that a detergent *helps* to eliminate stains does not tell us that it actually *will*.

Arguments and Policies

When analyzing a more articulated argument or policy, we’re often

3. J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye* (Boston, MA: LB Books, 1951), 8.

tempted to use a phrase either to wholeheartedly agree with a position or to dismiss it entirely. But in doing so, a critical examination often gets lost in a barrage of name-calling and hyperbole. To try to understand the other side of an argument, I like to write an issue dialogue, starting with the most extreme positions and moving toward more reasonable compromises. Consider, for instance, the debate that surrounds whether universities should continue to raise tuition in order to make up for government cut backs to education:

For: Universities should raise tuition. Why should taxpayers cover the expense? You students want to have a first rate education but you don't want to pay for it. You're just a bunch of lazy young people who feel entitled to every government handout you can get.

Against: Not true. Education is an investment. What you greedy old people don't realize is that when a student eventually receives a better job because of his education, he will pay more in taxes. This increased revenue will more than repay the government for what it spent on his education.

For: That's assuming that a student will get a better job because of his education; many people, like Bill Gates, have done pretty well without a degree. And even if you can prove that students will make more money, that doesn't mean that they will remain in the community that invested in their education.

Against: True, but most probably will, and anyway, the university invests a lot of its money in these surrounding communities. As for your second point, for every Bill Gates, there are thousands of college dropouts who are flipping burgers or living on the streets.

For: But why should someone who doesn't have children or live near a university town have to support an institution that doesn't give anything back to them? Would you want to have to spend your hard earned money to support a senior center's golf course?

Against: Studies have shown that when governments do not spend money on education, they have to spend more on prisons so it's not as though cutting funding for education will benefit those taxpayers

you describe. However, I agree that certain families should pay more for their children's education, as long as they can afford it.

For: And I will concede that governments should continue to provide access to education for those who can't afford it, but I think even children of poor families have an obligation to give back to the community that supported them when they finish their degrees.

Though this could continue for several more pages, you can see that both sides are starting to move toward more reasonable characterizations of each other. Again, when writing an issue dialogue, it is tempting to ridicule those on the other side with stock phrases to make it easier to dismiss their views (especially when looking at perspectives from different cultures and eras). But the more we can reasonably state the opposing view's arguments, the more we can reasonably state our own, and we should apply the same amount of scrutiny to our own beliefs that we do to those who disagree with us.

Part of this scrutiny may involve raising questions about the author's period, culture, and biases (see the previous chapter, regarding analysis of sources). In addition, you should consider the strength of the arguments, evaluating how well the author supports the main assertions with sound evidence and reasoning while paying particular attention to whether they rely on any fallacies—errors in reasoning. For instance, does the author make any hasty generalizations? Consider someone who attempts to argue that global warming doesn't exist on the basis that the weather has been quite cold for the last few days. Obviously the person would make a stronger case for her argument by presenting more encompassing evidence. Another common fallacy is the faulty syllogism (i.e. all cats die; Socrates is dead; therefore Socrates was a cat). Just because two items under considerations have a certain quality in common, does not mean that these items are the same. Perhaps the most common fallacy that I see students make is "guilt by association." This may be due to the fact that politicians use it all the time. For instance, in the 2008 presidential election, many

tried to associate Barack Obama with terrorists simply because his middle name (Hussein) was the same as the deposed leader of Iraq. John McCain's significant personal wealth was seen as evidence that he would be insensitive to the needs of the poor, even though liberals like Franklin Roosevelt and John Kennedy were also very well off. Also, be aware of the opposite fallacy—success by association. Go to any tennis shoe commercial on YouTube and you will see famous athletes performing incredible acts, as though the shoes, and not years of practice, are responsible for their success.

Metaphorical Language

Not all the details you analyze will suggest a literal action or point of view; many will be of a metaphorical, or symbolic, nature. Though there are many different types of tropes (words or phrases that point toward a figurative meaning)—such as metaphor, simile, and synecdoche. The basic function of each is to allow someone to literally “see what you mean” by comparing an abstract concept to something concrete. One reason the metaphor “love is a rose” is so well known is that the object and the concept match extremely well. A rose, like love, may manifest in many different forms and have several complex layers when examined closely. Roses show the cheerful side of love because they look nice, smell sweet, and inspire warm fuzzy feelings. However, they also show the dangers of love by having thorns, and being difficult to care for. Like the different people you love, a rose requires just the right amount of attention and care—neither too much nor too little.

The need to extend metaphorical implications is especially apparent when analyzing a poem or a song. For instance, in her song “China,” Tori Amos explores the different metaphorical significance the central term has on a crumbling relationship: a far away location that represents the distance couples often feel between each other, a place with a Great Wall that can refer to the figurative barriers

we build to protect ourselves emotionally, and fancy plates that, on closer examination, have cracks (just like those who seem to have the perfect relationship and then suddenly announce that they are breaking up).⁴ In this case, understanding the metaphorical significance can give us an even greater appreciation of the song. When we say that a song (or any piece of art) “strikes a chord,” we mean that it resonates with our thoughts, feelings, and memories, and an understanding of its central metaphors allows us to relate to it in even more ways.

Metaphorical language does not come up only in the arts, but also in other disciplines, especially theology and philosophy. Nearly all religious texts are filled with parables and analogies because they provide us with concrete images to explain spiritual concepts. Perhaps the most famous analogy from antiquity is Plato’s “Allegory of the Cave,” in which Socrates compares human understanding to people locked in chairs and forced to look at the shadows of themselves, cast by the light of candles against a cave wall. In time, they confuse that reality for the true reality that lies above them. When one brave soul (read Socrates) escapes these confines and leaves the cave to discover the true reality, he returns to the people left behind to tell them of their limited existence. Instead of being grateful, they choose not to believe him and have him put to death because they prefer to accept the reality to which they’ve become accustomed.

While this analogy continues to be told in various forms, it still needs to be examined critically. For instance, you might ask who put them in the cave and why? Is our reality set up as a training ground to move on to more satisfying forms of existence, as proposed in the film *The Matrix*? Or is it a cruel joke in which we’re allowed only a glimpse of the way things should be while wallowing in our own inability to effect change? In addition, many have argued that

4. Tori Amos, “China,” *Little Earthquakes* (Atlantic Records, 1992).

the analogy relies on a transcendent notion of Truth that cannot be communicated or realized—that Socrates believes that there is a greater place outside of our natural existence only because he has a vivid imagination or a need to prove his own importance. If this is true, then we might do better to improve the existence we actually experience than to stagnate while hoping for a better one.

But while poets, philosophers, and songwriters use metaphorical language to entertain and enlighten, many others use it primarily to manipulate—drawing off of the symbolic value of certain terms. Again, advertisers are masters of this, helping companies to embed their products with metaphorical significance, beginning with what they choose to call them. Car companies often use the names of swift predatory animals to associate their products with speed, control, and power. And advertisers love to use analogies because they don't have to be proven. For example when stating that a product works “like magic,” they get all the associations with a mystical process that offers quick, painless solutions without having to demonstrate its actual effectiveness. Be particularly on guard for inappropriate analogies when analyzing arguments. For instance, people may attempt to justify violent acts to advance their version of the public good by using the analogy that “you have to break a few eggs to make a cake.” A person is far more valuable than an egg, and the analogy is simply inappropriate. The analogy would be far more appropriate and effective if used to justify how you might need to give up smoking or sleeping late in order to get back into shape.

Images, Sounds, Tastes, and Smells

Images, like words, are often imbued with metaphorical significance and thus can be manipulated in a similar manner. For instance, the politician who stands in front of a flag while giving a speech is attempting to feed off of the patriotic implications associated with it. Likewise, fast food companies often use images of clowns and

cartoon figures to associate their products with the carefree days of childhood when we didn't have to worry about gaining weight or having high cholesterol. But images we see in painting, sculpture, photography, and the other arts offer more subtle and variant interpretations and deserve more careful examination.

In fact, we can look at certain paintings more than a hundred times and continue to discern new patterns of meaning. For me, this is especially true of Van Gogh's "The Starry Night." In his song "Vincent," singer-songwriter Don Mclean describes the painting as "swirling clouds in violet haze" that reflect the eyes of an artist who suffered for his sanity because the people around him could not understand or appreciate his vision.⁵ Sometimes I see the painting this way, and other times I see it as a joyous dance of the stars moving in constant circles unencumbered by human misery (if you want to consider what the painting might mean to you, go to <http://www.vangoghgallery.com/painting/starryindex.html>).

Music can also create feelings of triumph, joy, or despair without the need for any words to convey a direct message. Again, sometimes this can happen in a way that seems apparent and universal, (such as how the theme song from the film *Star Wars* evokes feelings of heroism, excitement, and adventure) or in ways that are more subtle and complex. Jerry Farber, Professor of Comparative Literature, explains that the aesthetic appeal of Mozart's *Violin Concerto in A Major* emerges through the contrast among the various musical themes within it:

Now there are moments when many listeners, I think, are likely to get isolated in the music immediately at hand, losing much of their awareness of the whole structure. Particularly during one section, a so-called 'Turkish' episode in a different time signature and a minor key, the listener is likely, once having adjusted to this new and exotic atmosphere, to be swept far away from the courtly minuet. Still, the

5. Don McClean, "Vincent," *American Pie* (United Artists Records, 1971).

overall structure is the context in which we hear this episode and is likely, if only by effect of contrast, to help shape our resonant response.⁶

Which of these details you analyze depends on the unique features of the subject's particular genre. For instance in analyzing both a poem and a song, you can consider the major metaphors, key terms, and actions. But with a song, you should also consider how it's sung, which instruments are used, and how the music underscores or contrasts with the lyrics. Likewise, an analysis of both a painting and a film requires attention to the color, composition, and perspective of the scene. But with a film, you should also consider the dialogue, background music, and how each scene relates to the ones that come before and after it. Keep in mind that although different kinds of texts tend to stimulate particular types of responses, sometimes it is fruitful to think about pieces in light of seemingly incongruous perspectives. For instance, you could look at a love song as reflecting cultural attitudes about gender roles or a political speech as encouraging psychological disorders such as paranoia.

When your analysis focuses on personal experiences, decisions, and encounters, you can discuss those details that correspond with the other senses as well. In fact, taste and smell can play a crucial role in our experiences, as they have the strongest connection to memory. In *Swann's Way*, the first part of his prolific novel *In Search of Lost Time*, French author Marcel Proust describes how dipping a pastry in tea helped him to recall a period of his life that he might have otherwise permanently forgotten. Though at first he couldn't recall why the taste had such a powerful effect on him, he eventually remembered that it was something his grandmother gave him as a child when the family visited her in the summer. The taste helped

6. Jerry Farber, *A Field Guide to the Aesthetic Experience* (New York: Forwards, 1982), 106.

him to recall not only his moments with his grandmother but the details of the house and town itself. As he puts it:

But when from a long-distant past nothing subsists, after the people are dead, after the things are broken and scattered, taste and smell alone, more fragile but more enduring, more unsubstantial, more persistent, more faithful, remain poised a long time, like souls, remembering, waiting, hoping, amid the ruins of all the rest; and bear unflinchingly, in the tiny and almost impalpable drop of their essence, the vast structure of recollection.⁷

Though the personal experiences you write about do not have to be as significant to you as this was for Proust's narrator, you still need to recall the details as best you can. When doing so, take a step back and try to look at yourself as you might a character in a novel. Detaching yourself like this can be very hard to do, especially when you have a vested interest in seeing yourself in a certain light. However, you often get your best insights when you try, to paraphrase the poet Robert Burns, to see yourself as others see you. To illustrate, I will show how I can both present and analyze a recent visit to my gym.

As I swiped my card at the entrance, the gentleman at the front desk greeted me with a friendly, "Hi Randy." I felt the usual twang of guilt because I can never remember his name and have to respond with a generic and slightly overenthusiastic, "Hey, how's it going?" Inside, the YMCA has its usual mix of old and young, most of whom are trying to get back into shape as opposed to other gyms where the main motivation for coming is to show off the body you already have.

I take a bitter sip from the rusty drinking fountain and head to the weight room where I see a young man completing his set on the first machine. He is definitely impressed with himself, periodically looking

7. Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way*, trans. C.K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Killmartin (New York: Random House, 1981), 50–51.

in the mirror with an expression that would make Narcissus ashamed. When he gets off, I wait until he turns around so he can see me move the key down to include more weight than he was just using. The satisfaction I get from this action comes partly from deflating some of his ego and partly from inflating my own. However, my own smugness is short-lived, because as soon as I get up, a much older man with a noticeable beer belly and smelling of Ben Gay sits at the machine and lowers the key much further than where I had it.

I go through my weight routine with a bit more humility and then wander over to the elliptical for the aerobic portion of my workout. I pull out my iPod and click to Credence Clearwater Revival, the only group with a happy enough sound to take my mind off my aching feet. After enough time, I leave the same way via the guy at the front desk (only now I return his, “Bye Randy,” with a generic and slightly over enthusiastic, “See you later; have a good day”).

Though there was no text to consult this time, I can still interpret the experience by recalling and focusing on the key details that make it up. I could discuss why I find it embarrassing to admit any personal weakness, whether it stems from my bad memory for trying to recall names or from my inability to lift as much weight as others. I could discuss the key in the weight machine metaphorically, and how I warped it in my mind from a simple tool to a larger symbol of competition. I could also discuss the effect of music and how it takes a lot of sting out of exercise by allowing me to focus on something other than the painful routine that stretches out before me. Finally, I could discuss how the rusty taste of the drinking fountain water or the smell of Ben Gay and sweat will always remind me of this particular gym.

When looking at a relationship or a decision, the analytical process is essentially the same as when you examine a specific event; you still need to consider, recall, and imagine various moments—just more of them. Whereas a relationship with another person is the sum total of all the time you’ve already spent with that person, making a decision involves imagining what might come

about as a result of our choices. Oftentimes our analysis inspires thoughts that leap around in time as we reconsider past patterns to predict likely future events. For instance, if I were to analyze whether I should get a kitten, my mind may race through a string of potentially good and bad memories of having had cats in the past: images of soft, cuddly, purring little creatures that also like to destroy drapes and meow in my ear at five in the morning. Of course no matter how long and hard we think about something, we can never be sure that the outcome will work out for us in the way we hope and expect. Still, to be satisfied that we at least tried to make an informed, intelligent, and aware decision, we must slow down and reconsider all the relevant moments that we've already experienced.

EXERCISE 1

Think of four concrete words, those which represent something we can see, touch, taste, or smell (for example, desk, willow, seaweed, or sidewalk), and four abstract words, those that represent concepts, feelings, or attitudes (for example, jealousy, freedom, fear, or arrogance), and then think of how each of your concrete words illustrate an aspect of your abstract ones. For instance, you might consider how fear is like a willow. Both may spread a lot of shade over our lives. At times fear may keep us in the dark, “rooted” like a willow from moving forward to places we need to go. However, at other times our fears may protect us from those dangers we are not yet ready to face.

EXERCISE 2

Write an issue dialogue on a policy that is important to you. First

freewrite on your own position, considering all of the places where you got your information from in the first place; then freewrite on the opposite point of view, again, considering all the places where you have heard these perspectives articulated. Write a dialogue in which you take both sides seriously by fully considering the merits of each argument. How did your own position change as you considered other points of view? What possible compromises did you come to?

EXERCISE 3

Select something in your own life that is important to you at the moment. It could be the desire to recall a past experience, to reflect on an important relationship, or to analyze a decision that you must make. Now, take a moment to freewrite on all the significant details and factors that are involved. Reflect further on what you just wrote. To what extent do/did you have choices regarding the outcome? To what extent does/did it seem predetermined and by which people and what circumstances? What can you still learn or do about the situation to maximize its benefits? How can you better accept those aspects of it that are not likely to change?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. A close reading of a subject involves understanding the implications of the actions, terms, phrases, arguments, and images that make it up.
2. Metaphorical language can help us to understand a concept further as we extend how something concrete compares to something abstract.
3. An analysis of personal experiences, decisions, and

relationships necessitates a certain level of detachment and a close reading of the relevant details.

3.2 From Interpretations to Assertions

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Reveal the kinds of assertions that block a successful analysis.
2. Discuss how to produce meaningful assertions.
3. Explain how to unite meaningful assertions into a working thesis.
4. Show how to evaluate and modify a working thesis.

A close reading of the key details of a subject should help you to discover several intriguing interpretations about an array of different subjects: the consequences of an event, the motivations of a character, the effectiveness of an argument, or the nature of an image.

Interpretations

An assertion differs from an interpretation by providing *perspective* on an underlying pattern, a perspective that implies what it means to you and why you think it's significant. Without such a perspective, an interpretation merely becomes a statement with no potential for development. Just as one might utter a statement that kills the mood of a particular situation (“What a romantic dinner you cooked for me! Too bad I’m allergic to lobster and chocolate...”), so one can make types of statements that block

any possibility for further analysis. What follows are some of the most common:

1. Statements of Fact

Factual statements might help support an analysis but should not be the main force that drives it. I might notice that Vincent Van Gogh used twenty-five thousand brush strokes to create *Starry Night*, that global warming has increased more rapidly in the polar regions, or that Alfred Hitchcock used erratic background music throughout his film *Psycho*. But what else can I say about any of these statements? They simply are true or false. To transform these factual statements into assertions that can be explored further, you need to add your own perspectives to them. For instance, you could argue that the erratic music in *Psycho* underscores the insanity of the plot and results in a cinematic equivalent to Edgar Allen Poe's frantic short sentences, or that global warming in the polar regions will result in higher sea levels that will cause enormous damage if we don't do anything to keep it in check.

2. Statements of Classification

It is not enough to simply assert that the focus of your analysis fits into a pre-established category like "modernism," "impressionism," "neo-conservativism," or "first wave feminism." Of course it can be useful to understand the nature of these broader categories, but you still need to explore why it is important to see your subject in this light. For instance, rather than simply point out that *Family Guy* can be seen as a satire of the American family, you should also consider what this perspective reveals about the show's development and reception. It might also be worthwhile to consider how a work

transcends the standard notions of its period or genre. You might point out that while most of the time the *Family Guy* characters are shown as broad and ridiculous, they can sometimes act in ways that are familiar and endearing. Similarly, when looking at a policy or argument, you should not simply categorize it as belonging to a particular social attitude or political party, but consider it on its own merits. Though political pundits often use terms associated with their opposition as curse words and summarily dismiss anything they advocate, you want to appear much more reasonable in an academic analysis.

3. Statements of Taste

Similarly, an analysis is not just a review in which you simply state how you feel about a piece or dismiss an argument or policy as being “distasteful.” A good assertion will not only reveal how you feel about the focus of your analysis but will also inspire you to explore why it makes you feel that way. In her article, “*Babe*, *Braveheart* and the Contemporary Body,” Susan Bordo, Professor of Media Studies, explains that the reason she liked the film *Babe* much better is that it shows the need for self-acceptance and connection to others in a society that overly values conformity and competition.⁸ This assertion allows her to explore different aspects of contemporary American culture that may have inspired each of these films. Had she simply stated her opinion without stating why her subject, the films, made her feel this way, her article would not have been as compelling or convincing.

8. Susan Bordo, *Twilight Zones: The Hidden Life of Cultural Images from Plato to O.J.* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press), 1999.

4. Statements of Intention

When looking at creative works, we often want to assert that our point of view is the one the author intended, yet when we equate our perspective with the author's, we (rather arrogantly) assume that we have solved the mystery of the piece, leaving us with nothing more to say about it. And even if we can quote the author as saying "I intended this," we should not stop exploring our own interpretations of what the piece means to us. John Lennon tells us that his song "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" was written in response to a drawing given to him by his son, Julian. Others suspect that his real intention was to describe a drug trip brought about by LSD, the initial letters in the words of the title of the song.⁹ I have never seen his son's drawing, and I don't use psychedelic drugs, so neither interpretation means much to me. I love the song because it guides me through a kind of *Alice in Wonderland* fantasy of "looking glass ties" and "tangerine trees." To be able to show why a given interpretation matters to us, we should not phrase our assertions as being about what we think the author intended but what it causes us to consider.

Likewise you should be careful to avoid simply stating that you know the "real intentions" behind a work of non-fiction, a social policy, or a particular action or decision. For example, consider if a business decides to move its operations overseas to save money. This may inspire some to say that the company's real intention is to destroy the American economy or to exploit workers overseas, but it would sound far more persuasive and reasonable to actually show how these concerns could come about, even if they were never the stated intentions.

9. John Lennon and Paul McCartney, "Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds," *Sergent Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (Apple Records, 1967).

Worthwhile Assertions

In short, worthwhile assertions should reveal a perspective on your subject that provides possibilities for further exploration. Statements based on facts, classifications, opinions, and author intentions provide only inklings of perspectives and should be revised to inspire more prolific and meaningful analysis. Once you come up with some initial interpretations of your subject, reconsider it in light of what it means to you, perhaps by asking some or all of the following questions:

- What memories does it spark?
- How does it cause you to react emotionally and intellectually?
- What personal decisions/relationships does it cause you to ponder?
- What social, political, or intellectual concerns does it make you consider?
- How does it confirm or contradict your morals and beliefs?

Questions like these will help you to reflect on the subject further, enabling you to transform the aforementioned problematic statements into meaningful assertions. For instance, consider how the interpretation, “The CEO is moving his company’s operations overseas because he hates America and wants to exploit the workers of the third world” can be revised: “Though the CEO’s stated intention for moving the company’s operations overseas is to save money, the end result could be disastrous for both the local economy and the new country’s employees who will have to work under unsafe conditions.” Similarly, the statement “John Lennon’s real intention in writing ‘Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds’ is to promote the use of LSD” can be revised: “Whatever John Lennon’s real intention, I see ‘Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds’ as being about the power of the imagination to transcend the deadening routine of daily life.”

Once you have made several assertions like these, you can

combine your favorite ones into a working thesis, your initial argument or center of focus for your essay. It's called a "working" thesis because your point of view is likely to evolve the more you consider each aspect of your subject. Contrary to what you may have heard, the thesis does not have to be set in stone before you begin to write, guiding all the ideas that follow. When you revisit your responses, your point of view will evolve to become more precise, more thoughtful, and more sophisticated. For example, sometimes your thesis may start off as a brief and somewhat vague notion: "This ad manipulates through patriotic images of our country's nature," and later becomes more developed and clear: "Though this ad appeals to the patriotic spirit by showing images of our cherished countryside, it attempts to sell a product that will cause harm to the very environment it uses in the background for inspiration." Each time you return to your thesis, you will think about it in a more nuanced manner, moving from the initial simplicity of a gut reaction to the complexity of a thoughtful and sophisticated response.

For this reason, you do not always need to state your thesis as a definitive argument that shows how you feel in no uncertain terms. Instead, it is often desirable to show your ambivalence about your position as long as you are clear about why you feel this way. For example, you might feel uncertain as to whether your school should build a new football stadium. Although you might think the money could be spent on more pressing educational needs, you might also want to have a more safe and comfortable place to watch the games. You can discuss the advantages and disadvantages of such a proposal, making it clear that you haven't yet decided which side to support. Some of the most intriguing essays are exploratory, highlighting the mysteries of a subject, rather than persuasive, trying to convince us of a particular point of view.

While a thesis does not need to be limited in terms of argument, it should be limited in terms of scope. Perhaps the most common mistake I see students make is to choose a thesis that encompasses too many aspects of the subject. Remember that it is almost always

better to write “a lot about a little” than “a little about a lot.” When you discuss too many aspects of your subject, it becomes difficult to provide any new perspectives. Challenge yourself to write about an aspect of your subject that may appear too small to inspire even a page response. Then think about the nature of your perspective a bit further, putting it to the following tests before you put too much more time into it.

1. The Evidence Test

Before engaging in further analysis, look again at your subject and ask yourself, “Is there really enough evidence here to support my point of view?” If I were to write about the film *Office Space* as showing just how much employees love to go to work in the Tech Industry, I might have a very difficult time finding enough scenes to match my perspective. You should also research the details surrounding your subject to see if your assertion needs to be modified, for instance by considering the historical circumstances that were in place at the time the event happened or the piece was created. One student, when writing about the speech from *The Tempest*, (quoted in Chapter 1), wrote that when Prospero’s actors disappear into “thin air,” they must have been projected on film with the camera suddenly switching off. Of course, Shakespeare could not have had that in mind given that he wrote three hundred years before we had the technology to carry this out. Still, one could argue that the scene might best be performed this way now. If a statement cannot be justified or at least modified to match the evidence, then you may have even more problems with the next category.

2. The Explanation Test

Oftentimes when there isn't enough evidence to support a thesis, writers will be accused of stretching their explanations. I once heard a talk on how technicians assigned terms associated with women to parts of the computer to give themselves an illusion of control. Some of the assertions made sense—for instance that “mother” in motherboard shows how men may want to recall/dominate the nurturing figure of their childhoods. However, when the speaker pointed out that the “apple” in Apple Computers recalls the forbidden fruit that Eve handed to Adam, I started to squirm. The speaker even tried to argue that the name Macintosh was chosen because it's a “tart” apple, and “tart” is a derogatory term that men use to refer to women of ill repute. Nonetheless, I would rather see a stretch than an analysis in which the explanation isn't even necessary because the thesis is so obvious: “Othello reveals the destructive consequences of jealousy,” or “Beavis and Butthead's stupidity often gets them into trouble.” Ideally, the assertion should require some explanation of the relevant details within or directly implied by the thesis. Remember that the goal is not to come up with an answer to the question “what's THE meaning of the piece?” But rather to explore dimensions of the subject that do not have definitive answers, allowing us to consider our own subjectivities.

3. The Significance Test

You should also try to avoid wasting time on a thesis that does not have any significance by applying what many teachers call the “so what?” test. If your assertions do not lead to a deeper consideration of any of the questions for further thought raised earlier, then it probably will be boring for both you to write and for your audience to read. Oftentimes to make an assertion more interesting, we

simply need to add more to it. For instance, I could argue that Peter feels beaten down by the soulless routine of his workplace throughout the film *Office Space*. But I need to remember that Peter is just a character in a film and cannot benefit from any of my conclusions. To make this more significant, I also need to consider how Peter represents the attitude of many contemporary workers and reveal the broader consequences of this attitude.

All of these considerations will help your thesis to become clearer, nuanced, and unique. In addition, it will allow your research questions (discussed in the previous chapter) to become more precise and fruitful as you compare and contrast your points of view with those of others. If there is one thing that I hope that I made clear throughout this chapter it is that the goal of a careful examination should not be to arrive at the same conclusions and have the same thoughts as everyone else. If we all came to the same conclusions when looking at a subject, then there would be no reason to write a new essay on it. I always tell my students that I know what I think and sometimes what most experts think when I look at a subject; I want you to tell me what you think instead of presenting opinions that have already been stated by someone else. Developing a perspective that is both unique and worthwhile takes time, and although carefully examining a piece may help you to form an initial understanding and lay the cornerstone for your analysis, you still need to build the rest of the essay. In the next chapter, we'll look at ways to do this, first by helping you to explain more thoroughly how you arrived at your perspective and second by helping you to explore the significance of your perspective in a manner that moves beyond the most obvious lessons.

EXERCISE

Look over the exercises you have completed so far in this chapter. Choose one and list the main assertions that you came up with

on your subject. Cross out those that reveal only statements of fact, classification, taste, or intention and then consider what the remaining ones have in common. Try to construct a working thesis that presents a point of view that implies all of these perspectives. Put this working thesis to the evidence, explanation, and significance tests, and modify it accordingly. Remember the thesis does not have to be stated as a definitive argument but can reveal your ambivalence about your subject.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Certain statements do not lead to productive essays, especially if they reveal only a fact, an individual taste, or a particular classification.
2. The remaining worthwhile assertions should connect to each other through a working thesis or center of focus.
3. This thesis may reveal a definitive perspective or an exploration of ambivalence, as long as it is justifiable, clear, and worthwhile (passes the evidence, explanation, and significance tests).

12. Chapter 4: Explanations and Significance: Developing Your Analysis

4.1 Explaining Your Perspective

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Introduce Kenneth Burke's Pentad as a means for focusing on the essential aspects of the subject.
2. Discuss how to provide background information for clarification and further analysis.
3. Show how a consideration of audience helps to determine which explanations should be included and which ones can remain implied.
4. Discuss how to expand explanations through comparison/contrast and personal experience.

To see a world in a grain of sand
And Heaven in a wild flower
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour¹

As one of the more mystical poets of the Romantic period, William Blake may have been thinking about the transformative power of the imagination when he wrote these lines, but his words apply equally well to how analysis can open up new perspectives that give greater understanding and appreciation for our subjects. In this chapter, you will learn how to both explain and show the significance of

1. William Blake, "Auguries of Innocence" *The Mentor Book of Major British Poets*, ed. Oscar Williams (New York: The New American Library, 1963), 40.

your initial assertions by looking again at the key aspects of the examples that first inspired them. In doing so, your point of view will evolve as your assertions become increasingly clear and complex. Always keep in mind that the more deeply you think about one area of analysis, the more fully you can understand the other areas. To illustrate, let's take a fresh look at one of the most well known movies of all time.

For those of you who have not seen *The Wizard of Oz*,² the 1939 film based on the novel by L. Frank Baum, here is a brief synopsis. Dorothy, a young girl from Kansas, is bored with the life that she leads on her uncle and aunt's farm and spends much of her time dreaming of running away to a magical place "over the rainbow." Besides her fantasies, she gets most of her happiness from taking care of her dog, Toto, but soon a mean yet influential woman takes the dog away from her and threatens to drown him in a river. Though Toto escapes and returns to Dorothy, Dorothy decides to run away to protect her pet and seek more exciting adventures. She doesn't get far, however, before she feels guilty for causing her Auntie Em so much worry and returns home, only to get caught in a tornado that takes her, her dog, and her house to the magical land of Oz.

At this point, the movie changes from black and white to color as Dorothy leaves her home to explore these strange new surroundings. Immediately we see that the house has landed on the Wicked Witch of the East, much to the gratitude of the Munchkins, strange little people whom the witch oppresses. Unfortunately for Dorothy, the witch's sister (the Wicked Witch of the West) is not at all pleased by this and threatens revenge. Before the Wicked Witch of the West can carry this out, however, Glenda, the Good Witch from the North, protects Dorothy by placing the deceased witch's magical ruby slippers on her feet. Glenda tells Dorothy to follow the

2. Victor Fleming, dir., *The Wizard of Oz* (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1939).

Yellow Brick Road to the Emerald City where the Wizard of Oz lives, the only man wise and powerful enough to protect her and help her to return home.

On the way there, Dorothy encounters a scarecrow, a tin man, and a cowardly lion who accompany her on her journey in the hopes that they too will get something from the wizard: a brain, a heart, and courage.

When they finally reach the wizard, he appears as a disembodied head emerging out of fire and speaking with a booming voice of authority. He refuses to help them until they return with the broom of the Wicked Witch of the West, which eventually they do, but on their return they discover that the fiery wizard is merely a projection of a “smoke and mirror” machine. The real wizard, whom Toto finds operating the machine behind a curtain, is an ordinary man with no more power to grant wishes than the rest of them. Nonetheless, he points out to the Scarecrow, the Tin Man and the Lion that they already performed deeds that showed intelligence, compassion, and courage—proving to them that they already possessed the qualities that they thought they lacked. He is not, however, so successful in helping Dorothy, and it seems as though she will never be able to return to Kansas.

Just when all seems lost, Glenda returns and tells Dorothy that she can return home simply by clicking the heels of her slippers together and repeating the phrase: “There’s no place like home.” The resulting magic returns Dorothy to Kansas where she wakes up in her own bed. When she tells her family about her adventure, they believe that it was only a dream brought about by a concussion caused during the storm. Dream or not, Dorothy tells her family that she’s happy to be back and that if she ever feels the urge to look for happiness and fulfillment again, she doesn’t need to look any further than her own backyard.

The Pentad

There are many different ways to analyze this film, but let's just focus on two common perspectives. Certain feminist analyses have taken issue with how the film might be seen as a warning to women to avoid the dangers of having too much power or straying too far from their "proper" role in the home. Yet others argue the exact opposite and instead see the film as a reminder to trust our own thoughts and feelings over those of questionable authorities. If you tried to explain each of these perspectives by simply summarizing the general plot, your explanation would seem too broad or too obvious. To fully justify your interpretation, you need to look again at the film with a more critical eye, concentrating on those features that validate your main assertions. To determine which details are the most significant and how they relate to each other, I recommend that you use a heuristic (derived from a concept by the social philosopher Kenneth Burke) called "the Pentad". The Pentad helps you to break apart any scene, whether real or fictional, into five interrelated components that determine its overall shape and direction:

Act: What generally happens.

Agent: Those involved in what happens.

Agency: The means through which it happens.

Scene: When and where it happens.

Purpose: Why it happens.

Of the five areas, the "purpose" is the most difficult to define. It can be understood as the motivation for the actions within the subject itself or it could be stated in terms of what it means to you as spelled out in your working thesis. When defined the second way, the Pentad can help you to explain your thesis more thoroughly by helping you to select the most relevant details and consider how they relate to each other. But, of course, this can happen only after you have taken the time to consider the subject long enough

to come up with a working thesis in the first place. To illustrate, consider how the Pentad helps us to look again at *The Wizard of Oz* in light of the two perspectives mentioned.

If the **Purpose** is to show how the film may discourage women from leaving the home to pursue careers or take on prominent positions in society, then the way you delineate the other aspects of the Pentad may look like this.

Act: Dorothy's attempts to leave her home are shown as short lived and irresponsible. She finds satisfaction only at the end of the film when she decides to wander no further than her own backyard, thus preparing her for her inevitable future as a stay-at-home wife and mother.

Agent: Powerful women in both Kansas and Oz are shown as "wicked" and abusive. In contrast, Auntie Em and Glenda are considered "good" because of their feminine and homespun qualities. Glenda knows magic but uses it only in small ways and primarily acts as a nurturing figure.

Agency: Objects of power that fall into women's hands (the broom, the ruby slippers) are either misunderstood or misused. Dorothy learns to disregard these objects, giving away the broom and using the slippers only to get back to a place where they no longer contain power.

Scene: Though Oz is certainly more "colorful" than Kansas, it's also shown as more dangerous and unsatisfying, which is why Dorothy chooses to leave it almost as soon as she gets there. At the time the film appeared, women were mostly expected to stay at home and any desire to have a career was often seen as strange or unnatural.

After considering all of these elements, you can then explain your perspective more thoroughly:

*For many generations **The Wizard of Oz** has not only served as entertainment but also as subtle propaganda for rigid gender roles. When the film was released in 1939, few women felt that they could pursue careers outside of the home. Those who wanted to do*

something else with their lives were often viewed as abnormal or irresponsible. The film clearly reinforces this attitude. Throughout, the women who seek more powerful positions are shown as “wicked” and crazy whereas those who are simply content to look after the home or look pretty are shown as good and stable. Though Dorothy is at first unsatisfied with her role as future homemaker, she eventually decides to embrace it, trading in magical objects like the ruby slippers and witch’s broom for her peaceful yet static rural existence.

This is clearly a valid perspective, one that justifies the main assertion with clear and appropriate examples. But while it brings to light something that should be seriously considered, it is not the only permissible way to see the film. Let’s consider the other perspective that the **Purpose** of the film might be to encourage a questioning of the traditional family structure along with other beliefs passed down by reason of tradition or authority. As the purpose behind our analysis changes, so do the other corresponding elements of the Pentad:

Act: The characters eventually come to accept their own traits and abilities without any need for external validation. Because the authority figures prove to be unreliable, phony, or just plain wicked, the characters eventually learn to rely on themselves.

Agent: Dorothy’s three companions eventually learn that they don’t need a wizard to grant them the qualities that they already possess. Dorothy too learns to stand up to a witch, to call a wizard a phony, and to eventually tap the power within her that she needs to get back home.

Agency: The wizard uses his “smoke and mirror” device to enhance his authority. Though he tries to create a persona that is “all powerful” and frightening, he is only a little man with no more power or ability to grant wishes than the rest of them.

Scene: Oz is a place for personal enlightenment. And while the film may reflect the cultural attitudes of its time, it may also have inspired future generations to question authority and challenge existing norms.

As before, evaluating these different elements leads to a stronger explanation:

*While the characters in the film **The Wizard of Oz** do not wear buttons stamped with the phrase “Question Authority,” the film as a whole strongly suggests that we do so. Though the characters Dorothy encounters look to the wizard to grant them a brain, a heart, and courage, they already show plenty of intelligence, feeling, and bravery. It’s only after Toto inadvertently exposes the real wizard’s “smoke and mirror” contraption that they see the phony behind the curtain and realize that they don’t need his validation to prove their self-worth. Likewise Dorothy learns to stand up to questionable authorities, and though she chooses to remain in the home, she has helped inspire countless others to say “no” to the rigid roles that restrict them.*

Even though these perspectives are very different, each paragraph reveals a reasonable position arising from a close and thoughtful viewing of the film. And perhaps the most useful aspect of the Pentad is that it not only helps you to reexamine the details of your subject in light of your purpose but also to see how the other elements relate to each other. For instance, it helps us to see how exposing the agency of the wizard’s machine inspires the agents to stand up for themselves. As you apply the Pentad, you might also be surprised by how many details you picked up on subconsciously when you arrived at your initial working thesis, justifying your perspective to yourself as well as to others.

Providing Background Information

Doing extra research and providing more background information can open up even more areas for analysis of *The Wizard of Oz*. For instance some scholars have argued that the story is based on the political situation at the turn of the Twentieth Century, the time of the novel’s release, and chronicles the rise of the

Populist Party, as represented by Dorothy, that attempted to take on the more established Democrat and Republican Parties, as represented by the two wicked witches. You might also want to read interviews with L. Frank Baum, the author, or Victor Fleming, the director, to find out what inspired them to create the book and the movie.

In addition to suggesting new avenues for interpretation, providing background information and research can help you to explain certain aspects of your subjects that might seem unclear because the terms, sounds or images are abstract, dated or specialized. For instance, to explain the quote from *The Tempest* in the first chapter you might first need to provide modern versions of some of the more archaic terms or reveal how a “baseless fabric” might refer to the painted sets on a stage. Likewise, if you are considering a historical event or a political speech, you should provide information about the surrounding circumstances and the key people involved in the outcome. For instance, to explain why President Bush decided to invade Iraq, you would need to know something about the potential threat Saddam Hussein posed, American economic interests in the Middle East, President Bush’s character and personal motivations, and the general mood of the American public after 9/11.

Considering the Audience

Just how much background you need to provide mostly depends on what you know about the people who will be reading your essay. For instance you will not need to review the basic principles of Sigmund Freud’s theory of id/ego/superego when writing for your psychology professor. But you might want to explain this when writing to your peers. On the other hand, when writing for your professors, you might need to explain references to popular culture that would be unnecessary if you were writing only to your friends.

Despite what you may have been taught in the past, you should never assume that your audience doesn't know anything because you do not want to bore them by explaining obvious references any more than you want to confuse them by withholding important background.

For this reason, you should also take the context of your writing into account before developing your explanations. If, for instance, you were writing an essay for a class about a book that was previously assigned, you would not have to begin with a general synopsis, but could jump straight to the section that corresponds most closely with your assertions. If, however, you were writing to a broader audience, you should first provide them with a general background or a summary of the piece before examining the sections that specifically stood out for you.

Likewise the tone and style of your essay will vary depending on context, audience, and purpose. When writing to a friend on Facebook, you might use vocabulary, abbreviations, and icons that you would never use when writing a more formal essay for your instructor. Even among teachers your tone and style will vary depending on how formal they expect your writing to appear. Teachers, like everyone else, have their own subjective impressions as to what constitutes effective writing. But try not to let this bother you too much because in learning how to communicate effectively to the various audiences you find in school, you will gain a greater rhetorical flexibility to communicate outside of it.

Explaining a Subject Through Comparison and Contrast

Once you provide enough background information for your specific audience, you can further explain your subject through comparison and contrast with others that relate to it. For instance, to lend validity to the feminist perspective on *The Wizard of Oz*, you might

compare the film to others of the same period that also show powerful women in a negative light. Consider, for instance, how the evil queen in Walt Disney's 1937 film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*³ uses her magic to get what she wants, while Snow White, the ideal of femininity, simply waits for a man to come along and rescue her.

You could also underscore how a subject is influenced by cultural attitudes through contrast. For example, if you wanted to explain why a show like *South Park* or *Family Guy* has particular appeal to young people today, you might contrast these shows with coming of age television series from other periods. For instance, you could contrast an episode of *South Park* with an episode of *Leave it to Beaver*, an iconic series from the 1950s. Though the main characters, Beaver and Wally Cleaver, often get into trouble, it is never anything like the kind that Eric Cartman gets into, and, unlike Cartman, who is spoiled by his single mother, the Cleaver kids are always able to talk out their difficulties with their father who helps them to learn from their mistakes at the end of each episode. Again, the conclusions you draw from this contrast could vary. You might assert that this reveals the necessity of a strong father figure to keep children in check, or you might suggest that the tightly controlled patriarchal family structure of the 1950s inspired rebellion and ridicule in the decades that followed.

Along these lines, you might also consider explaining your subject by contrasting it with how it could have been different by calling our attention to the details that were deliberately omitted. For instance you might analyze an advertisement by revealing what it doesn't show about the product. Advertisements for fast food restaurants usually show families sitting together, relaxed, and having a good time, but they never show how people usually eat at these places, quickly and alone. And these ads certainly do not reveal the negative

3. David Hand, dir., *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* (Walt Disney Productions, 1937).

effects that eating too much fast food can have on the body, such as heart disease or obesity. Similarly, we can tell a lot about how people feel about something or someone not only by the terms they use but also by the ones they refuse to use. For instance, if the first time you say “I love you” to your significant other only garners the response “thank you,” you might begin to suspect that your feelings run more deeply than those of your partner.

Explaining a Subject Through Personal Values and Experiences

As discussed in the first chapter, the process through which we discover meaning takes place in the interaction between the subject **and** the viewer/reader/listener. So to fully explain how and why you came up with your assertions, you should also consider how your experiences, your values, even your mood at the moment of encounter can shed light on how you see your subject. As the above examples indicate, you might begin by considering how your surrounding culture influences your response. For instance, Thomas de Zengotita argues that Americans have become so used to media constructions of reality that they often get bored with the real world that is unmitigated by it. To illustrate, he points out that if you were to see wolves in the wild, you might at first be fascinated, but then will quickly lose interest because the sight cannot measure up to the ones that you are used to seeing in movies and on television:

And you will get bored really fast if that ‘wolf’ doesn’t do anything. The kids will start squirming in, like, five minutes; you’ll probably need to pretend you’re not getting bored for a while longer. But if that little smudge of canine out there in the distance continues to just loll around in the tall grass, and you don’t have a really powerful tripod-supported telelens gizmo to play with, you will get bored.

You will begin to appreciate how much technology and editing goes into making those nature shows.⁴

Other times, your response may emerge from what is going on in your life at the moment of encounter. Consider, for instance, how time and experience might change how we view a subject. When I first heard the song “Time” from Pink Floyd’s album, *The Dark Side of the Moon*, I came across a line that confused me, “And then one day you find ten years have got behind you /No one told you when to run; you missed the starting gun.” At fifteen, I could not understand how ten years could just get “behind you.” That amount of time was pretty much my entire conscious life. But now at fifty, I understand the line much better. It often seems as though the last ten years have zoomed by, and I have missed “the starting gun” on so many things that I wanted to accomplish.

But we need to be careful here. One reason many teachers do not allow students to use the word “I” is that they often overuse it. If every sentence began with the phrase “I see it this way because” the essay would soon become monotonous and repetitive. Most of the time, you do not need to write this (or similar phrases like “in my opinion”) because it is implied that as the writer you are expressing your point of view. However, like most rules of writing that teachers pass down this one can be taken too far. Often, using “I” will make your writing clearer, more accurate, and more meaningful than constructions that begin with generic subjects like “the reader,” “the viewer” or “one.” These terms can make it tempting to not justify our perspectives, because they can give the impression that all people see a subject in the same way; this simply isn’t true, as evidenced by the fact that we can use these terms to make contradictory assertions: “the reader sees the poem as about the renewal and energy the life force brings to both people and nature”; “the reader views the poem as about the destructive consequences of time.”

4. Thomas de Zengotita, “The Numbing of the American Mind,” *Harpers* (April 2002), 37.

Think of how much more accurate, meaningful, and clear it is for me to write: “when I was younger I understood the poem to be about the mystery and power that creates life in people and nature, but now (having just turned fifty) I see it as revealing the inevitable decay of both.”

Those teachers who tell their students to never use “I” expect them to seem like objective and indifferent scholars. Yet according to Joan Didion, one of the most prolific and respected essayists of our time, the nature of writing is never like this:

In many ways writing is the act of saying *I*, of imposing oneself upon other people, of saying **listen to me, see it my way, change your mind**. It’s an aggressive, even a hostile act. You can disguise its aggressiveness all you want with veils of subordinate clauses and qualifiers and tentative subjunctives, with ellipses and evasions with the whole manner of intimating rather than claiming, of alluding rather than stating but there’s no getting around the fact that setting words on paper is the tactic of a secret bully, an invasion, an imposition of the writer’s sensibility on the readers most private space.⁵

Michel de Montaigne, the man credited with inventing the essay form, would clearly agree with Didion’s assessment because he frequently used the personal pronoun to acknowledge the subjective nature of his perspectives. Consider this excerpt from “Of Idleness”: “Lately when **I** returned to my home,...it seemed to me that **I** could do my mind no greater favor than to let it entertain itself in full idleness and stay and settle in itself, which **I** hoped it might do more easily now, having become weightier and riper with time.”⁶ Imagine if he had been expected to write these lines without

5. Joan Didion, “Why I Write” (New York Times Magazine, December 5, 1976).

6. Michael de Montaigne, “Of Idleness” Montaigne’s Essays

the use of the personal pronoun: “when one returns to one’s home, it seems to a person....”. So don’t be afraid of including that vertical line when it adds accuracy, clarity, or depth to your explanations.

