Formal Writing Guide

Use [this template](http://www.mrmooreismyteacher.com/Format/Format_2-Essay-Style.dotx), if you want your work to be perfectly formatted.

If you choose to not simply use my template for some reason, I require you to use Times New Roman, size 12 font for all text. Double-spaced. Indented paragraphs.

No personal pronouns in formal writing for me. Especially “you” and “your” or “we” and “our” and “us.” “I” and “my” and “me” only when you are supposed to be literally talking about yourself, rather than any other subject.

No putting “**many**” and then not putting ANY specific examples. “Many” is a promise of specifics. If you use it, you have to deliver on that promise, and with more than just one specific fact. So every time you promise me “many” I want three. Give specific details instead of making broad, general comments that are hard to support with evidence. Names, places, dates, percentages, amounts.

No use of words like “essay,” “topic” or “paragraph” in essays for me. No use of “portray.”

No use of “Firstly,” “Secondly,” “Thirdly,” “In conclusion” or “To conclude.”

First sentences in paragraphs “focus” the paragraph by subtly presenting the topic of the paragraph. Even just naming the topic while starting to talk about it will do this.

Do not use just the first name of famous people. Either use both of their names, or just their last name.

Avoid contractions (e