Whether you choose to explain your subject through background information, cultural influence, personal experience, comparison and contrast with other subjects, or some combination of these, you should never ignore this area of analysis. Your interpretation of a subject may seem apparent to you, but your reader may see it very differently and not understand how you derived your perspectives. By providing explanations, you show that you took the time to pay careful attention. Though not everyone will agree with your point of view, most will at least respect it if they see that you derived your assertions from a close consideration of the subject and did not just rely on a gut reaction based on a brief glance.

EXERCISE 1

Think of an important event that happened to you, one that you can vividly recall. First consider how the details of it correspond with the Pentad. What generally happened? Which key people were involved? Through what means did it happen? When and where did it happen? And, finally, why did it happen? In answering the last question, you might think of different reasons; for instance, what motivated the actions at the time and what lessons it may have taught you down the road. Now think of how these various aspects relate to each other. For example, if the scene where it took place was unfamiliar to you at the time, how did that shape your response as an agent? Freewrite on these various aspects and on how each

and Selected Writing, trans. Donald M Frame (New York: Saint Martin’s Press, 1963), 7.

relates to the other and then consider how this process gave you a better understanding of both the event and its consequences.

EXERCISE 2

Look over the event that you just analyzed and write a brief letter about it to two different audiences: to a friend who experienced it with you and to a stodgy older person. Consider the difference in content, how you provide more or less background information to explain what happened and include various considerations as to why and how it happened. Notice, also, the difference in the overall tone, vocabulary and voice. Now think of how you might write the letter to a friend who was not there with you or to a more mellow open-minded older person.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A closer examination of a particular aspect of a subject can lead to a more thorough justification of how we derived our assertions from it.
- Background information can reveal the surface meaning of a subject but should not substitute for a more thorough justification of an interpretation.
- You can explain a subject further by comparing and contrasting it with others (actual or hypothetical), and by relating how your personal beliefs and experiences cause you to see it in a unique light.
- Understanding the needs of the audience who will be reading your essay can help you to determine what additional information you need to provide about both the subject and yourself.

4.2 Considering the Broader Significance

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Discuss how to reveal the broader significance of the analysis—personal, cultural, and scholarly.
2. Explain how to avoid clichés and broad declarative statements.
3. Reveal heuristics that help us explore the significance.

By now you should have a pretty good idea of how to look carefully at your subject, come up with key assertions, find specific examples to illustrate these assertions, and justify your point of view through a close reading. Yet there is still one more area of analysis that we need to discuss: the significance. Sadly, this is the area most often overlooked in school because the answer to the question “Why are you writing the essay?” is so obvious—“Duh, because my teacher told me to.” However, without significance an essay simply becomes an interpretation, which by itself may not mean anything other than an excuse to show off how clever you are. Just as spices give flavor to food, significance is the ingredient that turns an interpretation into a perspective that is meaningful for both the writer and the audience. In fact, outside of school, the primary motivation for engaging in analysis is not to simply show off the ability to discern patterns in a subject, but to call attention to something of wider importance. In exploring the significance, you reveal how the process of analysis engenders new insights about your personal beliefs and experiences as well as the wider cultural concerns that surround both you and your subject.

Whether you choose to explore the personal, cultural, or academic significance of your subject, you will move in the reverse direction from how you derived your explanation. To illustrate, let's return to *The Wizard of Oz* for a moment. If I were to use a personal

experience to explain how I see one of the key scenes, it might write:

When I was a kid, I always felt intimidated by my teachers. To me they seemed like the fiery machine version of Oz—powerful, untouchable, and all knowing. However, when my mom became friends with my third grade teacher, and I got to know her outside of class, I discovered that she didn't know everything and had problems just like the rest of us. So when Toto exposes the man behind the curtain, it reminds me of how quickly authority can vanish in the harsh light of reality.

However, to make my analysis significant, I would need to discuss the implications of this further:

You might think that I lost respect for my teacher as I got to see more of her imperfections, but in fact I ended up liking her more, just as I've always preferred the humble, human version of Oz to his fiery alter ego. I wish that more authority figures would stop pretending and admit that they don't know everything. In my experience, people who talk and act with absolute certainty tend to be mediocre teachers and leaders; I have much greater respect for those who aren't afraid to utter the phrase "I don't know" once in awhile.

In short, while your explanations justify your perspectives through a discussion of the relevant details contained within your subject, the significance reveals the insights this leads you to discover in other related areas.

Thinking Beyond Clichés and Obvious Classifications

Though there are no hard and fast rules concerning how much you should explore the significance, you should at least take your observations beyond the obvious and cliché. Sometimes clichés

don't make any sense at all; we just repeat them ourselves because we hear others constantly utter them. When I was a child, anytime I would complain that something isn't fair, my parents would often respond with the cliché "life isn't fair." Though I often repeated the phrase myself (especially when I started teaching), I have since decided that it doesn't really make any sense. "Life" is too big to be broadly characterized as "fair" or "unfair"; instead we all experience countless moments of both justice and injustice. And even if life isn't fair, that's no reason for us to act unjustly. We may not have the ability to fix all the seemingly random sufferings that come with living, but we can at least strive to behave in a reasonable manner ourselves.

Other times, clichés become clichés because they are often true, but this does not mean that they are always true for all occasions. In fact, for every cliché you can come up with, you can find another that has the opposite meaning. "Absence can make the heart grow fonder," but often loved ones who are "out of sight are out of mind." "Good things may come to those who wait," but "it's the early bird that gets the worm." "The grass may be greener on the other side," but, as Dorothy reminds us, "there's no place like home." And not only can clichés seem contradictory, but also suggest a person's desire not to think. For instance, if you were having problems with a long distance relationship and asked your roommates for advice, you probably would not want them to simply reply "absence makes the heart grow fonder." Such a response would imply that they didn't care enough about you to take into account the specific concerns of your particular situation. Likewise, readers often feel the same way when a cliché substitutes for more detailed significance.

Along with a tendency to overuse clichés, the other factor that prevents writers from thinking very deeply about the implications of their subject occurs when they rely too much on those statements of classification and taste discussed in the previous chapter. When exploring the significance, try not to simply label your subject as "ironic," or "absurd," and leave it at that, but also consider why it matters that we see it this way. For instance, you could discuss

how certain aspects remind you of an absurdity in your own life that needs correcting. In short, try to move beyond simply showing that you understand the surface meaning of these terms to fully exploring the wider insights that they helped you to discover. If you only rely on a cliché or broad declarative statement, the significance of your essay may disappoint your reader like an unsatisfying punch line to a joke that took forever to set up.

One way to move beyond simple declarative statements or clichés is to brainstorm on what you already know about the significance of your focus. “Brainstorming” or “listing” is a widely used heuristic in which you quickly write down all the thoughts and associations that you have on a subject to see where the ideas may lead you. To give your mind free reign, you should not pause to censor any of the ideas because sometimes the ones that seem the most bizarre initially can lead to your most profound insights. Consider, for instance, the following brainstorm on the nature and implications of advertisements for laptops:

It's easy to look like I'm working

Work anywhere I like

Better than carrying a stack of heavy books

Always connected to my friends and fun stuff

Make it my favorite color and it'll look cool

After doing this for several minutes, you should then look over your jottings to see if any patterns appear. For instance, from my notes above you can see how these commercials might let students think that laptops make it easy for them to look intellectual and do their work in bits and pieces. In addition, this implies that they can use this one product to manage the “lighter side” of their lives—social interactions and relaxation (reading, watching movies).

For those of you who tend to think in concepts before considering the concrete details, you might try clustering (sometimes referred to as “looping” or “a spider diagram”), a variation of brainstorming in which you move in the opposite direction, from categories to specific instances (and, again, list everything that comes to mind

without censorship). In this version, you first write down the main topic you wish to examine in the middle of a piece of paper, surround this topic with the major issues and concerns that come to mind when you think of it, and then surround these issues with the concrete details that they consist of. For instance a cluster around the topic of commercials for laptops might look like this:



Notice that while the layout is different, the considerations appear similar to the ones that emerged while brainstorming. It doesn't really matter which form you use or how you use it, as long as it sparks new insights.

After taking time out to explore the significance, you can then return to your analysis to integrate your new insights about the broader implications of your piece:

There's little doubt that laptop advertisements work—or companies wouldn't continue to use these same tired plots. Typically we see a group of "with it" people— young students at a desk, on the grass or at a coffee shop; well-groomed professionals having success at a business meeting; young children looking at movies or educational learning programs. The laptops may be coordinated to their style or type of clothing (for instance, black or gray for a businessman; red for a college student; pink for a little girl). While people may like what they "see", the ads don't necessarily focus on what a laptop really helps

you do—preparing work, researching and rewriting presentations or conducting appropriate due diligence on research findings. This same focus on style over substance permeates much of our culture, from politicians who say that they are against government spending while increasing their personal salaries and staff to the students who paste “Go Green” bumper stickers to their unnecessarily large, gas guzzling cars.

The paragraph is much more intriguing than it would be if you tried to sum up the significance too quickly by relying on a cliché: “Buyer Beware.” If you think carefully about both the piece and the issues it raises before writing about it more formally, you will develop a much more satisfying discussion of its significance.

The Personal Significance

When looking at the personal significance, it’s helpful to remind yourself that you need to be careful of not overdoing it. A reason that teachers often tell students not to use “I” is that it often encourages them to only talk about themselves and leave the subject behind, leading to the dreaded “tangent” discussed in the first chapter. The temptation to go off course can be very great because it is usually easier to write about yourself than to sustain the close attention a successful analysis requires. For instance, one of my students had a difficult time understanding Woody Allen’s film *The Purple Rose of Cairo*, so instead of challenging himself to think about it further, he decided to begin his paper this way: “In the film the main character behaves in a manner that is naïve. I too behaved naively once...” And the rest of the paper was about a trip he took to Las Vegas where he lost all the money he needed for college that semester. This might have been fine if he had chosen to write about this experience in the first place; however, he didn’t really analyze what happened to him during the trip either but

simply reported on it. Too much attention to the significance leads to tangents, but ignoring it altogether makes the paper seem like a bland academic exercise with no lasting meaning.

Though you might think that it would be easier to discover the personal significance of something that you yourself are involved in, it can often be quite challenging, as anyone who has spent a sleepless night thinking about what a relationship or job means to them can testify. In fact, even something as simple as the trip to the gym that I wrote about in the previous chapter can lead to several complex insights:

So here I am, taking a break from working in front of the computer in order to go to a place where I am surrounded by even more machines, devices to work out on and devices to listen to as I go about it. I sometimes miss being a kid when I hardly relied on technology at all (I grew up before video games, iPods and the Internet). I would go out and play with other kids and we would create our own fantasies, games and exercises. I guess, however, that it is pretty unrealistic to assume that I would have the time to do that now, even if I could find friends my age that would be willing to take a break in the middle of the day. But maybe a change of setting wouldn't hurt either. Perhaps I can go for a hike tomorrow instead of working out on the elliptical. It may take more time to get to my destination and be less efficient at burning calories, but I'm sure it will be a lot more fun.

None of these insights would have occurred to me if I hadn't stopped to think about why I felt in such a rut every time I considered working out. I had to challenge myself to think beyond the obvious fact that exercise can sometimes feel like a chore to discover the more specific reasons I felt this way and what I could do to make it better.

The Broader Significance

When looking beyond the personal significance of your subject, you can examine a variety of related topics, depending on what you learned in the course of your analysis. However, the basic question you always need to ask is: how does your analysis offer a more complete and satisfying examination of your subject than those that have been done in the past, and how does this understanding lead to more appropriate insights about the discipline or situation from which your subject emerged? For instance, in his book *The Ecology of Fear*, environmentalist Mike Davis shows why it is important to reexamine the policies that have guided the city planning of Los Angeles for the past several decades:

For generations, market-driven urbanization has transgressed environmental common sense. Historic wildfire corridors have been turned into view-lot suburbs, wetland liquefaction zones into marinas, and floodplains into industrial districts and housing tracts. Monolithic public works have been substituted for regional planning and a responsible land ethic. As a result, Southern California has reaped flood, fire, and earthquake tragedies that were as avoidable, as unnatural as the beating of Rodney King and the ensuing explosion in the streets. In failing to conserve natural ecosystems it has squandered much of its charm and beauty.⁷

By revealing the disastrous consequences of basing city-planning decisions solely on short-term profits, Davis underscores the importance of his own, environmentally focused, analysis.

For Davis this perspective opens up an entire book outlining how Los Angeles (and by implication other cities) should use ecology, rather than short-term profit as the main guide for how it should develop. But sometimes the significance of your subject will seem

7. Mike Davis, *Ecology of Fear* (New York: Vintage Books, 1999), 9.

so blatantly obvious that it feels like there just isn't anything left to discuss. This does not necessarily mean that your focus is overly simplistic because many of the most powerful works gravitate toward very definitive points of view. Almost all critics agree that *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain is one of the greatest American novels and yet there is nothing subtle or ambiguous about how it shows slavery as an evil institution, particularly in one key scene. Huck, the narrator, has been helping Jim, a runaway slave, to escape. All his life Huck has been told that slaves are property and that anyone who helps a slave to escape is committing a deadly sin, one that will surely send him to Hell. Finally, Huck's conscience gets the better of him and he writes a letter to Miss Watson, Jim's "owner," alerting her of their location. At first Huck claims, "I felt good and all washed clean of sin for the first time I had ever felt so in my life..." but on further reflection Huck begins to recall all the great things Jim had done for him, how he was the best friend that Huck had ever known, how he was much kinder to Huck than his own father. At that moment Huck sees the letter and makes his decision: "All right, then, I'll go to hell"—and tore it up."⁸ Even if the point is obvious, that Jim is not just property, that slavery is an evil institution, and that Huck's personal experience is a better guide for his conscience than a warped social morality, the emotional impact of this scene always brings a tear to my eyes.

Yet there are still ways to examine the significance of this scene that take us beyond the obvious: for instance, to discuss how people often distort religious maxims to justify profitable social conventions. Many people who lived at the time the novel takes place argued that slaves were property and The Bible commands us not to steal, and, therefore, helping a slave to escape is breaking one of the Ten Commandments. However, a closer reading of The Bible may lead us to see that the dignity of the individual should matter

8. Mark Twain, *The Annotated Huckleberry Finn*, ed. Michael Patrick Hearn (New York: Norton, 2001), 344.

more than following rules that preserve an unjust social system. After all, Moses, the man who delivered the Ten Commandments in the first place, helped a whole country of slaves to escape. Along these lines we might also consider what issues we currently face that could potentially create conflicts between individual and social morality. Though all reasonable people should now agree that slavery was wrong, we can still speculate as to which actions, behaviors, or beliefs that we embrace today might seem repugnant to future generations.

Of course we can only speculate on future trends, but it isn't necessary when exploring the significance to come to definitive conclusions. Just as your assertions on a given subject may express ambivalence, so might your discussion of what it implies. It is fine, even desirable, to express ambivalence as long as you do not do so in a vague manner. For example, if you were to consider a current issue that instigates a moral dilemma for you that's similar to the conflict felt by Huck, you don't want to simply sound confused: *I guess we need to protect the environment, but I don't know it seems like a hassle sometimes, though I guess I could do more, but I'm really busy right now and the bus is often late, so it's easier to drive.* Instead you might write: *If people survive for the next hundred years, they may look back at our generation and shudder about how badly we treated the environment. I wish I could say that I am as dedicated as Huck in defying social convention, but I am just as guilty as most in choosing what is convenient over what is responsible.* While the first sentence seems like the jumbled thoughts of one pondering the issue for the first time, the second reads like an intelligent consideration that acknowledges ambivalence.

If you still have trouble articulating what makes your subject significant, I suggest that you go back over the questions for initial consideration raised at the beginning of the last chapter. We are often driven to consider a particular subject because of the meaning it suggests to us, even when we have not yet fully grasped the implications of that meaning. This happens to me all the time. When I go to an art gallery or when I listen to an album, I will focus on

a particular painting or song before I realize why it commands my attention. Only later when I've had time to really think about it, do I discover that it reminds me of something that happened in the past or helps me to clarify an issue that I'm currently pondering.

Though I've broken apart a way to consider analysis into particular elements to discuss each of them more clearly, when we actually begin to write on a subject, it will seldom follow such a neat and linear order. Instead our consideration of these aspects will take place recursively and sometimes in the reverse order of how I presented them, for when we think through the **significance**, we often come up with more precise **assertions**, which inspire us to choose more appropriate **examples**, which we can then **explain** more thoroughly. This takes time and effort but ultimately what we end up writing will be much more interesting than if we had simply jotted down the first thesis that came to mind and quickly tried to prove it. As we continue to think about our ideas, writing them down, considering them, modifying them, we eventually arrive at perspectives that are clear, reasonable, and worthwhile.

EXERCISE

Consider a cliché or aphorism that you often heard when you were a child. It could be something that your parents or teachers used to say to motivate you to work or to stop you from complaining. For example, I used to hear “life isn't fair” to my frequent pointing out of familial injustices. Brainstorm or cluster on ways this cliché has been true in your life and on ways that it has been false or misleading. For example I might first make note of the inevitable injustices that come with living and then list ones that we have the ability to change. Try to fit your ideas into broader categories and then write a paragraph in which you more thoroughly examine the significance suggested by the cliché.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A discussion of the significance of our interpretations can provide greater insight into our selves, our culture, and our core beliefs.
- Broad declarative statements and clichés should be avoided because they do not provide a satisfying exploration of why a particular perspective matters.
- Certain heuristics like brainstorming and clustering can help us to consider the broader implications of our subjects more thoroughly.
- A close examination of one aspect of analysis leads to a better understanding of the other areas as well.

13. Revising and Editing

Revising and Editing

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Identify major areas of concern in the draft essay during revising and editing.
- Use peer reviews and editing checklists to assist revising and editing.
- Revise and edit the first draft of your essay and produce a final draft.

Revising and editing are the two tasks you undertake to significantly improve your essay. Both are very important elements of the writing process. You may think that a completed first draft means little improvement is needed. However, even experienced writers need to improve their drafts and rely on peers during revising and editing. You may know that athletes miss catches, fumble balls, or overshoot goals. Dancers forget steps, turn too slowly, or miss beats. For both athletes and dancers, the more they practice, the stronger their performance will become. Web designers seek better images, a more clever design, or a more appealing background for their web pages. Writing has the same capacity to profit from improvement and revision.

Understanding the Purpose of Revising and Editing

Revising and editing allow you to examine two important aspects

of your writing separately, so that you can give each task your undivided attention.

- When you revise, you take a second look at your ideas. You might add, cut, move, or change information in order to make your ideas clearer, more accurate, more interesting, or more convincing.
- When you edit, you take a second look at how you expressed your ideas. You add or change words. You fix any problems in grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure. You improve your writing style. You make your essay into a polished, mature piece of writing, the end product of your best efforts.

TIP

How do you get the best out of your revisions and editing? Here are some strategies that writers have developed to look at their first drafts from a fresh perspective. Try them throughout this course; then keep using the ones that bring results.

- Take a break. You are proud of what you wrote, but you might be too close to it to make changes. Set aside your writing for a few hours or even a day until you can look at it objectively.
- Ask someone you trust for feedback and constructive criticism.
- Pretend you are one of your readers. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied? Why?
- Use the resources that your college provides. Find out where your school's writing lab is located and ask

about the assistance they provide online and in person.

Many people hear the words *critic*, *critical*, and *criticism* and pick up only negative vibes that provoke feelings that make them blush, grumble, or shout. However, as a writer and a thinker, you need to learn to be critical of yourself in a positive way and have high expectations for your work. You also need to train your eye and trust your ability to fix what needs fixing. For this, you need to teach yourself where to look.

Creating Unity and Coherence

Following your outline closely offers you a reasonable guarantee that your writing will stay on purpose and not drift away from the controlling idea. However, when writers are rushed, are tired, or cannot find the right words, their writing may become less than they want it to be. Their writing may no longer be clear and concise, and they may be adding information that is not needed to develop the main idea.

When a piece of writing has unity, all the ideas in each paragraph and in the entire essay clearly belong and are arranged in an order that makes logical sense. When the writing has coherence, the ideas flow smoothly. The wording clearly indicates how one idea leads to another within a paragraph and from paragraph to paragraph.

TIP

Reading your writing aloud will often help you find problems with unity and coherence. Listen for the clarity and flow of your ideas. Identify places where you find yourself confused, and write a note to yourself about possible fixes.

Creating Unity

Sometimes writers get caught up in the moment and cannot resist a good digression. Even though you might enjoy such detours when you chat with friends, unplanned digressions usually harm a piece of writing.

Mariah stayed close to her outline when she drafted the three body paragraphs of her essay she tentatively titled “Digital Technology: The Newest and the Best at What Price?” But a recent shopping trip for an HDTV upset her enough that she digressed from the main topic of her third paragraph and included comments about the sales staff at the electronics store she visited. When she revised her essay, she deleted the off-topic sentences that affected the unity of the paragraph.

Read the following paragraph twice, the first time without Mariah’s changes, and the second time with them.

Nothing is more confusing to me than choosing among televisions. It confuses lots of people who want a new high-definition digital television (HDTV) with a large screen to watch sports and DVDs on. ~~You could listen to the guys in the electronics store, but word has it they know little more than you do. They want to sell you what they have in stock, not what best fits your needs.~~ You face decisions you never had to make with the old, bulky picture-tube televisions. Screen resolution means the number of horizontal scan lines the screen can show. This resolution is often 1080p, or full HD, or 768p. The trouble is that if you have a smaller screen, 32 inches or 37 inches diagonal, you won't be able to tell the difference with the naked eye. ~~The 1080p televisions cost more, though, so those are what the salespeople want you to buy. They get bigger commissions.~~ The ~~other~~ important decision you face as you walk around the sales floor is whether to get a plasma screen or an LCD screen. ~~Now here the salespeople may finally give you decent info.~~ Plasma flat-panel television screens can be much larger in diameter than their LCD rivals. Plasma screens show truer blacks and can be viewed at a wider angle than current LCD screens. ~~But be careful and tell the salesperson you have budget constraints.~~ Large flat-panel plasma screens are much more expensive than flat-screen LCD models. Don't ~~let someone make you~~ buy more television than you need!

TIP

When you reread your writing to find revisions to make, look for each type of problem in a separate sweep. Read it straight through once to locate any problems with unity. Read it straight through a second time to find problems with coherence. You may follow this same practice during many stages of the writing process.

Writing at Work

Many companies hire copyeditors and proofreaders to help them produce the cleanest possible final drafts of large writing projects.

Copyeditors are responsible for suggesting revisions and style changes; proofreaders check documents for any errors in capitalization, spelling, and punctuation that have crept in. Many times, these tasks are done on a freelance basis, with one freelancer working for a variety of clients.

Creating Coherence

Careful writers use transitions to clarify how the ideas in their sentences and paragraphs are related. These words and phrases help the writing flow smoothly. Adding transitions is not the only way to improve coherence, but they are often useful and give a mature feel to your essays. Table 7.3 “Common Transitional Words and Phrases” groups many common transitions according to their purpose.

Table 7.3 Common Transitional Words and Phrases

Transitions That Show Sequence or Time

after	before	later
afterward	before long	meanwhile
as soon as	finally	next
at first	first, second, third	soon
at last	in the first place	then

Transitions That Show Position

above	across	at the bottom
at the top	behind	below
beside	beyond	inside
near	next to	opposite
to the left, to the right, to the side	under	where

Transitions That Show a Conclusion

indeed	hence	in conclusion
in the final analysis	therefore	thus

Transitions That Continue a Line of Thought

consequently	furthermore	additionally
because	besides the fact	following this idea further
in addition	in the same way	moreover
looking further	considering..., it is clear that	

Transitions That Change a Line of Thought

but	yet	however
nevertheless	on the contrary	on the other hand

Transitions That Show Importance

above all	best	especially
in fact	more important	most important
most	worst	

Transitions That Introduce the Final Thoughts in a Paragraph or Essay

finally	last	in conclusion
---------	------	---------------

most of all

least of all

last of all

All-Purpose Transitions to Open Paragraphs or to Connect Ideas Inside Paragraphs

admittedly

at this point

certainly

granted

it is true

generally speaking

in general

in this situation

no doubt

no one denies

obviously

of course

to be sure

undoubtedly

unquestionably

Transitions that Introduce Examples

for instance

for example

Transitions That Clarify the Order of Events or Steps

first, second, third

generally, furthermore, in the first place,
finally also, last

in the first place,
furthermore, finally

in the first place,
likewise, lastly

After Maria revised for unity, she next examined her paragraph about televisions to check for coherence. She looked for places where she needed to add a transition or perhaps reword the text to make the flow of ideas clear. In the version that follows, she has already deleted the sentences that were off topic.

TIP

Many writers make their revisions on a printed copy and then transfer them to the version on-screen. They conventionally use a small arrow called a caret (^) to show where to insert an addition or correction.

Finally. Nothing is more confusing to me than choosing among televisions. It confuses lots of people who want a new high-definition digital television (HDTV) with a large screen to watch sports and DVDs on. You face decisions you never had to make with the old, bulky picture-tube televisions. There's good reason for this confusion: The first big decision is the screen resolution you want. Screen resolution means the number of horizontal scan lines the screen can show. This resolution is often 1080p, or full HD, or 768p. The trouble is that if you have a smaller screen, 32 inches or 37 inches diagonal, you won't be able to tell the difference with the naked eye. The second important decision you face as you walk around the sales floor is whether to get a plasma screen or an LCD. Along with the choice of display type, a further decision buyers face is screen size and features. Plasma flat-panel television screens can be much larger in diameter than their LCD rivals. Plasma screens show truer blacks and can be viewed at a wider angle than current LCD screens. However, large flat-panel plasma screens are much more expensive than flat-screen LCD models. Don't buy more television than you need!

Being Clear and Concise

Some writers are very methodical and painstaking when they write a first draft. Other writers unleash a lot of words in order to get out all that they feel they need to say. Do either of these composing styles match your style? Or is your composing style somewhere in between? No matter which description best fits you, the first draft of almost every piece of writing, no matter its author, can be made clearer and more concise.

If you have a tendency to write too much, you will need to look for unnecessary words. If you have a tendency to be vague or imprecise in your wording, you will need to find specific words to replace any overly general language.

Identifying Wordiness

Sometimes writers use too many words when fewer words will appeal more to their audience and better fit their purpose. Here are some common examples of wordiness to look for in your draft. Eliminating wordiness helps all readers, because it makes your ideas clear, direct, and straightforward.

- **Sentences that begin with**

There is

or

There are

Wordy: There are two major experiments that the Biology Department sponsors.**Revised:** The Biology Department sponsors two major experiments.

- **Sentences with unnecessary modifiers.****Wordy:** Two extremely famous and well-known consumer advocates spoke eloquently in favor of the proposed important legislation.**Revised:** Two well-known consumer advocates spoke in favor of the proposed legislation.

- **Sentences with deadwood phrases that add little to the meaning.** Be judicious when you use phrases such as *in terms of, with a mind to, on the subject of, as to whether or not, more or less, as far as...is concerned*, and similar expressions. You can usually find a more straightforward way to state your point.**Wordy:** As a world leader in the field of green technology, the company plans to focus its efforts in the area of geothermal energy.A report as to whether or not to use geysers as an energy source is in the process of preparation.**Revised:** As a world leader in green technology, the company plans to focus on geothermal energy.A report about using geysers as an energy source is in preparation.

- **Sentences in the passive voice or with forms of the verb to be.** Sentences with passive-voice verbs often create confusion,

because the subject of the sentence does not perform an action. Sentences are clearer when the subject of the sentence performs the action and is followed by a strong verb. Use strong active-voice verbs in place of forms of *to be*, which can lead to wordiness. Avoid passive voice when you can. **Wordy:** It might perhaps be said that using a GPS device is something that is a benefit to drivers who have a poor sense of direction. **Revised:** Using a GPS device benefits drivers who have a poor sense of direction.

- **Sentences with constructions that can be shortened.** **Wordy:** The e-book reader, which is a recent invention, may become as commonplace as the cell phone. My over-sixty uncle bought an e-book reader, and his wife bought an e-book reader, too. **Revised:** The e-book reader, a recent invention, may become as commonplace as the cell phone. My over-sixty uncle and his wife both bought e-book readers.

Choosing Specific, Appropriate Words

Most college essays should be written in formal English suitable for an academic situation. Follow these principles to be sure that your word choice is appropriate.

- **Avoid slang.** Find alternatives to *bummer*, *kewl*, and *rad*.
- **Avoid language that is overly casual.** Write about “men and women” rather than “girls and guys” unless you are trying to create a specific effect. A formal tone calls for formal language.
- **Avoid contractions.** Use *do not* in place of *don’t*, *I am* in place of *I’m*, *have not* in place of *haven’t*, and so on. Contractions are considered casual speech.
- **Avoid clichés.** Overused expressions such as *green with envy*, *face the music*, *better late than never*, and similar expressions are empty of meaning and may not appeal to your

audience.

- **Be careful when you use words that sound alike but have different meanings.** Some examples are *allusion/illusion*, *complement/compliment*, *council/counsel*, *concurrent/consecutive*, *founder/flounder*, and *historic/historical*. When in doubt, check a dictionary.
- **Choose words with the connotations you want.** Choosing a word for its connotations is as important in formal essay writing as it is in all kinds of writing. Compare the positive connotations of the word *proud* and the negative connotations of *arrogant* and *conceited*.
- **Use specific words rather than overly general words.** Find synonyms for *thing*, *people*, *nice*, *good*, *bad*, *interesting*, and other vague words. Or use specific details to make your exact meaning clear.

Now read the revisions Mariah made to make her third paragraph clearer and more concise. She has already incorporated the changes she made to improve unity and coherence.

confuses buyers more than purchasing

Finally, nothing [^] is more confusing to me than choosing among televisions. It confuses lots of people who want a new high-definition digital television (HDTV), with a large and with screen to watch sports and DVDs on. [^] There's good reason for this confusion. You face decisions you never had to make with the old, bulky picture-tube televisions. The first involves which big decision is[^] the screen resolution, you want. [^]Screen resolution means the number of horizontal scan lines the screen can show. This resolution is often expressed as 1080p, as on or full HD, or [^]768p, which is half that. The trouble is that[^] if you have a smaller screen, viewers will not between them seeen, 32-inch or 37-inch diagonal [^]you won't be able to tell the difference[^] with the naked eye. The second important decision you face as you walk around the sales floor is whether to get a plasma screen or an LCD screen. Along with the choice of display type, a further decision buyers face is screen size and features. Plasma flat-panel television screens can be much larger in diameter than their LCD rivals. Plasma deeper screens show ~~more~~ blacks and can be viewed at a wider angle than current LCD screens. However, large flat-panel plasma screens are much more expensive than flat-screen LCD models. [^]Don't buy more television than you need!

Completing a Peer Review

After working so closely with a piece of writing, writers often need to step back and ask for a more objective reader. What writers most need is feedback from readers who can respond only to the words on the page. When they are ready, writers show their drafts to someone they respect and who can give an honest response about its strengths and weaknesses.

You, too, can ask a peer to read your draft when it is ready. After evaluating the feedback and assessing what is most helpful, the reader's feedback will help you when you revise your draft. This process is called peer review.

You can work with a partner in your class and identify specific ways to strengthen each other's essays. Although you may be

uncomfortable sharing your writing at first, remember that each writer is working toward the same goal: a final draft that fits the audience and the purpose. Maintaining a positive attitude when providing feedback will put you and your partner at ease. The box that follows provides a useful framework for the peer review session.

Questions for Peer Review

Title _____ of _____ essay:

—

Date:

—

Writer's _____ name:

—

Peer _____ reviewer's _____ name:

1. This essay is about _____
_____.
2. Your main points in this essay are _____
_____.
3. What I most liked about this essay is _____
_____.
4. These three points struck me as your strongest:
 1. Point:

----- Why:

2. Point:

----- Why:

3. Point:

----- Why:

5. These places in your essay are not clear to me:

1. Where:

----- Needs improvement
because -----

2. Where:

----- Needs improvement because

3. Where:

----- Needs improvement because

6. The one additional change you could make that would improve
this essay significantly is

-----.

Writing at Work

One of the reasons why word-processing programs build in a reviewing feature is that workgroups have become a common feature in many businesses. Writing is often collaborative, and the members of a workgroup and their supervisors often critique group members' work and offer feedback that will lead to a better final product.

Using Feedback Objectively

The purpose of peer feedback is to receive constructive criticism of your essay. Your peer reviewer is your first real audience, and you have the opportunity to learn what confuses and delights a reader so that you can improve your work before sharing the final draft with a wider audience (or your intended audience).

It may not be necessary to incorporate every recommendation your peer reviewer makes. However, if you start to observe a pattern in the responses you receive from peer reviewers, you might want to take that feedback into consideration in future assignments. For example, if you read consistent comments about a need for more research, then you may want to consider including more research in future assignments.

Using Feedback from Multiple Sources

You might get feedback from more than one reader as you share different stages of your revised draft. In this situation, you may receive feedback from readers who do not understand the assignment or who lack your involvement with and enthusiasm for it.

You need to evaluate the responses you receive according to two important criteria:

1. Determine if the feedback supports the purpose of the assignment.
2. Determine if the suggested revisions are appropriate to the audience.

Then, using these standards, accept or reject revision feedback.

Editing Your Draft

If you have been incorporating each set of revisions as Mariah has, you have produced multiple drafts of your writing. So far, all your changes have been content changes. Perhaps with the help of peer feedback, you have made sure that you sufficiently supported your ideas. You have checked for problems with unity and coherence. You have examined your essay for word choice, revising to cut unnecessary words and to replace weak wording with specific and appropriate wording.

The next step after revising the content is editing. When you edit, you examine the surface features of your text. You examine your spelling, grammar, usage, and punctuation. You also make sure you use the proper format when creating your finished assignment.

TIP

Editing often takes time. Budgeting time into the writing process allows you to complete additional edits after revising. Editing and proofreading your writing helps you

create a finished work that represents your best efforts. Here are a few more tips to remember about your readers:

- Readers do not notice correct spelling, but they *do* notice misspellings.
- Readers look past your sentences to get to your ideas—unless the sentences are awkward, poorly constructed, and frustrating to read.
- Readers notice when every sentence has the same rhythm as every other sentence, with no variety.
- Readers do not cheer when you use *there*, *their*, and *they're* correctly, but they notice when you do not.
- Readers will notice the care with which you handled your assignment and your attention to detail in the delivery of an error-free document.

The last section of this book offers a useful review of grammar, mechanics, and usage. Use it to help you eliminate major errors in your writing and refine your understanding of the conventions of language. Do not hesitate to ask for help, too, from peer tutors in your academic department or in the college's writing lab. In the meantime, use the checklist to help you edit your writing.

Checklist

Editing Your Writing

Grammar

- Are some sentences actually sentence fragments?
- Are some sentences run-on sentences? How can I correct them?
- Do some sentences need conjunctions between independent clauses?
- Does every verb agree with its subject?
- Is every verb in the correct tense?
- Are tense forms, especially for irregular verbs, written correctly?
- Have I used subject, object, and possessive personal pronouns correctly?
- Have I used *who* and *whom* correctly?
- Is the antecedent of every pronoun clear?
- Do all personal pronouns agree with their antecedents?
- Have I used the correct comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs?
- Is it clear which word a participial phrase modifies, or is it a dangling modifier?

Sentence Structure

- Are all my sentences simple sentences, or do I vary my sentence structure?
- Have I chosen the best coordinating or subordinating conjunctions to join clauses?
- Have I created long, overpacked sentences that should be shortened for clarity?
- Do I see any mistakes in parallel structure?

Punctuation

- Does every sentence end with the correct end punctuation?
- Can I justify the use of every exclamation point?
- Have I used apostrophes correctly to write all singular and plural possessive forms?

- Have I used quotation marks correctly?

Mechanics and Usage

- Can I find any spelling errors? How can I correct them?
- Have I used capital letters where they are needed?
- Have I written abbreviations, where allowed, correctly?
- Can I find any errors in the use of commonly confused words, such as *to/too/two*?

TIP

Be careful about relying too much on spelling checkers and grammar checkers. A spelling checker cannot recognize that you meant to write *principle* but wrote *principal* instead. A grammar checker often queries constructions that are perfectly correct. The program does not understand your meaning; it makes its check against a general set of formulas that might not apply in each instance. If you use a grammar checker, accept the suggestions that make sense, but consider why the suggestions came up.

TIP

Proofreading requires patience; it is very easy to read past a mistake. Set your paper aside for at least a few hours, if not a day or more, so your mind will rest. Some professional proofreaders read a text backward so they can concentrate on spelling and punctuation. Another helpful technique is to slowly read a paper aloud, paying attention to every word, letter, and punctuation mark.

If you need additional proofreading help, ask a reliable friend, a classmate, or a peer tutor to make a final pass on your paper to look for anything you missed.

Formatting

Remember to use proper format when creating your finished assignment. Sometimes an instructor, a department, or a college will require students to follow specific instructions on titles, margins, page numbers, or the location of the writer's name. These requirements may be more detailed and rigid for research projects and term papers, which often observe the American Psychological Association (APA) or Modern Language Association (MLA) style guides, especially when citations of sources are included.

To ensure the format is correct and follows any specific instructions, make a final check before you submit an assignment.

KEY TAKEAWAY

- Revising and editing are the stages of the writing process in which you improve your work before producing a final draft.
- During revising, you add, cut, move, or change information in order to improve content.
- During editing, you take a second look at the words and sentences you used to express your ideas and fix any problems in grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure.
- Unity in writing means that all the ideas in each paragraph and in the entire essay clearly belong together and are arranged in an order that makes logical sense.
- Coherence in writing means that the writer's wording clearly indicates how one idea leads to another within a paragraph and between paragraphs.
- Transitional words and phrases effectively make writing more coherent.
- Writing should be clear and concise, with no unnecessary words.
- Effective formal writing uses specific, appropriate words and avoids slang, contractions, clichés, and overly general words.
- Peer reviews, done properly, can give writers objective feedback about their writing. It is the writer's responsibility to evaluate the results of peer reviews and incorporate only useful feedback.
- Remember to budget time for careful editing and proofreading. Use all available resources, including

editing checklists, peer editing, and your institution's writing lab, to improve your editing skills.

EXERCISES

1. Answer the following two questions about Mariah's paragraph in "Creating Unity" above:

- Do you agree with Mariah's decision to make the deletions she made? Did she cut too much, too little, or just enough? Explain.
- Is the explanation of what screen resolution means a digression? Or is it audience friendly and essential to understanding the paragraph? Explain.

Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

2. Now start to revise the first draft of the essay you wrote. Reread it to find any statements that affect the unity of your writing. Decide how best to revise.

3. Answer the following questions about Mariah's revised paragraph in "Creating Coherence."

- Do you agree with the transitions and other changes that Mariah made to her paragraph? Which would you keep and which were unnecessary? Explain.
- What transition words or phrases did Mariah add to

her paragraph? Why did she choose each one?

- What effect does adding additional sentences have on the coherence of the paragraph? Explain. When you read both versions aloud, which version has a more logical flow of ideas? Explain.

4. Now return to the first draft of the essay you wrote and revise it for coherence. Add transition words and phrases where they are needed, and make any other changes that are needed to improve the flow and connection between ideas.

5. Answer the following questions about Mariah's revised paragraph:

- Read the unrevised and the revised paragraphs aloud. Explain in your own words how changes in word choice have affected Mariah's writing.
- Do you agree with the changes that Mariah made to her paragraph? Which changes would you keep and which were unnecessary? Explain. What other changes would you have made?
- What effect does removing contractions and the pronoun you have on the tone of the paragraph? How would you characterize the tone now? Why?

6. Now return once more to your essay in progress. Read carefully for problems with word choice. Be sure that your draft is written in formal language and that your word choice is specific and appropriate.

7. Exchange essays with a classmate and complete a peer review of each other's draft in progress. Remember to give positive feedback and to be courteous and polite in your

responses. Focus on providing one positive comment and one question for more information to the author.

8. Work with two partners. Go back to #3 in this lesson and compare your responses about Mariah's paragraph with your partners'. Recall Mariah's purpose for writing and her audience. Then, working individually, list where you agree and where you disagree about revision needs.

9. With the help of the checklist, edit and proofread your essay.

14. Revising & Editing

Style Guide for revision and editing help:

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/styleguide/>

15. Quotation Marks

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Identify the uses of quotes.
- Correctly use quotes in sentences.

Quotation marks (“ ”) set off a group of words from the rest of the text. Use quotation marks to indicate direct quotations of another person’s words or to indicate a title. Quotation marks always appear in pairs.

Direct Quotations

A direct quotation is an exact account of what someone said or wrote. To include a direct quotation in your writing, enclose the words in quotation marks. An indirect quotation is a restatement of what someone said or wrote. An indirect quotation does not use the person’s exact words. You do not need to use quotation marks for indirect quotations.

Direct quotation: Carly said, “I’m not ever going back there again.”

Indirect quotation: Carly said that she would never go back there.

Writing at Work

Most word processing software is designed to catch errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. While this can be a useful tool, it is better to be well acquainted with the rules of punctuation than to leave the thinking to the computer. Properly punctuated writing will convey your meaning clearly. Consider the subtle shifts in meaning in the following sentences:

- The client said he thought our manuscript was garbage.
- The client said, “He thought our manuscript was garbage.”

The first sentence reads as an indirect quote in which the client does not like the manuscript. But did he actually use the word “garbage”? (This would be alarming!) Or has the speaker paraphrased (and exaggerated) the client’s words?

The second sentence reads as a direct quote from the client. But who is “he” in this sentence? Is it a third party?

Word processing software would not catch this because the sentences are not grammatically incorrect. However, the meanings of the sentences are not the same. Understanding punctuation will help you write what you mean, and in this case, could save a lot of confusion around the office!

Punctuating Direct Quotations

Quotation marks show readers another person’s exact words. Often, you will want to identify who is speaking. You can do this at the beginning, middle, or end of the quote. Notice the use of commas and capitalized words.

Beginning: Madison said, “Let’s stop at the farmers market to buy some fresh vegetables for dinner.”

Middle: “Let’s stop at the farmers market,” Madison said, “to buy some fresh vegetables for dinner.”

End: “Let’s stop at the farmers market to buy some fresh vegetables for dinner,” Madison said.

Speaker not identified: “Let’s stop at the farmers market to buy some fresh vegetables for dinner.”

Always capitalize the first letter of a quote even if it is not the beginning of the sentence. When using identifying words in the middle of the quote, the beginning of the second part of the quote does not need to be capitalized.

Use commas between identifying words and quotes. Quotation marks must be placed *after* commas and periods. Place quotation marks after question marks and exclamation points only if the question or exclamation is part of the quoted text.

Question is part of quoted text: The new employee asked, “When is lunch?”

Question is not part of quoted text: Did you hear her say you were “the next Picasso”?

Exclamation is part of quoted text: My supervisor beamed, “Thanks for all of your hard work!”

Exclamation is not part of quoted text: He said I “single-handedly saved the company thousands of dollars”!

Quotations within Quotations

Use single quotation marks (‘ ’) to show a quotation within in a quotation.

Theresa said, “I wanted to take my dog to the festival, but the man at the gate said, ‘No dogs allowed.’”

“When you say, ‘I can’t help it,’ what exactly does that mean?”

“The instructions say, ‘Tighten the screws one at a time.’”

Titles

Use quotation marks around titles of short works of writing, such as essays, songs, poems, short stories, and chapters in books. Usually, titles of longer works, such as books, magazines, albums, newspapers, and novels, are italicized.

“Annabelle Lee” is one of my favorite romantic poems.

The *New York Times* has been in publication since 1851.

Writing at Work

In many businesses, the difference between exact wording and a paraphrase is extremely important. For legal purposes, or for the purposes of doing a job correctly, it can be important to know exactly what the client, customer, or supervisor said. Sometimes, important details can be lost when instructions are paraphrased. Use quotes to indicate exact words where needed, and let your coworkers know the source of the quotation (client, customer, peer, etc.).

Key Takeaways

- Use quotation marks to enclose direct quotes and titles of short works.
- Use single quotation marks to enclose a quote within a quote.
- Do not use any quotation marks for indirect quotations.

Exercises

1. Copy the following sentences onto your own sheet of paper, and correct them by adding quotation marks where necessary. If the sentence does not need any quotation marks, write OK.

- Yasmin said, I don't feel like cooking. Let's go out to eat.
- Where should we go? said Russell.
- Yasmin said it didn't matter to her.
- I know, said Russell, let's go to the Two Roads Juice Bar.
- Perfect! said Yasmin.
- Did you know that the name of the Juice Bar is a reference to a poem? asked Russell.
- I didn't! exclaimed Yasmin. Which poem?
- The Road Not Taken, by Robert Frost Russell

explained.

- Oh! said Yasmin, Is that the one that starts with the line, Two roads diverged in a yellow wood?
- That's the one said Russell.

16. Quotations

What this handout is about

Used effectively, quotations can provide important pieces of evidence and lend fresh voices and perspectives to your narrative. Used ineffectively, however, quotations clutter your text and interrupt the flow of your argument. This handout will help you decide when and how to quote like a pro.

When should I quote?



Use

quotations at strategically selected moments. You have probably been told by teachers to provide as much evidence as possible in support of your thesis. But packing your paper with quotations will not necessarily strengthen your argument. The majority of your paper should still be your original ideas in your own words (after all, it's your paper). And quotations are only one type of evidence: well-balanced papers may also make use of paraphrases, data, and

statistics. The types of evidence you use will depend in part on the conventions of the discipline or audience for which you are writing. For example, papers analyzing literature may rely heavily on direct quotations of the text, while papers in the social sciences may have more paraphrasing, data, and statistics than quotations.

1. Discussing specific arguments or ideas.

Sometimes, in order to have a clear, accurate discussion of the ideas of others, you need to quote those ideas word for word. Suppose you want to challenge the following statement made by John Doe, a well-known historian:

“At the beginning of World War Two, almost all Americans assumed the war would end quickly.”

If it is especially important that you formulate a counterargument to this claim, then you might wish to quote the part of the statement that you find questionable and establish a dialogue between yourself and John Doe:

Historian John Doe has argued that in 1941 “almost all Americans assumed the war would end quickly” (Doe 223). Yet during the first six months of U.S. involvement, the wives and mothers of soldiers often noted in their diaries their fear that the war would drag on for years.

2. Giving added emphasis to a particularly authoritative source on your topic.

There will be times when you want to highlight the words of a particularly important and authoritative source on your topic. For example, suppose you were writing an essay about the differences between the lives of male and female slaves in the U.S. South. One

of your most provocative sources is a narrative written by a former slave, Harriet Jacobs. It would then be appropriate to quote some of Jacobs's words:

Harriet Jacobs, a former slave from North Carolina, published an autobiographical slave narrative in 1861. She exposed the hardships of both male and female slaves but ultimately concluded that “slavery is terrible for men; but it is far more terrible for women.”

In this particular example, Jacobs is providing a crucial first-hand perspective on slavery. Thus, her words deserve more exposure than a paraphrase could provide. Jacobs is quoted in Harriet A. Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, ed. Jean Fagan Yellin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987).

3. Analyzing how others use language.

This scenario is probably most common in literature and linguistics courses, but you might also find yourself writing about the use of language in history and social science classes. If the use of language is your primary topic, then you will obviously need to quote users of that language.

Examples of topics that might require the frequent use of quotations include:

Southern colloquial expressions in William Faulkner's Light in August

Ms. and the creation of a language of female empowerment
A comparison of three British poets and their use of rhyme

4. Spicing up your prose.



In order to lend variety to your prose, you may wish to quote a source with particularly vivid language. All quotations, however, must closely relate to your topic and arguments. Do not insert a quotation solely for its literary merits.

One example of a quotation that adds flair:

Calvin Coolidge's tendency to fall asleep became legendary. As H. L. Mencken commented in the *American Mercury* in 1933, "Nero fiddled, but Coolidge only snored."

How do I set up and follow up a quotation?

Once you've carefully selected the quotations that you want to use, your next job is to weave those quotations into your text. The words that precede and follow a quotation are just as important as the quotation itself. You can think of each quote as the filling in a sandwich: it may be tasty on its own, but it's messy to eat without some bread on either side of it. Your words can serve as the "bread" that helps readers digest each quote easily. Below are four guidelines for setting up and following up quotations.

In illustrating these four steps, we'll use as our example, Franklin Roosevelt's famous quotation, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

1. Provide a context for each quotation.

Do not rely on quotations to tell your story for you. It is your responsibility to provide your reader with a context for the quotation. The context should set the basic scene for when, possibly where, and under what circumstances the quotation was spoken or written. So, in providing a context for our above example, you might write:

When Franklin Roosevelt gave his inaugural speech on March 4, 1933, he addressed a nation weakened and demoralized by economic depression.

2. Attribute each quotation to its source.

Tell your reader who is speaking. Here is a good test: try reading your text aloud. Could your reader determine without looking at your paper where your quotations begin? If not, you need to attribute the quote more noticeably.

Avoid getting into the “he/she said” attribution rut! There are many other ways to attribute quotes besides this construction. Here are a few alternative verbs, usually followed by “that”:

add	remark	exclaim
announce	reply	state
comment	respond	estimate
write	point out	predict
argue	suggest	propose
declare	criticize	proclaim
note	complain	opine
observe	think	note

Different reporting verbs are preferred by different disciplines, so pay special attention to these in your disciplinary reading. If you're unfamiliar with the meanings of any of these words or others you find in your reading, consult a dictionary before using them.

3. Explain the significance of the quotation.

Once you've inserted your quotation, along with its context and attribution, don't stop! Your reader still needs your assessment of why the quotation holds significance for your paper. Using our Roosevelt example, if you were writing a paper on the first one-hundred days of FDR's administration, you might follow the quotation by linking it to that topic:

With that message of hope and confidence, the new president set the stage for his next one-hundred days in office and helped restore the faith of the American people in their government.

4. Provide a citation for the quotation.

All quotations, just like all paraphrases, require a formal citation. For more details about particular citation formats, see the [UNC Library's citation tutorial](#). In general, you should remember one rule of thumb: Place the parenthetical reference or footnote/endnote number after—not within—the closed quotation mark.

Roosevelt declared, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself" (Roosevelt, Public Papers 11).

Roosevelt declared, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."¹

How much should I quote?

As few words as possible. Remember, your paper should primarily contain your own words, so quote only the most pithy and memorable parts of sources. Here are three guidelines for selecting quoted material judiciously.

1. Excerpt fragments.

Sometimes, you should quote short fragments, rather than whole sentences. Suppose you interviewed Jane Doe about her reaction to John F. Kennedy's assassination. She commented:

"I couldn't believe it. It was just unreal and so sad. It was just unbelievable. I had never experienced such denial. I don't know why I felt so strongly. Perhaps it was because JFK was more to me than a president. He represented the hopes of young people everywhere."

You could quote all of Jane's comments, but her first three sentences are fairly redundant. You might instead want to quote Jane when she arrives at the ultimate reason for her strong emotions:

Jane Doe grappled with grief and disbelief. She had viewed JFK, not just as a national figurehead, but as someone who "represented the hopes of young people everywhere."

2. Excerpt those fragments carefully!

Quoting the words of others carries a big responsibility. Misquoting misrepresents the ideas of others. Here's a classic example of a misquote:

John Adams has often been quoted as having said: “This would be the best of all possible worlds if there were no religion in it.”

John Adams did, in fact, write the above words. But if you see those words in context, the meaning changes entirely. Here’s the rest of the quotation:

Twenty times, in the course of my late reading, have I been on the point of breaking out, ‘this would be the best of all possible worlds, if there were no religion in it!!!!’ But in this exclamation, I should have been as fanatical as Bryant or Cleverly. Without religion, this world would be something not fit to be mentioned in public company—I mean hell.

As you can see from this example, context matters!

This example is from Paul F. Boller, Jr. and John George, *They Never Said It: A Book of Fake Quotes, Misquotes, and Misleading Attributions* (Oxford University Press, 1989).

3. Use block quotations sparingly.

There may be times when you need to quote long passages. However, you should use block quotations only when you fear that omitting any words will destroy the integrity of the passage. If that passage exceeds four lines (some sources say five), then set it off as a block quotation.

Here are a few general tips for setting off your block quotation—to be sure you are handling block quotes correctly in papers for different academic disciplines, check the index of the citation style guide you are using:

1. Set up a block quotation with your own words followed by a colon.
2. Indent. You normally indent 4-5 spaces for the start of a paragraph. When setting up a block quotation, indent the

- entire paragraph once from the left-hand margin.
3. Single space or double space within the block quotation, depending on the style guidelines of your discipline (MLA, CSE, APA, Chicago, etc.).
 4. Do not use quotation marks at the beginning or end of the block quote—the indentation is what indicates that it’s a quote.
 5. Place parenthetical citation according to your style guide (usually after the period following the last sentence of the quote).
 6. Follow up a block quotation with your own words.

So, using the above example from John Adams, here’s how you might include a block quotation:

After reading several doctrinally rigid tracts, John Adams recalled the zealous ranting of his former teacher, Joseph Cleverly, and minister, Lemuel Bryant. He expressed his ambivalence toward religion in an 1817 letter to Thomas Jefferson:

Twenty times, in the course of my late reading, have I been on the point of breaking out, ‘this would be the best of all possible worlds, if there were no religion in it!!!!’ But in this exclamation, I should have been as fanatical as Bryant or Cleverly. Without religion, this world would be something not fit to be mentioned in public company—I mean hell.

Adams clearly appreciated religion, even if he often questioned its promotion.

How do I combine quotation marks with other punctuation marks?

It can be confusing when you start combining quotation marks with other punctuation marks. You should consult a style manual for

complicated situations, but the following two rules apply to most cases:

1) Keep periods and commas within quotation marks.

So, for example:

According to Professor Jones, Lincoln “feared the spread of slavery,” but many of his aides advised him to “watch and wait.”

In the above example, both the comma and period were enclosed in the quotation marks. The main exception to this rule involves the use of internal citations, which always precede the last period of the sentence. For example:

According to Professor Jones, Lincoln “feared the spread of slavery,” but many of his aides advised him to “watch and wait” (Jones 143).

Note, however, that the period remains inside the quotation marks when your citation style involved superscript footnotes or endnotes. For example:

According to Professor Jones, Lincoln “feared the spread of slavery,” but many of his aides advised him to “watch and wait.”²

2) Place all other punctuation marks (colons, semicolons, exclamation marks, question marks) outside the quotation marks, except when they were part of the original quotation.

Take a look at the following examples:

The student wrote that the U. S. Civil War “finally ended around 1900”!

The coach yelled, “Run!”

In the first example, the author placed the exclamation point outside the quotation mark because she added it herself to emphasize the absurdity of the student’s comment. The student’s original comment had not included an exclamation mark. In the second example, the exclamation mark remains within the quotation mark because it is indicating the excited tone in which the coach yelled the command. Thus, the exclamation mark is considered to be part of the original quotation.

How do I indicate quotations within quotations?

If you are quoting a passage that contains a quotation, then you use single quotation marks for the internal quotation. Quite rarely, you quote a passage that has a quotation within a quotation. In that rare instance, you would use double quotation marks for the second internal quotation.

Here’s an example of a quotation within a quotation:

In “The Emperor’s New Clothes,” Hans Christian Andersen wrote, “‘But the Emperor has nothing on at all!’ cried a little child.”

Remember to consult your style guide to determine how to properly cite a quote within a quote.

When do I use those three dots (. . .)?

Whenever you want to leave out material from within a quotation, you need to use an ellipsis, which is a series of three periods, each of

which should be preceded and followed by a space. So, an ellipsis in this sentence would look like . . . this. There are a few rules to follow when using ellipses:

1. Be sure that you don't fundamentally change the meaning of the quotation by omitting material.

Take a look at the following example: "The Writing Center is located on the UNC campus and serves the entire UNC community."

"The Writing Center . . . serves the entire UNC community."

The reader's understanding of the Writing Center's mission to serve the UNC community is not affected by omitting the information about its location.

2. Do not use ellipses at the beginning or ending of quotations, unless it's important for the reader to know that the quotation was truncated.

For example, using the above example, you would NOT need an ellipsis in either of these situations:

"The Writing Center is located on the UNC campus . . ."

"The Writing Center" . . . serves the entire UNC community."

3. Use punctuation marks in combination with ellipses when removing material from the end of sentences or clauses.

For example, if you take material from the end of a sentence, keep the period in as usual.

“The boys ran to school, forgetting their lunches and books. Even though they were out of breath, they made it on time.”

“The boys ran to school. . . . Even though they were out of breath, they made it on time.”

Likewise, if you excerpt material at the end of clause that ends in a comma, retain the comma.

“The red car came to a screeching halt that was heard by nearby pedestrians, but no one was hurt.”

“The red car came to a screeching halt . . . , but no one was hurt.”



Is it ever okay to insert my own words or change words in a quotation?

Sometimes it is necessary for clarity and flow to alter a word or

words within a quotation. You should make such changes rarely. In order to alert your reader to the changes you've made, you should always bracket the altered words. Here are a few examples of situations when you might need brackets.

1. Changing verb tense or pronouns in order to be consistent with the rest of the sentence.

Suppose you were quoting a woman who, when asked about her experiences immigrating to the United States, commented “nobody understood me.” You might write:

Esther Hansen felt that when she came to the United States “nobody understood [her].”

In the above example, you've changed “me” to “her” in order to keep the entire passage in third person. However, you could avoid the need for this change by simply rephrasing:

“Nobody understood me,” recalled Danish immigrant Esther Hansen.

2. Including supplemental information that your reader needs in order to understand the quotation.

For example, if you were quoting someone's nickname, you might want to let your reader know the full name of that person in brackets.

“The principal of the school told Billy [William Smith] that his contract would be terminated.”

Similarly, if a quotation referenced an event with which the reader might be unfamiliar, you could identify that event in brackets.

“We completely revised our political strategies after the strike [of 1934].”

3. Indicating the use of nonstandard grammar or spelling.

In rare situations, you may quote from a text that has nonstandard grammar, spelling, or word choice. In such cases, you may want to insert [sic], which means “thus” or “so” in Latin. Using [sic] alerts your reader to the fact that this nonstandard language is not the result of a typo on your part. Always italicize “sic” and enclose it in brackets. There is no need to put a period at the end. Here’s an example of when you might use [sic]:

Twelve-year-old Betsy Smith wrote in her diary, “Father is afraid that he will be guilty of beach [sic] of contract.”

Here [sic] indicates that the original author wrote “beach of contract,” not breach of contract, which is the accepted terminology.

4. Do not overuse brackets!

For example, it is not necessary to bracket capitalization changes that you make at the beginning of sentences. For example, suppose you were going to use part of this quotation:

“We never looked back, but the memory of our army days remained with us the rest of our lives.”

If you wanted to begin a sentence with an excerpt from the

middle of this quotation, there would be no need to bracket your capitalization changes.

“The memory of our army days remained with us the rest of our lives,” commented Joe Brown, a World War II veteran.

Not

“[T]he memory of our army days remained with us the rest of our lives,” commented Joe Brown, a World War II veteran.

Works consulted

We consulted these works while writing the original version of this handout. This is not a comprehensive list of resources on the handout’s topic, and we encourage you to do your own research to find the latest publications on this topic. Please do not use this list as a model for the format of your own reference list, as it may not match the citation style you are using. For guidance on formatting citations, please see the [UNC Library’s citation tutorial](#).

Barzun, Jacques and Henry F. Graff. *The Modern Researcher*. 6th Edition. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 2004.

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*, 2nd Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th Edition. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2003.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 6th Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

17. Using Sources Blending Source Material with Your Own Work

When working with sources, many students worry they are simply regurgitating ideas that others formulated. That is why it is important for you to develop your own assertions, organize your findings so that your own ideas are still the thrust of the paper, and take care not to rely too much on any one source, or your paper's content might be controlled too heavily by that source.

In practical terms, some ways to develop and back up your assertions include:

Blend sources with your assertions. Organize your sources before and as you write so that they blend, even within paragraphs. Your paper—both globally and at the paragraph level—should reveal relationships among your sources, and should also reveal the relationships between your own ideas and those of your sources.

Write an original introduction and conclusion. As much as is practical, make the paper's introduction and conclusion your own ideas or your own synthesis of the ideas inherent in your research. Use sources minimally in your introduction and conclusion.

Open and close paragraphs with originality. In general, use the openings and closing of your paragraphs to reveal your work—"enclose" your sources among your assertions. At a minimum, create your own topic sentences and wrap-up sentences for paragraphs.

Use transparent rhetorical strategies. When appropriate, outwardly practice such rhetorical strategies as analysis, synthesis, comparison, contrast, summary, description, definition, hierarchical structure, evaluation, hypothesis, generalization,

classification, and even narration. Prove to your reader that you are thinking as you write.

Also, you must clarify where your own ideas end and the cited information begins. Part of your job is to help your reader draw the line between these two things, often by the way you create context for the cited information. A phrase such as “A 1979 study revealed that . . .” is an obvious announcement of citation to come. Another recommended technique is the insertion of the author’s name into the text to announce the beginning of your cited information. You may worry that you are not allowed to give the actual names of sources you have studied in the paper’s text, but just the opposite is true. In fact, the more respectable a source you cite, the more impressed your reader is likely to be with your material while reading. If you note that the source is the NASA Science website or an article by Stephen Jay Gould or a recent edition of *The Wall Street Journal* right in your text, you offer your readers immediate context without their having to guess or flip to the references page to look up the source.

What follows is an excerpt from a political science paper that clearly and admirably draws the line between writer and cited information:

The above political upheaval illuminates the reasons behind the growing Iranian hatred of foreign interference; as a result of this hatred, three enduring geopolitical patterns have evolved in Iran, as noted by John Limbert. First . . .

Note how the writer begins by redefining her previous paragraph’s topic (political upheaval), then connects this to Iran’s hatred of foreign interference, then suggests a causal relationship and ties her ideas into John Limbert’s analysis—thereby announcing that a synthesis of Limbert’s work is coming. This writer’s work also becomes more credible and meaningful because, right in the text, she announces the name of a person who is a recognized authority in the field. Even in this short excerpt, it is obvious that this writer is using proper citation and backing up her own assertions with confidence and style.

18. Using Sources Creatively



Using Sources Creatively

Heather Logan

[\(printable version here\)](#)

When writing papers that require the use of outside source material, it is often tempting to cite only direct quotations from your sources. If, however, this is the only method of citation you choose, your paper will become nothing more than a series of quotations linked together by a few connecting words. Your paper will seem to be a collection of others' thoughts and will contain little thinking on your part.

To avoid falling into this trap, follow a few simple pointers:

- **Avoid using long quotations merely as space-fillers.** While this is an attractive option when faced with a ten-page paper, the overuse of long quotations gives the reader the impression you cannot think for yourself.
- **Don't use only direct quotations.** Try using paraphrases in addition to your direct quotations. To the reader, the effective use of paraphrases indicates that you took the time to think about the meaning behind the quote's words. (For further assistance see our materials on "[Using Paraphrases](#).")
- When introducing direct quotations, try to **use a variety of verbs in your signal phrases**. Don't always rely on stock verbs such as "states" or "says." Think for a little while about the purpose of your quotation and then choose a context-appropriate verb.

Also, when using direct quotations try qualifying them in a novel or

interesting manner. Depending on the system of documentation you're using, the signal phrases don't always have to introduce the quotation.

For example, instead of saying:

"None of them knew the color of the sky" is the opening line of Stephen Crane's short story, "The Open Boat" (339). This implies the idea that "all sense of certainty" in the lives of these men is gone (Wolford 18).

Try saying:

"None of them knew the color of the sky," the opening line of Stephen Crane's, "The Open Boat," implies that "all sense of certainty" in the lives of these men is gone (Crane 339; Wolford 18).

The combination of these two sentences into one is something different. It shows thought on the writer's part in how to combine direct quotations in an interesting manner.

19. Assessment: Practice Quoting

Responsible academic writing involves a good deal of direct quotation from sources. Let's practice that now, to make sure that we've got the finer points figured out by the time the essay is due.

Find a quote from the original article that you think will serve you well in your Source Evaluation Essay.

- Include an introductory “signal” phrase that cues us in on the context for the quote, and then the quote itself. Follow this quote with a phrase or sentence in your own words that summarizes, interprets, or explains the quote in your own words.



This 3-step process is sometimes referred to as a “**quote sandwich**” and is useful for every time you'd like to incorporate a quote into an academic essay you're writing.

If you have any questions at all about using quotations in your writing, please include them in your submission.

This work is just a draft—you may choose to use it or not in the final version of your essay at your discretion.

20. When to Quote & When to Paraphrase

“When to Quote and When to Paraphrase” was written by Brianna Jerman

Academic writing requires authors to connect information from outside sources to their own ideas in order to establish credibility and produce an effective argument.

Sometimes, the rules surrounding source integration and plagiarism may seem confusing, so many new writers err on the side of caution by using the simplest form of integration: direct quotation. However, using direct quotes is not always the best way to use a source. Paraphrasing or summarizing a text is sometimes a more effective means of supporting a writer’s argument than directly quoting. Taking into consideration the purpose of their own writing and the purpose of utilizing the outside source, authors should seek to vary the ways in which they work sources into their own writing.

Paraphrasing and quoting are two of the three ways an author can integrate sources. The two methods are closely related, and therefore, can sometimes be confused with one another. Quoting borrows the exact wording used in a source and is indicated by placing quotes around the borrowed material. Paraphrasing, on the other hand, borrows an idea found in a shorter passage but communicates this idea using different words and word order. While it is acceptable to loosely follow a similar structure, paraphrasing requires more than simply changing a few of the original words to synonyms. Both paraphrasing and directly quoting have their merit, but they should be used at different times for different purposes. An author chooses to use one of these strategies depending on why the source is being used and what information the source provides.

When to Paraphrase

Paraphrasing provides an author the opportunity to tailor the passage for the purpose of his or her own essay, which cannot always be done when using a direct quote. Paraphrasing should be used to

- Further explain or simplify a passage that may be difficult to understand. It could be that the topic, such as the process of extracting stem cells, is particularly difficult to follow, or that the author has used language that further complicates the topic. In such situations, paraphrasing allows an author to clarify or simplify a passage so the audience can better understand the idea.
- Establish the credibility of the author. In connection to the above point, paraphrasing a complicated passage can help the author establish trust with his or her audience. If an author directly quotes a difficult passage without analysis or further explanation, it may appear that he or she does not understand the idea. Paraphrasing not only clarifies the idea in the passage but also illustrates that the writer, since he or she can articulate this difficult message to the reader, is knowledgeable about the topic and should be trusted.
- Maintain the flow of the writing. Each author has a unique voice, and using direct quotes can interrupt this voice. Too many quotes can make an essay sound choppy and difficult to follow. Paraphrasing can help communicate an important idea in a passage or source without interrupting the flow of the essay.
- Eliminate less relevant information. Since paraphrasing is written using the author's own words, he or she can be more selective in what information from a passage should be included or omitted. While an author should not manipulate a passage unnecessarily, paraphrasing allows an author to leave

out unrelated details that would have been part of a direct quote.

- Communicate relevant statistics and numerical data. A lot of times, sources offer statistical information about a topic that an author may find necessary to developing his or her own argument. For example, statistics about the percentage of mothers who work more than one job may be useful to explaining how the economy has affected children rearing practices. Directly quoting statistics such as this should be avoided.

When to Quote

Direct quotes should be used sparingly, but when they are used, they can be a powerful rhetorical tool. As a rule, avoid using long quotes when possible, especially those longer than three lines. When quotes are employed, they should be used to

- Provide indisputable evidence of an incredible claim. Directly quoting a source can show the audience exactly what the source says so there is not suspicion of misinterpretation on the author's part.
- Communicate an idea that is stated in a particularly striking or unique way. A passage should be quoted if the source explains an idea in the best way possible or in a way that cannot be reworded. Additionally, quoting should be used when the original passage is particularly moving or striking.
- Serve as a passage for analysis. If an author is going to analyze the quote or passage, the exact words should be included in the essay either before or following the author's analysis.
- Provide direct evidence for or proof of an author's own claim. An author can use a direct quote as evidence for a claim he or she makes. The direct quote should follow the author's claim

and a colon, which indicates that the following passage is evidence of the statement that precedes it.

- Support or clarify information you've already reported from a source. Similar to the above principle, an author can use a direct quote as further evidence or to emphasize a claim found in the source. This strategy should be used when an idea from a source is particularly important to an author's own work.
- Provide a definition of a new or unfamiliar term or phrase. When using a term that is used or coined by the source's author or that is unfamiliar to most people, use direct quotes to show the exact meaning of the phrase or word according to the original source.

21. Discussion: Practice

Paraphrasing

Academic writing also involves heavy use of paraphrasing sources. Paraphrasing is actually much more common than quoting, particularly in APA-style writing.

Paraphrasing has several advantages:

- it lets you keep a consistent tone and voice throughout the essay
- it demonstrates your mastery of the concepts coming from outside sources
- it lets you be flexible in wording and vocabulary to best meet the needs of your readers

Paraphrasing seems simple on the surface: it's just putting another author's ideas into your own original words. In practice, though, this is one of the most challenging aspects of writing academic work.

To help us all feel more comfortable and confident with our paraphrasing skills, let's practice it here.

In your post, copy and paste the original wording (a direct quote) from the source you're using for the Source Evaluation Essay. Be sure to include the title of the source and a link to it, if possible, and put the quote inside of quotation marks.

Beneath this quote, draft a paraphrase that states

the idea of the quotation in unique language. The paraphrase should include a “signal” phrase, so that we have some context for where it’s coming from. Guidance about how to draft a paraphrase can be found in earlier module contents.

Your post should be about 100-200 words. It doesn’t have to be grammatically perfect, but should use standard English (no text-speak, please) and normal capitalization rules.

You will also need to return to this Discussion to **reply to at least two** of your classmates’ posts. Content could include, but is not limited to, any of the following: Commenting on the style or quality of your classmate’s paraphrase. Be sure to point out if the paraphrase contains too much borrowed language from the original article that your classmate may not have noticed.

Responses are weighed as heavily as your initial posting, and should be roughly as long (100-200 words) when combined. Responses should indicate you’ve read your classmate’s post carefully. Include specific details from the post you’re responding to in your reply.

22. Assessment: Signalling/ Paraphrasing/Quoting

Directions:

1. Find any 4 pieces of information that you have found from your research. This information should come from at least four different sources that you have found to be credible and useful to your research. Once you have identified these sources, do the following:
2. Copy one paragraph from the source that includes information that you might want to use in your research paper. Type the section out EXACTLY as it is written in the original. **(1 point)**
3. Take **one piece** of specific information from the original information and write a direct quote using those exact words. The direct quote needs to contain a **signal phrases and use MLA in-text citations. (2 points)**
4. Take the **same** information that you've just quoted and write it again, **paraphrasing** it into your own words. **Remember to use MLA in-text citations. (2 points)**

Example (Using MLA In-text citation rules):

Original

About half of the rise in sea level is due to thermal expansion. In addition oceans are rising because ice is melting. So far, most of that water has come from mountain glaciers and ice caps. If the Greenland ice sheet were to melt completely, it would release enough water to raise the sea level by 7 meters. West Antarctica's melting would raise sea level by over 5 meters and East Antarctica by 50 meters. If the Earth were to lose just 8% of its ice, the consequences would be horrific. New York, London, Shanghai, and other low-lying cities would be submerged.

Direct Quote

According to Lonnie G. Thompson and Gioietta Kuo in the article, “Climate Change” “If the Earth were to lose just 8% of its ice, the consequences would be horrific. New York, London, Shanghai, and other low-lying cities would be submerged.”

Paraphrase

According to Lonnie G. Thompson and Gioietta Kuo in the article, “Climate Change” even if the earth lost only 8% of its frozen waters, many cities below sea level would be engulfed under water.

You will **repeat this process 4 times**, for a total of 4 sets of quotes & paraphrases.

23. Citing and Referencing Techniques

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Apply American Psychological Association (APA) style formatting guidelines for citations.

This section covers the nitty-gritty details of in-text citations. You will learn how to format citations for different types of source materials, whether you are citing brief quotations, paraphrasing ideas, or quoting longer passages. You will also learn techniques you can use to introduce quoted and paraphrased material effectively. Keep this section handy as a reference to consult while writing the body of your paper.

Formatting Cited Material: The Basics

As noted in previous sections of this book, in-text citations usually provide the name of the author(s) and the year the source was published. For direct quotations, the page number must also be included. Use past-tense verbs when introducing a quote—“Smith found...” and not “Smith finds....”

Formatting Brief Quotations

For brief quotations—fewer than forty words—use quotation marks to indicate where the quoted material begins and ends, and cite the name of the author(s), the year of publication, and the page number where the quotation appears in your source. Remember to include commas to separate elements within the parenthetical citation. Also, avoid redundancy. If you name the author(s) in your sentence, do not repeat the name(s) in your parenthetical citation. Review following the examples of different ways to cite direct quotations.

Chang (2008) emphasized that “engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (p. 49).

The author’s name can be included in the body of the sentence or in the parenthetical citation. Note that when a parenthetical citation appears at the end of the sentence, it comes **after** the closing quotation marks and **before** the period. The elements within parentheses are separated by commas.

Weight Training for Women (Chang, 2008) claimed that “engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (p. 49).

Weight Training for Women claimed that “engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (Chang, 2008, p. 49).

Including the title of a source is optional.

In Chang’s 2008 text *Weight Training for Women*, she asserts, “Engaging in weight-bearing exercise is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (p. 49).

The author's name, the date, and the title may appear in the body of the text. Include the page number in the parenthetical citation. Also, notice the use of the verb *asserts* to introduce the direct quotation.

“Engaging in weight-bearing exercise,” Chang asserts, “is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (2008, p. 49).

You may begin a sentence with the direct quotation and add the author's name and a strong verb before continuing the quotation.

Formatting Paraphrased and Summarized Material

When you paraphrase or summarize ideas from a source, you follow the same guidelines previously provided, except that you are not required to provide the page number where the ideas are located. If you are summing up the main findings of a research article, simply providing the author's name and publication year may suffice, but if you are paraphrasing a more specific idea, consider including the page number.

Read the following examples.

Chang (2008) pointed out that weight-bearing exercise has many potential benefits for women.

Here, the writer is summarizing a major idea that recurs throughout the source material. No page reference is needed.

Chang (2008) found that weight-bearing exercise could help women maintain or even increase bone density through middle age and beyond, reducing the likelihood that they will develop osteoporosis in later life (p. 86).

Although the writer is not directly quoting the source, this passage

paraphrases a specific detail, so the writer chose to include the page number where the information is located.

Tip

Although APA style guidelines do not require writers to provide page numbers for material that is not directly quoted, your instructor may wish you to do so when possible.

Check with your instructor about his or her preferences.

Formatting Longer Quotations

When you quote a longer passage from a source—forty words or more—use a different format to set off the quoted material. Instead of using quotation marks, create a block quotation by starting the quotation on a new line and indented five spaces from the margin. Note that in this case, the parenthetical citation comes **after** the period that ends the sentence. Here is an example:

In recent years, many writers within the fitness industry have emphasized the ways in which women can benefit from weight-bearing exercise, such as weightlifting, karate, dancing, stair climbing, hiking, and jogging. Chang (2008) found that engaging in weight-bearing exercise regularly significantly reduces women's risk of developing osteoporosis. Additionally, these exercises help women maintain muscle mass and overall strength, and many common forms of weight-bearing exercise,

such as brisk walking or stair climbing, also provide noticeable cardiovascular benefits. (p. 93)

If you are quoting a passage that continues into a second paragraph, indent five spaces again in the first line of the second paragraph. Here is an example:

In recent years, many writers within the fitness industry have emphasized the ways in which women can benefit from weight-bearing exercise, such as weightlifting, karate, dancing, stair climbing, hiking, and jogging. Chang (2008) found that engaging in weight-bearing exercise regularly significantly reduces women's risk of developing osteoporosis. Additionally, these exercises help women maintain muscle mass and overall strength, and many common forms of weight-bearing exercise, such as brisk walking or stair climbing, also provide noticeable cardiovascular benefits.

It is important to note that swimming cannot be considered a weight-bearing exercise, since the water supports and cushions the swimmer. That doesn't mean swimming isn't great exercise, but it should be considered one part of an integrated fitness program. (p. 93)

Tip

Be wary of quoting from sources at length. Remember, your ideas should drive the paper, and quotations should be used to support and enhance your points. Make sure any lengthy quotations that you include serve a clear purpose.

Generally, no more than 10–15 percent of a paper should consist of quoted material.

Introducing Cited Material Effectively

Including an introductory phrase in your text, such as “Jackson wrote” or “Copeland found,” often helps you integrate source material smoothly. This citation technique also helps convey that you are actively engaged with your source material. Unfortunately, during the process of writing your research paper, it is easy to fall into a rut and use the same few dull verbs repeatedly, such as “Jones said,” “Smith stated,” and so on.

Punch up your writing by using strong verbs that help your reader understand how the source material presents ideas. There is a world of difference between an author who “suggests” and one who “claims,” one who “questions” and one who “criticizes.” You do not need to consult your thesaurus every time you cite a source, but do think about which verbs will accurately represent the ideas and make your writing more engaging. The following chart shows some possibilities.

Strong Verbs for Introducing Cited Material

ask	suggest	question
explain	assert	claim
recommend	compare	contrast
propose	hypothesize	believe
insist	argue	find
determine	measure	assess
evaluate	conclude	study
warn	point out	sum up

Writing at Work

It is important to accurately represent a colleague's ideas or communications in the workplace. When writing professional or academic papers, be mindful of how the words you use to describe someone's tone or ideas carry certain connotations. Do not say a source *argues* a particular point unless an argument is, in fact, presented. Use lively language, but avoid language that is emotionally charged. Doing so will ensure you have represented your colleague's words in an authentic and accurate way.

Formatting In-Text Citations for Other Source Types

These sections discuss the correct format for various types of in-text citations. Read them through quickly to get a sense of what is covered, and then refer to them again as needed.

Print Sources

This section covers books, articles, and other print sources with one or more authors.

A Work by One Author

For a print work with one author, follow the guidelines provided in [“Formatting a Research Paper.”](#) Always include the author’s name and year of publication. Include a page reference whenever you quote a source directly. (See also the guidelines presented earlier in this chapter about when to include a page reference for paraphrased material.)

Chang (2008) emphasized that “engaging in weight-bearing exercise consistently is one of the single best things women can do to maintain good health” (p. 49).

Chang (2008) pointed out that weight-bearing exercise has many potential benefits for women.

Two or More Works by the Same Author

At times, your research may include multiple works by the same author. If the works were published in different years, a standard in-text citation will serve to distinguish them. If you are citing multiple works by the same author published in the same year, include a lowercase letter immediately after the year. Rank the sources in the order they appear in your references section. The source listed first includes an *a* after the year, the source listed second includes a *b*, and so on.

Rodriguez (2009a) criticized the nutrition-supplement industry for making unsubstantiated and sometimes misleading claims about the benefits of taking supplements. Additionally, he warned that consumers frequently do not realize the potential harmful effects of some popular supplements (Rodriguez, 2009b).

Tip

If you have not yet created your references section, you may not be sure which source will appear first. See [“Creating a References Section”](#) for guidelines—or assign each source a temporary code and highlight the in-text citations so you remember to double-check them later on.

Works by Authors with the Same Last Name

If you are citing works by different authors with the same last name, include each author’s initials in your citation, whether you mention them in the text or in parentheses. Do so even if the publication years are different.

J. S. Williams (2007) believes nutritional supplements can be a useful part of some diet and fitness regimens. C. D. Williams (2008), however, believes these supplements are overrated.

According to two leading researchers, the rate of childhood obesity exceeds the rate of adult obesity (K. Connelley, 2010; O. Connelley, 2010).

Studies from both A. Wright (2007) and C. A. Wright (2008) confirm the benefits of diet and exercise on weight loss.

A Work by Two Authors

When two authors are listed for a given work, include both authors' names each time you cite the work. If you are citing their names in parentheses, use an ampersand (&) between them. (Use the word *and*, however, if the names appear in your sentence.)

As Garrison and Gould (2010) pointed out, "It is never too late to quit smoking. The health risks associated with this habit begin to decrease soon after a smoker quits" (p. 101).

As doctors continue to point out, "It is never too late to quit smoking. The health risks associated with this habit begin to decrease soon after a smoker quits" (Garrison & Gould, 2010, p. 101).

A Work by Three to Five Authors

If the work you are citing has three to five authors, list all the authors' names the first time you cite the source. In subsequent citations, use the first author's name followed by the abbreviation *et al.* (*Et al.* is short for *et alia*, the Latin phrase for "and others.")

Henderson, Davidian, and Degler (2010) surveyed 350 smokers aged 18 to 30.

One survey, conducted among 350 smokers aged 18 to 30, included a detailed questionnaire about participants' motivations for smoking (Henderson, Davidian, & Degler, 2010).

Note that these examples follow the same ampersand conventions

as sources with two authors. Again, use the ampersand only when listing authors' names in parentheses.

As Henderson et al. (2010) found, some young people, particularly young women, use smoking as a means of appetite suppression.

Disturbingly, some young women use smoking as a means of appetite suppression (Henderson et al., 2010).

Note how the phrase *et al.* is punctuated. No period comes after *et*, but *al.* gets a period because it is an abbreviation for a longer Latin word. In parenthetical references, include a comma after *et al.* but not before. Remember this rule by mentally translating the citation to English: "Henderson and others, 2010."

A Work by Six or More Authors

If the work you are citing has six or more authors, list only the first author's name, followed by *et al.*, in your in-text citations. The other authors' names will be listed in your references section.

Researchers have found that outreach work with young people has helped reduce tobacco use in some communities (Costello et al., 2007).

A Work Authored by an Organization

When citing a work that has no individual author(s) but is published by an organization, use the organization's name in place of the author's name. Lengthy organization names with well-known abbreviations can be abbreviated. In your first citation, use the full

name, followed by the abbreviation in square brackets. Subsequent citations may use the abbreviation only.

It is possible for a patient to have a small stroke without even realizing it (American Heart Association [AHA], 2010).

Another cause for concern is that even if patients realize that they have had a stroke and need medical attention, they may not know which nearby facilities are best equipped to treat them (AHA, 2010).

A Work with No Listed Author

If no author is listed and the source cannot be attributed to an organization, use the title in place of the author's name. You may use the full title in your sentence or use the first few words—enough to convey the key ideas—in a parenthetical reference. Follow standard conventions for using italics or quotation marks with titles:

- Use italics for titles of books or reports.
- Use quotation marks for titles of articles or chapters.

“Living With Diabetes: Managing Your Health” (2009) recommends regular exercise for patients with diabetes.

Regular exercise can benefit patients with diabetes (“Living with Diabetes,” 2009).

Rosenhan (1973) had mentally healthy study participants claim to be experiencing hallucinations so they would be admitted to psychiatric hospitals.

A Work Cited within Another Work

To cite a source that is referred to within another secondary source, name the first source in your sentence. Then, in parentheses, use the phrase *as cited in* and the name of the second source author.

Rosenhan's study "On Being Sane in Insane Places" (as cited in Spitzer, 1975) found that psychiatrists diagnosed schizophrenia in people who claimed to be experiencing hallucinations and sought treatment—even though these patients were, in fact, imposters.

Two or More Works Cited in One Reference

At times, you may provide more than one citation in a parenthetical reference, such as when you are discussing related works or studies with similar results. List the citations in the same order they appear in your references section, and separate the citations with a semicolon.

Some researchers have found serious flaws in the way Rosenhan's study was conducted (Dawes, 2001; Spitzer, 1975).

Both of these researchers authored works that support the point being made in this sentence, so it makes sense to include both in the same citation.

A Famous Text Published in Multiple Editions

In some cases, you may need to cite an extremely well-known work that has been repeatedly republished or translated. Many works of literature and sacred texts, as well as some classic nonfiction

texts, fall into this category. For these works, the original date of publication may be unavailable. If so, include the year of publication or translation for your edition. Refer to specific parts or chapters if you need to cite a specific section. Discuss with your instructor whether he or she would like you to cite page numbers in this particular instance.

In *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, Freud explains that the “manifest content” of a dream—what literally takes place—is separate from its “latent content,” or hidden meaning (trans. 1965, lecture XXIX).

Here, the student is citing a classic work of psychology, originally written in German and later translated to English. Since the book is a collection of Freud’s lectures, the student cites the lecture number rather than a page number.

An Introduction, Foreword, Preface, or Afterword

To cite an introduction, foreword, preface, or afterword, cite the author of the material and the year, following the same format used for other print materials.

Electronic Sources

Whenever possible, cite electronic sources as you would print sources, using the author, the date, and where appropriate, a page number. For some types of electronic sources—for instance, many online articles—this information is easily available. Other times, however, you will need to vary the format to reflect the differences in online media.

Online Sources without Page Numbers

If an online source has no page numbers but you want to refer to a specific portion of the source, try to locate other information you can use to direct your reader to the information cited. Some websites number paragraphs within published articles; if so, include the paragraph number in your citation. Precede the paragraph number with the abbreviation for the word *paragraph* and the number of the paragraph (e.g., para. 4).

As researchers have explained, “Incorporating fresh fruits and vegetables into one’s diet can be a challenge for residents of areas where there are few or no easily accessible supermarkets” (Smith & Jones, 2006, para. 4).

Even if a source does not have numbered paragraphs, it is likely to have headings that organize the content. In your citation, name the section where your cited information appears, followed by a paragraph number.

The American Lung Association (2010) noted, “After smoking, radon exposure is the second most common cause of lung cancer” (What Causes Lung Cancer? section, para. 2).

This student cited the appropriate section heading within the website and then counted to find the specific paragraph where the cited information was located.

If an online source has no listed author and no date, use the source title and the abbreviation *n.d.* in your parenthetical reference.

It has been suggested that electromagnetic radiation from cellular telephones may pose a risk for developing certain cancers (“Cell Phones and Cancer,” n.d.).

Personal Communication

For personal communications, such as interviews, letters, and e-mails, cite the name of the person involved, clarify that the material is from a personal communication, and provide the specific date the communication took place. Note that while in-text citations correspond to entries in the references section, personal communications are an exception to this rule. They are cited only in the body text of your paper.

J. H. Yardley, M.D., believes that available information on the relationship between cell phone use and cancer is inconclusive (personal communication, May 1, 2009).

Writing at Work

At work, you may sometimes share information resources with your colleagues by photocopying an interesting article or forwarding the URL of a useful website. Your goal in these situations and in formal research citations is the same. The goal is to provide enough information to help your professional peers locate and follow up on potentially useful information. Provide as much specific information as possible to achieve that goal, and consult with your professor as to what specific style he or she may prefer.

Key Takeaway

- In APA papers, in-text citations include the name of the author(s) and the year of publication whenever

possible.

- Page numbers are always included when citing quotations. It is optional to include page numbers when citing paraphrased material; however, this should be done when citing a specific portion of a work.
- When citing online sources, provide the same information used for print sources if it is available.
- When a source does not provide information that usually appears in a citation, in-text citations should provide readers with alternative information that would help them locate the source material. This may include the title of the source, section headings and paragraph numbers for websites, and so forth.
- When writing a paper, discuss with your professor what particular standards he or she would like you to follow.

Exercises

1. Review the places in your paper where you cited, quoted, and paraphrased material from a source with a single author. Edit your citations to ensure that

- each citation includes the author's name, the date of publication, and, where appropriate, a page reference;
- parenthetical citations are correctly formatted;
- longer quotations use the block-quotation format.

2. Review the citations in your paper once again. This time, look for

places where you introduced source material using a signal phrase in your sentence.

- Highlight the verbs used in your signal phrases, and make note of any that seem to be overused throughout the paper.
- Identify at least three places where a stronger verb could be used.
- Make the edits to your draft.

3. Review the places in your paper where you cited material from a source with multiple authors or with an organization as the author. Edit your citations to ensure that each citation follows APA guidelines for the inclusion of the authors' names, the use of ampersands and *et al.*, the date of publication, and, where appropriate, a page reference.

24. Read: Acknowledging Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism

Acknowledgment of Sources is a Rhetorical Act

To an inexperienced writer, citing and documenting sources may seem like busywork. Yet, when you cite your external sources in the text of your paper and when you document them at the end of your piece in a list of works cited or a bibliography, you are performing a rhetorical act. Complete and accurate citing and documenting of all external sources help writers achieve three very important goals:

1. It enhances your credibility as a writer. By carefully and accurately citing your external sources in the text and by documenting them at the end of your paper you show your readers that you are serious about your subject, your research, and the argument which you are making in your paper. You demonstrate that you have studied your subject in sufficient depth, and by reading credible and authoritative sources.
2. It helps you to avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism is trying to pass someone else's ideas or writing as your own. It is a serious offense that can damage the reputation of a writer forever and lead to very serious consequences if committed in an academic or professional setting. Later on in the chapter, we will discuss plagiarism and ways to avoid it in detail.
3. The presence of complete citations of sources in your paper will help you demonstrate to your readers that you are an active participant in the community of readers, writers, researchers, and learners. It shows that you are aware of the

conversations that are going on among writers and researchers in your field and that you are willing to enter those conversations by researching and writing about the subjects that interest you. By providing enough information about the sources which you used in you own research and writing, you give other interested readers the opportunity to find out more about your subject and, thus, to enter in a conversation with you.

The Logic and Structure of a Source Citation

Every time writers cite and document their sources, they do it in two places in the paper—in the text itself and at the end of the paper, in a list of works cited or bibliography. A citation is incomplete and, by and large, useless to the readers, if either of the parts is missing. Consider the following example, in which I cite an academic journal article using the Modern Language Association citation system. Please note that I give this example at this point in the chapter only to demonstrate the two parts of a citation. Later on, we will discuss how to cite and document different kinds of sources using different documentation systems, in full detail.

In-text citations

In-text citations are also known as parenthetical citations or parenthetical references because, at the end of the citation, parentheses are used. In her essay “If Winston Weather Would Just Write to Me on E-mail,” published in the journal *College*

Composition and Communication, writer and teacher Wendy Bishop shares her thoughts on the nature of writing: “[I see...writing as a mixture of mess and self-discipline, of self-history [and] cultural history.” (101).

The Citation in the List of Works Cited

Bishop, Wendy. “If Winston Weather Would Just Write to Me on E-mail.” *College Composition and Communication*. 46.1 (1995): 97-103.

The reason why each citation, regardless of the type of source and the documentation system being used, has two parts is simple. Writers acknowledge and document external sources for several reasons. One of these reasons is to give their readers enough information and enable them, if necessary, to find the same source which the paper mentions. Therefore, if we look at the kinds of information provided in the citation (page numbers, titles, authors, publishers, and publication dates), it becomes clear that this information is sufficient to locate the source in the library, bookstore, or online.

When to Cite and Document Sources

The brief answer to this question is “always.” Every time you use someone else’s ideas, arguments, opinions, or data, you need to carefully acknowledge their author and source. Keep in mind that you are not just borrowing others’ words when you use sources in your writing. You are borrowing ideas. Therefore, even if you are not directly citing the source, but paraphrase or summarize it, you still

need to cite it both in the text and at the end of the paper in a list of works cited or in a list of references.

The only exception is when you are dealing with what is known as “common knowledge.” Common knowledge consists of facts that are so widely known that they do not require a source reference. For instance, if you say in your writing that the Earth rotates around the Sun or that Ronald Reagan was a US President, you do not need to cite the sources of this common knowledge formally.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a problem that exists not only on college, university, and high school campuses. In recent years, several high profile cases, some involving famous writers and journalists have surfaced, in which these writers were accused of either presenting someone else's work as their own or fabricating works based on fictitious or unreliable research. With the advent of the Internet, it has become relatively easy to download complete papers. Various people and organizations, sometimes masquerading as “writing consultants” promise students that they would write a paper on any subject and of any level of complexity for a hefty fee. Clearly, the use of such services by student writers is dishonest and dishonorable. If your college or university is like mine, it probably has adopted strict policies for dealing with plagiarizing writers. Punishments for intentional plagiarism are severe and may include not only a failing grade for the class but even an expulsion from the university.

In addition to intentional plagiarism, there is also the unintentional kind. Experience shows that beginning writers' work sometimes include passages which could be called plagiarized because such writers often do not know how to cite and document external sources properly or do not understand that importance of following proper citation practices.

Observing the following practices will help you avoid plagiarism:

As you research, keep careful notes of your sources. As you take notes for your research project, keep track of what materials in those notes comes from external sources and what material is yours. Keep track of all your sources, including interviews and surveys, photographs and drawings, personal e-mails and conversations. Be sure to record the following information:

- Author
- Title
- Date of publication
- Publisher

Remember that when you use external sources, you are borrowing not the words of another writer, but his or her ideas, theories, and opinions. Therefore, even if you summarize or paraphrase a source, be sure to give it full credit. Writers used to have to record this information on separate note cards. However, with the proliferation of online and other electronic tools which allow us to keep track of our research, the task of recording and reflecting on source-related information has become easier.

Anti-Plagiarism Activity

Read the following four paragraphs. They are from a research source, an article in *The New Yorker* magazine. The other three are from student papers which attempt to use the article as an external source. As you read consider the following questions:

- Would you call the student's passage or its parts plagiarized from the original? Why or why not?
- If any parts of the student's passages are plagiarized what

needs to be changed in order to avoid plagiarism? Keep in mind that you may need to rewrite the whole Paragraph and not just make changes in separate sentences.

- Which of the student passages will require more significant rewriting than others and why?

Source Paragraph (from the article “Personality Plus,” by Malcolm Gladwell. *New Yorker*, Sept 20, 2004). One of the most popular personality tests in the world is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a psychological assessment system based on Carl Jung’s notion that people make sense of the world through a series of psychological frames. Some people are extraverts, some are introverts. Some process information through logical thought. Some are directed by their feelings. Some make sense of the world through intuitive leaps. Others collect data through their senses.

Student Paragraph 1

The Myers-Briggs Test is a very popular way to assess someone’s personality type. Philosopher Carl Jung believed that people make sense of the world in different ways. Some are extraverts and some are introverts. According to this idea, people process information either by logical reasoning or through intuition or feelings.

Student Paragraph 2

According to writer Malcolm Gladwell, One of the most popular personality tests in the world is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a psychological-assessment system based on Carl Jung’s notion that people make sense of the world through a series of psychological frames. Gladwell states that the test is based on the idea by Carl Jung that people make sense of the world through a series of psychological frames. According to Jung, some people are extroverts and some are introverts. Some process information through logical input, and some through feelings. Some make sense of the world through intuitive leaps. Others collect data through their senses.

Student Paragraph 3

One of the most popular personality tests in the world is the

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a psychological assessment system based on Carl Jung's notion that people make sense of the world through a series of psychological frames (Gladwell 43). The test is based on Jung's theory that people understand the world differently. This is why we have extroverts and introverts and people who act either based on reasoning or feelings (Gladwell).

Major Citation Systems

In this part of the chapter, I will explain the major citation and documentation systems which you are likely to encounter in your writing for college classes and beyond. The information in this section is not meant to be memorized. Instead, I encourage you to use this material as a reference source, when you are writing a paper and need to cite and document sources correctly, using one of the systems described below, refer to this chapter.

Please note that the following sections include only the basic information about each of the citation styles. There are plenty of excellent sources explaining and illustrating the differences between citation systems. I recommend the cite of the [Online Writing Center at Purdue University](#).

Conclusion

Avoiding plagiarism and acknowledging your external sources completely and accurately are vital parts of the writing process. Your credibility as a writer and the reception that you work will receive from readers may depend on how well you acknowledge your sources. By following the guidelines presented in this chapter

and by seeking out more knowledge about the rules of citing and documenting from the publications listed in this chapter, you will become a more competent, more professional, and more credible writer. This chapter covers only the basics of source citing and documenting. For more resources this topic and the various styles of documentation, see the Appendix to this book.

25. Assessment: MLA & APA Game Response

APA (American Psychological Association) and MLA (Modern Language Association) are two very common types of citation formatting used in higher education. There are others, as well, but we'll be talking specifically about APA and MLA this quarter.

APA is typically used for science courses, including nursing. MLA, on the other hand, is the usual style for humanities and social science courses. You'll probably be asked to use both of them during your time in college, so I want you to be prepared to handle each of them when need be.

First, visit the [APA and MLA Citation Game Home Page](#) by the University of Washington's TRIO Training program.

Then, complete the writing task below.

For this assignment, I'd like you to write a 2-paragraph (3+ sentences per paragraph) commentary on your familiarity with APA and MLA right now.

- In the first paragraph, describe your reaction to the citation work you've done so far in your academic life. Which style have you used more often so far? Which style seems more natural to you? Which style is more likely to be the one used in your degree program?
- In the second paragraph, discuss the mechanics of APA and MLA citation as you understand them right now. Did the questions in this game make sense to you? Do you have questions about why things are formatted in citations the way they are? Do you have comments about what information needs to be included in a citation, and why that information is

necessary?

Extra Credit Opportunity: While the overall quiz is pretty accurate, it does contain a few minor mistakes in the way it lists authors and dates. You can earn 1 extra credit point for each inaccuracy you find, up to 5 points maximum.

For each extra point, you must tell me

- which page of the quiz the error is on
- what specifically is wrong
- what the correct format should be instead

26. When & How To Use MLA In-Text Citation

[Download this PDF file to see a Decision Tree for When & How to use MLA in-text citation.](#)

27. Assessment: Five Potential Sources

Locate 5 potential research sources for the topic you submitted as your final choice for the Research Essay. At least one of these needs to come from the school's library (electronic databases are fine).

These are just to get you started. You won't have to use them in the final draft of the essay if they turn out to be duds.

These should be 5 NEW sources. Don't include ones you've used for previous assignments, even if they relate to your chosen topic.

You don't have to tell me anything about the contents of these sources. Instead, I want you to **create BOTH Works Cited (MLA) citations and References (APA) citations for each of the 5 sources you've found.**

You're welcome to use the pre-formatted citations available in the library databases, if you find your sources there. Other good helpful tools for building citations are [Son of Citation Machine](#) and [EasyBib](#).

All of the automated citation generators have their unique, problematic quirks. Be sure to compare what they give you with what the handbooks say your citation should look like, so you can learn to spot the problems with machine-generated citations.

28. How to Cite YouTube

For information on how to cite YouTube using APA style, [view the “Quick Answers” article directly from the APA.](#)

How to Cite a YouTube Video in MLA

As more information is introduced via the Web, students and instructors must come to expect an increase in the number of online citations included in research papers. YouTube videos are among the content one should learn to handle. Continue reading for specific instructions and examples concerning how to cite a YouTube video in MLA format.

Method 1 of 4: In-Text Citation

1. **Type a portion of the title in parentheses.**^[1] Follow quoted, paraphrased, or summarized information included in the text with the video’s full title or a shortened version of the title. Enclose the title in parentheses, and place any punctuation marks on the outside of the parentheses.
 - Maru is a famous cat known for a variety of antics (“Maru Greatest Hits”).
2. **Introduce the title in the sentence.** Instead of including the

title inside parentheses, you can also introduce the video's full title or a shortened form directly in the sentence when you write out the borrowed information. Surround the title in quotation marks.

- As seen in "Maru Greatest Hits," Maru is a famous cat known for a variety of antics.

3. **Include the creator's name when applicable.** If you know the name of the director or the person otherwise responsible for creating the content of the video, state the last name of that individual. A YouTube username can be used if no real name is provided. The name can either be included in the parentheses or introduced directly within the sentence containing the cited information.

- The man responsible for holding the three Cleveland women captive has been arrested along with two other suspects (Associated Press, "3 Women").
- As stated in "3 Women," the man responsible for holding the three Cleveland women captive has been arrested along with two other suspects (Associated Press).
- According to the Associated Press, the man responsible for holding the three Cleveland women captive has been arrested along with two other suspects ("3 Women").
- In "3 Women," the Associated Press explains that the man responsible for holding the three Cleveland women captive has been arrested along with two other suspects.

Method 2 of 4: Works Cited Page with Creator Name

Mention the name or username of the creator.^[2] Use the real name of the director, editor, or compiler when available. Write it out in *LastName, FirstName* format. If citing a video from an organization or if the creator's real name is not available, cite the name of the organization or the username associated with that YouTube account. Regardless of the name you use, follow it with a period.

- Associated Press.
- Tofield, Simon.

State the full title of the video. Write the title exactly as it is typed online. Never abbreviate it; write the full title out since multiple videos may be abbreviated in similar ways. Type a period after the final word and enclose it all in double quotation marks.

- Associated Press. "3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio."
- Tofield, Simon. "Screen Grab – Simon's Cat."

Name the website. In this case, the name of the website is simply "YouTube." Italicize the website name and follow it with a period.

- Associated Press. "3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio." *YouTube*.
- Tofield, Simon. "Screen Grab – Simon's Cat." *Youtube*.

Name the sponsor/publisher.^[3] The sponsor refers to the official legal name of the corporation or entity responsible for the website. In this case, it would be "YouTube." Do not enclose it in quotation marks or italicize it. Instead of following it with a period, use a comma.

- Associated Press. “3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio.”*YouTube*. YouTube,
- Tofield, Simon. “Screen Grab – Simon’s Cat.” *Youtube*. YouTube,

State when the video was created. The date that the video was posted should be written in *Day Month Year* format. Follow it with a period.

- Associated Press. “3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio.”*YouTube*. YouTube, 6 May 2013.
- Tofield, Simon. “Screen Grab – Simon’s Cat.” *Youtube*. YouTube, 12 April 2013.

Mention the publishing medium. For all YouTube videos, the medium should be listed as “Web.” This, too, should be followed with a period.

- Associated Press. “3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio.”*YouTube*. YouTube, 6 May 2013. Web.
- Tofield, Simon. “Screen Grab – Simon’s Cat.” *Youtube*. YouTube, 12 April 2013. Web.

Include the date of access. The date of access refers to the first date that you went to that video for the sake of using it as a citation source. List the date in *Day Month Year* format. Conclude with a period.

- Associated Press. “3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio.”*YouTube*. YouTube, 6 May 2013. Web. 7 May 2013.
- Tofield, Simon. “Screen Grab – Simon’s Cat.” *Youtube*. YouTube, 12 April 2013. Web. 7 May 2013.

Type the URL, when requested. The URL is not a standard part of MLA citation style for online videos. Nonetheless, many instructors still request it. If your instructor does request the URL, enclose it in carrot brackets and follow the ending bracket with a period.

- Associated Press. “3 Women, Missing for Years, Found Alive in Ohio.” *YouTube*. YouTube, 6 May 2013. Web. 7 May 2013. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9ZXoHnzbcA>>.
- Tofield, Simon. “Screen Grab – Simon’s Cat.” *Youtube*. YouTube, 12 April 2013. Web. 7 May 2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpHpm_b0vRY>.

Method 3 of 4: Works Cited Page with No Creator Name

Write out the full title of the video. If video footage is reposted by a YouTube user who is not the original creator of the footage, and if the name of the original creator is not listed, the first piece of information is the title of the video. Do not list the name or username of the YouTube channel responsible for reposting the video. Enclose the full title in double quotation marks, and follow the final word of the title with a period.

- “Maru Greatest Hits V1.”

Indicate the name of the website. For all YouTube videos, the name of the website should simply be “YouTube.” Italicize the word and follow it with another period.

- “Maru Greatest Hits V1.” *YouTube*.

State the name of the sponsor. The official, legal name of the corporation that owns YouTube should also be indicated. Type “YouTube,” and follow the name with a comma.

- “Maru Greatest Hits V1.” *YouTube*. YouTube,

Include a posting date. Specify the original date that the video was posted on the YouTube channel you used to access it. Arrange the date in *Day Month Year* format and place another period after the year.

- “Maru Greatest Hits V1.” *YouTube*. YouTube, 29 April 2009.

State the publishing medium. For a YouTube video, the publishing medium will always be “Web.” Follow it with yet another period.

- “Maru Greatest Hits V1.” *YouTube*. YouTube, 29 April 2009. Web.

Type an access date. The access date is the day, month, and year on which you first accessed the video with the intention of citing it among your research. Write the date in *Day Month Year* format and conclude with a period.

- “Maru Greatest Hits V1.” *YouTube*. YouTube, 29 April 2009. Web. 7 May 2013.

Include the URL only when requested. The video URL is not a standard part of MLA format and may be marked as wrong if you include it. Oftentimes, however, an instructor will specifically ask for the URL of any online source to be included, in which case, you should enclose the URL in carrot brackets and conclude the entire thing with a final period.

- “Maru Greatest Hits V1.” *YouTube*. YouTube, 29 April 2009. Web. 7 May 2013. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8uDuls5TyNE>>.

Method 4 of 4: Works Cited Page when Citing

YouTube Directly

State the creator as “YouTube.” This applies to any video that was uploaded to the official YouTube channel. Write the name out and follow it with a period.

- YouTube.

Include the full title of the video. Make sure to include the full title to minimize the odds of citing a duplicate or similar title. Follow the title with a period and enclose it in parentheses.

- YouTube. “Rewind YouTube Style 2012.”

Specify the name of the website. Even though “YouTube” is already listed once as the creator of the video, you must also list it a second time as the publisher. Note, however, that you do not need to list it a third time as an official corporation. Only italicize the name of the website here, and follow it with another period.

- YouTube. “Rewind YouTube Style 2012.” *YouTube*.

Indicate the date of publication. Specify the date that the video was originally updated in *Day Month Year* format. Follow the year with a period.

- YouTube. “Rewind YouTube Style 2012.” *YouTube*. 17 Dec. 2012.

State the publishing medium. The publishing medium for any YouTube video will be “Web.” Type a period after this information.

- YouTube. “Rewind YouTube Style 2012.” *YouTube*. 17 Dec. 2012.
Web.

Include a date of access. Write the day on which you first accessed

or viewed the video with the intention of using it as a resource. Type it out in *Day Month Year* format.

- YouTube. "Rewind YouTube Style 2012." *YouTube*. 17 Dec. 2012. Web. 7 May 2013.

Write the URL if directly requested. Official MLA guidelines do not list the URL as vital information, but if your instructor asks for it, include the URL in carrot brackets and follow the end bracket with a concluding period.

- YouTube. "Rewind YouTube Style 2012." *YouTube*. 17 Dec. 2012. Web. 7 May 2013. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCkYw3cRwLo>>^[4]

Tips

- Ask your instructor if he or she has a preference regarding the way that YouTube videos are cited. Some instructors prefer students to include the URL of online sources, while many do not. Moreover, since there is no official set of guidelines governing the citation of YouTube videos in MLA format, these details can be considered somewhat subjective.
- Check the MLA citation guidelines to verify that the above information is accurate and complete. These guidelines change periodically.

Sources and Citations

1. http://citesource.trincoll.edu/mla/mlavideoweb_002.pdf

2. <http://valenciacollege.edu/library/documents/youtube.pdf>
3. <http://www.bibme.org/citation-guide/MLA/website>
4. http://elmo.academyart.edu/reference-help/mla_citation_guide.html

29. APA in-text citations

How should a parenthetical in-text citation be formatted?

An essential component of a research paper, in-text citations are a way of acknowledging the ideas of the author(s) of a particular work.

Each source that appears as an in-text citation should have a corresponding detailed entry in the References list at the end of the paper. Including the required elements in every citation allows other researchers to easily track the references used in a paper and locate those resources themselves.

There are three pieces of information that should be included in a citation after quoting another writer's work: the author's last name, the year of publication, and the page number(s) of the quoted material, all of which are separated by commas. The page number should follow a lower-case letter 'p' and a period.

- Basic structure: (Author, Year of Publication, p. 142)
 - **Example:** (Kutner, 2003, p. 451) [1]

If the quoted material was taken from more than one page, use two lower-case letter 'p' s.

- Basic structure: (Author, Year, of Publication, pp. 194-196)
 - **Example:** (Kutner, 2003, pp. 451-452) [1]

How should multiple authors of a single source be cited?

There are a few guidelines to follow when citing multiple authors for

a single source. Separate the names of the source's authors by using commas. Depending on the location and instance of the citation, an ampersand(&), the word *and*, or the term *et al.* may also need to be used.

When should an ampersand be used?

Ampersands (&) should only be used in parenthetical in-text citations. An ampersand separates the last and second to last author of a cited work.

- **Example:** Research has demonstrated that “synesthesia appears quite stable over time, and synesthetes are typically surprised to discover that other people do not share their experiences” (Niccolai, Jennes, Stoerig, & Van Leeuwen, 2012, p. 81). [1]

When should the word and be used?

The word *and* should only be used in a sentence or paragraph; do not use it in a parenthetical in-text citation. The last and second to last author of a cited work are separated by the word *and*.

- **Example:** Niccolai, Jennes, Stoerig, and Van Leeuwen (2012) observed that “synesthesia appears quite stable over time, and synesthetes are typically surprised to discover that other people do not share their experiences” (p. 81). [1]

When should the term et al. be used?

When citing a single work with many authors, you may need to

substitute some of the authors' names with the term *et al.* The term *et al.* should not be italicized in your paper, and a period should be placed after the word *al* as it is an abbreviated term. Follow these guidelines regarding the usage of *et al.*:

Use et al.:

- The first time and every time you cite a source with at least six authors.
 - **Example:** The in-text citation of *Zoonoses: Infectious diseases transmissible from animals to humans*, a book authored by Krauss, Weber, Appel, Enders, Isenberg, Schiefer, Slenczka, von Graevenitz, and Zahner, would appear as follows: [2]
 - (Krauss et al., 2003, p. 91)
 - As Krauss et al. (2003) observed, ...
- Every following time (after the first instance) that you cite a source with at least three authors.
 - **Example:** Citing the article “Modality and variability of synesthetic experience” by Niccolai, Jennes, Stoerig, & Van Leeuwen would appear as follows: [1]
 - The first instance: (Niccolai, Jennes, Stoerig, & Van Leeuwen, 2012, p. 81)
 - Every following instance: (Niccolai et al., 2012)

Avoid using et al.:

- The first time you cite a source with up to five authors.
 - Instead, list all of the authors at their first mentioning.
- To cite a work that only has two authors.

- Instead, always list the two authors' names in every citation (separated by either an ampersand or the word and, depending on the location)

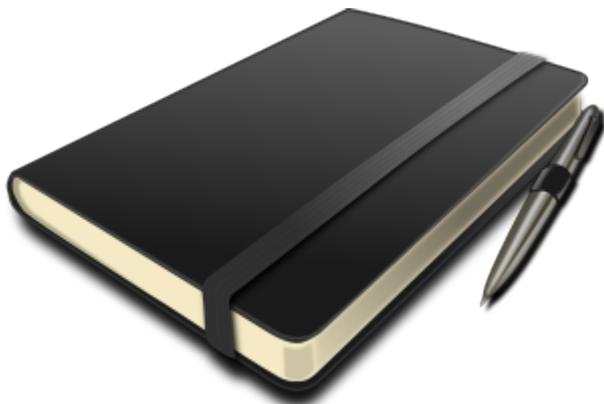
For more information about referencing sources in APA, see also:

- [Formatting the References Page \(APA\)](#)
- [References Page Template \(APA\)](#)

[1] Niccolai, V., Jennes, J., Stoerig, P., & Van Leeuwen, T. M. (2012). Modality and variability of synesthetic experience. *The American Journal of Psychology*, 125(1), 81-94. Retrieved from JSTOR database at <http://www.jstor.org/>

[2] Krauss, H., Weber, A., Appel, M., Enders, B., Isenberg, H. D., Schiefer, H. G., . . . Zahner, H. (2003). *Zoonoses: Infectious diseases transmissible from animals to humans*. Washington, DC: ASM Press

30. Assessment: Reading Notebook Entry #3



So far, the research you've done has been primarily text-based: written work on the page or the computer screen. One of the requirements for the Annotated Bibliography, however, is to find at least one video or audio source that relates to your research topic. Let's prepare for that by locating an interesting-looking one, now.

Sources to consider for good audio/ video sources are iTunes, iTunesU, YouTube, and TED Talks. This is just a starting point, of course. The school library has a great collection of DVDs and audio recordings that's worth exploring, as well.

After you've found an audio or video source and watched/listened to it, complete your next Notebook Entry. It should include any or all of the following:

- Title, speaker, link to file, and other relevant information so I can find it
- questions you had while listening/watching
- emotional reactions to the source

- key terms that seem important to you
- what you think the thesis or main idea of this source is
- what you think the intended audience for this source is
- how effective you think this source is
- how watching or listening differs from reading, in terms of effectiveness of presentation

This is an informal assignment. Your writing can be in complete sentences, or bullet points or fragments, as you see appropriate. Editing isn't vital for this work, though it should be proofread to the point that obvious typos or misspellings are addressed and corrected. Target word count is 150-300 words for this entry.

PART III

LET'S READ & SYNTHESIZE
IDEAS! (NONFICTION)

3I. The Conversation

<http://theconversation.com/us>

32. ProPublica

<https://www.propublica.org/>

33. Formulating a Thesis

You need a good thesis statement for your essay but are having trouble getting started. You may have heard that your thesis needs to be specific and arguable, but still wonder what this really means.

Let's look at some examples. Imagine you're writing about John Hughes's film [Sixteen Candles](#) (1984).

You take a first pass at writing a thesis:

Sixteen Candles is a romantic comedy about high school cliques.

Is this a strong thesis statement? Not yet, but it's a good start. You've focused on a topic—high school cliques—which is a smart move because you've settled on one of many possible angles. But the claim is weak because it's not yet arguable. Intelligent people would generally agree with this statement—so there's no real “news” for your reader. You want your thesis to say something surprising and debatable. If your thesis doesn't go beyond summarizing your source, it's descriptive and not yet argumentative.

The key words in the thesis statement are “romantic comedy” and “high school cliques.” One way to sharpen the claim is to *start asking questions*.

For example, how does the film represent high school cliques in a surprising or complex way? How does the film reinforce stereotypes about high school groups and how does it undermine them? Or why does the film challenge our expectations about romantic comedies by focusing on high school cliques? If you can answer one of those questions (or others of your own), you'll have a strong thesis.



Tip : Asking “how” or “why” questions will help you refine your thesis, making it more arguable and interesting to your readers.



Take 2. You revise the thesis. Is it strong now?

Sixteen Candles is a romantic comedy criticizing the divisiveness created by high school cliques.

You're getting closer. You're starting to take a stance by arguing that the film identifies

"divisiveness" as a problem and *criticizes* it, but your readers will want to know how this plays out and why it's important. Right now, the thesis still sounds bland – not risky enough to be genuinely contentious.

Tip: Keep raising questions that test your ideas. And ask yourself the "so what" question. Why is your thesis interesting or important?

Take 3. Let's try again. How about this version?

Although the film *Sixteen Candles* appears to reinforce stereotypes about high school cliques, it undermines them in important ways, questioning its viewers' assumptions about what's normal.

Bingo! This thesis statement is pretty strong. It challenges an obvious interpretation of the movie (that is just reinforces stereotypes), offering a new and more complex reading in its place. We also have a sense of why this argument is important. The film's larger goal, we learn, is to question what we think we understand about normalcy.

What's a Strong Thesis?



A GOOD SIGN...

As we've just seen, a strong thesis statement crystallizes your paper's argument and, most importantly, it's *arguable*.

This means two things. It goes beyond merely summarizing or describing to stake out an interpretation or position that's not obvious, and others could challenge for good reasons. It's also arguable in the literal sense that it can be *argued*, or supported through a thoughtful analysis of your sources. If your argument lacks evidence, readers will think your thesis statement is an opinion or belief as opposed to an argument.

Exercises for Drafting an Arguable Thesis

A good thesis will be *focused* on your object of study (as opposed to making a big claim about the world) and will introduce the *key words* guiding your analysis.

To get started, you might experiment with some of these “mad libs.” They're thinking exercises that will help propel you toward an arguable thesis.

By examining _____ [topic/approach], we can see _____ [thesis—the claim that's surprising], which is important because _____.[1]

Example:

“By examining *Sixteen Candles* through the lens of Georg Simmel's writings on fashion, we can see that the protagonist's interest in

fashion as an expression of her conflicted desire to be seen as both unique and accepted by the group. This is important because the film offers its viewers a glimpse into the ambivalent yearnings of middle class youth in the 1980s.

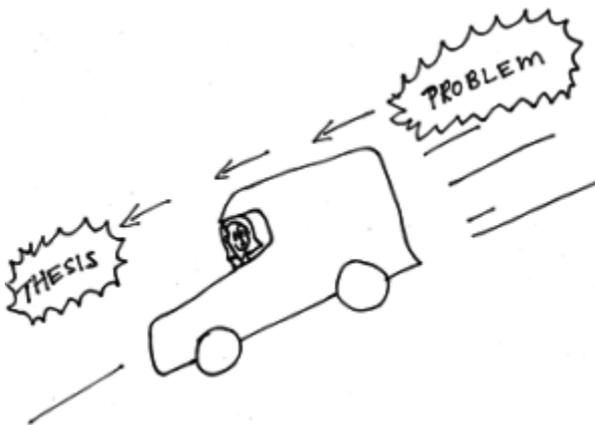


Although _____ readers might assume _____ [the commonplace idea you're challenging], I argue that _____ [your surprising claim].

Example:

Although viewers might assume the romantic comedy *Sixteen Candles* is merely entertaining, I believe its message is political. The film uses the romance between Samantha, a middle class sophomore, and Jake, an affluent senior, to reinforce the fantasy that anyone can become wealthy and successful with enough cunning and persistence.

Still Having Trouble? Let's Back Up...



It helps to understand why readers value the arguable thesis. What larger purpose does it serve? Your readers will bring a set of expectations to your essay. The better you can anticipate the expectations of your readers, the better you'll be able to persuade them to entertain seeing things your way.

Academic readers (and readers more generally) read to learn something new. They want to see the writer challenge commonplaces—either everyday assumptions about your object of study or truisms in the scholarly literature. In other words, academic readers want to be surprised so that their thinking shifts or at least becomes more complex by the time they finish reading your essay. Good essays problematize what we think we know and offer an alternative explanation in its place. They leave their reader with a fresh perspective on a problem.

We all bring important past experiences and beliefs to our interpretations of texts, objects, and problems. You can harness these observational powers to engage critically with what you are studying. The key is to be alert to what strikes you as strange, problematic, paradoxical, or puzzling about your object of study. If you can articulate this and a claim in response, you're well on your way to formulating an arguable thesis in your introduction.

How do I set up a “problem” and an arguable thesis in response?

All good writing has a purpose or motive for existing. Your thesis is your surprising response to this problem or motive. This is why it seldom makes sense to start a writing project by articulating the thesis. The first step is to articulate the question or problem your paper addresses.



Here are some possible ways to introduce a conceptual problem in your paper's introduction.

1. **Challenge a commonplace interpretation** (or your own first impressions).



How are readers likely to interpret this source or issue? What might intelligent readers think at first glance? (Or, if you've been given secondary sources or have been asked to conduct research to locate secondary sources, what do other writers or scholars assume is true or important about your primary source or issue?)

What does this commonplace interpretation leave out, overlook, or under-emphasize?

2. Help your reader see the complexity of your topic.



Identify and describe for your reader a paradox, puzzle, or contradiction in your primary source(s).

What larger questions does this paradox or contradiction raise for you and your readers?

3. If your assignment asks you to do research, piggyback off another scholar's research.



Summarize for your reader another scholar's argument about your topic, primary source, or case study and tell your reader why this claim is interesting.

Now explain how you will extend this scholar's argument to explore an issue or case study that the scholar doesn't address fully.

4. If your assignment asks you to do research, identify a gap in another scholar's or a group of scholars' research.



Summarize for your reader another scholar's argument about your topic, primary source, or case study and tell your reader why this claim is interesting. Or, summarize how scholars in the field tend to approach your topic.

Next, explain what important aspect this scholarly representation misses or distorts. Introduce your particular approach to your topic and its value

5. If your assignment asks you to do research, bring in a new lens for investigating your case study or problem.



Summarize for your reader how a scholar or group of scholars has approached your topic.

Introduce a theoretical source (possibly from another discipline) and explain how it helps you address this issue from a new and productive angle.

Screen Shot
2013-02-09 at
2.32.39 PM

Tip: your introductory paragraph will probably look like this:



Testing Your Thesis

You can test your thesis statement's arguability by asking the following questions:



Does my thesis only or mostly summarize my source?

If so, try some of the exercises above to articulate your paper's conceptual problem or question.



Is my thesis arguable –can it be supported by evidence in my source, and is it surprising and contentious?

If not, return to your sources and practice the exercises above.



Is my thesis about my primary source or case study, or is it about the world?

If it's about the world, revise it so that it focuses on your primary source or case study. Remember you need solid evidence to support your thesis.

“Formulating a Thesis” was written by Andrea Scott, Princeton University

Acknowledgements

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[1] Adapted from Erik Simpson's "Five Ways of Looking at a Thesis" at <http://www.math.grinnell.edu/~simpson/Teaching/fiveways.html>

34. Constructing the Thesis and Argument—From the Ground Up

Moving beyond the five-paragraph theme

As an instructor, I've noted that a number of new (and sometimes not-so-new) students are skilled wordsmiths and generally clear thinkers but are nevertheless stuck in a high-school style of writing. They struggle to let go of certain assumptions about how an academic paper *should be*. [Chapter 1](#) points to the essay portion of the SAT as a representative artifact of the writing skills that K-12 education imparts. Some students who have mastered that form, and enjoyed a lot of success from doing so, assume that college writing is simply more of the same. The skills that go into a very basic kind of essay—often called [the five-paragraph theme](#)—are indispensable. If you're good at the five-paragraph theme, then you're good at identifying a clear and consistent thesis, arranging cohesive paragraphs, organizing evidence for key points, and situating an argument within a broader context through the intro and conclusion.

In college you need to build on those essential skills. The five-paragraph theme, as such, is bland and formulaic; it doesn't compel deep thinking. Your professors are looking for a more ambitious and arguable thesis, a nuanced and compelling argument, and real-life evidence for all key points, all in an organically¹ structured paper.

Figures 3.1 and 3.2 contrast the standard five-paragraph theme and the organic college paper. The five-paragraph theme, outlined in Figure 3.1 is probably what you're used to: the introductory paragraph starts broad and gradually narrows to a thesis, which readers expect to find at the very end of that paragraph. In this idealized format, the thesis invokes the magic number of three: three reasons why a statement is true. Each of those reasons is explained and justified in the three body paragraphs, and then the final paragraph restates the thesis before gradually getting broader. This format is easy for readers to follow, and it helps writers

organize their points and the evidence that goes with them. That's why you learned this format.

Figure 3.2, in contrast, represents a paper on the same topic that has the more organic form expected in college. The first key difference is the thesis. Rather than simply positing a number of reasons to think that something is true, it puts forward an arguable statement: one with which a reasonable person might disagree. An arguable thesis gives the paper purpose. It surprises readers and draws them in. You hope your reader thinks, "Huh. Why would they come to that conclusion?" and then feels compelled to read on. The body paragraphs, then, build on one another to carry out this ambitious argument. In the classic five-paragraph theme (Figure 3.1) it hardly matters which of the three reasons you explain first or second. In the more organic structure (Figure 3.2) each paragraph specifically leads to the next.

image

Figure 3.1, The five-paragraph "theme"

The last key difference is seen in the conclusion. Because the organic essay is driven by an ambitious, non-obvious argument, the reader comes to the concluding section thinking "OK, I'm convinced by the argument. What do you, author, make of it? Why does it matter?" The conclusion of an organically structured paper has a real job to do. It doesn't just reiterate the thesis; it explains why the thesis matters.

image

Figure 3.2, The organic college paper

The substantial time you spent mastering the five-paragraph form in Figure 3.1 was time well spent; it's hard to imagine anyone succeeding with the more organic form without the organizational

skills and habits of mind inherent in the simpler form. But if you assume that you must adhere rigidly to the simpler form, you're blunting your intellectual ambition. Your professors will not be impressed by obvious theses, loosely related body paragraphs, and repetitive conclusions. They want you to undertake an ambitious independent analysis, one that will yield a thesis that is somewhat surprising and challenging to explain.

The three-story thesis: from the ground up

You have no doubt been drilled on the need for a thesis statement and its proper location at the end of the introduction. And you also know that all of the key points of the paper should clearly support the central driving thesis. Indeed, the whole model of the five-paragraph theme hinges on a clearly stated and consistent thesis. However, some students are surprised—and dismayed—when some of their early college papers are criticized for not having a good thesis. Their professor might even claim that the paper doesn't have a thesis when, in the author's view it clearly does. So, what makes a good thesis in college?

1. A *good thesis is non-obvious*. High school teachers needed to make sure that you and all your classmates mastered the basic form of the academic essay. Thus, they were mostly concerned that you had a clear and consistent thesis, even if it was something obvious like “sustainability is important.” A thesis statement like that has a wide-enough scope to incorporate several supporting points and concurring evidence, enabling the writer to demonstrate his or her mastery of the five-paragraph form. Good enough! When they can, high school teachers nudge students to develop arguments that are less obvious and more engaging. College instructors, though, fully expect you to produce something more developed.

2. A *good thesis is arguable*. In everyday life, “arguable” is often used as a synonym for “doubtful.” For a thesis, though, “arguable” means that it’s worth arguing: it’s something with which a reasonable person might disagree. This arguability criterion dovetails with the non-obvious one: it shows that the author has deeply explored a problem and arrived at an argument that legitimately needs 3, 5, 10, or 20 pages to explain and justify. In that way, a good thesis sets an ambitious agenda for a paper. A thesis like “sustainability is important” isn’t at all difficult to argue for, and the reader would have little intrinsic motivation to read the rest of the paper. However, an arguable thesis like “sustainability policies will inevitably fail if they do not incorporate social justice,” brings up some healthy skepticism. Thus, the arguable thesis makes the reader want to keep reading.
3. A *good thesis is well specified*. Some student writers fear that they’re giving away the game if they specify their thesis up front; they think that a purposefully vague thesis might be more intriguing to the reader. However, consider movie trailers: they always include the most exciting and poignant moments from the film to attract an audience. In academic papers, too, a well specified thesis indicates that the author has thought rigorously about an issue and done thorough research, which makes the reader want to keep reading. Don’t just say that a particular policy is effective or fair; say what makes it is so. If you want to argue that a particular claim is dubious or incomplete, say why in your thesis.
4. A *good thesis includes implications*. Suppose your assignment is to write a paper about some aspect of the history of linen production and trade, a topic that may seem exceedingly arcane. And suppose you have constructed a well supported and creative argument that linen was so widely traded in the ancient Mediterranean that it actually served as a kind of currency.² That’s a strong, insightful, arguable, well specified thesis. But which of these thesis statements do you find more

engaging?

Version A:

Linen served as a form of currency in the ancient Mediterranean world, connecting rival empires through circuits of trade.

Version B:

Linen served as a form of currency in the ancient Mediterranean world, connecting rival empires through circuits of trade. The economic role of linen raises important questions about how shifting environmental conditions can influence economic relationships and, by extension, political conflicts.

Putting your claims in their broader context makes them more interesting to your reader and more impressive to your professors who, after all, assign topics that they think have enduring significance. Finding that significance for yourself makes the most of both your paper and your learning.

How do you produce a good, strong thesis? And how do you know when you've gotten there? [Many instructors and writers](#) find useful a metaphor based on this passage by Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr.:³

There are one-story intellects, two-story intellects, and three-story intellects with skylights. All fact collectors who have no aim beyond their facts are one-story men. Two-story men compare, reason, generalize using the labor of fact collectors as their own. Three-story men idealize, imagine, predict—their best illumination comes from above the skylight.

One-story theses state inarguable facts. Two-story theses bring in an arguable (interpretive or analytical) point. Three-story theses nest that point within its larger, compelling implications. ⁴

The biggest benefit of the three-story metaphor is that it describes a process for building a thesis. To build the first story, you first have to get familiar with the complex, relevant facts surrounding the problem or question. You have to be able to describe the situation thoroughly and accurately. Then, with that first story built, you can layer on the second story by formulating the insightful, arguable point that animates the analysis. That's often the most effortful part: brainstorming, elaborating and comparing alternative ideas, finalizing your point. With that specified, you can frame up the third story by articulating why the point you make matters beyond its particular topic or case.

Thesis: that's the word that pops at me whenever I write an essay. Seeing this word in the prompt scared me and made me think to myself, "Oh great, what are they really looking for?" or "How am I going to make a thesis for a college paper?" When rehearsing that I would be focusing on theses again in a class, I said to myself, "Here we go again!" But after learning about the three story thesis, I never had a problem with writing another thesis. In fact, I look forward to being asked on a paper to create a thesis.

Timothée Pizarro

For example, imagine you have been assigned a paper about the impact of online learning in higher education. You would first construct an account of the origins and multiple forms of online learning and assess research findings about its use and effectiveness. If you've done that well, you'll probably come up with a well considered opinion that wouldn't be obvious to readers who haven't looked at the issue in depth. Maybe you'll want to argue that online learning is a threat to the academic community. Or perhaps you'll want to make the case that online learning opens up pathways to college degrees that traditional campus-based learning does not. In the course of developing your central, argumentative point, you'll

come to recognize its larger context; in this example, you may claim that online learning can serve to better integrate higher education with the rest of society, as online learners bring their educational and career experiences together. To outline this example:

- *First story:* Online learning is becoming more prevalent and takes many different forms.
- *Second story:* While most observers see it as a *transformation* of higher education, online learning is better thought of an *extension* of higher education in that it reaches learners who aren't disposed to participate in traditional campus-based education.
- *Third story:* Online learning appears to be a promising way to better integrate higher education with other institutions in society, as online learners integrate their educational experiences with the other realms of their life, promoting the freer flow of ideas between the academy and the rest of society.

Here's another example of a three-story thesis:⁵

- *First story:* Edith Wharton did not consider herself a modernist writer, and she didn't write like her modernist contemporaries.
- *Second story:* However, in her work we can see her grappling with both the questions and literary forms that fascinated modernist writers of her era. While not an avowed modernist, she did engage with modernist themes and questions.
- *Third story:* Thus, it is more revealing to think of modernism as a conversation rather than a category or practice.

Here's one more example:

- *First story:* Scientists disagree about the likely impact in the U.S. of [the light brown apple moth \(LBAM\)](#), an agricultural pest native to Australia.

- *Second story*: Research findings to date suggest that the decision to spray pheromones over the skies of several southern Californian counties to combat the LBAM was poorly thought out.
- *Third story*: Together, the scientific ambiguities and the controversial response strengthen the claim that industrial-style approaches to pest management are inherently unsustainable.

A thesis statement that stops at the first story isn't usually considered a thesis. A two-story thesis is usually considered competent, though some two-story theses are more intriguing and ambitious than others. A thoughtfully crafted and well informed three-story thesis puts the author on a smooth path toward an excellent paper.

The concept of a three-story thesis framework was the most helpful piece of information I gained from the writing component of DCC 100. The first time I utilized it in a college paper, my professor included "good thesis" and "excellent introduction" in her notes and graded it significantly higher than my previous papers. You can expect similar results if you dig deeper to form three-story theses. More importantly, doing so will make the actual writing of your paper more straightforward as well. Arguing something specific makes the structure of your paper much easier to design.

Peter Farrell

Three-story theses and the organically structured argument

The three-story thesis is a beautiful thing. For one, it gives a paper authentic momentum. The first paragraph doesn't just start with some broad, vague statement; every sentence is crucial for setting

up the thesis. The body paragraphs build on one another, moving through each step of the logical chain. Each paragraph leads inevitably to the next, making the transitions from paragraph to paragraph feel wholly natural. The conclusion, instead of being a mirror-image paraphrase of the introduction, builds out the third story by explaining the broader implications of the argument. It offers new insight without departing from the flow of the analysis.

I should note here that a paper with this kind of momentum often reads like it was knocked out in one inspired sitting. But in reality, just like accomplished athletes and artists, masterful writers make the difficult thing look easy. As writer Anne Lamott notes, reading a well written piece feels like its author sat down and typed it out, “bounding along like huskies across the snow.” However, she continues,

This is just the fantasy of the uninitiated. I know some very great writers, writers you love who write beautifully and have made a great deal of money, and not one of them sits down routinely feeling wildly enthusiastic and confident. Not one of them writes elegant first drafts. All right, one of them does, but we do not like her very much.⁶

Experienced writers don't figure out what they want to say and then write it. They write in order to figure out what they want to say.

Experienced writers develop theses in dialog with the body of the essay. An initial characterization of the problem leads to a tentative thesis, and then drafting the body of the paper reveals thorny contradictions or critical areas of ambiguity, prompting the writer to revisit or expand the body of evidence and then refine the thesis based on that fresh look. The revised thesis may require that body paragraphs be reordered and reshaped to fit the emerging three-story thesis. Throughout the process, the thesis serves as an anchor point while the author wades through the morass of facts and ideas. The dialogue between thesis and body continues until the author is satisfied or the due date arrives, whatever comes first. It's an effortful and sometimes tedious process. Novice writers, in

contrast, usually oversimplify the writing process. They formulate some first-impression thesis, produce a reasonably organized outline, and then flesh it out with text, never taking the time to reflect or truly revise their work. They assume that revision is a step backward when, in reality, it is a major step forward.

Everyone has a different way that they like to write. For instance, I like to pop my earbuds in, blast dubstep music and write on a white board. I like using the white board because it is a lot easier to revise and edit while you write. After I finish writing a paragraph that I am completely satisfied with on the white board, I sit in front of it with my laptop and just type it up.

Kaethe Leonard

Another benefit of the three-story thesis framework is that it demystifies what a “strong” argument is in academic culture. In an era of political polarization, many students may think that a strong argument is based on a simple, bold, combative statement that is promoted in the most forceful way possible. “Gun control is a travesty!” “Shakespeare is the best writer who ever lived!” When students are encouraged to consider contrasting perspectives in their papers, they fear that doing so will make their own thesis seem mushy and weak. However, in academics a “strong” argument is comprehensive and nuanced, not simple and polemical. The purpose of the argument is to explain to readers why the author—through the course of his or her in-depth study—has arrived at a somewhat surprising point. On that basis, it has to consider plausible counter-arguments and contradictory information. Academic argumentation exemplifies the popular adage about all writing: show, don’t tell. In crafting and carrying out the three-story thesis, you are showing your reader the work you have done.

The model of the organically structured paper and the three-story thesis framework explained here is the very foundation of the paper itself and the process that produces it. The subsequent chapters, focusing on sources, paragraphs, and sentence-level

wordsmithing, all follow from the notion that you are writing to think and writing to learn as much as you are writing to communicate. Your professors assume that you have the self-motivation and organizational skills to pursue your analysis with both rigor and flexibility; that is, they envision you developing, testing, refining and sometimes discarding your own ideas based on a clear-eyed and open-minded assessment of the evidence before you.

Other resources

1. The Writing Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill offers an [excellent, readable run-down](#) on the five-paragraph theme, why most college writing assignments want you to go beyond it, and those times when the simpler structure is actually a better choice.
2. There are many useful websites that describe good thesis statements and provide examples. Those from the writing centers at [Hamilton College](#), [Purdue University](#), and [Clarkson University](#) are especially helpful.

Exercises

1. Find a scholarly article or book that is interesting to you. Focusing on the abstract and introduction,

outline the first, second, and third stories of its thesis.

2. Here is a list of one-story theses. Come up with two-story and three-story versions of each one.
 - A. Television programming includes content that some find objectionable.
 - B. The percent of children and youth who are overweight or obese has risen in recent decades.
 - C. First-year college students must learn how to independently manage their time.
 - D. The things we surround ourselves with symbolize who we are.
3. Find an example of a five-paragraph theme (online essay mills, your own high school work), produce an alternative three-story thesis, and outline an organically structured paper to carry that thesis out.
4. Go to the [SAT website about the essay exam](#), choose one of the highly rated sample essays. In structure, how does it compare to the five-paragraph theme? How does it compare to the organic college essay? Use the SAT essay example you found to create alternative examples for Figures 3.1 and 3.2.

¹ “Organic” here doesn’t mean “pesticide-free” or containing carbon; it means the paper grows and develops, sort of like a living thing.

² For more see Fabio Lopez-Lazaro “Linen.” In [Encyclopedia of World Trade from Ancient Times to the Present](#). Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2005.

³[Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., *The Poet at the Breakfast Table* \(New York: Houghton & Mifflin, 1892\).](#)

⁴ The metaphor is extraordinarily useful even though the passage is annoying. Beyond the sexist language of the time, I don't appreciate the condescension toward "fact-collectors." which reflects a general modernist tendency to elevate the abstract and denigrate the concrete. In reality, data-collection is a creative and demanding craft, arguably more important than theorizing.

⁵ Drawn from [Jennifer Haytock, *Edith Wharton and the Conversations of Literary Modernism* \(New York: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2008\).](#)

⁶[Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life* \(New York: Pantheon, 1994\), 21.](#)

35. Secondary Sources in Their Natural Habitats

Ah, the research paper

Such exhilaration! Such consternation! Educators are fond of research papers because they require you to find your own sources, confront conflicting evidence, and synthesize diverse information and ideas—all skills required in any professional leadership role. Research papers also allow students to pursue their own topic of interest; your professors have to assume that you are genuinely interested in at least some major part of the course.¹ The open-endedness of research papers sets you up to do your best work as a self-motivated scholar.

Research papers are, by far, the best kind of papers! If you have an original twist to an old idea and about five good sources, you pretty much have a research paper. Most of the hard work is done for you already! If I can give you one piece of advice for research papers, it would be to know what you're looking for in an article. If you want statistics, skim for statistics. Knowing what you want will cut down the time it takes you to find sources.

Kaethe Leonard

This chapter is about secondary sources: what they are, where to find them, and how to choose them.² [Recall the distinction between primary and secondary sources.](#) Primary sources are original documents, data, or images: the law code of the Le Dynasty in Vietnam, the letters of Kurt Vonnegut, data gathered from an experiment on color perception, an interview, or Farm Service Administration photographs from the 1930s.³ Secondary sources are produced by analyzing primary sources. They include news articles, scholarly articles, reviews of films or art exhibitions, documentary films, and other pieces that have some descriptive or analytical purpose. Some things may be primary sources in one context but secondary sources in another. For example, if you're

using news articles to inform an analysis of a historical event, they're serving as secondary sources. If you're counting the number of times a particular newspaper reported on different types of events, then the news articles are serving as primary sources because they're more akin to raw data.

Some sources are better than others

You probably know by now that if you cite [Wikipedia](#) as an authoritative source, the wrath of your professor shall be visited upon you. Why is it that even the most informative Wikipedia articles are still often considered illegitimate? And what are good sources to use? The table below summarizes types of secondary sources in four tiers. All sources have their legitimate uses, but the top-tier ones are preferable for citation.

Tier	Type	Content	Uses	How to find them
1	Peer-reviewed academic publications	Rigorous research and analysis	Provide strong evidence for claims and references to other high-quality sources	Google Scholar, library catalogs, and academic article databases
2	Reports, articles, and books from credible non-academic sources	Well researched and even-handed descriptions of an event or state of the world	Initial research on events or trends not yet analyzed in the academic literature; may reference important Tier 1 sources	Websites of relevant agencies, Google searches using (site: *.gov or site: *.org), academic article databases
3	Short pieces from newspapers or credible websites	Simple reporting of events, research findings, or policy changes	Often point to useful Tier 2 or Tier 1 sources, may provide a factoid or two not found anywhere else	Strategic Google searches or article databases including newspapers and magazines
4	Agenda-driven or uncertain pieces	Mostly opinion, varying in thoughtfulness and credibility	May represent a particular position within a debate; more often provide keywords and clues about higher quality sources	Non-specific Google searches

Tier 1: Peer-reviewed academic publications

These are sources from the mainstream academic literature: books and scholarly articles. Academic books generally fall into three categories: (1) textbooks written with students in mind, (2) monographs which give an extended report on a large research

project, and (3) edited volumes in which each chapter is authored by different people. Scholarly articles appear in academic journals, which are published multiple times a year in order to share the latest research findings with scholars in the field. They're usually sponsored by some academic society. To get published, these articles and books had to earn favorable anonymous evaluations by qualified scholars. Who are the experts writing, reviewing, and editing these scholarly publications? Your professors. I describe this process below. Learning how to read and use these sources is a fundamental part of being a college student.

Tier 2: Reports, articles and books from credible non-academic sources

Some events and trends are too recent to appear in Tier 1 sources. Also, Tier 1 sources tend to be highly specific, and sometimes you need a more general perspective on a topic. Thus, Tier 2 sources can provide quality information that is more accessible to non-academics. There are three main categories. First, official reports from government agencies or major international institutions like the [World Bank](#) or the [United Nations](#); these institutions generally have research departments staffed with qualified experts who seek to provide rigorous, even-handed information to decision-makers. Second, feature articles from major newspapers and magazines like the [New York Times](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), [London Times](#), or [The Economist](#) are based on original reporting by experienced journalists (not press releases) and are typically 1500+ words in length. Third, there are some great books from non-academic presses that cite their sources; they're often written by journalists. All three of these sources are generally well researched descriptions of an event or state of the world, undertaken by credentialed experts who generally seek to be even-handed. It is still up to you to judge their credibility. Your instructors and campus librarians

can advise you on which sources in this category have the most credibility.

Tier 3. Short pieces from periodicals or credible websites

A step below the well-developed reports and feature articles that make up Tier 2 are the short tidbits that one finds in newspapers and magazines or credible websites. How short is a short news article? Usually, they're just a couple paragraphs or less, and they're often reporting on just one thing: an event, an interesting research finding, or a policy change. They don't take extensive research and analysis to write, and many just summarize a press release written and distributed by an organization or business. They may describe things like corporate mergers, newly discovered diet-health links, or important school-funding legislation. You may want to cite Tier 3 sources in your paper if they provide an important factoid or two that isn't provided by a higher-tier piece, but if the Tier 3 article describes a particular study or academic expert, your best bet is to find the journal article or book it is reporting on and use that Tier 1 source instead. If the article mentions which journal the study was published in, you can go right to that journal through your library website. Sometimes you can find the original journal article by putting the scholar's name and some keywords into Google Scholar.

What counts as a credible website in this tier? You may need some guidance from instructors or librarians, but you can learn a lot by examining the person or organization providing the information (look for an "About" link). For example, if the organization is clearly agenda-driven or not up-front about its aims and/or funding sources, then it definitely isn't something you want to cite as a neutral authority. Also look for signs of expertise. A tidbit about a medical research finding written by someone with a science background carries more weight than the same topic written by a policy analyst. These sources are sometimes uncertain, which is

all the more reason to follow the trail to a Tier 1 or Tier 2 source whenever possible.

Personally, research papers are my thing! They give me a chance to further explore a topic that I usually am genuinely interested in, and it gives me the opportunity to write down everything I know. Sources are easy to find; they're everywhere. Unfortunately, the useful ones you have to put in a little more effort to find. As much as I love Wikipedia, if I'm going to take the time to write a paper, I want it to be taken seriously. There are so many resources out there to help students find scholarly information. The better the source, the more supported your paper will be. But it doesn't matter how well supported or amazing your paper is if you don't cite your sources! A citing mistake could definitely get you a big fat zero on the paper you worked so hard on, and maybe even kicked out of school. Utilize resources like www.easybib.com for a quick works cited, and Purdue's OWL (english.purdue.edu/owl) for a complete and easy explanation on APA and MLA citing formats.

Aly Button

Tier 4. Agenda-driven or pieces from unknown sources

This tier is essentially everything else, including Wikipedia.⁴ These types of sources—especially Wikipedia—can be hugely helpful in identifying interesting topics, positions within a debate, keywords to search on, and, sometimes, higher-tier sources on the topic. They often play a critically important role in the early part of the research process, but they generally aren't (and shouldn't be) cited in the final paper. Throwing some keywords into [Google](#) and seeing what you get is a fine way to get started, but don't stop there. Start a list of the people, organizations, sources, and keywords that seem most relevant to your topic. For example, suppose you've been assigned a research paper about the impact of linen production and trade on the ancient world. A quick Google search reveals that (1) linen

comes from the flax plant, (2) the scientific name for flax is *Linum usitatissimum*, (3) Egypt dominated linen production at the height of its empire, and (4) Alex J. Warden published a book about ancient linen trade in 1867. Similarly, you found some useful search terms to try instead of “ancient world” (antiquity, Egyptian empire, ancient Egypt, ancient Mediterranean) and some generalizations for linen (fabric, textiles, or weaving). Now you’ve got a lot to work with as you tap into the library catalog and academic article databases.

Origins and anatomy of a journal article

Most of the Tier 1 sources available are academic articles, also called scholarly articles, scholarly papers, journal articles, academic papers, or peer-reviewed articles. They all mean the same thing: a paper published in an academic periodical after being scrutinized anonymously and judged to be sound by other experts in the subfield. Their origin explains both their basic structure and the high esteem they have in the eyes of your professors.

Many journals are sponsored by academic associations. Most of your professors belong to some big, general one (such as the [Modern Language Association](#)⁵, the [American Psychological Association](#)⁶, the [National Association for Sport and Physical Education](#), or the [American Physical Society](#)) and one or more smaller ones organized around particular areas of interest and expertise (such as the [Association for the Study of Food and Society](#), the [International Association for Statistical Computing](#), or the [Slavic and East European Folklore Association](#)). There are also generalist organizations organized by region of the country or state, such as the [Eastern Sociological Society](#) or the [Southern Management Association](#). Each of these associations exists to promote the exchange of research findings and collaboration in their disciplines. Towards this end, they organize conferences, sponsor working groups, and publish one or more academic journals. These journals

are meant to both publicize and archive the most interesting and important findings of the field.

Academic papers are essentially reports that scholars write to their peers—present and future—about what they’ve done in their research, what they’ve found, and why they think it’s important. Thus, in a lot of fields they often have a structure reminiscent of the lab reports you’ve written for science classes:

1. *Abstract*: A one-paragraph summary of the article: its purpose, methods, findings, and significance.
2. *Introduction*: An overview of the key question or problem that the paper addresses, why it is important, and the key conclusion(s) (i.e., thesis or theses) of the paper.
3. *Literature review*: A synthesis of all the relevant prior research (the so-called “academic literature” on the subject) that explains why the paper makes an original and important contribution to the body of knowledge.
4. *Data and methods*: An explanation of what data or information the author(s) used and what they did with it.
5. *Results*: A full explanation of the key findings of the study.
6. *Conclusion/discussion*: Puts the key findings or insights from the paper into their broader context; explains why they matter.

Not all papers are so “sciencey.” For example, a historical or literary analysis doesn’t necessarily have a “data and methods” section; but they do explain and justify the research question, describe how the authors’ own points relate to those made in other relevant articles and books, develop the key insights yielded by the analysis, and conclude by explaining their significance. Some academic papers are review articles, in which the “data” are published papers and the “findings” are key insights, enduring lines of debate, and/or remaining unanswered questions.

[Scholarly journals use a peer-review process](#) to decide which articles merit publication. First, hopeful authors send their article manuscript to the journal editor, a role filled by some prominent

scholar in the field. The editor reads over the manuscript and decides whether it seems worthy of peer-review. If it's outside the interests of the journal or is clearly inadequate, the editor will reject it outright. If it looks appropriate and sufficiently high quality, the editor will recruit a few other experts in the field to act as anonymous peer reviewers. The editor will send the manuscript (scrubbed of identifying information) to the reviewers who will read it closely and provide a thorough critique. Is the research question driving the paper timely and important? Does the paper sufficiently and accurately review all of the relevant prior research? Are the information sources believable and the research methods rigorous? Are the stated results fully justified by the findings? Is the significance of the research clear? Is it well written? Overall, does the paper add new, trustworthy, and important knowledge to the field? Reviewers send their comments to the editor who then decides whether to (1) reject the manuscript, (2) ask the author(s) to revise and resubmit the manuscript⁷, or (3) accept it for publication. Editors send the reviewers' comments (again, with no identifying information) to authors along with their decisions. A manuscript that has been revised and resubmitted usually goes out for peer-review again; editors often try to get reviews from one or two first-round reviewers as well as a new reviewer. The whole process, from start to finish, can easily take a year, and it is often another year before the paper appears in print.

Understanding the academic publication process and the structure of scholarly articles tells you a lot about how to find, read and use these sources:

1. *Find them quickly.* Instead of paging through mountains of dubious web content, go right to the relevant scholarly article databases in order to quickly find the highest quality sources.
2. *Use the abstracts.* Abstracts tell you immediately whether or not the article you're holding is relevant or useful to the paper you're assigned to write. You shouldn't ever have the experience of reading the whole paper just to discover it's not

useful.

3. *Read strategically.* Knowing the anatomy of a scholarly article tells you what you should be reading for in each section. For example, you don't necessarily need to understand every nuance of the literature review. You can just focus on why the authors claim that their own study is distinct from the ones that came before.
4. *Don't sweat the technical stuff.* Not every social scientist understands the intricacies of log-linear modeling of quantitative survey data; however, the reviewers definitely do, and they found the analysis to be well constructed. Thus, you can accept the findings as legitimate and just focus on the passages that explain the findings and their significance in plainer language.
5. *Use one article to find others.* If you have one really good article that's a few years old, you can use article databases to find newer articles that cited it in their own literature reviews. That immediately tells you which ones are on the same topic and offer newer findings. On the other hand, if your first source is very recent, the literature review section will describe the other papers in the same line of research. You can look them up directly.

Research papers, amongst others, are the most common papers a college student will ever write, and as difficult as it may sound, it is not impossible to complete. Research papers are my favorite kind of papers because of sourcing, paraphrasing, and quoting. Naturally as you would in other papers, your own paper should come from yourself, but when you are proving a point about a specific area of your topic, it is always ok to have a credible source explain further. In college, sources are very important for most, if not all papers you will have, and citing those sources is important as well. After you are able to familiarize yourself with citations, it will come natural like it has for many students.

Timothée Pizarro

Students sometimes grumble when they're ordered to use scholarly articles in their research. It seems a lot easier to just Google some terms and find stuff that way. However, academic articles are the most efficient resource out there. They are vetted by experts and structured specifically to help readers zero in on the most important passages.

Finding Tier 1 sources: article databases

Your campus library pays big money to subscribe to databases for Tier 1 articles. Some are general purpose databases that include the most prominent journals across disciplines⁸, and some are specific to a particular discipline.⁹ Often they have the full-text of the articles right there for you to save or print. We won't go over particular databases here because every campus has different offerings. If you haven't already attended a workshop on using the resources provided by your library, you should. A one-hour workshop will save you many, many hours in the future. If there aren't any workshops, you can always seek advice from librarians and other library staff on the best databases for your topic. Many libraries also have online research guides that point you to the best databases for the specific discipline and, perhaps, the specific course. Librarians are eager to help you succeed with your research—it's their job and they love it!—so don't be shy about asking.

An increasingly popular article database is [Google Scholar](#). It looks like a regular Google search, and it aspires to include the vast majority of published scholarship. Google doesn't share a list of which journals they include or how Google Scholar works, which limits its utility for scholars. Also, because it's so wide-ranging, it can be harder to find the most appropriate sources. However, if you want to cast a wide net, it's a very useful tool.

Here are three tips for using Google Scholar effectively:

1. *Add your field (economics, psychology, French, etc.) as one of your keywords.* If you just put in “crime,” for example, Google Scholar will return all sorts of stuff from sociology, psychology, geography, and history. If your paper is on crime in French literature, your best sources may be buried under thousands of papers from other disciplines. A set of search terms like “crime French literature modern” will get you to relevant sources much faster.
2. *Don’t ever pay for an article.* When you click on links to articles in Google Scholar, you may end up on a publisher’s site that tells you that you can download the article for \$20 or \$30. Don’t do it! You probably have access to virtually all the published academic literature through your library resources. Write down the key information (authors’ names, title, journal title, volume, issue number, year, page numbers) and go find the article through your library website. If you don’t have immediate full-text access, you may be able to get it through inter-library loan.
3. *Use the “cited by” feature.* If you get one great hit on Google Scholar, you can quickly see a list of other papers that cited it. For example, the search terms “crime economics” yielded this hit for a 1988 paper that appeared in a journal called *Kyklos*:

image

Figure 4.1, Google Scholar

1988 is nearly 30 years ago; for a social-science paper you probably want more recent sources. You can see that, according to Google, this paper was cited by 392 other sources. You can click on that “Cited by 392” to see that list. You can even search within that list of 392 if you’re trying to narrow down the topic. For example, you could search on the term “cities” to see which of those 392 articles are most likely to be about the economic impact of crime on cities.

Library research as problem-solving

You'll probably engage the subscription article databases at different points in the process. For example, imagine you've been assigned a research paper that can focus on any topic relevant to the course. Imagine further that you don't have a clue about where to start and aren't entirely sure what counts as an appropriate topic in this discipline. A great approach is to find the top journals in the specific field of your course and browse through recent issues to see what people are publishing on. For example, when I assign an open-topic research paper in my Introduction to Sociology course, I suggest that students looking for a topic browse recent issues of *Social Problems* or *American Journal of Sociology* and find an article that looks interesting. They'll have a topic and—booyah!—their first source. An instructor of a class on kinesiology might recommend browsing *Human Movement Science*, the *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, or *Perceptual and Motor Skills*.

When you have a topic and are looking for a set of sources, your biggest challenge is finding the right keywords. You'll never find the right sources without them. You'll obviously start with words and phrases from the assignment prompt, but you can't stop there. As explained above, lower tier sources (such as Wikipedia) or the top-tier sources you already have are great for identifying alternative keywords, and librarians and other library staff are also well practiced at finding new approaches to try. Librarians can also point you to the best databases for your topic as well.

As you assess your evidence and further develop your thesis through the writing process, you may need to seek additional sources. For example, imagine you're writing a paper about the added risks adolescents face when they have experienced their parents' divorce. As you synthesize the evidence about negative impacts, you begin to wonder if scholars have documented some positive impacts as well.¹⁰ Thus you delve back into the literature

to look for more articles, find some more concepts and keywords (such as “resiliency”), assess new evidence, and revise your thinking to account for these broader perspectives. Your instructor may have asked you to turn in a bibliography weeks before the final paper draft. You can check with your professor, but he or she is probably perfectly fine with you seeking additional sources as your thinking evolves. That’s how scholars write.

Finding good sources is a much more creative task than it seems on the face of it. It’s an extended problem-solving exercise, an iterative cycle of questions and answers. Go ahead and use Wikipedia to get broadly informed if you want. It won’t corrupt your brain. But use it, and all other sources, strategically. You should eventually arrive at a core set of Tier 1 sources that will enable you to make a well informed and thoughtful argument in support of your thesis. It’s also a good sign when you find yourself deciding that some of the first sources you found are no longer relevant to your thesis; that likely means that you have revised and specified your thinking and are well on your way to constructing the kind of self-driven in-depth analysis that your professor is looking for.

Other resources

1. The Online Writing Laboratory (OWL) at Purdue University provides [this list](#) of links to freely available article databases.
2. Google provides some great tips for getting the most out of [Google Scholar](#).
3. [This resource](#) from Bowling Green State University explains how searching subject headings in a database (compared to key words) can more quickly bring you to relevant sources.

Exercises

1. Choose a research topic, enter it into Google and then into Google Scholar, and compare your results. Some topics you could try: college athletes and academics, antibiotic resistance, Ptolemaic dynasty.
2. Using various databases, find one source in each of the four tiers for a particular topic.
3. Enter a topic into a general subscription database that has both scholarly and non-scholarly sources (such as Academic Search Complete or Academic OneFile); browse the first few hits and classify each one as scholarly or not-scholarly. Look at the structure of the piece to make your determination.

¹ If you aren't actually interested in anything relating to the course, you'd do well to keep that information to yourself.

² Obviously, not all writing assignments require you to find and use secondary sources. This chapter is relevant to those that do.

³ Bored? Browse these images and other collections of the [Library of Congress' American Memory Project](http://memory.loc.gov): memory.loc.gov. Fascinating!

⁴ Wikipedia is a conundrum. There are a lot of excellent articles on there, and I, like many other professors, embrace the open-access values that embody things like Wikipedia and this very textbook. It's not that Wikipedia is crap; it's just that there are much more solid alternatives.

⁵ Where MLA citation style comes from.

⁶ Where APA citation style comes from.

⁷ From an author's perspective, a verdict of "revise and resubmit"—colloquially called an "R & R"—is a cause for celebration. In many fields, most papers are revised and resubmitted at least once before being published.

⁸ Examples include Academic Search Premier (by EBSCO), Academic Search Complete (by EBSCO), Academic OneFile (by Cengage), General OneFile (by Cengage), ArticleFirst (by OCLC), and JSTOR (by ITHAKA).

⁹ Some examples: PsycINFO (for psychology), CINAHL (for nursing), Environment Complete (for environmental science), Historical Abstracts (for history).

¹⁰ One fairly recent article is Ilana Sever, Joseph Gutmann, and Amnon Lazar, "Positive Consequences of Parental Divorce Among Israeli Young Adults", *Marriage and Family Review* 42, no. 4 (2007): 7-28.

36. Listening to Sources, Talking to Sources

Theses and sources

Everyone knows that a thorough analysis and persuasive argument needs strong evidence. The credibility of sources, addressed in [Chapter 4](#), is one key element of strong evidence, but it also matters how sources are used in the text of the paper. Many students are accustomed to thinking of sources simply as expert corroboration for their own points. As a result, they tend to comb texts to find statements that closely parallel what they want to say and then incorporate quotes as evidence that a published author agrees with them. That's one way to use sources, but there is a lot more to it.

Recall from prior chapters that writing academic papers is about joining a conversation. You're contributing your own original thinking to some complex problem, be it interpretive, theoretical, or practical. Citing sources helps situate your ideas within that ongoing conversation. Sometimes you're citing a research finding that provides strong evidence for your point; at other times you're summarizing someone else's ideas in order to explain how your own opinion differs or to note how someone else's concept applies to a new situation. [Graff and Birkenstein](#)¹ encourage you to think about writing with sources is a "They Say/I Say" process. You first report what "they" say; "they" being published authors, prevalent ideas in society at large, or maybe participants in some kind of political or social debate. Then you respond by explaining what you think: Do you agree? Disagree? A little of both?

This "They Say/I Say" approach can help student writers find balance in their use of sources. On one extreme, some students think that they aren't allowed to make any claims without citing one or more expert authors saying the same thing. When their instructors encourage them to bring more original thinking into their writing, they're confused about how to do it. On the other

extreme, some students tend to describe, more or less accurately, what sources say about a topic but then go on to state opinions that seem unrelated to the claims they just summarized. For example, a student writer may draw on expert sources to explain how the prevention and early detection of cancer has saved lives² but then argue for more funding for curing advanced cancer without making any explicit link to the points about prevention and screening. On one extreme, the sources are allowed to crowd out original thinking; on the other, they have seemingly no impact on the author's conclusions.

How can you know when you're avoiding both of these extremes? In other words, what kinds of [theses](#) ("I Say") can count as an original claim and still be grounded in the sources ("They Say")? Here are five common strategies:

1. *Combine research findings from multiple sources to make a larger summary argument.* You might find that none of the sources you're working with specifically claim that early 20th century British literature was preoccupied with changing gender roles but that, together, their findings all point to that broader conclusion.
2. *Combine research findings from multiple sources to make a claim about their implications.* You might review papers that explore various factors shaping voting behavior to argue that a particular voting-reform proposal will likely have positive impacts.
3. *Identify underlying areas of agreement.* You may argue that the literature on cancer and the literature on violence both describe the unrecognized importance of prevention and early intervention in order to claim that insights about one set of problems may be useful for the other.
4. *Identify underlying areas of disagreement.* You may find that the controversies surrounding educational reform—and its debates about accountability, curricula, school funding—ultimately stem from different assumptions about the role of schools in

society.

5. *Identify unanswered questions.* Perhaps you review studies of the genetic and behavioral contributors to diabetes in order to highlight unknown factors and argue for more in-depth research on the role of the environment.

There are certainly other ways authors use sources to build theses, but these examples illustrate how original thinking in academic writing involves making connections with and between a strategically chosen set of sources.

Incorporating sources

Here's a passage of academic writing (an excerpt, not a complete paper) that illustrates several ways that sources can figure into a "They Say/I Say" approach³:

[Willingham \(2011\)](#) draws on cognitive science to explain that students must be able to regulate their emotions in order to learn. Emotional self-regulation enables students to ignore distractions and channel their attention and behaviors in appropriate ways. Other research findings confirm that anxiety interferes with learning and academic performance because it makes distractions harder to resist ([Perkins and Graham-Bermann, 2012](#); [Putwain and Best, 2011](#)).

Other cognitive scientists point out that deep learning is itself stressful because it requires people to think hard about complex, unfamiliar material instead of relying on cognitive short-cuts.

[Kahneman \(2011\)](#) describes this difference in terms of two systems for thinking: one fast and one slow. Fast thinking is based on assumptions and habits and doesn't require a lot of effort. For example, driving a familiar route or a routine grocery-shopping trip are not usually intellectually taxing

activities. Slow thinking, on the other hand, is what we do when we encounter novel problems and situations. It's effortful, and it usually feels tedious and confusing. It is emotionally challenging as well because we are, by definition, incompetent while we're doing it, which provokes some anxiety. Solving a tough problem is rewarding, but the path itself is often unpleasant.

These insights from cognitive science enable us to critically assess the claims made on both sides of the education reform debate. On one hand, they cast doubt on the claims of education reformers that measuring teachers' performance by student test scores is the best way to improve education. For example, the [Center for Education Reform](#) promotes "the implementation of strong, data-driven, performance-based accountability systems that ensure teachers are rewarded, retained and advanced based on how they perform in adding value to the students who they teach, measured predominantly by student achievement" (<http://www.edreform.com/issues/teacher-quality/#what-we-believe>). The research that Willingham (2011) and Kahneman (2011) describe suggests that frequent high-stakes testing may actually work against learning by introducing greater anxiety into the school environment.

At the same time, opponents of education reform should acknowledge that these research findings should prompt us to take a fresh look at how we educate our children. While Stan Karp of [Rethinking Schools](#) is correct when he argues that "data-driven formulas [based on standardized testing] lack both statistical credibility and a basic understanding of the human motivations and relationships that make good schooling possible" (http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/26_03/26_03_karp.shtml), it doesn't necessarily follow that all education reform proposals lack merit. Challenging standards, together with specific training in

emotional self-regulation, will likely enable more students to succeed.⁴

In that example, the ideas of Willingham and Kahneman are summarized approvingly, bolstered with additional research findings, and then applied to a new realm: the current debate surrounding education reform. Voices in that debate were portrayed as accurately as possible, sometimes with representative quotes. Most importantly, all references were tied directly to the author's own interpretative point, which relies on the quoted claims.

I think the most important lesson for me to learn about sources was that the best way to use them is to create a new point. What I mean by this is instead of using them only to back up your points, create your own conclusion from what your sources say. As a psychology major, I look at a lot of data from researchers who have created a conclusion from a meta-analysis (a combination of many studies about the same thing). So that's how I like to think of using sources, I will look at many articles about the same subject and then come up with my own opinion. After using your sources, it is very important to cite them correctly. Personally, I want to be a respected and trustworthy scholar. However, if any of my papers were to be found without proper citations, all of my hard work would be for nothing and people would be wary about the rest of my work.

Aly Button

As you can see, there are times when you should quote or paraphrase sources that you don't agree with or do not find particularly compelling. They may convey ideas and opinions that help explain and justify your own argument. Similarly, when you cite sources that you agree with, you should choose quotes or paraphrases that serve as building blocks within your own argument. Regardless of the role each source plays in your writing, you certainly don't need to find whole sentences or passages that express your thinking. Rather, focus on what each of those sources

is claiming, why, and how exactly their claims relate to your own points.

The remainder of this chapter explains some key principles for incorporating sources, principles which follow from the general point that academic writing is about entering an ongoing conversation.

Principle 1: Listen to your sources

Have you ever had the maddening experience of arguing with someone who twisted your words to make it seem like you were saying something you weren't? Novice writers sometimes inadvertently misrepresent their sources when they quote very minor points from an article or even positions that the authors of an article disagree with. It often happens when students approach their sources with the goal of finding snippets that align with their own opinion. For example, the passage above contains the phrase "measuring teachers' performance by student test scores is the best way to improve education." An inexperienced writer might include that quote in a paper without making it clear that the author(s) of the source actually dispute that very claim. Doing so is not intentionally fraudulent, but it reveals that the paper-writer isn't really thinking about and responding to claims and arguments made by others. In that way, it harms his or her credibility.

Academic journal articles are especially likely to be misrepresented by student writers because their literature review sections often summarize a number of contrasting viewpoints. For example, sociologists Jennifer C. Lee and Jeremy Staff wrote a paper in which they note that high-schoolers who spend more hours at a job are more likely to drop out of school.⁵ However, Lee and Staff's analysis finds that working more hours doesn't actually make a student more likely to drop out. Instead, the students who express less interest in school are both more likely to work a lot of

hours *and* more likely to drop out. In short, Lee and Staff argue that disaffection with school causes students to drop-out, not working at a job. In reviewing prior research about the impact of work on dropping out, Lee and Staff write “Paid work, especially when it is considered intensive, reduces grade point averages, time spent on homework, educational aspirations, and the likelihood of completing high school”⁶. If you included that quote without explaining how it fits into Lee and Staff’s actual argument, you would be misrepresenting that source.

Principle 2: Provide context

Another error beginners often make is to drop in a quote without any context. If you simply quote, “Students begin preschool with a set of self-regulation skills that are a product of their genetic inheritance and their family environment” (Willingham, 2011, p.24), your reader is left wondering who Willingham is, why he or she is included here, and where this statement fits into his or her larger work. The whole point of incorporating sources is to situate your own insights in the conversation. As part of that, you should provide some kind of context the first time you use that source. Some examples:

Willingham, a cognitive scientist, claims that ...

Research in cognitive science has found that ... (Willingham, 2011).

Willingham argues that “Students begin preschool with a set of self-regulation skills that are a product of their genetic inheritance and their family environment” (Willingham, 2011, p.24). Drawing on findings in cognitive science, he explains “... ”

As the second example above shows, providing a context doesn’t

mean writing a brief biography of every author in your bibliography—it just means including some signal about why that source is included in your text.

Even more baffling to your reader is when quoted material does not fit into the flow of the text. For example, a novice student might write,

Schools and parents shouldn't set limits on how much teenagers are allowed to work at jobs. "We conclude that intensive work does not affect the likelihood of high school dropout among youths who have a high propensity to spend long hours on the job" (Lee and Staff, 2007, p. 171). Teens should be trusted to learn how to manage their time.

The reader is thinking, who is this sudden, ghostly "we"? Why should this source be believed? If you find that passages with quotes in your draft are awkward to read out loud, that's a sign that you need to contextualize the quote more effectively. Here's a version that puts the quote in context:

Schools and parents shouldn't set limits on how much teenagers are allowed to work at jobs. Lee and Staff's carefully designed study found that "intensive work does not affect the likelihood of high school dropout among youths who have a high propensity to spend long hours on the job" (2007, p. 171). Teens should be trusted to learn how to manage their time.

In this latter example, it's now clear that Lee and Staff are scholars and that their empirical study is being used as evidence for this argumentative point. Using a source in this way invites the reader to check out Lee and Staff's work for themselves if they doubt this claim.

Many writing instructors encourage their students to contextualize their use of sources by making a "[quotation sandwich](#)"; that is, introduce the quote in some way and then follow

it up with your own words. If you've made a bad habit of dropping in un-introduced quotes, the quotation sandwich idea may help you improve your skills, but in general you don't need to approach every quote or paraphrase as a three-part structure to have well integrated sources. You should, however, avoid ending a paragraph with a quotation. If you're struggling to figure out what to write after a quote or close paraphrase, it may be that you haven't yet figured out what role the quote is playing in your own analysis. If that happens to you a lot, try writing the whole first draft in your own words and then incorporate material from sources as you revise with "They Say/I Say" in mind.

Principle 3: Use sources efficiently

Some student writers are in a rut of only quoting whole sentences. Some others, like myself as a student, get overly enamored of extended block quotes and the scholarly look they give to the page.⁷ These aren't the worst sins of academic writing, but they get in the way of one of the key principles of writing with sources: shaping quotes and paraphrases efficiently. Efficiency follows from the second principle, because when you fully incorporate sources into your own explicit argument, you zero in on the phrases, passages, and ideas that are relevant to your points. It's a very good sign for your paper when most quotes are short (key terms, phrases, or parts of sentences) and the longer quotes (whole sentences and passages) are clearly justified by the discussion in which they're embedded. Every bit of every quote should feel indispensable to the paper. An overabundance of long quotes usually means that your own argument is undeveloped. The most incandescent quotes will not hide that fact from your professor.

Also, some student writers forget that quoting is not the only way to incorporate sources. [Paraphrasing](#) and summarizing are sophisticated skills that are often more appropriate to use than

direct quoting. The first two paragraphs of the example passage above do not include any quotations, even though they are both clearly focused on presenting the work of others. Student writers may avoid paraphrasing out of fear of plagiarizing, and it's true that a poorly executed paraphrase will make it seem like the student writer is fraudulently claiming the wordsmithing work of others as his or her own. Sticking to direct quotes seems safer. However, it is worth your time to master [paraphrasing](#) because it often helps you be more clear and concise, drawing out only those elements that are relevant to the thread of your analysis.

For example, here's a passage from a hypothetical paper with a block quote that is fully relevant to the argument but, nevertheless, inefficient:

Drawing on a lifetime of research, Kahneman concludes our brains are prone to error:⁸

System 1 registers the cognitive ease with which it processes information, but it does not generate a warning signal when it becomes unreliable. Intuitive answers come to mind quickly and confidently, whether they originate from skills or from heuristics. There is no simple way for System 2 to distinguish between a skilled and a heuristic response. Its only recourse is to slow down and attempt to construct an answer on its own, which it is reluctant to do because it is indolent. Many suggestions of System 1 are casually endorsed with minimal checking, as in the bat-and-ball problem.

While people can get better at recognizing and avoiding these errors, Kahneman suggests, the more robust solutions involve developing procedures within organizations to promote careful, effortful thinking in making important decisions and judgments.

Even a passage that is important to reference and is well contextualized in the flow of the paper will be inefficient if it introduces terms and ideas that aren't central to the analysis within

the paper. Imagine, for example, that other parts of this hypothetical paper use Kahneman's other terms for System 1 (fast thinking) and System 2 (slow thinking); the sudden encounter of "System 1" and "System 2" would be confusing and tedious for your reader. Similarly, the terms "heuristics" and "bat-and-ball problem" might be unfamiliar to your reader. Their presence in the block quote just muddies the waters. In this case, a paraphrase is a much better choice. Here's an example passage that uses a paraphrase to establish the same points more clearly and efficiently:

Drawing on a lifetime of research, Kahneman summarizes that our brains are prone to error because they necessarily rely on cognitive shortcuts that may or may not yield valid judgments.⁹ We have the capacity to stop and examine our assumptions, Kahneman points out, but we often want to avoid that hard work. As a result, we tend to accept our quick, intuitive responses. While people can get better at recognizing and avoiding these errors, Kahneman suggests that the more robust solutions involve developing procedures within organizations to promote careful, effortful thinking in making important decisions and judgments.

Not only is the paraphrased version shorter (97 words versus 151), it is clearer and more efficient because it highlights the key ideas, avoiding specific terms and examples that aren't used in the rest of the paper. If other parts of your paper did refer to Kahneman's System 1 and System 2, then you might choose to include some quoted phrases to make use of some of Kahneman's great language. Perhaps something like this:

Drawing on a lifetime of research, Kahneman summarizes that our brains are prone to error because they necessarily rely on cognitive shortcuts that may or may not yield valid judgments.¹⁰ System 1, Kahneman explains, "does not generate a warning signal when it becomes

unreliable.”¹¹ System 2 can stop and examine these assumptions, but it usually wants to avoid that hard work. As a result, our quick, intuitive responses are “casually endorsed with minimal checking.”¹² While people can get better at recognizing and avoiding these errors, Kahneman suggests, the more robust solutions involve developing procedures within organizations to promote careful, effortful thinking in making important decisions and judgments.

Whether you choose a long quote, short quote, paraphrase or summary depends on the role that the source is playing in your analysis. The trick is to make deliberate, thoughtful decisions about how to incorporate ideas and words from others.

Paraphrasing, summarizing, and the mechanical conventions of quoting take a lot of practice to master. Numerous other resources (like those listed at the end of this chapter) explain these practices clearly and succinctly. Bookmark some good sources and refer to them as needed. If you suspect that you're in a quoting rut, try out some new ways of incorporating sources.

Principle 4: Choose precise verbs of attribution

It's time to get beyond the all-purpose “says.” And please don't look up “says” in the thesaurus and substitute verbs like “proclaim” (unless there was actually a proclamation) or “pronounce” (unless there was actually a pronouncement). Here's a list of 15 useful alternatives:¹³

- Claims
- Asserts
- Relates
- Recounts
- Complains

- Reasons
- Proposes
- Suggests (if the author is speculating or hypothesizing)
- Contests (disagrees)
- Concludes
- Shows
- Argues
- Explains
- Indicates
- Points out
- Offers

More precise choices like these carry a lot more information than “says”, enabling you to relate more with fewer words. For one thing, they can quickly convey what kind of idea you’re citing: a speculative one (“postulates”)? A conclusive one (“determines”)? A controversial one (“counters”)? You can further show how you’re incorporating these sources into your own narrative. For example, if you write that an author “claims” something, you’re presenting yourself as fairly neutral about that claim. If you instead write that the author “shows” something, then you signal to your reader that you find that evidence more convincing. “Suggests” on the other hand is a much weaker endorsement. As I’ll discuss in [Chapter 8](#), saying more with less makes your writing much more engaging.

Sources are your best friend. They either help you reaffirm your thesis or offer a differing opinion that you can challenge in your paper. The biggest thing to worry about, when it comes to sources, is citing. However, there are a multitude of resources to help you cite properly. My personal favorite is called Knightcite.com. You just pick the type of resource, fill in the information on it and voila, you have a perfectly cited resource!

Kaethe Leonard

Conclusion

Like so many things in adult life, writing in college is often both more liberating and burdensome than writing in high school and before. On the one hand, I've had students tell me that their high-school experiences made it seem that their own opinions didn't matter in academic writing, and that they can't make any claims that aren't exactly paralleled by a pedigreed quotation. Writing papers based on their own insights and opinions can seem freeing in contrast. At the same time, a college student attending full time may be expected to have original and well considered ideas about pre-Columbian Latin American history, congressional redistricting, sports in society, post-colonial literatures, and nano-technology, all in about two weeks. Under these conditions, it's easy to see why some would long for the days when simple, competent reporting did the job. You probably won't have an authentic intellectual engagement with every college writing assignment, but approaching your written work as an opportunity to dialogue with the material can help you find the momentum you need to succeed with this work.

Other resources

1. [Graff and Birkenstein's little book, *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* 2nd ed. \(New York: Norton, 2009\)](#) is a gem and well worth reading. They offer a series of templates that can help you visualize new ways of relating to sources and constructing arguments.
2. Another excellent resource is [Gordon Harvey's *Writing with Sources: A Guide for Students*](#)

[2nd ed. \(Indianapolis: Hackett, 2008\)](#), In it, he discusses the key principles for incorporating sources, the stylistic conventions for quoting and paraphrasing, and the basics of common citation styles. That’s all information you want to have at the ready.

3. Many university writing centers have nicely concise on-line guides to summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting. I found some especially good ones at the [University of Wisconsin](#), the [University of Washington](#), and, as always, the [Purdue Online Writing Laboratory](#).

Exercises

1. Here is a passage from a world history textbook:¹⁴

Like so many things desired by Europeans and supplied by Asians—at first luxury items for the elite such as silk or porcelain, but increasingly products like tea from China for the mass market—cotton textiles were produced well and cheaply in India. The British textile manufacturers focused on the “cheap” part and complained that with relatively higher wages, British manufacturers could not compete. India had a competitive advantage in the eighteenth century, being able to undersell in the world market virtually any other producer of textiles. Some

thought the reason for cheap Indian textiles was because of a low living standard, or a large population earning depressed wages, but all of those have been shown to not be true: Indian textile workers in the eighteenth century had just as high a standard of living as British workers. So, if it was not a low standard of living that gave India its competitive advance, what did?

In a word: agriculture. Indian agriculture was so productive that the amount of food produced, and hence its cost, was significantly lower than in Europe. In the preindustrial age, when working families spent 60-80 percent of their earnings on food, the cost of food was the primary determinant of their real wages (i.e. how much a pound, dollar, a real, or a pagoda could buy). In India (and China and Japan as well), the amount of grain harvested from a given amount of seed was in the ration of 20:1 (e.g., twenty bushels of rice harvested for every one planted), whereas in England it was at best 8:1. Asian agriculture thus was more than twice as efficient as British (and by extension European) agriculture, and food—the major component in the cost of living—cost less in Asia.

Drawing on this passage, try out different quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing options:

- a. Quote a key phrase or part of a sentence, naming the source and incorporating the quote within your own logic.
- b. Quote an entire sentence or two, providing context and incorporating the quote within your own logic.

c. Construct an unacceptable paraphrase of part of the passage; copying a couple sentences and change just a few of the key words.

d. Construct a successful paraphrase of part of the passage; describing it in your own words.

e. Write a sentence, with a citation, that summarizes the general point of the passage.

2. Rewrite your responses to 1a and 1b, above, changing the verbs of attribution. How do the new verbs change the meaning or tone of your sentence?

¹[Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*, \(New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2009\).](#)

² Recommended read: [Siddhartha Mukherjee's *The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer*\(New York, Scribner, 2010\).](#)

³ The sources cited in this example: [Daniel T. Willingham, "Can teachers increase students' self control?" *American Educator* 35, no. 2 \(2011\): 22-27.](#) [Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*.](#) [Suzanne Perkins and Sandra Graham-Bermann, "Violence exposure and the development of school-related functioning: mental health, neurocognition, and learning;" *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 17, no. 1\(2012\): 89-98.](#) [David William Putwain and Natalie Best, "Fear appeals in the primary classroom: Effects on test anxiety and test grade," *Learning and Individual Differences* 21, no. 5 \(2011\): 580-584.](#)

⁴ A side note: You may have noticed that the verbs used in referencing tend to be in present tense: so-and-so "writes" or

“claims” or “argues”. That’s what academic writers do, even if the piece and author are from far in the past. It’s called “the historical present” and it’s just one convention of academic writing.

⁵[Jennifer C. Lee, J.C. and Jeremy Staff, “When Work Matters: The Varying Impact of Work Intensity on High School Drop Out,” *Sociology of Education* 80, no. 2 \(2007\): 158-178.](#)

⁶[Ibid.](#), 159.

⁷ It took me a long time to stop abusing block quotes. They made me feel like my paper was an unassailable fortress of citation! With the friendly but pointed feedback of my professors, I gradually came to see how they took too much space away from my own argument.

⁸[Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, 416-7.](#)

⁹[Ibid.](#)

¹⁰[Ibid.](#)

¹¹[Ibid.](#), 416.

¹²[Ibid.](#), 417.

¹³ Google “verbs of attribution” to find other suggestions.

¹⁴[Robert B. Marks, *The Origins of the Modern World: A Global and Ecological Narrative from the Fifteenth to the Twenty-first Century* \(Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007\), 95.](#)

PART IV

LET'S READ, RESEARCH &
COLLABORATE!

37. Assessment: Annotated Bibliography

The Annotated Bibliography 100 points

“An annotated bibliography provides specific information about each source you have used. As a researcher, you have become an expert on your topic and have the ability both to explain the content and to assess the usefulness of your sources for those not in the know. Think of your paper as part of a conversation with others interested in the same things you are; the annotated bibliography allows you to tell readers what to check out, what might be worth checking out in some situations, and what might not be worth spending the time on. It’s kind of like providing a list of good movies for your classmates to watch and then going over the list with them, telling them why this movie is better than that one or why one student in your class might like a particular movie better than another student would. You want to give your audience enough information to understand basically what the movies are about and to make an informed decision about where to spend their money based on their interests” (“Annotated Bibliography”).

Essentially, this assignment consists of two elements that will be blended together:

- A Works Cited page in MLA format that lists all of the research sources you have found and

- evaluated thus far for your final paper
- A 3-4 sentence-long mini-evaluation immediately following each of these source's citation that shows how and why this source will be useful to your final project (or not). This evaluation should include your interpretation of the source's thesis or overall focus.

An MLA example, using the source for the above quote:

"Annotated Bibliography." *Handouts and Links*. The Writing Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2007. Web. 12 Feb. 2010. This source is a handout made available by a reputable university's writing center, and describes with great detail and examples what an annotated bibliography is and what purpose it serves. It contains an extensive list of works consulted that could lead me towards additional sources as needed.

The Nuts and Bolts

Your final Annotated Bibliography will have **12 sources** listed. Of those,

- at least 5 will be academic journal article sources, retrieved from the school or a public library
 - at least 2 will be book-length, either physical books or ebooks from the Library or online
 - at least 1 will be an online media source, such as a YouTube video, podcast, or interactive presentation
 - The remaining 4 sources will be “wild card” slots—anything you want to include.
-
- at least 2 sources (of any of the above formats) must contain elements that DISAGREE with

your own position on the matter

The remaining sources may fall into whichever category you choose. You may single-space both the citations and evaluations to make it more reader-friendly. Entries should be organized in alphabetical order. **We are using MLA formatting**, for the Bibliography as well as the final Research Essay.

Remember, this is just an assignment to demonstrate the range of research you'll be doing for your final essay. You won't be expected to use all of these sources in your final paper, and if you find more after you've turned this in, you can use those instead. The Annotated Bibliography is a snapshot of where you are in the research process at this particular point in time.

You're also more than welcome to recycle sources you've used in earlier assignments.

38. Video: Annotated Bibliographies An Illustrated Guide

A quick tour of the what, why, and how of an annotated bibliography.
Created to support information literacy instruction at Lincoln
Memorial University.

<https://youtu.be/-LpgXJvQnEc>

39. Discussion: Annotated Bibliography Practice

This discussion is voluntary, and won't be graded. It is a great way to get some feedback on Annotated Bibliography work you've done, before it's submitted for a grade. I'll be checking this regularly before the due date, and welcome input from you to answer other questions posted here, as well.

I realize citations can get intricate, and there's always one source that just absolutely stumps you, it seems. Post your questions here, preferably with a draft of the citation & summary paragraph you've done so far for that source. We'll do our best to get it perfect, together.

40. Thinking Critically About Research

- What is “Research” and Why Should I Use It?
- What’s Different about Academic Research?
- Primary versus Secondary Research
- Scholarly versus Non-Scholarly Sources
- Sources that are Both Scholarly and Non-Scholarly?
- The Internet: The Researcher’s Challenge
- Evaluating the Quality and Credibility of Your Research
- Complicating Factors in Evaluating the Credibility of Internet Research

What is “Research” and Why Should I Use It?

Research always begins with the goal of answering a question. In your quest to answer basic research questions, you turn to a variety of different sources for evidence: reference resources, people, evaluative and opinionated articles, and other sources. All along the way, you continually evaluate and re-evaluate the credibility of your sources.

For example, if you wanted to find out where you could buy the best computer within your budget, your question might be “what kind of computer should I buy and where should I buy it?” To answer your questions about computers, the first research tool you might use is the phone book, where you would look up “Computer retailers” in the yellow pages. You might also ask friends where they got their computers and what they thought were the best (and worst) stores to go to. You would probably also talk to your friends about the kind of computer they bought: a Windows-based PC

versus a Macintosh computer, or a desktop versus a laptop computer, for example. You could go to a computer store and ask the salespeople for their advice, though you would perhaps be more critical of what they tell you since they are biased. After all, salespeople are trying to sell you a computer that they sell in their stores, not necessarily the “best” computer for the amount of money you want to spend. To get the opinions of computer experts, you might do research in computer magazines or web sites, looking for reviews and ratings of different models of computers in your price range.

Of course, you could skip this research process entirely. You could simply go to a store and buy the first computer in your budget based on nothing more than a “gut feeling” or based on some criteria that has little to do with the quality of the computer—the color, for example.

Who knows? By just guessing like this, you might actually end up with a computer as good as you would have ended up with after your research. After all, researchers can never be certain that the evidence they find to answer their research questions is entirely correct, and the fact that there are different kinds of computers available suggests it is possible for people to look at the research and reach different conclusions about what is the “best computer.”

Talk to loyal Macintosh computer owners and you will get a very different answer about “the best” kind of computer than you will from loyal Windows PC owners!

Nonetheless, the likelihood is quite high that the computer you bought after careful research is a better choice than the computer you would have bought after conducting no research at all. Most of us would agree that you have a better chance of being “right” about your choice of computer (and just about anything else) if that choice is informed by research.

Exercise 1.1

Working alone or collaboratively in small groups, answer the following questions:

- What are some examples of some of the decisions you have made that were based on a research method similar to the one described here? What do you think would have been the result of your decision had you not done any research?
- Can you think of any decisions that you have made that were not based on research? Would these decisions have turned out more favorably had you conducted some basic research?
- What kinds of decisions do think are potentially best made without research?

What's Different about Academic Research?

The reasons academics and scholars conduct research are essentially the same as the reasons someone does research on the right computer to buy: to find information and answers to questions with a method that has a greater chance of being accurate than a guess or a “gut feeling.” College professors in a history department, physicians at a medical school, graduate students studying physics, college juniors in a literature class, students in an introductory research writing class—all of these people are members of the academic community, and they all use research to find answers to their questions that have a greater chance of being “right” than making guesses or betting on feelings. Students in an introductory research writing course are “academics,” the same as college professors? Generally speaking, yes. You might not think of yourself as being a part of the same group as college professors or graduate students, but when you enter a college classroom, you are joining the academic community in the sense that you are expected to use your research to support your ideas and you are agreeing to the conventions of research within your discipline. Another way of looking at it: first-year college students and college professors more or less follow

the same “rules” when it comes to making points supported by research and evidence.

A Student Profile:

Daniel Marvins, New to Academic Research

Daniel Marvins is a first year college student at a large public university in the Midwest. While he certainly wrote plenty of essays when he was in high school, Marvins thought that the kind of research writing his teacher was asking him to do for his writing class was different.

“In high school, we wrote more about stories and poems and newspaper articles we read,” Marvins said. “We didn’t do a lot of research, other than looking things up on the web.”

Marvins was ready for the challenge of tackling the thinking and research that would be expected of him in college. But he still wasn’t sure about being “an academic.” “I never thought of it that way, because I didn’t really see how the stuff I had to write for school made me anything like my teachers. But I guess I’m starting to see the connection.”

Read Marvins’ “Working Thesis Essay” in Chapter 5, “The Working Thesis Exercise.”

Primary Research Versus Secondary Research

Before you begin to answer your questions, you’ll need to know about two types of research: primary research and secondary research. And, you’ll need to learn about the differences between them.

Primary research is usually the “raw stuff” of research—the materials that researchers gather on their own and then analyze in their writing. For example, primary research would include the following:

- The experiments done by chemists, physicists, biologists, and other scientists.
- Researcher-conducted interviews, surveys, polls, or observations.
- The particular documents or texts (novels, speeches,

government documents, and so forth) studied by scholars in fields like English, history, or political science.

Secondary research is usually considered research from texts where one researcher is quoting someone else to make a point. For example, secondary research would include the following:

- An article in a scientific journal that reported on the results of someone else's experiment.
- A magazine or newspaper account of an interview, survey, or poll done by another researcher.
- An article in a scholarly journal or a book about a particular novel or speech.

When you quote from another article in your research project, your writing becomes an example of secondary research. When other researchers quote information from your research project in their research project, your research project is considered a secondary source for them. And if a researcher decides to write about you (a biography, for example) and if that researcher examines and quotes from some of the writings you did in college—like the research project you are working on right now—then your project would probably be considered a primary source.

Obviously, the divisions between primary and secondary research are not crystal-clear. But even though these differences between primary and secondary research are somewhat abstract, the differences are good ones to keep in mind as you consider what to research and as you conduct your research. For example, if you were writing a research project on the connection between pharmaceutical advertising and the high cost of prescription drugs, it would be useful and informative to consider the differences between primary research on the subject (an article where the researcher documents statistical connections) and the secondary research (an essay where another researcher summarizes a variety of studies done by others).

Of course, the term “secondary” research has nothing to do with the quality or value of the research; it just means that to answer the questions of your research project and to support your point,

you are relying in great part on the observations and opinions of others.

Most research projects completed by students in writing classes are based almost exclusively in secondary research because most students in introductory writing classes don't have the time, resources, or expertise to conduct credible primary research.

However, sometimes some modest primary research is a realistic option. For example, if you were writing about the dangers of Internet-based computer crime and someone on your campus was an expert in the subject and was available for an interview, your interview of her would be primary research. If you were writing about the problems of parking on your campus, you might conduct some primary research in the form of observations, surveys of the students that drive and try to park on campus, interviews of the campus officials in charge of parking, and so forth.

Exercise 1.2

Working alone or collaboratively in small groups, answer the following questions:

- What other sorts of evidence do you think you would find that would count as “primary” research? What other sorts of evidence do you think would count as “secondary” research?
- Think about the kind of topics you are interested in researching and writing about. What sorts of “primary” research can you imagine examining that might be useful in your writing? What sorts of “secondary” research can you imagine examining that might be useful in your writing?

Scholarly versus Non-Scholarly Sources

Before you begin to research you should be aware of the difference between “scholarly” and “non-scholarly” or popular sources.

Scholarly or academic publications are those where academics publish their research and opinions about topics of concern in

their discipline. By and large, scholarly publications are highly specialized periodicals, as many of their titles suggest: *College Composition and Communication*, *Foodservice Research International*, or the *Journal of Analytic Social Work*. Scholarly periodicals tend to be published less frequently than popular sources, perhaps monthly, quarterly, or even less often. For the most part, the readers of scholarly journals are scholars themselves interested in the specific field of the publication—in other words, the articles in these publications are written for academics (both students and teachers) interested in the field, not a “general audience.” Because of the audience, the language of academic journals is often specialized and potentially difficult to understand for a reader not familiar with the field.

Scholarly or academic sources tend to be kind of bland in appearance: other than charts, graphs, and illustrations that appear predominantly in scientific publications, most academic journals include few color photos or flashy graphics. Most academic journals are not published in order to make a profit: while they frequently include some advertising, they usually only include a few ads to offset publication costs. Also, most academic journals are associated with academic organizations or institutions that subsidize and support their publication. Unless you are a subscriber, chances are the only place you will find most of these journals in your college or university library.

Usually, the articles that appear in academic journals indicate where the writer’s evidence comes from with footnotes, end notes, or information in parentheses. Most academic articles end with a “bibliography” or a “works cited” page, which is a list of the research the writer used in his essay. This practice—generally called “citation”—is particularly important in scholarly writing because the main audience of these articles (other scholars) is keenly interested in knowing where the writers got their information. As a member of the academic community, you too will have to follow some system of citation in the research project you do for this and other classes.

Hyperlink: See “Chapter 12: Citing Your Researching Using MLA or APA Style.”

Non-scholarly or popular sources tend to be written by journalists and writers who are not necessarily experts about the subject they are writing about. While there certainly are specialized popular sources, they tend to have names most of us have seen on the magazine racks of grocery and drug stores—GQ, Cosmopolitan, Better Homes and Gardens, Sports Illustrated, and so on—and even specialized popular sources tend to be written with a more general audience in mind. Writers of popular sources reach a general and broad audience by keeping the style of the writing in their articles approachable to people from a variety of different educational backgrounds—not necessarily members of the academic community.

Many popular periodicals are published weekly and almost all of them are published at least monthly. They tend to be visually appealing with lots of color photographs, graphics, and advertisements. Almost all popular sources are intended to make a profit, and some of the better known periodicals (Time or Newsweek, for example) sell millions of copies every week. Finally, popular sources rarely provide citation information about where the writer got her information.

Generally speaking, academic and non-academic books have characteristics that are similar to academic and non-academic periodicals. Academic books tend to be written by and for academics, are usually somewhat bland in appearance, tend to be published by companies that are supported by academic institutions, and tend to be only available at academic libraries or specialized bookstores. Non-academic books tend to be written by journalists or other writers trying to reach a more general audience, they are more eye-catching in appearance, they are published by large and for profit publishing companies, and they are more readily available at public libraries and bookstores.

Scholarly versus Non-Scholarly or Popular Sources

Scholarly Sources

Usually titled according to their specialization (College English, Journal of Analytic Social Work, etc.)

Contain articles written by and for academics with language that is highly specialized for academic readers

Often published less frequently than monthly

Usually fairly bland in appearance

Generally not published “for profit” and usually supported by an academic organization or institution

Almost always available only through subscription or at an academic library

Most publish fewer than 5,000 copies of an issue

Its articles follow some sort of citation system (MLA or APA, for example) that allow its readers to know where the writer’s research comes from

Non-Scholarly or Popular Sources

Often titled in ways that have little to do with their focus (Newsweek, Time, People, etc.)

Contain articles written by journalists and in a language that is for a non-academic reader

Almost always published at least monthly, and often weekly

Visually appealing and attractive in appearance

Generally published “for profit,” and many well-known popular publications are very profitable; often supported by very large corporations

Almost always readily available at bookstores, grocery and convenience stores

Many publish tens of thousands of copies each issue

Very rarely contain any sort of citation information that allows readers to know where writers found their information

Sources that are Both Scholarly and Non-Scholarly?

While these differences between scholarly and non-scholarly sources might seem straight-forward, many publications are somewhere in between scholarly and non-scholarly. A journal like *College English* is clearly an academic source and a magazine like *People* is clearly a popular source. But categorizing magazines like *Ms.*, *Harper’s*, or *The Atlantic* is more difficult since these publications tend to publish articles that are in many ways similar to the articles published in more academic sources.

Another difficult to categorize source is corporate or “trade” journals. Most professions and industries have highly specialized publications about that particular business. For example, *Human Resource Executive* is targeted to professionals who work in Human Resources departments, *Accounting Today* is for and about the accounting business, and *Advertising Age* focuses on the advertising industry. While most of the writers and editors of trade journals do not have scholarly backgrounds, they tend to be

highly focused and knowledgeable about their business. An article about hiring trends in Human Resource Executive will probably have more in common with an academic source than it will with a popular source.

A third “in between” type of research resource is newspapers. On the one hand, most newspapers would seem to share the characteristics of non-scholarly or popular sources: they are written for a general audience by writers who are not necessarily experts, they include many photographs and graphics, and so on.

However, a number of publications like *The Chronicle of Higher Education* are quite different from most newspapers because they are written for a specialized audience, like college and community college teachers and administrators. Further, newspapers tend to be used by a wide variety of readers and writers— including scholars— as a source of basic and reliable information about day-to-day events.

In research writing courses, teachers will often insist students use only or mostly scholarly sources in their research projects because, as is discussed in some detail in the next section in this chapter, scholarly sources tend to be more credible and reliable than non-scholarly sources. This is not to say that popular sources aren’t credible or reliable; clearly, most of them are, and in many cases, specialized popular sources can be very useful in academic research. A research project about computer crime may very well include relevant information from a popular source like *WIRED* or a trade publication written for people who work in the computer industry.

However, scholarly sources are generally considered more credible and reliable than popular sources. They tend to publish articles that go into more detail about their subjects, they are written for a more knowledgeable audience, and they are written by experts.

Exercise 1.3

Working alone or collaboratively in small groups, consider the following questions:

- What sorts of scholarly sources are you and your classmates already familiar with? What sorts of non-scholarly sources of evidence are you already familiar with that might be useful for your research process?
- Think about the kind of topics you are interested in researching and writing about. Are you aware of any scholarly sources where you are likely to find research on your topic? What about popular or non-scholarly publications?
- If you are not yet familiar with specific titles of scholarly or popular sources that might be relevant for your topic, what kind of research would you conduct to find these sources?

The Internet: The Researcher's Challenge

Along with the distinction between primary and secondary sources and the distinction between scholarly and non-scholarly publications, you now need to consider a relatively new type of research source as you gather your evidence: the Internet, particularly the World Wide Web. The Internet started up almost 30 years ago, and elements like electronic mail (“email”) and bulletin board newsgroup discussions have been around for quite some time.

Widespread use of the Internet really took off in the early 1990s with the development of the World Wide Web and browser software like Mosaic, Netscape, and Internet Explorer. In fact, the Web has become such a powerful research resource that many beginning research writing students wonder why they should go to the library at all.

Hyperlink: See the section “What’s ‘a library?’ & ‘What’s The Internet?’” in Chapter 2, “Understanding and Using the Library and the Internet for Research, pages xx-xx.

The Web has become such a powerful medium in part because it

has such a far reach—literally, anyone anywhere in the world who is connected to the World Wide Web with the right computer and the right software can access almost any of the hundreds of millions of “pages” and other documents on the Web. But it also has grown so quickly because it is relatively easy to put documents on to the Web. In fact, you too might consider exploring some of the options through your school or through a commercial service for joining the World Wide Web community by publishing your research project on the Web.

Hyperlink: See the section “The Web-based Research Project” in Chapter 11, “Alternative Ways to Present Your Research.”

Nowadays, the Web has become dominated by corporate and “mainstream” sites that are advertised on television and in traditional magazines and newspapers, which means that it is difficult for an individual’s Web site to compete with the Web sites of The New York Times or amazon.com. But individuals can still publish their own Web sites, and individually published Web sites can still attract a large and international audience.

Indeed, one of the great strengths of the World Wide Web is that just about anyone can put up “professional looking” Web pages that can reach a potential audience of millions. However, this strength of the Web is also its weakness, at least as far as being a good place to look for research because anyone can publish what appears to be a “professional” Web site, regardless of his or her qualifications.

This fact means the Web is significantly different from more traditional sources of research. Most scholarly publications are closely scrutinized by editors and other scholars within a particular field. Further, the articles that appear in even the most non-scholarly of popular sources pass through a variety of different writers and editors before they make it to press.

The problem with many Web pages is that the review process and editors that we assume to be in place with traditional print sources are simply not there. For example, it would be easy for me to fabricate a Web site (complete with charts, graphs, and fake statistics) that argued that students and teachers who used this

textbook became more fit, richer, and better-looking. Such inaccurate claims would never pass the review process of a scholarly journal or a popular magazine—with the possible exception of the sort of tabloid we all see at the grocery store check-out that reports on Elvis sightings. But on the Web, it is just another page which, if someone finds it “believable,” could be included in someone’s research writing.



The Dihydrogen Monoxide Research Division web site, <<http://www.dhmo.org>>, certainly looks like an official and reliable web site. What seems to make it a bit suspect? What exactly is Dihydrogen Monoxide, anyway?

More seriously, many deceptive and “professional” looking Web pages present very inaccurate and misleading information and they are not intended to be jokes. Some of these pages are the work of various hate groups—racists or Holocaust deniers, for example—and some of these sites seem to be the work of con artists. But when these sites are read uncritically, they can cause serious problems for academic researchers.

Of course, not everything you find on the Web is untrustworthy. Far from it. For one thing, the lines between what counts as an Internet source and a more traditional “print” source are beginning to blur. There are numerous online databases available in many

libraries that have complete text versions of articles from academic and popular periodicals, and the articles from these databases are every bit as reliable as the traditional print sources.

Hyperlink: See the discussion about electronically available periodicals in the section “Journals, Magazines, and Newspapers” in Chapter 2, “Understanding and Using the Library and the Internet for Research.”

Additionally, more and more traditional print sources are creating and maintaining Web sites. Almost all of the most popular news magazines, newspapers, and television networks have Web pages that either reproduce information available in more traditional formats or that publish articles specifically for the Web. More and more scholarly publications are becoming available on the Web as well, and considering the international reach and low cost of publishing on the Web, it seems inevitable that more (maybe most) academic journals will eventually move from being traditional print journals to ones available only online.

Conversely, not everything you find in traditional print publications—either scholarly or non-scholarly—is always accurate and truthful. Despite the safeguards that most academic and popular publications follow to ensure they publish truthful and accurate articles, there are all sorts of examples of inaccuracies in print.

More common and therefore perhaps more problematic, small errors and misrepresentations appear in both academic and popular sources, evidence that the process of editorial review is not perfect. And what “counts” as true or accurate in many fields is a question of some debate and uncertainty, and this is frequently reflected in published articles of all sorts.

Here’s my point: as I will discuss in the next section of this chapter, the best way to ensure that your evidence is reliable, regardless of where you found that evidence, is to seek out a variety of different types of evidence and to think critically about the quality and credibility of your sources. This is particularly true with Web-based research.

Exercise 1.4

Working alone or collaboratively in small groups, consider the following questions:

- Think of a web site that you visit on a regular basis. What makes this site a useful and credible resource for you?
- Are there any Web sites that you have come across that you thought were not believable or credible? Why did you find this site not believable?

Evaluating the quality and credibility of your research

Finding evidence that answers a question is only the first part of the research process. You also have to evaluate the quality and credibility of your research. Inevitably, as we've already seen in this chapter, you do this as you consider the origins of your research—primary versus secondary research, scholarly versus popular sources, the Internet, and so forth. But evaluating the quality and credibility of your research is more subtle and complicated than just determining the source of the evidence.

Consider again the example from the beginning of this chapter about deciding which computer to buy. One of the things you would have to weigh is the credibility of the information you received from your friends compared to the information you received from a salesperson at the computer store. You can probably count on your friends to be trustworthy and honest, but they might not know much about computers. Conversely, while a salesperson might know a lot about computers, you may be uncertain to what extent you can trust him to give you the best advice. The salesperson wants to sell you a computer, which means that his motivations might be consciously or unconsciously influencing the information he is providing you.

Who should you trust? We have all been in situations like this, and there is no easy way to answer that question. Chances are, you'll make your computer decision based on your interpretation of the evidence and based on what you perceive to be the reliability and

credibility of your different sources. If someone else were faced with the same computer decision and the same evidence, they might make a different choice. That is why there are different kinds of computers on the market and that is why different people can do the same sort of research about “the best” computer and why they can arrive at different conclusions.

Academic research is not much different in the sense that different researchers, considering the same or similar evidence, often arrive at different conclusions. Academic research rarely provides clear answers in the sense of definitively knowing the “rights” and “wrongs” about some issue. Not all academics think that computer hacking is wrong (or right), that the solution to commercial over-fishing is strict international control, or that F. Scott Fitzgerald’s novel *The Great Gatsby* depicts the connection between material goods and the American dream. Rather, there are debates about these issues, differences of interpretation and opinion that result from different researchers looking at the same evidence.

Furthermore, the debates about differences of opinion on how to interpret evidence are good and healthy because these discussions further our understanding of complex issues. If we all agreed that something was true, then there would be no point in conducting research and writing about it. Indeed, if we all agreed about everything and had all of our questions answered as well as we thought possible, there would be no point to education at all!

Ultimately, there is no easy formula for evaluating the credibility and reliability of research. But there are some basic questions you should ask about your all of your evidence to ensure it is reliable and credible:

- Who wrote it?
- What do you think motivated the writer?
- Where was it published?
- When was it written?

Who wrote or said it?

Is there an author named with the evidence?

If your evidence does not name the author, it might still be reliable,

especially if you have confidence about where the evidence was published. However, most credible and reliable publications tell readers who wrote the articles they contain.

On Web pages and other Internet-based sources, it can sometimes be tricky to find the name of the Web page's author. Many web sites don't name an author, which, given the nature of the Web, should send up red flags for you as a researcher regarding the credibility of the evidence. But like print publications, more credible Web pages will include the name of the page's writer. Be sure to look for the writer's name throughout the particular page (including the bottom) and related pages within the Web site.

What are the qualifications of the author?

Does he or she seem to be an expert in the field?

Have he or she written about this topic before?

Are there other experiences that seem to uniquely qualify him or her as a reliable and credible source on this topic?

Many academic publications will give a lot of detail about their authors, including their degrees and academic training, the institution where they work (if they are a college professor or instructor), and other publications they have had in the past.

Popular sources tend to include less information about their writers, though they too will often indicate in a byline (where the writer's name is listed in a magazine or newspaper article) if the writer is a reporter, contributing editor, or editor for a particular subject.

Credible web sources will also describe the qualifications of the source's author or authors. If you can find an author's name on a Web site but you can't find anything about their qualifications on their research subject, you should be suspicious about what that research has to say.

Have you come across the writer based on some of the other research you have done?

After you have conducted a bit of research on your topic, you might find yourself coming across the same authors writing similar articles in different publications. You might also find different

publications referring to the author or her work, which would suggest that the author is indeed reliable and credible in her field.

After all, if other articles and writers refer positively to a particular writer or her articles again and again, then it seems likely that the often-referred-to writer is credible.

Understanding and trusting the expertise of the author of your evidence is probably the most crucial test of credibility and reliability of that evidence.

Simply put, academics find evidence that comes from an author who is a credible expert to be much more persuasive than evidence that does not come from an expert.

For example, while my mom is a reliable source of information regarding many different topics, it would do you little good for me to interview her for an academic research project about the problems of over-fishing. Mind you, I value my mom's thoughts and wisdom, and she might have some things to say about the effects of decreased catches of fish that I find insightful. However, because my mom doesn't have any expertise about commercial fishing and because she doesn't know anything more (or less) about it than most people, most of the readers of my research project won't be persuaded by what she has to say.

On the other hand, my mother was a hospice worker for many years, working with terminally ill patients and their families. If I were conducting research about the advantages and disadvantages of hospice care for terminally ill patients, my mom might be a very interesting and credible source.

What do you think motivated the writer?

Is the writer identified with a particular organization or group that might have a specific interest in the subject of the writing?

This can often be the source of conscious or unconscious bias. An obvious example: a writer who is identified as a member of the National Riflemen's Association, which represents a variety of Americans particularly interested in protecting the right to own guns, will certainly have a different view on gun ownership than a member of The Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, an

organization working to enact gun control legislation.

You need to be particularly careful with Web-based sources of research when considering the writer's affiliation with different groups or organizations. There have been numerous incidents where Web page writers falsely claimed their Web pages were affiliated with particular groups or causes.

Does the writer identify himself or herself with an explicit political group or party?

Considering a writer's politics is particularly important when thinking about the credibility of a Web site. Besides the ease with which a writer can misrepresent themselves or others, the low cost and wide reach of the Web has also made it an attractive forum for hate groups, terrorists, and other "fringe" political movements.

This doesn't automatically mean the information you find on reactionary or radical Web sites is wrong; however, writers with particularly strong and extreme politics frequently present information that is biased to the point of inaccuracy.

Of course, while it is important to consider why a writer wrote about her subject and to think about how her motivations impact how she wrote about his or her subject, having a particular bias or motivation doesn't automatically lead to a lack of credibility or reliability.

Where was it published?

Was the piece of writing published in an academic or non-academic source? A book, a journal, a magazine, etc.? I've already discussed this a great deal in this chapter; generally speaking, academic sources are considered more credible than non-academic sources, and print-based sources are generally considered more credible than web-based sources.

But there are some more subtle tests of credibility and reliability concerning where a piece of research was published. For example, single-authored or co-authored scholarly books on a particular subject might be more regarded as more credible than a scholarly journal article because books go into much greater detail on topics than journal articles.

Are you familiar with the publication? If you are a new researcher to a particular field of study this can be a difficult question to answer since you might not have heard of some of the more well-known and credible publications known in that field. But once you get to know the field better (which will inevitably be the case as you conduct more research on your topic), chances are you will begin to realize certain publications are seen by experts in the field as more credible than others.

When was it written?

Last, but far from least, the date of publication can dramatically effect the credibility of your research. Obviously, this is especially important for date-sensitive research topics. If you were writing a research project about the Internet and the World Wide Web, chances are any research older than about 1990 or so would be of limited use since the Web literally did not exist before 1990.

But other potentially less obvious topics of research have date sensitive components to them. For example, if you were doing research on cigarette smoking or drunk driving, you would have to be careful about evaluating the credibility of research from the 1970s or 1960s or earlier since cultural “norms” in the United States for both smoking and drinking have changed a great deal.

Knowing (or rather, not knowing) the date of publication of a piece of research is yet another thing to be worried about when evaluating the credibility of Web-based sources. Many Web sites do not include any information about the date of publication or the date when the page was last updated. This means that you have no way of knowing when the information on that dateless page was published.

The date of publication is a key piece of information, the sort of thing that is always included in more print sources. Again, just because the date of publication or update is missing from a Web site does not automatically discount it as a credible source; however, it should make you suspicious.

Exercise 1.5

Working alone or collaboratively in small groups, consider a variety of different types of research—articles from scholarly and non-scholarly sources, newspaper articles, books, web sites, and other types of evidence. Using the criteria discussed here, how would you rate the quality and credibility of your research? Which of your sources seems the most reliable? Are there any pieces of evidence that, upon closer examination, do not seem credible or reliable?

Evidence Quality and Credibility Checklist

Who wrote or said it?

- The writer's name
- Qualifications
- Expertise in the field
- Previous publications on the topic
- Unique experiences of the writer

Why did the source write or say it?

- Association with an organization or group
- The writer's stated or implied politics

Where (what source) was it published?

- Academic/scholarly source versus non-academic/popular source
- Prior knowledge of publication

When was it published or said?

And when it comes to evidence from the 'net and World Wide Web...

- It's still important to know who wrote it, why you think they wrote it, where you found it online, and when was it published.
- If you don't know the answers to the who/why/where/when questions, you should be skeptical of the evidence.
- Don't be fooled by Web sites that "look" real, because...
- Anybody can publish information on the Web, no matter what that information is. Unlike most scholarly and many non-scholarly

publications, Web writers don't have to have the work reviewed by editors and publishers to reach an audience.

- The Internet and the World Wide Web are still good places to find research. You just have to be a bit more careful with them.

41. Chapter Two: Understanding and Using the Library and the Internet for Research

- Defining “The Library” and “The Internet:” An Introduction
- Researching in the Library
 - * Books
 - * Journals, Magazines, and Newspapers (Periodicals)
 - * Periodical Indexes
 - * Accessing an Article
 - * Periodicals from Electronic Databases
 - * Some Final Tips
 - * Other Library Materials (Government documents, Interlibrary loan, Theses and dissertations, rare books and special collections)
- Researching on the Internet
 - * Email
 - * A Word about “Netiquette”
 - * The World Wide Web
 - * Search Engines
 - * Metasearch Engines
 - * Web Directories

Defining “The Library” and “The Internet:” An Introduction

You might think the answers to the questions “what is a library?” and “what is the Internet?” are pretty obvious. But actually, it is easy to get them confused, and there are a number of research resources that are a bit of both: library materials available over the Internet or Internet resources available in the library.

Understanding the differences between the library and the Internet and knowing where your research comes from is crucial in

the process of research writing because research that is available from libraries (either in print or electronic form) is generally considered more reliable and credible than research available only over the Internet. Most of the publications in libraries (particularly in academic libraries) have gone through some sort of review process. They have been read and examined by editors, other writers, critics, experts in the field, and librarians.

In contrast, anyone with appropriate access to the Internet can put up a Web page about almost anything without anyone else being involved in the process: no editors, other writers, critics, experts, or anyone else review the credibility or reliability of the evidence. However, the line between what counts as library research and what counts as Internet research is becoming blurred. Plenty of reliable and credible Internet-based research resources are available: online academic and popular journals, Web-based versions of online newspapers, the homepages of experts in a particular field, and so forth.

Let's begin with the basics of understanding the differences between libraries and the Internet.

Libraries are buildings that house and catalog books, magazines, journals, microfilm, maps, government documents, and other resources. It would be surprising if you attended a community college, college, or university that did not have a library, and it would be equally surprising if your school's library wasn't a prominent and important building on campus.

As you might expect, libraries at community colleges, colleges, and universities tend to specialize in scholarly materials, while public libraries tend to specialize in non-scholarly materials. You are more likely to find *People* magazine or the latest best-selling novels in a public library and a journal like *College English* and scholarly books in a college library.

Many universities have different libraries based on distinctions like who tends to use them ("graduate" or "undergraduate" libraries) or based on specific subject matter collected within that particular library (education, social work, law, or medicine). Almost all college

and university libraries also have collections of “special items,” which include items like rare books, maps, and government documents.

While we tend to see the library as a “place,” most people see the Internet as something less physically tangible (though still somehow a “place”). Basically, the Internet is the international network of computers that makes things like email, the World Wide Web, blogs, and online chat possible. In the early 1970s, the beginnings of the Internet (then known as “ARPANET”) consisted of about a half-dozen computers located at research universities in the United States. Today, the Internet is made up of tens of millions of computers in almost every part of the world. The World Wide Web appeared in the mid-1990s and has dramatically changed the Internet. The Web and the Web-reading software called “browsers” (Internet Explorer and Netscape, for example) have made it possible for users to view or “surf” a rich mix of Web pages with text, graphics, animations, and video.

Almost all universities, colleges, and community colleges in the United States provide students and faculty with access to the Internet so they can use email and the World Wide Web, or even so they can publish Web pages. Millions of people both in and out of school have access to the Internet through “Internet Service Providers,” which are companies both large and small that provide customers access to the ‘net for a monthly fee.

An enormous variety of information, text, and media are available to almost anyone via the Internet: discussion groups, books available for download or for online reading, journal and magazine articles, music and video clips, virtual “rooms” for live “chats.”

In the simplest sense, the differences between libraries and the Internet is clear: buildings, books, magazines, and other physical materials, versus computers everywhere connected via networks, the World Wide Web, and other electronic, digitized, or “virtual” materials.

However, in practice, these differences are not always so clear. First, almost all university, college, and community college libraries

provide patrons access to the Internet on their campuses. Being able to access almost anything that is available on the Internet at computers in your library has the effect of blurring the border between library and non-library resources. And just because you happened to find your research on a Web page while you were physically in the library obviously doesn't make your Web-based research as credible as the materials housed within the library. Second, many libraries use the Internet or the World Wide Web to provide access to electronic databases, some of which even contain "full text" versions of print publications. This will be covered in more detail in the next section of this chapter, "Finding Research in the Library: An Overview;" however, generally speaking, the research from these resources (even though it looks a lot like what you might find on a variety of Internet-based Web pages) is considered as reliable and credible as more traditional print sources.

Third, most libraries allow for patrons to search their collections via the Internet. With an adequate Internet connection, you don't have to actually go to the library to use the library. The point is that while some obvious differences still exist between research you find in the library versus research you find on the Internet, there are many interesting similarities and points where the library and the Internet are actually one in the same. Libraries, The Internet, and Somewhere In-between

Libraries

- Traditional books
- Traditional academic journals and popular magazines
- Newspapers
- Microfilm and microfiche documents
- Government documents
- Rare books and materials

Somewhere In-between

- Electronically reproduced books
- Digitized articles from journals or magazines found in a library database
- Database search tools

The Internet

- Email between friends
- Newsgroups
- Personal homepages
- Internet Search Engines
- Web versions of printed newspapers
- Web-based academic journals or popular “magazines”
- Web pages for groups or organizations

Researching in the Library

The best source for information about how to find things in your library will come directly from the librarians who can answer your questions. But here is an overview of the way most academic libraries are organized and some guidelines for finding materials in the library.

On most campuses, the main library is a very prominent building, although some schools have several smaller libraries focused on particular subjects housed within other academic buildings.

Almost all libraries have a circulation desk, where patrons can check out items. Most libraries also have an information or reference desk that is staffed with reference librarians to answer your questions about using reference materials, about the databases available for research, and other questions about finding materials in the library. Libraries usually have a place where you can make photocopies for a small cost and they frequently have computer labs available to patrons for word processing or connecting to the Internet.

Many libraries still have a centralized area with computer terminals that are connected to the library’s computerized databases, though increasingly, these terminals are located throughout the building instead of in one specific area. (Very few libraries still actually have card catalogs, and when they do, these catalogs are usually for

specialized and small collections of materials.) You will want to get familiar with your library's database software because it will be your key resource in finding just about anything in the building. Libraries tend to have particular reading rooms or places where they keep current newspapers and periodicals, and where they keep bound periodicals, which are previous editions of journals and magazines bound together by volume or year and kept on the shelf like books. Many libraries also have specialized areas where they keep government documents, rare books and manuscripts, maps, video tapes, and so forth.

How do you find any of these things in the library? Here are some guidelines for finding books, journals, magazines, and newspapers.

Books

You will need to use the library's computerized catalog to find books the library owns. Most library database systems allow you to conduct similar types of searches for books. Typically, you can search by:

Author or editor. Usually, this is a "last name first" search, as in "Krause, Steven D." If you are looking for the name of a writer who contributed a chapter to a collection of essays, try using a "key word" search instead.

Title. Most library databases will allow you to search by typing in the complete title or part of the title.

Key word. This is different from the other types of searches in that it is a search that will find whatever words or phrases you type in. Whatever you type into a key word search is what you're going to get back. For example, if you typed in "commercial fishing" into a key word search, you are likely to get results about the commercial fishing industry, but also about "commercials" (perhaps books about advertising) and about "fishing" (perhaps "how to" books on fly fishing, or a reference to the short story collection Trout Fishing in America).

Most library computer databases will allow you to do more advanced key word searches that will find phrases, parts of words, entries before or after a certain date, and so forth. You can also

increase the quality of your results by doing more keyword searches with synonyms of the word or words you originally have in mind. For example, if you do a keyword search for “commercial fishing,” you might also want to try searching for “fish farming,” “fisheries,” or “fishing industry.”

Library of Congress Subject. Chances are, your university, college, or community college library arranges their books according to the same system used by the U.S. Library of Congress. (The other common system, the Dewey Decimal System, is sometimes the organizational system used at public libraries and high school libraries.) The Library of Congress system has a long but specific list of subjects that is used to categorize every item. For example, here are some Library of Congress subjects that might be of interest to someone doing research on the ethical practices of the pharmaceutical industry:

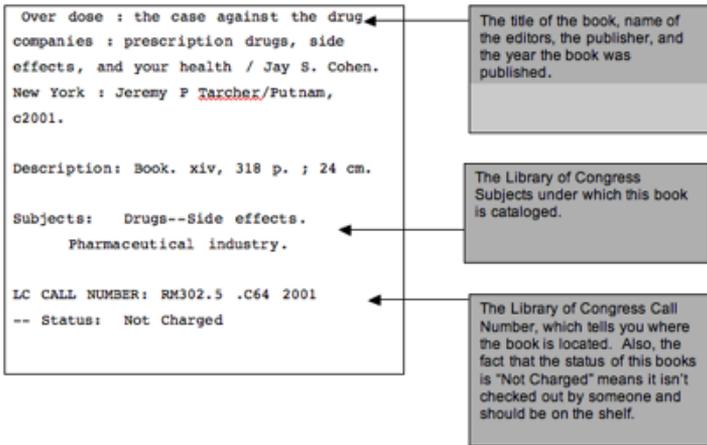
- Pharmaceutical ethics.
- Pharmaceutical ethics, United States.
- Pharmaceutical industry.
- Pharmaceutical industry, Corrupt practices, United States.

Each one of these categories is actually a Library of Congress subject that is used to categorize books and materials. In other words, when a new book on pharmaceuticals comes into the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., a librarian categorizes it according to previously determined subject categories and assigns the book a number based on that category. These “official” categories and the related Library of Congress Call Numbers (more on that in a moment) are the way that libraries that use the Library of Congress system keep track of their books.

Call Number. Most academic library database systems will allow you to search for a book with a particular call number. However, this feature is probably only useful to you if you are trying to find out if your library has a specific book you want for your research. When you are first searching for books on a research idea or topic at your library, you should begin with key word searches instead of author, title, or subject searches. However, once you find a book

that you think will be useful in your research, you will want to note the different authors and subjects the book fits into and search those same categories.

Here's an example of a book entry from a library computer database with the most important parts of the entry labeled:



The “Subjects” information might be particularly helpful for you to find other books and materials on your topic. For example, if you did a subject search for “Drugs- – Side effects,” you would find this book plus other related books that might be useful in your research.

In most university libraries, to retrieve this book, you need to find it on one of the book shelves, or, as they are often known, the “stacks.” This can be an intimidating process, especially if you aren’t used to the large scale of many college and university libraries. But actually, finding a book on a shelf is no more complicated than finding a street address.

The Library of Congress Call Number– in this example, RM 302.5 .C64 2001– is essentially the “address” of that book within the library. To get to it, you will first want to find out where your library keeps the books. This might be very obvious in many libraries, and not at all obvious in others. When in doubt, check with a librarian.

The Library of Congress Call Number system works alphabetically and then numerically, so to find the book in our example, you need to find the shelf (or shelves) where the library keeps books that begin with the call letters “RM.” Again, this will be very obvious in many libraries, and less obvious in others. At smaller academic libraries, finding the location of the “RM” books might be quite easy. But at some large academic libraries, you might need to find out what floor or even what building houses books that begin with the call letters “RM.”

If you were looking for the book in our example (or any other with a call number that began with “RM”), you can expect it to be somewhere between where they keep books that begin with the call letters “RL” and “RN.” Once you find where the “RM”s are, you’ll need to find the next number, 302.5. Again, this will be on the shelf numerically, somewhere between books with a call number that begins with “RM 302.4” and “RM 302.6.” By the time you get to this point, you are getting close. Then you’ll want to locate the “.C64” part, which will be between “.C63” and “.C65,” then the next “.D7,” and then finally the 2001.

If you go to the shelf and are not able to locate the book, there are three possible explanations: either the book is actually checked out, you have made a mistake in looking the book up, or the library has made a mistake in cataloging or shelving the book. It’s very easy to make a mistake and to look for a book in the wrong place, so first double-check yourself. However, libraries do make mistakes either by mis-shelving an item or by not recording that it has been checked out. If you are sure you’re right and you think the library has made a mistake, ask a librarian for help.

One last tip: when you find the book you are looking for, take a moment to scan the other books on the shelf near it. Under the Library of Congress system, books about similar subjects tend to be shelved near each other. You can often find extremely interesting and useful books by looking around on the shelf like this.

Journals, Magazines, and Newspapers

Libraries group journals, magazines, and newspapers into a

category called “periodicals,” which, as the name implies, are items in a series that are published “periodically.” Periodicals include academic periodicals that are perhaps published only a few times a year, quarterly and monthly journals, or weekly popular magazines. Newspapers are also considered periodicals.

Periodical Indexes

Your key resource for finding articles in periodic materials for your research project will be some combination of the many different indexes that are available. There are hundreds of different indexing tools, so be sure to ask the librarians at your library about what resources are available to you.

Many indexes are quite broad in their scope—The Reader’s Guide to Periodical Literature and the online resources ArticleFirst and WilsonSelect are common examples—while others are quite specific, like The Modern Language Association Bibliography (which covers fields like English, Composition and Rhetoric, and Culture Studies, not to mention studies in other languages) and ABI/INFORM (which indexes materials that have to do with business and management). It is crucial that you examine different indexes as you conduct your research: different indexes will lead you to different articles that are relevant for your research idea or topic.

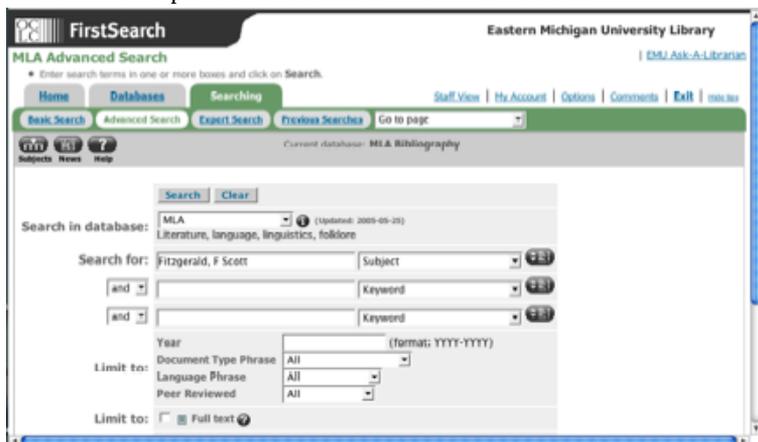
While indexes frequently overlap with each other, using different indexes will give you a wider variety of results. Some library computer systems make this easy to do by allowing you to search multiple indexes at the same time. However, not all libraries have this capability and not all indexes will allow for these kinds of searches.

Most periodical indexes have gone the way of the card catalog and are now available electronically. How these electronic databases work varies, but typically patrons can search by keyword or author, and sometimes by subject (though “subject” in these online databases isn’t necessarily as strict as the “subject” used in the Library of Congress system). A few indexes are still only available in “paper” form and these tend to be kept in library reference areas.

Database interfaces: differences and similarities

As I've mentioned previously, there are too many differences between library databases to provide too many details about how to use them in this chapter. You may have already noticed this in your own experiences with databases in your library.

Some of these differences can be rather confusing. For example, a “subject search” for a book in a database that uses the Library of Congress cataloging system is not at all the same as a “subject search” with a periodical database like WilsonSelect.



This is the search screen of the “FirstSearch” database system.

While this particular example is of the MLA database, all of the databases supported by FirstSearch use a similar search screen.

However, different database systems will have different search screens with different options and commands.

Fortunately, there are two common features with just about any library search software tool that will aid you in your research:

- Author searches, which almost always works the same in different databases; and
- Keyword searches. Keyword searches usually allow for different Boolean search functions. In some databases, you need to indicate that you are searching for a phrase. This is often done with putting quotes around a phrase: “space shuttle” will find just that phrase; without quotes, it will find all occurrences of the keywords space

and shuttle. Some keyword searches also allow a “not” function. For example, shuttle NOT space would exclude keyword references to the space shuttle. Boolean searches also usually allow for “and/or” searches: “Hillary and/or Bill Clinton” would return information about Hillary Clinton, Bill Clinton, and information that was about both Hillary and Bill Clinton.

Indexes typically provide the key information a reader needs to make some judgment about a periodical article and the information about where to actually find the article: the title of the publication, the title of the article, the name of the author, the date of publication, and the page numbers where the article appears. Sometimes, indexes also provide abstracts, which are brief summaries of the article that can also let readers know if it is something they are interested in reading.

Here is an example of a typical entry from a periodical index resource; specifically, this example is a portion of an entry from the online database Wilson Select Plus:

The image shows a screenshot of a database entry from Wilson Select Plus. The entry is enclosed in a rectangular box. To the right of the box are three separate callout boxes, each with an arrow pointing to a specific part of the entry. The first callout box points to the top line of the entry, 'Database: WilsonSelectPlus'. The second callout box points to the 'Author(s): Nelson, Nancy L.' line. The third callout box points to the 'SUBJECT(S)' line at the bottom of the entry.

Database: WilsonSelectPlus Ownership: Check the catalogs in your library. Search the catalog at EMU Bruce T. Halle Library Full Text: View HTML Full Text (WilsonSelectPlus)	The name of the database and information about availability. The "full text" of the article is available online.
Author(s): Nelson, Nancy L. Title: International concern for the sustainability of the world's fisheries: United Nations efforts to combat over-fishing and international debate over state fishing subsidies. Source: Colorado Journal of International Environmental Law & Policy v. 1999 (2000) p. 157-63	Key citation information: authors, article title, title of publication, date published, page numbers.
SUBJECT(S) Fishing (International law). Sustainable development. Subsidies.	The article subjects. Doing a "subject search" in this database with these subjects would lead you to articles similar to this one.

Accessing an Article

To find the article, you first have to determine if your library has the particular periodical. This is a key step because just because an item is listed in an index you have available to you in your library doesn't mean that your library subscribes to that particular periodical. If you know it is an article that is critical to your research and it is in a periodical your library doesn't carry, you might want to discuss your options with a librarian. You still might

be able to get access to the article, but you will probably have to wait several days or even weeks to get it, and your library might charge you a fee.

The process of how to find out if your library subscribes to a particular periodical varies from library to library. At many libraries, you can learn whether or not a particular periodical is available by doing a “title” search of the library’s main electronic catalog. At other libraries, you have to conduct a search with a different electronic database.

You will also want to figure out whether or not the article you are looking for appears in a more current issue of the periodical. Most libraries keep the current magazines, journals, and newspapers in a reading room of some sort that is separate from where they keep older issues of periodicals. What counts as “current” depends on the periodical and your particular library’s practices. For daily newspapers, libraries might only make a few weeks of the current editions available, while they might consider all of a year’s worth of a journal that is only published three or four times a year as current.

If your library does carry the particular periodical publication where the article appears, your next step is to figure out how the library carries the item. Unlike books, libraries store periodical materials in several different ways. Ask your librarian how you can find out how your library stores particular periodicals, though this information is usually provided to you when you find out if your library carries the periodical in the first place.

Bound periodicals. Most libraries have shelves where they keep bound periodicals, which are groups of individual issues of a periodical that are bound together into book form. Individual issues of a magazine or journal (usually a year’s worth) are made into one large book with the title of the periodical and the volume or year of editions of the periodical printed in bold letters on the spine of the book.

Microfilm/microfiche. Libraries also store periodicals by converting them to either microfilm or microfiche because it takes

much less room to store these materials. Newspapers are almost always stored in one of these two formats or online. Microfilms are rolls of film where a black-and-white duplicate of the periodical publication appears, page for page as it appeared in the original.

Microfiche are small sheets of film with black-and-white duplications of the original. To read these materials, library patrons must use special machinery that projects the images of the periodical pages onto a screen. Check with a librarian in your library about how to read and make copies of articles that are stored on microfilm or microfiche.

Electronic periodicals. Most college and university libraries also make periodicals available electronically through a particular database. These articles are often available as just text, which means any illustrations, charts, or photographs that might have accompanied the article as it was originally published won't be included. However, some online databases are beginning to provide articles in a format called "Portable Document File" (PDF), which electronically reproduces the article as it originally appeared in the periodical.

Periodicals from Electronic Databases

The example of an entry from a periodical database, "International concern for the sustainability of the world's fisheries," is an example of one where the full text of the article is available online through the library's database. This example also demonstrates how the differences between "the library" and "the Internet" can be confusing. Periodical articles available online, but originally published in a more traditional journal, magazine, or newspaper, are considered "library" and not "Internet" evidence.

For example, I was able to read the article, which appeared in *The Colorado Journal of International Environmental Law & Policy*, even though my library doesn't subscribe to the paper version of this journal, because I was able to read it electronically with the WilsonSelect database. But even though I was only able to read an electronic version of this article delivered to me via a library database accessed through the World Wide Web, I still

consider this article as a “periodical” or “library” source.

Hyperlink: For guidelines for properly citing research materials you find as “complete text” in online databases, see “Citing Your Researching Using MLA or APA Style.”

Some Final Tips

Photocopy or print out your articles. Most academic libraries won’t let you check out periodicals. This means you either have to read and take your notes on the article while in the library, you have to make a photocopy of the article, or, if it is available electronically, you have to print it out. It might cost you a dollar or two and take a few minutes at a photocopier or a printer, but it will be worth it because you’ll be able to return to the article later on when you’re actually doing your writing.

Write down all the citation information before you leave the library.

When you start using the evidence you find in journals, magazines, and newspapers to support your points in your research writing projects, you will need to give your evidence credit.

The key pieces of information to note about your evidence before you leave the library include:

- the type of periodical (a journal, a magazine, or a newspaper)
- the title of the publication
- the author or authors of the article
- the title of the article
- the date of the publication
- the page numbers of the article

Recording all of this information does take a little time, but it is much easier to record that information when you first find the evidence than it is to try to figure it out later on.

Hyperlink: Chapter Six, “The Annotated Bibliography Exercise,” describes the process of keeping track of the research materials you find in the library and on the Internet in a writing project.

Other Library Materials

Chances are, the bulk of your library research will involve books and periodicals. But libraries have many other types of materials that you might find useful for your research projects as well. Here

are some examples and brief explanations of these materials.

Government Documents. Most college and university libraries in this country collect materials published by the United States federal government. Given the fact that the U.S. government releases more publications than any other organization in the world, the variety of materials commonly called “government documents” is quite broad. They include transcripts of congressional hearings and committee meetings; reports from almost every government office, agency and bureau; and pamphlets, newsletters, and periodic publications from various government sponsored institutes and associations. If your research project is about any issue involving an existing or proposed federal law, a government reform or policy, a foreign policy, or an issue on which the U.S. Congress held hearings about, chances are the federal government has published something about it.

Check with your librarian about the government documents available and how to search them. Most of the materials published by the U.S. government can be researched using the same databases you use to search for periodicals and books.

Interlibrary Loan. Most college and university libraries provide their patrons ways to borrow materials from other libraries. The nature of this service, usually called interlibrary loan, varies considerably. Many community college, college, and university libraries in the U.S. have formed partnerships with other libraries in their geographic areas to make interlibrary loan of books and even periodicals quite easy and convenient. On the other hand, many other libraries treat each interlibrary request as a special case, which means it frequently isn't as easy or as quick.

Theses and dissertations. If your college or university has graduate programs, your library probably has a collection of the theses or dissertations written by these graduate students. These documents are usually shelved in a special place in the library, though at most libraries, you would use the same database you used to find books to find a thesis or a dissertation.

Rare books and other special collections. Many college and university libraries have collections of unusual and often valuable materials that they hold as part of a special collection. Most of these special collections consist of materials that can be loosely classified as rare books: books, manuscripts, and other publications that are valuable because of their age, their uniqueness, the fame of the author, and so forth. Your research project probably won't require you to use these unusual collections, but rare book and other special collection portions of the library can be fun to visit.

Researching on the Internet

The great advantage of the Internet is it is a fast and convenient way to get information on almost anything. It has revolutionized how all academics conduct research and practice writing.

However, while the Internet is a tremendous research resource, you are still more likely to find detailed, accurate, and more credible information in the library than on the Web. Books and journals are increasingly becoming available online, but most are still only available in libraries. This is particularly true of academic publications. You also have a much better chance of finding credible and accurate information in the library than on the Internet.

Hyperlink: See the sections “The Internet: The Researcher’s Wild Card” and “Evaluating the quality and credibility of your research” in Chapter One, “Thinking Critically About Research.”

It is easy to imagine a time when most academic journals and even academic books will be available only electronically. But for the time-being, you should view the library and the Internet as tools that work together and that play off of each other in the process of research. Library research will give you ideas for searches to conduct on the Internet, and Internet research will often lead you back to the more traditional print materials housed in your library.

Email

Electronic mail (“email”) is the basic tool that allows you to send messages to other people who have access to the Internet, regardless of where they physically might be. Email is extremely

popular because it's easy, quick, and cheap—free, as long as you aren't paying for Internet access. Most email programs allow you to attach other documents like word processed documents, photos, or clips of music to your messages as well.

For the purposes of research writing, email can be a useful tool in several different ways.

You can use email to communicate with your teacher and classmates about your research projects—asking questions, exchanging drafts of essays, and so forth. Many teachers use email to provide comments and feedback on student work, to facilitate peer review and collaboration, or to make announcements.

Hyperlink: See Chapter Four, “How to Collaborate and Write With Others.”

Depending on the subject of your research project, you can use email to conduct interviews or surveys. Of course, the credibility of an email interview (like more traditional phone or “face to face” interviews) is based entirely on the credibility of whom you interview and the extent to which you can trust that the person you think you are communicating with via email really is that person. But since email is a format that has international reach and is convenient to use, you may find experts who would be unlikely to commit to a phone or “face to face” interview who might be willing to answer a few questions via email.

You can join an electronic mailing list, or listserv, to learn more about your topic and to post questions and observations. With the use of various email software, an emailing list works by sending email messages to a group of people known as “subscribers.” Email lists are usually organized around a certain topic or issue of interest: movies, writing, biology, politics, or current events. Before posting a question or quoting messages from the mailing list, be sure to review that lists' guidelines for posting.

Many different sorts of groups and organizations maintain mailing lists that you will be able to find most easily by finding Web-based information about that group through a Web search.

A Word about Netiquette

Netiquette is simply the concept of courtesy and politeness when working on the Internet. The common sense “golden rule” of every day life—“do unto others as you would want them to do to you”—is the main rule to keep in mind online as well.

But there are two reasons why practicing good netiquette in discussion forums like email, newsgroups, and chat rooms is more difficult than practicing good etiquette in real life. First, many people new to the Internet and its discussion forums aren’t aware that there are differences between how one behaves online versus how to behave in real life. Folks new to the Internet in general or to a specific online community in particular (sometimes referred to as newbies) often are inadvertently rude or inconsiderate to others.

It is a bit like traveling to a different country: if you are unfamiliar with the language and customs, it is easy to unintentionally do or not do something that is considered wrong or rude in that culture.

Second, the Internet is a volatile and potentially combative discussion space where people can find themselves offending or being offended by others quickly. The main reason for this is the Internet lacks the visual cues of “face to face” communication or the oral cues of a phone conversation. We convey a lot of information with the tone of our voice, our facial expression, or hand gestures. A simple question like “Are you serious?” can take on many different meanings depending on how you emphasize the words, whether or not you are smiling or frowning, whether or not you say it in a laughing tone or a loud and angry tone, or whether or not you are raising your hand or pointing a finger at the speaker. The lack of visual or oral cues is also a problem with writing, of course, but online writing tends to be much more like speaking than more traditional forms of writing because it is usually briefer and much quicker in transmission. It’s difficult to imagine a heated argument that turns into name calling happening between two people writing letters back and forth, but it is not at all difficult to imagine (or experience!) an argument that arose out of some sort of miscommunication with the use of email messages that travel from writers to readers in mere seconds.

This phenomenon of the Internet making it possible for tempers to rise quickly and for innocent conversations to lead to angry arguments even has a name: flaming. An ongoing and particularly angry argument that takes place in a newsgroup or emailing list forum is called a “flame war.” Flames (like conventional “fighting words”) often are the result of intentional rudeness, but they are also the result of simple miscommunications.

Here are some basic guidelines for practicing good netiquette: Use “common sense courtesy.” Always remember that real people are on the other side of the email or newsgroup message you are responding to or asking about. As such, remember to try and treat people as you would want them to treat you.

Don’t type in all capital letters. “All caps” is considered shouting on the Internet. Unless you mean to shout something, don’t do this.

Look for, ask for, and read discussion group FAQs. Many discussion groups have a “Frequently Asked Questions” document for their members. Before posting to an Internet group, try to read this document to get an idea about what is or isn’t discussed in the forum.

Read some of the messages before posting to your electronic group. Make sure you have a sense of the tone and type of conversation that takes place in the forum before posting a message of your own.

Do not send advertisements, chain letters, or personal messages to a discussion group.

Ask permission to quote from others on the list. If someone writes something in a newsgroup or an emailing list discussion forum you think might be useful to quote in your research project, send a private email to the author of the post and ask for permission.

Along these lines, do not post copyrighted material to the Internet without getting permission from the holder of the copyright to do so.

- Make sure your email messages and other discussion forum posts have subjects. Keep the subject line brief and to the point,

but be sure to include it. If your message is part of an ongoing conversation, make sure your subject is the same as the other subject lines in the conversation.

Sidebar: Be on the look out for new technologies!

One of the challenges I face in offering advice on how to use the Internet for your research is that the tools available on the Internet keep changing at an extremely rapid rate. New and exciting technologies are emerging all the time, and many of them become popular in an amazingly short period of time. Conversely, older Internet tools (Telnet, Gopher, newsgroups, etc.) are more fitting in a history of the Internet textbook than this one.

Here's just a partial list of emerging technologies you might be using for Internet research in the near future (if you're not using them already):

- Blogs. A blog (or “web log”) is a web-based publication of articles, usually dated and published with the most current entries first. Many blogs are very similar to a personal journal or diary, though other blogs are maintained collaboratively and by academic or professional writers. Two of the most popular services are Blogger <<http://www.blogger.com>> and Xanga <<http://www.xanga.com>>.

- Podcasting. A “podcast” is a way of publishing sound files and making them available for others to listen to over the Internet. Despite its name, you don't actually have to have an iPod to listen to a podcast, just a computer that can play MP3 sound files. Similar to blogs, podcasts range from individual broadcasts about virtually anything on their minds to news organizations producing professional shows. See iPodder.org <<http://www.ipodder.org>> to get started.

- Instant Messaging. My experience has been that most of my students are more familiar with IM than most of my fellow faculty members. Instant messaging allows users to chat with each other in real time. Most cell phones support IM-ing, too, called text messaging (?). Two of the most popular IM software tools are America Online's Instant Messenger <<http://www.aim.com>> and

Yahoo! Messenger <<http://messenger.yahoo.com>>

- Peer-to-Peer file sharing. “Peer-to-peer” sharing is a technology that allows users on a network to share files with each other. Usually, this is associated with music sharing, and it has been controversial because of the possibility of illegally copying music files.
- Scholarly Publishing online. There are currently significant differences between the materials available on the Internet and in an academic library. Obviously, libraries have books and the Internet doesn’t. But that might be changing sooner than you might think. For example, Google is working with several academic libraries around the world to scan their books into their database. (See <http://www.google.com/press/pressrel/print_library.html>). More and more periodicals are making their articles available electronically, both via “full text” databases like WilsonSelect.

The World Wide Web

Chances are, the World Wide Web will be your most valuable Internet research tool. While you can go to literally billions of different “pages” or sites on the Web that might be useful for your research, finding them can be a bit like finding a needle in a haystack. This is one of the major drawbacks of the World Wide Web. Unlike the library, where the materials are strictly organized, cataloged, and cared for, the Web is more of a jumble of files that can be difficult to find or that are missing altogether.

Fortunately, you can turn to several resources to aid in your World Wide Web research: search engines, meta-search engines, and Web directories.

Search engines are software-driven Web sites that allow users to search by entering in a word, a phrase, or even another Web site address. Search engines are “for profit” enterprises which come and go in the fast-paced world of the Internet.

By far, the most popular search engine currently is Google <<http://www.google.com>>. There are other search engines of course, notably AltaVista <<http://www.altavista.com>>, and Teoma

<<http://www.teoma.com>>.

But Google is so popular it has become synonymous for most users for “search engine” and is even used as a verb, as in “Where was George Washington born? I guess I’d better google that.”

Most search engines look deceptively simple: enter in a few words into the window, hit return, and you’re provided thousands of hits.

However, it is somewhat more complicated than that. For one thing, search engines make money by advertising and listing those sponsors first— Google and other search engines note that these are “Sponsored Links.” For another, search engine searches are conducted by machines. Unlike a library catalog, which is created by people, search engine databases are created and searched through by powerful software that constantly scans the ever-growing World Wide Web for sites to include in its database.

Software can catalog materials faster than people, but it cannot prioritize or sort the material as precisely as people. As a result, a search engine search will frequently return tens of thousands of matches, most of which have little relevance to you.

Hyperlink: Search engines are also a great resource when you are first trying to develop a research topic. See the “Brainstorming with Computers” section of Chapter 5, “The Working Thesis Exercise.”

But to get the most out of a search engine search, you have to “search smart.” Typing in a word or a phrase into any search engine will return results, but you have a much better chance of getting better results if you take the time to conduct a good search engine search.

Read through the “advanced search” tips or “help” documents. All of the major search engines provide information about conducting advanced searches, which you should read for at least two reasons.

First, the advanced search tips or help documents explain the specific rules for conducting more detailed searches with that particular search engine. Different search engines are similar, but not identical. Some search engines will allow a search for a word root or truncation—in other words, if you type in a word with an

asterisk in some search engines (“bank*” for example), you will do a search for other forms of the word (banks, banker, banking, etc.).

Some search engines don’t allow for this feature.

Second, many search engines have features that you wouldn’t know about unless you examined the advanced search or help documents.



If you click on the “Advanced Search” option on the Google homepage, you are taken to this page that offers a variety of ways to refine your search. For example you can search for an exact phrase, for “at least one word” in a phrase, and for pages that do not contain a particular phrase.

Use different search engines. Each search engine compiles its data a bit differently, which means that you won’t get identical results from all search engines. Just as you should use different indexing tools when doing library periodical research, using different search engines is a good idea.

Try using as many different synonyms and related terms for your search as possible. For example, instead of using only the term “Drug advertising” in your search, try using “pharmaceutical advertising,” “prescription drug promotions,” “television and

prescription drugs,” and so forth.

This is extremely important because there is no systematic way to categorize and catalog information similar to the way it is done in libraries. As a result, there is no such thing as a “subject” search on a search engine, certainly not in the way you can search subjects with the Library of Congress system. Some Web sites might refer to drunk driving as “drunk driving,” while other Web sites might refer to drunk driving as “driving while intoxicated.”

Take your time and look past the first page of your search results. If you do a search for “drug advertising” with a search engine, you will get thousands of matches. Most search engines organize the results so that the pages that are most likely to be useful in your search will appear first. However, it is definitely worthwhile to page through several pages of results. Search engines like Google support basic Boolean search commands (and, and/or, not, etc.), and a lot of other even more sophisticated commands. For example, Google allows you to search for synonyms for a term by typing “~” in front of it. For example, the search “~corporal punishment” also returns information about web sites that use the synonym “spanking.”

Metasearch Engines are similar to search engines, except they are software-driven Web sites that search other search engines. The difference is that when you do a search with a search engine like Google, you are searching only through Google’s database; when you use a metasearch engine, you are searching through Google’s database along with other search engine databases. Simply put, metasearch engines allow you to search through many different databases at the same time.

Like search engines, metasearch engines are commercial services and they come and go depending on their business successes and failures. Currently, two of the more popular of these services are AlltheWeb.com <<http://www.alltheweb.com>> and Dogpile <<http://dogpile.com>>.

Metasearch engines might seem to have an obvious advantage over regular search engines, but in practice, this is not necessarily the

case. For one thing, metasearch engines don't account for the different rules of different search engines very well—in other words, they will apply the same “rules” for a search to all of the search engines they are searching, regardless of how those rules might apply. For another thing, different search engines have different rules as to what results they rank as most important. Again, this is something that most metasearch engines don't account for very well in their results.

In other words, right now, metasearch engines don't usually work as well as using several different search engines independently.

When I conduct search engine research on the World Wide Web, I prefer to visit several different search engines than one metasearch engine.

If you do decide to use metasearches, keep in mind that the “tips” provided for search engines apply to these devices as well. To do a “smart search” with a metasearch engine, be sure to read the “advanced search,” “search tips,” or “help” document, be sure to use different synonyms for the key words you are using to search, and be sure to look past the first page of results.

Web Directories

Web Directories look like search engines, and many of them include a search engine component. But Web directories are different from search engines because they are collections of data about Web sites that are categorized by people and not computer programs.

The most famous web directory is Yahoo!

<<http://www.yahoo.com>>, which was started in 1994 by two graduate students at Stanford, David Filo and Jerry Yang. But there are many other Web directory sites, including the following:

- About <<http://about.com>>
- The WWW Virtual Library <<http://vlib.org/>>
- Librarian's Index to the Internet <<http://lii.org/>>

In a sense, Web directories are more like library databases: they are organized by people into logical categories, and the organizers of Web directories make some choices as to what they will and

won't include in their directories and about how they will categorize different items. However, each search engine makes up its own system for categorizing data; there is no "standardized" system of subjects like there is with the Library of Congress system. This means that while Web directories are "more organized" than what you might find with a search engine, they are probably "less organized" than what you might find in the library with a book or periodical database.

Web directory searches will often return higher quality Web sites because what is and isn't included in these directories is decided by people and not computer software. Further, some of these Web directories, like the "Librarian's Index to the Internet," are quite a bit more selective and specialized. Conversely, Web directories don't usually give you the "quantity" of information that you are likely to receive from search engines or metasearch engines.

In general, the best advice for working with Web directories is very similar to the best advice for working with search engines: be sure to read the instructions on conducting advance searches, use more than one Web directory, and use synonyms for your key terms. Use search engines, metasearch engines, and Web directories in conjunction with each other: the "computer software" based searches you do with search and metasearch engines can help you refine the searches you conduct with the help of Web directories.

"Dos" and "Don'ts" of Research on the Web

- Do use synonyms in your keyword searches (for example, "drugs" and "pharmaceuticals").
- Do use multiple search engines and directories.
- Do read the "advanced search" documents.
- Don't stop at just search engines; use directory searches, too
- Don't forget there is no organized subject search on the Web that is like the subject search in a library.
- Don't stop at the first page of search results; look through more than the first few hits.

- Do your searches over a period of time.
- Do remember that because anyone can create a Web site, you need to evaluate the credibility of web sources very carefully.

42. Chapter Four: How to Collaborate and Write With Others

- Why Collaborate on Writing?
- Considering (and Balancing) the Two Extremes of Collaboration
- Peer Review as Collaboration
 - * A “sample recipe” for how peer review can work
 - * A few last things to remember about successful peer review
- Collaborative Writing on Larger Projects
- Three Ideas for Collaborative Projects
 - * Research Idea Groups
 - * Research Writing Partners
 - * Collaborative Research Writing Projects
- Collaborating With Computers and the Internet

Why Collaborate on Writing?

In my teaching experience, students have mixed feelings about collaboration. Many of my students initially say they don’t want to work with their classmates on their writing. When it comes to in-class peer review sessions or more involved collaborative project such as small group work, they believe there is nothing they can learn about their writing from their classmates; “After all, “they tell me, “the teacher gives the grade.”

However, most of my students tell me after the course ends that the times in which they collaborated with their classmates were occasions where they felt they learned a lot about writing. While they might enter into collaborative exercises and writing projects reluctantly, it’s been my experience that most students end up finding them worthwhile.

Collaborating in different ways on writing projects is a good idea for several reasons. First, composition and rhetoric teachers and

scholars have known for a long time now that one of the best ways for students to improve their writing skills is to have them share their writing with other students. If you think about it for a moment, this is common sense. If you never show your writing to other readers, or if you limit your audience to simply the teacher, how will you as a writer learn about the effectiveness of your writing beyond a grade in a class?

Second, almost all “real writing” is the product of collaboration. Of course, you probably don’t collaborate on your diary or journal entries, letters to relatives, or emails to your friends. But almost all of the writing you read in academic or popular publications has involved different levels of collaboration, sometimes in surprising and hidden ways. For example, while I am indeed the author of *The Process of Research Writing*, this book has been a collaborative project in the sense that I received a lot of advice and ideas from my wife, friends, students, colleagues, and editors.

Considering (and Balancing) the Two Extremes of Collaboration
Collaboration always implies people working together toward a goal, but I like to think of the way collaboration actually works as being somewhere between two extremes.

One extreme is what I call “very immediate and intimate” collaboration, where writers collaborate extremely closely, literally sitting together in front of the computer keyboard or the pad of paper and going over each sentence of each paragraph together.

The advantages of this very close collaboration include:

- An equal and immediate sense for everyone involved about how the project is going;
- Writing projects that are more seamless: that is, all of the different parts fit together clearly as one complete text; and
- A greater sense by individuals within a group of their roles, since all the group members are working together in the same time and place.

The disadvantages of this type of collaboration include:

- “Hard workers” in the group might resent the group members who do not seem to contribute an equal part, or some members of

the group might feel they are being silenced and manipulated by more forceful group members;

- It can be difficult to coordinate times and places to meet; and
- It is extremely time consuming, especially if the group is collaborating on creating a more detailed writing project.

The other extreme of collaboration is what I call “very distant” collaboration, where writers divide up the labor of a particular project into smaller tasks that can be then assigned to members of the group and put together later, assembly-line fashion.

Some of the advantages of this type of collaboration include:

- It is easy to set up tasks so each group member has the opportunity to contribute equally without duplicating the work of others;
- It can be done with few (if any) meetings where all of the group members need to be present; and
- Tasks can be accomplished quickly since all group members are simultaneously working on their parts of the project.

The disadvantages include:

- Because it is being done in parts, the completed project may seem disjointed and uneven;
- It can be difficult to manage this sort of collaboration since the individual parts of the project have to somehow be put together, usually by a group leader, someone who is named by the others, or someone who takes on the role; and
- There can be resentment within the group, either from leaders who other members of the group feel are doing a poor job, or of those within the group perceived as not doing their share of the work.

Where most collaborative projects end up on the “collaboration spectrum” depend on the nature of the collaborative task. For example, things like in-class peer review of each others’ rough drafts, in-class reading and writing assignments, or shorter collaborative writing projects tend to end up closer to “very immediate and intimate” collaboration. Things like collaborative research writing projects, research oriented web sites, or to other

longer and more detailed writing projects tend to be closer to the “very distant” collaboration side of the spectrum.

Clearly, one sort of collaboration isn’t automatically “better” than another; it depends on your purposes. The best approach to any collaborative project is to be conscious of the strengths and weaknesses of both sides of the collaborative spectrum and strive to emphasize the strengths of the approach within which you are working.

For example, one way to avoid some of the pitfalls of the “very immediate and intimate” types of collaboration is to make sure that each member of the group has a clear sense of their role in the writing project and is allowed to contribute. Conversely, the disadvantages of “very distant” types of collaboration might be avoided if members of the group strive to work on producing writing in a similar style and if there is frequent communication among group members.

Peer Review as Collaboration

One of the most common types of collaboration done in writing classes comes in the form of in-class “group work” or as peer review sessions. Peer review has become a common practice for contemporary composition and rhetoric classrooms. Basically, it is the process where small groups of students read, comment on, and make suggestions for other student’s work.

While successful peer review can be hard and takes practice, it really can work. But first, you have to be willing to accept two premises.

- Your fellow students have valid comments to make on your writing projects. Students often assume that the only person whose opinion really matters is the teacher because, after all, the teacher is the one who assigns the grade. I understand the logic of the assumption that the “teacher is always right,” but I don’t think it’s true.

The best writing projects are ones that strive to fulfill a purpose and reach an audience that is beyond a particular class and a particular teacher. But beyond that, your classmates represent an

audience you should be trying to reach. You should listen to your classmate's suggestions because they are in same writing situation as you. After all, they too are trying to reach an audience that includes their fellow classmates, and they are also writing a project that will have to be read and evaluated by the teacher.

- All writing projects can be improved by revision. Sometimes we have an overly romantic view of writing and of writers who are able to create “great works” without ever having to make any real changes. Rarely (if ever) has this been the case. Any writing project can be improved with revision.

As straightforward as these premises might be, they can often be difficult to accept. But with practice, patience, and work with your classmates, seeing these premises as valid becomes easier.

How peer review can work, step by step

I offer the following advice on how to get started with peer review sessions as a “recipe” where ingredients and methods can be altered to fit the particulars of the class, the writing project, time limitations, and so forth. After all, you and your teacher probably have ideas on what will or won't work for peer review in your specific contexts.

- With the help of your teacher, break into groups of three to five students. Groups of five work well only if the writing project you are considering is short or if you have a lot of class time to go over each project. I would also recommend not working in pairs since that overly limits the size of the audience.

Some students and teachers like to work with the same peer collaborators for the entire semester, while others like to work with different collaborators with each project.

- Exchange a copy of your writing project with each person in the group. You should come to the peer review session class with several copies of your writing project to share with others in your peer review group.

- Select someone to start, and have that person read their essay out loud while the other members of the group read along. The extent to which you will be able to read your essays out loud will

vary according to the particular circumstances of your class and of the assignment, but I would encourage you to try to include this step in the process of in-class peer review. Actually reading your writing out loud to others gives the reader and writer a real sense of the voice of an essay and is a great way for writers and readers to catch small grammar errors.

- While the writer “up” is reading, the readers should read along, marking comments in the margins of the draft they are reading. As a reader, you should note points you hope to come back to in group discussion. You can also mark any grammatical errors you might notice as you read.
- When the writer is done reading, the readers should provide their comments. This is not the time for the writer to explain things that the readers say they didn’t understand. Rather, this is the time for the writer to listen to what the other members of the group have to say.

This is a crucial part of the process because the questions that readers have are ones that point to changes the writer should make in revision rather than being answered in person. After all, you will never be able to be there when other readers (your teacher or other people in your audience) try to understand your writing project. Readers’ questions have to be anticipated and answered in the writing itself. So, the role of the person who just finished reading is to try and be as open-minded (and open-eared!) to their classmates’ advice as possible.

Giving good advice to classmates in peer review sessions can be a tricky process. Readers often have a hard time expressing their comments to the person who’s writing is being discussed. On the one hand, it isn’t productive or nice to say things that might hurt the writer’s feelings; but on the other hand, it also isn’t productive to be so nice as to not say anything that can help the writer. So the goal here should be to somehow balance the two: advice that is “nice,” but also constructive.

Here are two suggestions to help make this step of readers giving writers constructive advice a bit easier:

- Try to keep the focus of the constructive advice on the big issues. By “the big issues,” I mean things like the clarity of the points the writer is trying to make, the use of evidence, the points where readers are particularly persuaded or particularly confused, and so forth. This is not to say things like grammar and proofreading and such are not important—far from it. But those issues are more about “proofreading” than they are about changing the substance of an essay.
- Consider some of the questions I have at the end of each of the chapters in Part Two of the book, “Exercises in the Process of Research.” Each of the chapters in this part of the book end with sections titled “Questions to Ask While Writing and Researching” and “Review and Revision.” The questions you should consider very according to the writing exercise, but the goal is always the same: what changes can you make to your writing project to make it more accessible to your readers?

Making revisions as a result questions like these (and the ones provided by your teacher) will make it much easier for you and your group members to give each other useful advice, and it will also help keep the group on task.

A few final things to remember about successful peer review

- Peer review takes practice. If you don’t think peer review works that well for you and your classmates the first time you try it, give it another chance with a different writing project. Like most things in writing (or life!) that are rewarding and useful, good peer review takes practice and time. If you stick with it, you’ll see that the peer review sessions you have toward the end of term are much more productive than the ones at the beginning of the term.
- If you don’t get good advice about your writing projects in class, seek out advice elsewhere. Show a draft of your writing project to someone who’s opinion you value—friends, family, classmates—and ask them for suggestions in making the project better. If your school has a writing center, writing lab, or other sort of tutoring center, take a copy of the writing project to it and have a staff member look at your work.

- It is always still up to you to choose what advice you want to follow. Inevitably, you will receive advice from your reviewers that is conflicting or that is advice you simply don't agree with. That is okay. Remember that you are not under any obligation to incorporate all the suggestions you receive, and part of the process of becoming a better writer is learning for yourself when you need to follow advice and when you need to follow your own instincts.

Collaborative Writing on Larger Projects

Collaboration on large and ongoing writing projects can be a rewarding experience for both teachers and students for several reasons.

- Collaborative groups provide a “support” mechanism that can often times be very important when working on a research project. Writing and researching are hard work, and it can be comforting and encouraging to have the support of classmates to help you successfully complete projects.
- Collaborating with others can often make more elaborate and sophisticated research projects possible. Simply put, by “putting their heads together,” writers working in groups can usually do more research and more analysis of a topic than someone working alone.

Collaborating With Computers and the Internet

Two of the most significant obstacles to collaborative writing, especially collaboration on larger writing projects, are time and place. It can be difficult to set up a meeting outside of class time that fits into the schedule of all the members of the group. This can obviously make for a frustrating and unpleasant collaborative experience.

Computers and the Internet have dramatically extended the possibilities of collaborative writing projects. With tools like e-mail, chat room, and instant messaging, students can collaborate “asynchronously:” that is, they can work with each other without having to meet in a specific place or at a specific time. While “live” communication tools like chat and instant messaging require participants to be interacting at the same time, students can still

collaborate with each other without having to be in the same place. Chances are, you have already used email or instant messaging to do a form of “collaboration” online. Most of my students are familiar with these technologies, and many of my students use things like email or instant messaging to plan meetings or evening plans, even to do homework. Collaborative peer review doesn’t need to be any more complicated than this: emailing each other (usually by including a group of email addresses in the “to” line) or chatting with each other with one of the many commercial chat and instant messaging services.

The Internet also has a lot of potential as a collaborative writing tool. For “very immediate and intimate” styles of collaborations, writers can work together on the same web site, but they can do it asynchronously. For projects that tend toward the “very distant” side of the collaboration spectrum, web writers can work on parts of a web site individually and then assemble them later. For more detail on creating collaborative web projects, see chapter 12, “The Web-based Research Project.” This title will change...

Of course, collaborating with each other with computers and the Internet is slightly different than collaborating “face to face” with each other. Here are some things to be think about and some things to avoid as you try to collaborate asynchronously:

- Make sure everyone in your collaborative group is included in the discussion. This can be a problem with some email applications since automatically replying to the sender of a message doesn’t necessarily mean it will go to all of the members of your group. To make sure no one is left out, make sure that all members of the group have everyone’s correct email address, and make sure all of these addresses appear in the “To:” line of your email software. To include multiple email addresses in the “To:” line, separate each email address with a comma.
- Make sure everyone in your collaborative group understands how to read and write messages in the format they are being sent. For example, if you and your group members decide to send attachments of writing projects to each other, make sure that

everyone has access to the appropriate software and understands how to use it.

- All of the group members need to read and respond to each other's messages in a timely fashion. If some group members are in the habit of checking their email once every other week, that person will have to change their habits for the purposes of this project. Collaboration with email works best when each member of the group checks their email at least once a day.
- Keep in mind the rules of good "netiquette" when working with your group members. In chapter two, "Understanding and Using the Library and the Internet for Research," I provided a brief guide to the practice of good online etiquette, or "netiquette." I would encourage you to review those guidelines as you work with your group members online. Remember that simple misunderstandings and miscommunications, the sorts of things that are usually easy to clarify in "face-to-face" interactions, can sometimes become arguments or "flames" online. So be sure to use common sense courtesy, and remember that there are "real people" behind the emails that you are sending.
- Remember that some things are better done "face-to-face," so be prepared to schedule some more traditional collaboration time. Computers and the Internet are rarely suitable to serve as a complete substitution for more traditional "face-to-face" collaboration experiences. While collaborating via e-mail is extremely convenient, it often isn't very efficient. Writing and reading tasks that would only a few moments to discuss "face-to-face" can take days or longer to discuss online. So while using electronic tools like email can minimize the number of more traditional collaboration meetings you will need to have with your group members, it probably won't eliminate them entirely.

43. Chapter Six: The Annotated Bibliography Exercise

- What is an Annotated Bibliography?
- Why Write Annotated Bibliographies?
- “How many sources do I need?”
- Using Computers to Write Annotated Bibliographies
- The Process of Writing the Annotated Bibliography
 - * A Sample Assignment
 - * The Annotated Bibliography and Collaboration
 - * Questions to Ask while Writing and Researching
 - * Review and Revision

What is an Annotated Bibliography?

As you develop a working thesis for your research project and begin to collect different pieces of evidence, you will soon find yourself needing some sort of system for keeping track of everything. The system discussed in this chapter is an annotated bibliography, which is a list of sources on a particular topic that includes a brief summary of what each source is about. This writing exercise is a bit different from the others in this part of *The Process of Research Writing* in that isn't an “essay” per se; rather it is an ongoing writing project that you will be “building” as you discover new pieces of evidence for your research project.

Here is an example of an entry from an annotated bibliography in MLA style:

Parsons, Matt. “Protecting Children on the Electronic Frontier: A Law Enforcement Challenge.” *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* 69.10 (2000): 22-26.

This article is about an educational program used by the U.S. Navy to educate people in the Navy and their families about some of the

things that are potentially dangerous to children about the Internet. Parsons says that the educational program has been effective.

Annotated bibliography entries have two parts. The top of the entry is the citation. It is the part that starts “Parsons, Matt” and that lists information like the name of the writer, where the evidence appeared, the date of publication, and other publishing information.

Hyperlink: For guidelines on how to properly write citations for your Annotated bibliographies, see Chapter 12, “Citing Your Research Using MLA or APA Style.”

The second part of the entry is the summary of the evidence being cited. A good annotated bibliography summary provides enough information in a sentence or two to help you and others understand what the research is about in a neutral and non-opinionated way.

The first two sentences of this annotation are an example of this sort of very brief, “just the facts” sort of summary. In the brief summaries of entries in an annotated bibliography, stay away from making evaluations about the source—“I didn’t like this article very much” or “I thought this article was great.” The most important goal of your brief summary is to help you, colleagues, and other potential readers get an idea about the subject of the particular piece of evidence.

Summaries can be challenging to write, especially when you are trying to write them about longer and more complicated sources of research. Keep these guidelines in mind as you write your own summaries.

- Keep your summary short. Good summaries for annotated bibliographies are not “complete” summaries; rather, they provide the highlights of the evidence in as brief and concise a manner as possible, no more than a sentence or two.
- Don’t quote from what you are summarizing. Summaries will be more useful to you and your colleagues if you write them in your own words. Instead of quoting directly what you think is the point

of the piece of evidence, try to paraphrase it. (For more information on paraphrasing your evidence, see Chapter 3, “Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Avoiding Plagiarism”).

- Don’t “cut and paste” from database abstracts. Many of the periodical indexes that are available as part of your library’s computer system include abstracts of articles. Do no “cut” this abstract material and then “paste” it into your own annotated bibliography. For one thing, this is plagiarism. Second, “cutting and pasting” from the abstract defeats one of the purposes of writing summaries and creating an annotated bibliography in the first place, which is to help you understand and explain your research.

Different writers will inevitably write slightly different summaries of the same evidence. Some differences between different writers’ summaries of the same piece of evidence result from different interpretations of what is important in the research; there’s nothing wrong with that.

However, two summaries from different writers should both provide a similar summary. In other words, it’s not acceptable when the difference of interpretation is the result of a lack of understanding of the evidence.

Why Write Annotated Bibliographies?

An annotated bibliography is an excellent way to keep track of the research you gather for your project. Make no mistake about it— it is extremely important that you keep track of all of your evidence for your research project, and that you keep track of it from the beginning of the process of research writing.

There’s nothing more frustrating than finding an excellent article or book chapter you are excited about incorporating into your research project, only to realize you have forgotten where you found the article or book chapter in the first place. This is extremely frustrating, and it’s easily avoided by doing something like writing an annotated bibliography.

You could use other methods for keeping track of your research.

For example, you could use note cards and write down the source

information as a proper citation, then write down the information about the source that is important. If the material you know you want to use from a certain source is short enough, you might even write a direct quote, which is where you write down word for word what the source says exactly as it is written. At other times, you can write a paraphrase, which is where you write down what the source means using your own words.

While note cards and other methods have their advantages, annotated bibliographies are an extremely useful tool for keeping track of your research. An annotated bibliography:

- Centralizes your research into one document that you can keep track of both as a print-out of a word-processed file and as a file you save electronically.
- Allows you to “copy and paste” citation information into the works cited part of your research project.

An annotated bibliography also gives you the space to start writing and thinking a bit about how some of your research might fit into your project. Consider these two sample entries from an annotated bibliography from a research project on pharmaceutical advertising:

Siegel, Marc. “Fighting the Drug (ad) Wars.” *The Nation* 17 June 2002: 21.

Siegel, who is a doctor himself, writes about how drug advertising has undermined the communication between doctors and patients.

He says that drug ads have driven up the costs of prescription drugs, particularly big selling drugs like those for cholesterol.

Wechsler, Jill. “Minority Docs See DTC Ads as Way to Address ‘Race Gap.’” *Pharmaceutical Executive* May 2002: 32, 34. WilsonSelect Database. Eastern Michigan University Halle Library. 20 October 2002. <<http://www.emich.edu/halle>>.

This article is about a study that said that African-American doctors saw advertising of prescription drugs as a way of educating their patients. The ads are useful because they talk about diseases that affect African-Americans.

Even from the limited amount of information available in these

entries, it's clear that a relationship between these articles exists.

Both are similar articles about how the doctor/patient relationship is affected by drug advertising. But both are also different. The first article is from the newspaper *The Nation*, which is in many ways similar to an academic journal and which is also known for its liberal views. The second article is from a trade journal (also similar to academic journals in many ways) that obviously is an advocate for the pharmaceutical industry.

In other words, in the process of compiling an annotated bibliography, you are doing more than keeping track of your research. You are starting to make some comparisons and beginning to see some relationships between your evidence, a process that will become increasingly important as you gather more research and work your way through the different exercises that lead to the research project.

But remember: However you decide to keep track of your research as you progress through your project—annotated bibliography, note cards, or another method—the important thing is that you need to keep track of your research as you progress through your project!

How many sources do I need?

Inevitably, students in research writing classes always ask how many sources they need to include in their research projects. In one sense, “how many sources do I need?” is a utilitarian question, one usually attached to a student’s exploration of what it will take to get a particular grade. Considered more abstractly, this question is also an effort to explore the scope of a research project. Like a certain page or word count requirement, the question “how many sources do I need?” is an effort to get a handle on the scope of the research project assignment. In that sense, asking about the number of sources is probably a good idea, a little like asking how much something weighs before you attempt to pick it up.

But ultimately, there is no right or wrong answer to this question.

Longer research projects tend to have evidence from more different sources than shorter projects, but there is no cut-and-dry

formula where “X” number of pages will equal “X” number of sources.

However, an annotated bibliography should contain significantly more entries than you intend or expect to include in your research project. For example, if you think you will need or if your instructor requires you to have research from about seven different sources, you should probably have about 15 different entries on your annotated bibliography.

The reasons you need to find twice as many sources as you are likely to use is that you want to find and use the best research you can reasonably find, not the first pieces of research you can find. Usually, researchers have to look at a lot more information than they would ever include in a research writing project to begin making judgements about their research. And by far the worst thing you can do in your research is to stop right after you have found the number of sources required by the instructor for your project.

Using Computers to Write Annotated Bibliographies

Personal computers, word-processing software, and the Internet can make putting together an annotated bibliography more useful and a lot easier. If you use word-processing software to create your annotated bibliography, you can dramatically simplify the process of creating a “works cited” or “references” page, which is a list of the sources you quote in your research project. All you will have to do is “copy and paste” the citation from the annotated bibliography into your research project—that is, using the functions of your computer and word processing software, “copy” the full citation that you have completed on your annotated bibliography page and “paste” it into the works cited page of your research project.

This same sort of “copy and paste” function also comes in handy when doing research on the web. For example, you can usually copy and paste the citation information from your library’s online database for pieces of evidence you are interested in reading. In most cases, you should be able to “copy and paste” information you

find in your library's online database into a word processing file. Many library databases—both for books and for periodicals—also have a feature that will allow you to email yourself results from a search.

Keep two things in mind about using computers for your annotated bibliographies:

- You will have to reformat whatever information you get from the Internet or your library's databases in order to meet MLA or APA style.
- Don't use the copy and paste feature to plagiarize! Simply copying things like abstracts defeats one of the important purposes for writing an annotated bibliography in the first place, and it's cheating.

Assignment: Writing an Annotated Bibliography

As you conduct your research for your research writing project, compile an annotated bibliography with 15-20 entries. Each entry in your annotated bibliography should contain a citation, a brief summary of the cited material. You will be completing the project in phases and a complete and revised version of it will be due when you have completed your research.

You should think of your annotated bibliography as having roughly twice as many sources as the number of sources you will need to include for the research project, but your instructor might have a different requirement regarding the number of sources required. Also, you should work on this assignment in parts. Going to the library and trying to complete this assignment in one sitting could turn this into a dreadful writing experience. However, if you complete it in stages, you will have a much better understanding of how your resources relate to each other.

You will probably need to discuss with your instructor the style of citation you need to follow for your research project and your annotated bibliography. Following a citation style isn't difficult to do, but you will want to be consistent and aware of the "rules" from the beginning. In other words, if you start off using MLA style, don't switch to APA style halfway through your annotated

bibliography or your research project.

Hyperlink: For an explanation of the differences of and the guidelines for using both MLA and APA style, see “Chapter 12, “Citing Your Researching Using MLA or APA Style.”

Last, but not least, you will need to discuss with your instructor the sorts of materials you need to include in your research and your annotated bibliography. You may be required to include a balance of research from scholarly and non-scholarly sources, and from “traditional” print resources (books, magazines, journals, newspapers, and so forth) and the Internet.

Questions to ask while writing and researching

- Would you classify the material as a primary or a secondary source? Does the research seem to be difficult to categorize this way? (For more information on primary and secondary sources, see Chapter 1, “Thinking Critically About Research” and the section “Primary versus Secondary Research”).
- Is the research from a scholarly or a non-scholarly publication? Does the research seem difficult to categorize this way?
- Is the research from the Internet—a web page, a newsgroup, an email message, etc.? Remember: while Internet research is not necessarily “bad” research, you do need to be more careful in evaluating the credibility of Internet-based sources. (For more information on evaluating Internet research, see Chapter 1, “Thinking Critically About Research,” and the sections “The Internet: The Researcher’s Challenge” and “Evaluating the Quality and Credibility of Your Research.”)
- Do you know who wrote the material you are including in your annotated bibliography? What qualifications does your source say the writer has?
- Why do you think the writer wrote it? Do they have a self-interest or a political viewpoint that might make them overly biased?
- Besides the differences between scholarly, non-scholarly, and Internet sources, what else do you know about where your research was published? Is it an academic book? An article in a

respected journal? An article in a news magazine or newspaper?

- When was it published? Given your research topic, how important do you think the date of publication is?
- Are you keeping your summaries brief and to the point, focusing on the point your research source is trying to make?
- If it's part of the assignment, are you including a sentence or two about how you see this piece of research fitting into your overall research project?

Revision and Review

Because of its ongoing nature, revising an annotated bibliography is a bit different than the typical revision process. Take opportunities as you compile your annotated bibliography to show your work in progress to your classmates, your instructor, and other readers you trust. If you are working collaboratively on your research projects, you will certainly want to share your annotated bibliography with classmates who are working on a similar topic. Working together like this can be a very useful way to get more ideas about where your research is going.

It is best to approach the annotated bibliography in smaller steps—five or six entries at a time. If that's how you're approaching this project, then you will always be in a process of revision and review with your classmates and your instructor. You and your readers (your instructor and your classmates) should think about these questions as you revise, review, and add entries:

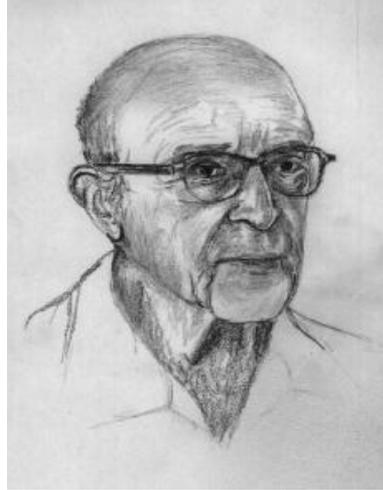
- Are the summaries you are including brief and to the point? Do your readers understand what the cited articles are about?
- Are you following a particular style guide consistently?
- If you are including a sentence or two about each of your resources, how do these sentences fit with your working thesis? Are they clarifying parts of your working thesis that were previously unclear? Are they suggesting changes to the approach you took when you began the research process?
- Based on the research you have so far, what other types of research do you think you need to find?

PART V
LET'S ARGUE!

44. Rogerian Argument

The Rogerian argument, inspired by the influential psychologist Carl Rogers, aims to find compromise on a controversial issue.

If you are using the Rogerian approach your introduction to the argument should accomplish three objectives:



Carl Rogers

1. **Introduce the author and work**

Usually, you will introduce the author and work in the first sentence, as in this

example: *In Dwight Okita's "In Response to Executive Order 9066," the narrator addresses an inevitable by-product of war – racism.* The first time you refer to the author, refer to him or her by his or her full name. After that, refer to the author by last name only. Never refer to an author by his or her first name only.

2. **Provide the audience a short but concise summary of the work to which you are responding**

Remember, your audience has already read the work you are responding to. Therefore, you do not need to provide a lengthy summary. Focus on the main points of the work to which you are responding and use direct quotations sparingly. Direct quotations work best when they are powerful and compelling.

3. **State the main issue addressed in the work** Your thesis, or claim, will come after you summarize the two sides of the issue.

The Introduction

The following is an example of how the introduction of a Rogerian argument can be written. The topic is racial profiling.

In Dwight Okita's "In Response to Executive Order 9066," the narrator — a young Japanese-American — writes a letter to the government, who has ordered her family into a relocation camp after Pearl Harbor. In the letter, the narrator details the people in her life, from her father to her best friend at school. Since the narrator is of Japanese descent, her best friend accuses her of "trying to start a war" (18). The narrator is seemingly too naïve to realize the ignorance of this statement, and tells the government that she asked this friend to plant tomato seeds in her honor. Though Okita's poem deals specifically with World War II, the issue of race relations during wartime is still relevant. Recently, with the outbreaks of terrorism in the United States, Spain, and England, many are calling for racial profiling to stifle terrorism. The issue has sparked debate, with one side calling it racism and the other calling it common sense.

Once you have written your introduction, you must now show the two sides to the debate you are addressing. Though there are always more than two sides to a debate, Rogerian arguments put two in stark opposition to one another. Summarize each side, then provide a middle path. Your summary of the two sides will be your first two body paragraphs. Use quotations from outside sources to effectively illustrate the position of each side.

An outline for a Rogerian argument might look like this:

- Introduction
- Side A
- Side B
- Claim
- Conclusion

The Claim

Since the goal of Rogerian argument is to find a common ground between two opposing positions, you must identify the shared beliefs or assumptions of each side. In the example above, both sides of the racial profiling issue want the U.S. A solid Rogerian argument acknowledges the desires of each side, and tries to accommodate both. Again, using the racial profiling example above, both sides desire a safer society, perhaps a better solution would focus on more objective measures than race; an effective start would be to use more screening technology on public transportation. Once you have a claim that disarms the central dispute, you should support the claim with evidence, and quotations when appropriate.

Quoting Effectively

Remember, you should quote to illustrate a point you are making. You should not, however, quote to simply take up space. Make sure all quotations are compelling and intriguing: Consider the following example. In “The Danger of Political Correctness,” author Richard Stein asserts that, “the desire to not offend has now become more important than protecting national security” (52). This statement sums up the beliefs of those in favor of profiling in public places.

The Conclusion

Your conclusion should:

- Bring the essay back to what is discussed in the introduction
- Tie up loose ends
- End on a thought-provoking note

The following is a sample conclusion:

Though the debate over racial profiling is sure to continue, each side desires to make the United States a safer place. With that goal in mind, our society deserves better security measures than merely searching a person who appears a bit dark. We cannot waste time with such subjective matters, especially when we have technology that could more effectively locate potential terrorists. Sure, installing metal detectors and cameras on public transportation is costly, but feeling safe in public is priceless.

45. Classical Essay Structure

The following videos provide an explanation of the classical model of structuring a persuasive argument. [You can access the slides alone, without narration, here.](#)



An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://library.achievingthedream.org/sanjacenglishcomp2/?p=65>



An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://library.achievingthedream.org/sanjacenglishcomp2/?p=65>

46. Chapter Ten: The Research Essay

- A “Research Essay” Instead of A “Research Paper”
- Getting Ready: Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Research Essay
- Creating and Revising a Formal Outline
- The Introduction
- Giving Your Readers Background Information
- Weaving in Evidence to Support Your Points
- Accounting for the Opposition: Antithetical Arguments
- Conclusions
- Works Cited/Bibliography

A “Research Essay” or a “Research Project” instead of a “Research Paper”

Throughout this book, I’ve purposefully avoided the term “research paper” for three reasons. First, while teachers assign and students write essays in college classes that are commonly called “research papers,” there is no clear consensus on the definition of a research paper. This is because the definition of “research” differs from field to field, and even between instructors within the same discipline teaching the same course.

Second, while the papers we tend to call “research papers” do indeed include research, most other kinds of college writing require at least some research as well. All of the exercises outlined in Part Two of the book, “Exercises in the Process of Research” are examples of this: while none of these assignments are “research papers,” all of them involve research in order to make a point.

A third reason has to do with the connotations of the word “paper” versus the word “essay.” For me, “paper” suggests something static, concrete, routine, and uninteresting—think of the negative connotations of the term bureaucratic “paperwork,” or the policing

mechanism of “showing your papers” to the authorities. On the other hand, the word “essay” has more positive connotations: dynamic, flexible, unique, and creative. The definitions of essay in dictionaries I have examined include terms like “attempt,” “endeavor,” and “a try.” As a writer, I would much rather work on something that was a dynamic and creative endeavor rather than a static and routine document. My hope is that you, as a student and a writer, feel the same way.

This chapter is about writing a research essay. While I cannot offer you exact guidelines of how to do this for each and every situation where you will be asked to write such a paper or essay, I can provide you with the general guidelines and advice you’ll need to successfully complete these sorts of writing assignments. In the next chapter, I’ll describe a few alternatives to presenting your research in a conventional essay.

Getting Ready: Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Research Essay

If you are coming to this chapter after working through some of the writing exercises in Part Two, “Exercises in the Process of Research,” then you are ready to dive into your research essay. By this point, you probably have done some combination of the following things:

- Thought about different kinds of evidence to support your research;
- Been to the library and the internet to gather evidence;
- Developed an annotated bibliography for your evidence;
- Written and revised a working thesis for your research;
- Critically analyzed and written about key pieces of your evidence;
- Considered the reasons for disagreeing and questioning the premise of your working thesis; and
- Categorized and evaluated your evidence.

In other words, you already have been working on your research essay through the process of research writing.

But before diving into writing a research essay, you need to take a

moment to ask yourself, your colleagues, and your teacher some important questions about the nature of your project.

- What is the specific assignment?

It is crucial to consider the teacher's directions and assignment for your research essay. The teacher's specific directions will in large part determine what you are required to do to successfully complete your essay, just as they did with the exercises you completed in part two of this book.

If you have been given the option to choose your own research topic, the assignment for the research essay itself might be open-ended. For example:

Write a research essay about the working thesis that you have been working on with the previous writing assignments. Your essay should be about ten pages long, it should include ample evidence to support your point, and it should follow MLA style.

Some research writing assignments are more specific than this, of course. For example, here is a research writing assignment for a poetry class:

Write a seven to ten page research essay about one of the poets discussed in the last five chapters of our textbook and his or her poems. Besides your analysis and interpretation of the poems, be sure to cite scholarly research that supports your points. You should also include research on the cultural and historic contexts the poet was working within. Be sure to use MLA documentation style throughout your essay.

Obviously, you probably wouldn't be able to write a research project about the problems of advertising prescription drugs on television in a History class that focused on the American Revolution.

- What is the main purpose of your research essay?

Has the goal of your essay been to answer specific questions based on assigned reading material and your research? Or has the purpose of your research been more open-ended and abstract, perhaps to learn more about issues and topics to share with a wider audience? In other words, is your research essay supposed

to answer questions that indicate that you have learned about a set and defined subject matter (usually a subject matter which your teacher already more or less understands), or is your essay supposed to discover and discuss an issue that is potentially unknown to your audience, including your teacher.

The “demonstrating knowledge about a defined subject matter” purpose for research is quite common in academic writing. For example, a political science professor might ask students to write a research project about the Bill of Rights in order to help her students learn about the Bill of Rights and to demonstrate an understanding of these important amendments to the U.S. Constitution. But presumably, the professor already knows a fair amount the Bill of Rights, which means she is probably more concerned with finding out if you can demonstrate that you have learned and have formed an opinion about the Bill of Rights based on your research and study.

“Discovering and discussing an issue that is potentially unknown to your audience” is also a very common assignment, particularly in composition courses. As the examples included throughout *The Process of Research Writing* suggest, the subject matter for research essays that are designed to inform your audience about something new is almost unlimited.

Hyperlink: See “Chapter 5: The Working Thesis Exercise” and the guidelines for “Working With Assigned Topics” and “Coming Up With a Topic of Your Own Idea.”

Even if all of your classmates have been researching a similar research idea, chances are your particular take on that idea has gone in a different direction. For example, you and some of your classmates might have begun your research by studying the effect on children of violence on television, either because that was a topic assigned by the teacher or because you simply shared an interest in the general topic. But as you have focused and refined this initially broad topic, you and your classmates will inevitably go into different directions, perhaps focusing on different genres (violence in cartoons versus live-action shows), on different age

groups (the effect of violent television on pre-schoolers versus the effect on teen-agers), or on different conclusions about the effect of television violence in the first place (it is harmful versus there is no real effect).

- Who is the main audience for your research writing project? Besides your teacher and your classmates, who are you trying to reach with your research? Who are you trying to convince as a result of the research you have done? What do you think is fair to assume that this audience knows or doesn't know about the topic of your research project? Purpose and audience are obviously closely related because the reason for writing something has a lot to do with who you are writing it for, and who you are writing something for certainly has a lot to do with your purposes in writing in the first place.

In composition classes, it is usually presumed that your audience includes your teacher and your classmates. After all, one of the most important reasons you are working on this research project in the first place is to meet the requirements of this class, and your teacher and your classmates have been with you as an audience every step of the way.

Contemplating an audience beyond your peers and teachers can sometimes be difficult, but if you have worked through the exercises in Part Two of *The Process of Research Writing*, you probably have at least some sense of an audience beyond the confines of your class. For example, one of the purposes “Critique Exercise” in Chapter 7 is to explain to your readers why they might be interested in reading the text that you are critiquing. The goal of the “Antithesis Exercise” in Chapter 8 is to consider the position of those who would disagree with the position you are taking. So directly and indirectly, you've probably been thinking about your readers for a while now.

Still, it might be useful for you to try to be even more specific about your audience as you begin your research essay. Do you know any “real people” (friends, neighbors, relatives, etc.) who might be an ideal reader for your research essay? Can you at least

imagine what an ideal reader might want to get out of reading your research essay?

I'm not trying to suggest that you ought to ignore your teacher and your classmates as your primary audience. But research essays, like most forms of writing, are strongest when they are intended for a more specific audience, either someone the writer knows or someone the writer can imagine. Teachers and classmates are certainly part of this audience, but trying to reach an audience of potential readers beyond the classroom and the assignment will make for a stronger essay.

- What sort of “voice” or “authority” do you think is appropriate for your research project?

Do you want to take on a personal and more casual tone in your writing, or do you want to present a less personal and less casual tone? Do you want to use first person, the “I” pronoun, or do you want to avoid it?

My students are often surprised to learn that it is perfectly acceptable in many types of research and academic writing for writers to use the first person pronoun, “I.” It is the tone I’ve taken with this textbook, and it is an approach that is very common in many fields, particularly those that tend to be grouped under the term “the humanities.

For example, consider this paragraph from Kelly Ritter’s essay “The Economics of Authorship: Online Paper Mills, Student Writers, and First-Year Composition,” which appeared in June 2005 issue of one of the leading journals in the field of composition and rhetoric, *College Composition and Communication*:

When considering whether, when, and how often to purchase an academic paper from an online paper-mill site, first-year composition students therefore work with two factors that I wish to investigate here in pursuit of answering the questions posed above: the negligible desire to do one’s own writing, or to be an author, with all that entails in this era of faceless authorship vis-à-vis the Internet; and the ever-shifting concept of “integrity,” or responsibility when purchasing work, particularly in the

anonymous arena of online consumerism. (603, emphasis added)

Throughout her thoughtful and well-researched essay, Ritter uses first person pronouns (“I” and “my,” for example) when it is appropriate: “I think,” “I believe,” “my experiences,” etc. This sort of use of the personal pronoun is not limited to publications in English studies. This example comes from the journal *Law and Society Review* (Volume 39, Issue 2, 2005), which is an interdisciplinary journal concerned with the connections between society and the law. The article is titled “Preparing to Be Colonized: Land Tenure and Legal Strategy in Nineteenth-Century Hawaii” and it was written by law professor Stuart Banner: The story of Hawaii complicates the conventional account of colonial land tenure reform. Why did the land tenure reform movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries receive its earliest implementation in, of all places, Hawaii? Why did the Hawaiians do this to themselves? What did they hope to gain from it? This article attempts to answer these questions. At the end, I briefly suggest why the answers may shed some light on the process of colonization in other times and places, and thus why the answers may be of interest to people who are not historians of Hawaii. (275, emphasis added)

Banner uses both “I” and “my” throughout the article, again when it’s appropriate.

Even this cursory examination of the sort of writing academic writers publish in scholarly journals will demonstrate my point: academic journals routinely publish articles that make use of the first person pronoun. Writers in academic fields that tend to be called “the sciences” (chemistry, biology, physics, and so forth, but also more “soft” sciences like sociology or psychology) are more likely to avoid the personal pronoun or to refer to themselves as “the researcher,” “the author,” or something similar. But even in these fields, “I” does frequently appear.

The point is this: using “I” is not inherently wrong for your research essay or for any other type of academic essay. However, you need to be aware of your choice of first person versus third person and

your role as a writer in your research project.

Generally speaking, the use of the first person “I” pronoun creates a greater closeness and informality in your text, which can create a greater sense of intimacy between the writer and the reader. This is the main reason I’ve used “I” in *The Process of Research*

Writing: using the first person pronoun in a textbook like this lessens the distance between us (you as student/reader and me as writer), and I think it makes for easier reading of this material.

If you do decide to use a first person voice in your essay, make sure that the focus stays on your research and does not shift to you the writer. When teachers say “don’t use I,” what they are really cautioning against is the overuse of the word “I” such that the focus of the essay shifts from the research to “you” the writer.

While mixing autobiography and research writing can be interesting (as I will touch on in the next chapter on alternatives to the research essay), it is not the approach you want to take in a traditional academic research essay.

The third person pronoun (and avoidance of the use of “I”) tends to have the opposite effect of the first person pronoun: it creates a sense of distance between writer and reader, and it lends a greater formality to the text. This can be useful in research writing because it tends to emphasize research and evidence in order to persuade an audience.

(I should note that much of this textbook is presented in what is called second person voice, using the “you” pronoun. Second person is very effective for writing instructions, but generally speaking, I would discourage you from taking this approach in your research project.)

In other words, “first person” and “third person” are both potentially acceptable choices, depending on the assignment, the main purpose of your assignment, and the audience you are trying to reach. Just be sure to consistent—don’t switch between third person and first person in the same essay.

- What is your working thesis and how has it changed and evolved up to this point?

If you've worked through some of the exercises in part two of *The Process of Research Writing*, you already know how important it is to have an evolving working thesis. If you haven't read this part of the textbook, you might want to do so before getting too far along with your research project. Chapter Five, "The Working Thesis Exercise," is an especially important chapter to read and review. Remember: a working thesis is one that changes and evolves as you write and research. It is perfectly acceptable to change your thesis in the writing process based on your research.

Exercise 10.1

Working alone or in small groups, answer these questions about your research essay before you begin writing it:

- What is the specific research writing assignment? Do you have written instructions from the teacher for this assignment? Are there any details regarding page length, arrangement, or the amount of support evidence that you need to address? In your own words, restate the assignment for the research essay.
- What is the purpose of the research writing assignment? Is the main purpose of your research essay to address specific questions, to provide new information to your audience, or some combination of the two?
- Who is the audience for your research writing assignment? Besides your teacher and classmates, who else might be interested in reading your research essay?
- What sort of voice are you going to use in your research essay? What do you think would be more appropriate for your project, first person or third person?
- What is your working thesis? Think back to the ways you began developing your working thesis in the exercises in part two of *The Process of Research Writing*. In what ways has your working thesis changed?

If you are working with a small group of classmates, do each of you agree with the basic answers to these questions? Do the answers to these questions spark other questions that you have and need to have answered by your classmates and your teacher before you

begin your research writing project?

Once you have some working answers to these basic questions, it's time to start thinking about actually writing the research essay itself. For most research essay projects, you will have to consider at least most of these components in the process:

- The Formal Outline
- The Introduction
- Background Information
- Evidence to Support Your Points
- Antithetical Arguments and Answers
- The Conclusion
- Works Cited or Reference Information

The rest of this chapter explains these parts of the research essay and it concludes with an example that brings these elements together.

Creating and Revising a Formal Outline

Frequently, research essay assignments will also require you to include a formal outline, usually before the essay begins following the cover page. Formal outlines are sort of table of contents for your essay: they give the reader a summary of the main points and sub-points of what they are about to read.

The standard format for an outline looks something like this:

- I. First Major Point
 - A. First sub-point of the first major point
 1. First sub-point of the first sub-point
 2. Second sub-point of the first sub-point
 - B. Second sub-point of the first major point
- II. Second Major point

And so on. Alternatively, you may also be able to use a decimal outline to note the different points. For example:

1. First Major point
 - 1.1. First sub-point of the first major point
 - 1.1.1 First sub-point of the first sub-point
 - 1.1.2 Second sub-point of the first sub-point
 - 1.2. Second sub-point of the first major point

2. Second Major point

Sometimes, teachers ask student writers to include a “thesis statement” for their essay at the beginning of the outline.

Generally speaking, if you have one “point,” be it a major point or a sub-point, or sub-point of a sub-point (perhaps a sub-sub-point!), you need to have at least a second similar point. In other words, if you have a sub-point you are labeling “A.,” you should have one labeled “B.” The best rule of thumb I can offer in terms of the grammar and syntax of your various points is to keep them short and consistent.

Now, while the formal outline is generally the first thing in your research essay after the title page, writing one is usually the last step in the writing process. Don’t start writing your research essay by writing a formal outline first because it might limit the changes you can make to your essay during the writing process.

Of course, a formal outline is quite different from a working outline, one where you are more informally writing down ideas and “sketching” out plans for your research essay before or as you write. There are no specific rules or methods for making a working outline– it could be a simple list of points, it could include details and reminders for the writer, or anything in-between. Making a working outline is a good idea, particularly if your research essay will be a relatively long and complex one. Just be sure to not confuse these two very different outlining tools. If you’re having trouble starting to write your research essay, revisit some of the tips I suggest in the “Brainstorming for Ideas” section of Chapter Five, “The Working Thesis Exercise.”

Exercise 10.2

- Working alone or in small groups, make a formal outline of an already completed essay. You can work with any of the sample essays in previous chapters in *The Process of Research Writing* or any other brief sample. Don’t work with the sample research essay at the end of this chapter, though– there is a sample formal outline included with it.

- If you and your classmates made a formal outline of the same essay, compare your outlines. Were there any significant differences in your approaches to making an outline? What were they?

The Introduction

Research essays have to begin somewhere, and this somewhere is called the “introduction.” By “beginning,” I don’t necessarily mean only the first paragraph—introductions in traditional research essays are frequently several paragraphs long. Generally speaking though, the introduction is about 25 percent or less of the total essay; in other words, in a ten-page, traditional research essay, the introduction would rarely be longer than two and a half pages.

Introductions have two basic jobs to perform:

- To get the reader’s attention; and
- To briefly explain what the rest of the essay will be about.

What is appropriate or what works to get the reader’s attention depends on the audience you have in mind for your research essay and the sort of voice or authority you want to have with your essay.

Frequently, it is a good idea to include some background material on the issue being discussed or a brief summary of the different sides of an argument. If you have an anecdote from either your own experience or your research that you think is relevant to the rest of your project or will be interesting to your readers, you might want to consider beginning with that story. Generally speaking, you should avoid mundane or clichéd beginnings like “This research essay is about...” or “In society today...”

The second job of an introduction in a traditional research essay is to explain to the reader what the rest of the essay is going to be about. This is frequently done by stating your “thesis statement,” which is more or less where your working thesis has ended up after its inevitable changes and revisions.

A thesis statement can work in a lot of different places in the introduction, not only as the last sentence at the end of the first paragraph. It is also possible to let your readers know what your

thesis is without ever directly stating it in a single sentence. This approach is common in a variety of different types of writing that use research, though traditionally, most academic research essays have a specific and identifiable thesis statement.

Let's take a look at this example of a WEAK introductory paragraph:

In our world today, there are many health problems, such as heart disease and cancer. Another serious problem that affects many people in this country is diabetes, particularly Type II diabetes.

Diabetes is a disease where the body does not produce enough insulin, and the body needs insulin to process sugars and starches.

It is a serious disease that effects millions of people, many of whom don't even know they have the disease. In this essay, I will discuss how eating sensibly and getting plenty of exercise are the most important factors in preventing Type 2 Diabetes.

The first two sentences of this introduction don't have much to do with the topic of diabetes, and the following sentences are rather vague. Also, this introduction doesn't offer much information about what the rest of the essay will be about, and it certainly doesn't capture the reader's attention.

Now, consider this revised and BETTER introductory paragraph:

Diabetes is a disease where the body does not produce enough of insulin to process starches and sugars effectively. According to the American Diabetes Association web site, over 18 million Americans have diabetes, and as many as 5.2 million of these people are unaware that they have it. Perhaps even more striking is that the most common form of diabetes, Type 2 Diabetes, is largely preventable with a sensible diet and exercise.

This introduction is much more specific and to the point, and because of that, it does a better job of getting the reader's attention. Also, because it is very specific, this introduction gives a better sense to the reader where the rest of the essay will be leading.

While the introduction is of course the first thing your readers will see, make sure it is one of the last things you decide to revise in the process of writing your research essay. You will probably start

writing your essay by writing an introduction—after all, you’ve got to start somewhere. But it is nearly impossible to write a very effective introduction if the rest of the essay hasn’t been written yet, which is why you will certainly want to return to the introduction to do some revision work after you’ve written your essay.

Exercise 10.3

- Working alone or in small groups, revise one of the following “bad” introductions, being sure to get the reader’s attention, to make clear what the essay being introduced would be about, and to eliminate unneeded words and clichés. Of course, since you don’t have the entire essay, so you may have to take certain liberties with these passages. But the goal is to improve these “bad beginnings” without changing their meaning.

Example #1:

In society today, there are many problems with television shows. A lot of them are not very entertaining at all. Others are completely inappropriate for children. It’s hard to believe that these things are on TV at all. In fact, because of a lot of the bad things that have been on television in recent years, broadcasters have had to censor more and more shows. They have done some of this voluntarily, but they have also been required to do this by irate advertisers and viewers as well. For example, consider Janet Jackson’s famous “wardrobe malfunction” at the 2004 Super Bowl. I contend that Jackson’s performance in the 2004 Super Bowl, accident or not, has led to more censorship on television.

Example #2:

There are a lot of challenges to being a college student. We all know that studying and working hard will pay off in the end. A lot of college students also enjoy to cheer for their college teams. A lot of colleges and universities will do whatever it takes to have winning teams. In fact, some colleges and universities are even willing to allow in students with bad test scores and very low high school grades as long as they are great athletes and can make the team better. All of this leads to a difficult to deny observation:

college sports, especially Division I football, is full of corruption and it is damaging the academic integrity of some of our best universities.

Background Information (or Helping Your Reader Find a Context)

It is always important to explain, contextualize, and orientate your readers within any piece of writing. Your research essay is no different in that you need to include background information on your topic in order to create the right context for the project.

In one sense, you're giving your reader important background information every time you fully introduce and explain a piece of evidence or an argument you are making. But often times, research essays include some background information about the overall topic near the beginning of the essay. Sometimes, this is done briefly as part of the introduction section of the essay; at other times, this is best accomplished with a more detailed section after the introduction and near the beginning of the essay.

How much background information you need to provide and how much context you need to establish depends a great deal on how you answer the “Getting Ready” questions at the beginning of this chapter, particularly the questions in which you are asked to consider your purpose and your audience. If one of the purposes of your essay is to convince a primary audience of readers who know little about your topic or your argument, you will have to provide more background information than you would if the main purpose of your essay was to convince a primary audience that knows a lot about your topic. But even if you can assume your audience is as familiar with the topic of your essay as you, it's still important to provide at least some background on your specific approach to the issue in your essay.

It's almost always better to give your readers “too much” background information than “too little.” In my experience, students too often assume too much about what their readers (the teacher included!) knows about their research essay. There are several reasons why this is the case; perhaps it is because students so involved in their research forget that their readers haven't been

doing the same kind of research. The result is that sometimes students “cut corners” in terms of helping their audience through their essay. I think that the best way to avoid these kinds of misunderstandings is for you to always remember that your readers don’t know as much about your specific essay as you do, and part of your job as a writer is to guide your reader through the text.

In Casey Copeman’s research essay at the end of this chapter, the context and background information for the subject matter after the introduction; for example:

The problems surrounding corruption in university athletics have been around ever since sports have been considered important in American culture. People have emphasized the importance of sports and the significance of winning for a long time. According to Jerome Cramer in a special report published in Phi Delta Kappan, “Sports are a powerful experience, and America somehow took this belief of the ennobling nature of sports and transformed it into a quasi-religion” (Cramer K1).

Casey’s subject matter, college athletics, was one that she assumed most of her primary audience of fellow college students and classmates were familiar with. Nonetheless, she does provide some basic information about the importance of sports team in society and in universities in particular.

Weaving in Evidence to Support Your Point

Throughout your research essay, you need to include evidence that supports your points. There is no firm rule as to “how much” research you will want or need to include in your research essay.

Like so many other things with research writing, it depends on your purpose, the audience, the assignment, and so forth. But generally speaking, you need to have a piece of evidence in the form of a direct quote or paraphrase every time you make a claim that you cannot assume your audience “just knows.”

Hyperlink: See “Chapter 3: “Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Avoiding Plagiarism” for more details on how to effectively introduce quotes and paraphrases into your research writing.

Stringing together a series of quotes and paraphrases from different sources might show that you have done a lot of research on a particular topic, but your audience wants to know your interpretation of these quotes and paraphrases, and your reader wants and needs to be guided through your research. To do this, you need to work at explaining the significance of your evidence throughout your essay.

For example, this passage does a BAD job of introducing and weaving in evidence to support a point.

In America today, the desire to have a winning team drives universities to admit academically unqualified students. “At many universities, the tradition of athletic success requires coaches to produce not only competitive by championship-winning teams” (Duderstadt 191).

The connection between the sentence and the evidence is not as clear as it could be. Further, the quotation is simply “dropped in” with no explanation. Now, compare it with this revised and BETTER example:

The desire to always have a winning team has driven many universities to admit academically unqualified student athletes to their school just to improve their sports teams. According to James Duderstadt, former president of the University of Michigan, the corruption of university athletics usually begins with the process of recruiting and admitting student athletes. He states that, “At many universities, the tradition of athletic success requires coaches to produce not only competitive but championship-winning teams” (Duderstadt 191).

Remember: the point of using research in writing (be it a traditional research essay or any other form of research writing) is not merely to offer your audience a bunch of evidence on a topic.

Rather, the point of research writing is to interpret your research in order to persuade an audience.

Antithetical Arguments and Answers

Most research essays anticipate and answer antithetical arguments, the ways in which a reader might disagree with your

point. Besides demonstrating your knowledge of the different sides of the issue, acknowledging and answering the antithetical arguments in your research essay will go a long way toward convincing some of your readers that the point you are making is correct.

Hyperlink: See “Chapter 8: “The Antithesis Exercise,” which offers strategies for researching, developing, and answering antithetical arguments in your research writing.

Antithetical arguments can be placed almost anywhere within a research essay, including the introduction or the conclusion.

However, you want to be sure that the antithetical arguments are accompanied by “answering” evidence and arguments. After all, the point of presenting antithetical arguments is to explain why the point you are supporting with research is the correct one.

In the essay at the end of this chapter, Casey brings up antithetical points at several points in her essay. For example:

To be fair, being a student-athlete isn't easy. They are faced with difficult situations when having to juggle their athletic life and their academic life at school. As Duderstadt said, “Excelling in academics is challenging enough without the additional pressures of participating in highly competitive athletic programs” (Duderstadt 190). So I can see why some athletes might experience trouble fitting all of the studying and coursework into their busy schedules.

The Conclusion

As research essays have a beginning, so do they have an ending, generally called a conclusion. While the main purpose of an introduction is to get the reader's attention and to explain what the essay will be about, the goal of a conclusion is to bring the reader to a satisfying point of closure. In other words, a good conclusion does not merely “end” an essay; it wraps things up.

It is usually a good idea to make a connection in the conclusion of your essay with the introduction, particularly if you began your essay with something like a relevant anecdote or a rhetorical question. You may want to restate your thesis, though you don't necessarily have to restate your thesis in exactly the same words

you used in your introduction. It is also usually not a good idea to end your essay with obvious concluding cues or clichéd phrases like “in conclusion.”

Conclusions are similar to introductions on a number of different levels. First, like introductions, they are important since they leave definite “impressions” on the reader—in this case, the important “last” impression. Second, conclusions are almost as difficult to write and revise as introductions. Because of this, be sure to take extra time and care to revise your conclusion.

Here’s the conclusion of Casey Copeman’s essay, which is included at the end of this chapter:

As James Moore and Sherry Watt say in their essay “Who Are Student Athletes?”, the “marriage between higher education and intercollegiate athletics has been turbulent, and always will be” (7).

The NCAA has tried to make scholarly success at least as important as athletic success with requirements like Proposition 48 and Proposition 16. But there are still too many cases where under-prepared students are admitted to college because they can play a sport, and there are still too many instances where universities let their athletes get away with being poor students because they are a sport superstar. I like cheering for my college team as much as anyone else, but I would rather cheer for college players who were students who worried about learning and success in the classroom, too.

Exercise 10.4

- If you worked with the examples in Exercise 10.3 on page xxx, take another look at the revised introductions you wrote. Based on the work you did in that exercise, write a fitting conclusion. Once again, since you don’t have the entire essay, you’ll have to take some liberties with what you decide to include in your conclusion.

“Works Cited” or “Reference” Information

If I were to give you one and only one “firm and definite” rule about research essay writing, it would be that you must have a section following the conclusion of your essay that explains to the reader

where the evidence you cite comes from. This information is especially important in academic essays since academic readers are keenly interested in the evidence that supports your point. If you're following the Modern Language Association rules for citing evidence, this last section is called "Works Cited." If you're following the American Psychological Association rules, it's called "References." In either case, this is the place where you list the full citation of all the evidence you quote or paraphrase in your research essay. Note that for both MLA and APA style, research you read but didn't actually use in your research essay is not included. Your teacher might want you to provide a "bibliography" with your research essay that does include this information, but this is not the same thing.

Hyperlink: For guidelines for properly citing your evidence and compiling "Works Cited" or "Reference" pages, see "Chapter 12: Citing Your Research Using MLA or APA Style."

Frankly, one of the most difficult aspects of this part of the research essay is the formatting—alphabetizing, getting the spacing right, underlining titles or putting them in quotes, periods here, commas there, and so forth. Again, see the appendix for information on how to do this. But if you have been keeping and adding to an annotated bibliography as you have progressed through the process of research (as discussed in chapter six), this part of the essay can actually be merely a matter of checking your sources and "copying" the citation information from the word processing file where you have saved your annotated bibliography and "pasting" it into the word processing file where you are saving your research essay.

Hyperlink: See the assignment for constructing an annotated bibliography in "Chapter 6: The Annotated Bibliography Exercise."

A Student Example:

"The Corruption Surrounding University Athletics" by Casey K. Copeman

The assignment that Casey Copeman followed to write this research essay is similar to the assignment described earlier in this

chapter:

Write a research essay about the working thesis that you have been working on with the previous writing assignments. Your essay should be about ten pages long, it should include ample evidence to support your point, and it should follow MLA style.

Of course, it's also important to remember that Casey's work on this project began long before she wrote this essay with the exercises she worked through to develop her working thesis, to gather evidence, and to evaluate and categorize it.

The Corruption Surrounding University Athletics

By Casey Copeman

Outline

- I. Introduction
- II. Origins and description of the problem
 - A. The significance of sports in our society
 - B. The drive and pressure for universities to win leads to admitting academically unqualified student athletes
- III. The Eligibility Rules Proposition 48 and Proposition 16
 - A. Proposition 48 explained
 - B. Proposition 16 explained
 - C. Proposition 16 challenged but upheld in the courts
 - D. Academic eligibility rules still broken
- IV. Rules Broken At School
 - A. The pressures faced by athletes and universities
 1. The pressures of being a student athlete
 2. The pressures put on universities to recruit "good players"
 - B. "Athletics" emphasized over studies indirectly and directly
 1. The indirect message is about sports above academics
 2. Occasionally, the message to emphasize sports is direct
 3. Student-athletes often steered into "easy" classes
 - C. Good student athletes, mostly in sports other than football and men's basketball, get a bad name
- V. Conclusion

Most young people who are trying to get into college have to spend a lot of time studying and worrying. They study to get good

grades in high school and to get good test scores, and they worry about whether or not all of the studying will be enough to get them into the college of their choice. But there is one group of college students who don't have to study and worry as much, as long as they are outstanding football or basketball players: student athletes.

Issues involving student athletes with unsatisfactory test scores, extremely low grade point averages, special privileges given to them by the schools, and issues concerning their coaches' influence on them academically, have all been causes of concern with university athletics. The result is a pattern where athletics at the university level are full of corruption surrounding the academic standards and admittance policy that are placed upon some university athletes. In this essay, I will explain what I see as the source of this corruption and the ways in which academic standards are compromised in the name of winning.

The problems surrounding corruption in university athletics have been around ever since sports have been considered important in American culture. People have emphasized the importance of sports and the significance of winning for a long time. According to Jerome Cramer in a special report published in Phi Delta Kappan, "Sports are a powerful experience, and America somehow took this belief of the ennobling nature of sports and transformed it into a quasi-religion" (Cramer K1). Cramer also says, "The original sin of sports in United States society seems to have been committed when we allowed our games to assume too much of our lives. It was as if we could measure our moral fiber by the won/lost record of our local team. Once schools began to organize sports, winning became a serious institutional consideration. Our innocence vanished when we refused to accept losing" (Cramer K1). This importance of sports and winning in the United States today is what has led to this corruption that we now see in our top universities when it comes to athletes and how they are treated by their schools.

The desire to always have a winning team has driven many

universities to admit academically unqualified student athletes to their school just to improve their sports teams. According to James Duderstadt, former president of the University of Michigan, the corruption of university athletics usually begins with the process of recruiting and admitting student athletes. He states that, “At many universities, the tradition of athletic success requires coaches to produce not only competitive but championship-winning teams” (Duderstadt 191). This, in turn, “puts enormous pressure to recruit the most outstanding high school athletes each year, since this has become the key determinant of competitive success in major college sports”(Duderstadt 192).

According to Duderstadt, “Coaches and admissions officers have long known that the pool of students who excel at academics and athletics is simply too small to fill their rosters with players who meet the usual admissions criteria” (Duderstadt 193). This pressure put on coaches to recruit the best athletes “leads them to recruit athletes who are clearly unprepared for college work or who have little interest in a college education” (Duderstadt 193). This obviously leads to a problem because although most universities have standards that must be met for students to be admitted, “in all too many cases, recruited athletes fail to meet even these minimum standards” (Duderstadt 193).

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) set some minimum standards for admission in January of 1986. They had decided that “the time had come to make sure that college athletes were not only athletically qualified, but that they also were academically competent to represent schools of higher learning” (Cramer K4). Proposition 48 required that “all entering athletes score a minimum of 700 on their Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and achieve a minimum high school grade point average in core academic courses of 2.0, or sit out their first year” (Duderstadt 194). This seemed like a fairly reasonable rule to most universities around the country, and some even thought, “a kid who can not score a combined 700 and keep a C average in high school should not be in college in the first place” (Cramer K4).

In 1992, the NCAA changed these requirements slightly with the introduction of proposition 16. According to the document “Who Can Play? An Examination of NCAA’s Proposition 16,” which was published on the National Center for Educational Statistics in August 1995, Proposition 16 requirements are “more strict than the current Proposition 48 requirements. The new criteria are based on a combination of high school grade point average (GPA) in 13 core courses and specified SAT (or ACT) scores.”

Some coaches and college athletes have argued against proposition 48 and proposition 16 because they claim that they unfairly discriminate against African-American students. According to Robert Fullinwider’s web-based article “Academic Standards and the NCAA,” some “black coaches were so incensed that they toyed with the idea of boycotting NCAA events.” Fullinwider goes on: John Thompson, then-coach of Georgetown University’s basketball team, complained that poor minority kids were at a disadvantage taking the “mainstream-oriented” SAT. “Certain kids,” he noted just after the federal court’s decision, “require individual assessment. Some urban schools cater to poor kids, low-income kids, black and white. To put everybody on the same playing field [i.e., to treat them the same in testing] is just crazy.”

Fullinwider writes that the legality of Proposition 16 was challenged in March 1999 on the basis that it was discriminatory to African-American student athletes. However, in its summary of the case *Cureton v. NCAA*, the Marquette University Law School You Make the Call web site explains that the federal courts ultimately decided that Proposition 16 was not a violation of students’ civil rights and could be enforced by the NCAA.

With rules like Proposition 48 and Proposition 16, “the old practice of recruiting athletes who are clearly unqualified for admission with the hope that their contributions on the field will be sufficient before their inadequacy in the classroom, slowed somewhat” (Duderstadt 195). However, as facts show today, it seems as if these rules are harder to enforce in some universities than the NCAA originally thought.

There have been many documented instances of athletes being admitted to a university without even coming close to meeting the minimum requirements for academic eligibility set by the NCAA. One such instance happened just one year after Proposition 48 was enacted. North Carolina State University signed Chris Washburn, “one of the most highly recruited high school seniors in the nation” (Cramer K4). Although Washburn proved to be valuable to the team, it was later found out that “his combined score on the SAT was a whopping 470,” and that he had “an abysmal academic record in high school” (Cramer K4). Both his SAT score and his poor grades in high school all fell much lower than the standards set by the NCAA. According to Art Padilla, former vice president for academic affairs at the University of North Carolina System, student athletes like Chris Washburn are not uncommon at most universities (Cramer K5). He states, “Every major college sports institution has kids with that kind of academic record, and if they deny it, they are lying” (Cramer K5).

The admitting of unqualified students is not the only place where colleges seem to step out of bounds though. Once the athlete has been admitted and signed with the university, for some, a long list of corruption from the university is still to follow when it comes to dealing with their academics.

Furthermore, many universities face a lot of pressure to recruit good players to their schools regardless of their academic skills. Debra Blum reported in 1996 about the case of a star basketball player who wanted to attend Vanderbilt University. As Blum writes, “Vanderbilt denied him (basketball player Ron Mercer) admission, describing his academic record as not up to snuff. So he enrolled at Kentucky, where he helped his team to a national championship last season” (A51). The case of Vanderbilt losing Mercer caused a lot of “soul searching” at Vanderbilt, in part because there was a lot of pressure from “other university constituents, particularly many alumni ... to do what it takes to field more-competitive teams, especially in football and men’s basketball” (A51).

But these pressures are also the point where school officials are tempted to break the rules. As John Gerdy wrote in his article “A Suggestion For College Coaches: Teach By Example,” in universities where the purpose of recruiting a great athlete is to improve the team, they often claim, “intercollegiate athletics are about education, but it is obvious that they are increasingly about entertainment, money, and winning” (28).

Mixed messages are sent when some student-athletes “are referred to as “players” and “athletes” rather than “students” and “student-athletes” (Gerdy 28). It is clear that these student-athletes are sometimes only wanted for their athletic ability, and it is also clear that there are sometimes many pressures to recruit such students. As Austin C. Wherwein said, many student athletes “are given little incentive to be scholars and few persons care how the student athlete performs academically, including some of the athletes themselves” (Quoted in Thelin 183).

In some cases, coaches directly encourage students to emphasize their athletic career instead of their studies. One such instance, reported in *Sports Illustrated* by Austin Murphy, involves an Ohio State tailback, Robert Smith, who quit the football team “saying that coaches had told him he was spending too much time on academics” (Murphy 9). Smith claims that offensive coordinator Elliot Uzelac “encouraged him to skip a summer-school chemistry class because it was causing Smith, who was a pre-med student, to miss football practice” (Murphy 9). Smith did not think this was right so he walked off the team (Murphy 9). Supposedly, “the university expressed support for Uzelac, who denied Smith’s allegations” (Murphy 9).

Another way some universities sometimes manage the academic success of their student-athletes is to enroll them in easier classes, particularly those set up specifically for student-athletes. The curriculum for some of these courses is said to be “less than intellectually demanding”(Cramer K2). Jan Kemp, a remedial English professor at the University of Georgia who taught a class with just football players for students, was “troubled by the fact that many of

her students seemed incapable of graduating from college” (Cramer K2). This seems surprising, but in fact some athletes from the University of Georgia “were described as being given more than four chances to pass developmental studies classes” without ever being successful (Cramer K2). Also, “school records show that in an effort to keep athletes playing, several were placed in the regular academic curriculum without having passed even the watered-down classes” (Cramer K2). Although this particular story comes from the University of Georgia, it is not just unique to that school. Many universities have been guilty of doing such things for their athletes just so they could continue to play on the team.

Of course, not all student-athletes are bad students. Many student-athletes actually do well in school and excel both athletically and academically. But although these true “student-athletes” do exist, they are often overshadowed by those negative images of athletes who do not do as well in school. And while all sorts of different sports have had academic problems with their athletes, the majority of corruption at the university level exists in football and basketball teams (Cramer K3). According to Duderstadt, “football and basketball are not holding their own when it comes to student academic honors” (Duderstadt 190). He says “Football and basketball have developed cultures with low expectations for academic performance. For many student-athletes in these sports, athletics are clearly regarded as a higher priority than their academic goals” (Duderstadt 191). So although this label of the bad student-athlete does not even come close to applying to all athletes, some universities are still considered, as John Thelin wrote in his book *Games Colleges Play*, “academically corrupt and athletically sound” (199).

As James Moore and Sherry Watt say in their essay “Who Are Student Athletes?”, the “marriage between higher education and intercollegiate athletics has been turbulent, and always will be” (7).

The NCAA has tried to make scholarly success at least as important as athletic success with requirements like Proposition 48 and Proposition 16. But there are still too many cases where

under-prepared students are admitted to college because they can play a sport, and there are too still too many instances where universities let their athletes get away with being poor students because they are a sport superstar. I like cheering for my college team as much as anyone else, but I would rather cheer for college players who were students who worried about learning and success in the classroom, too.

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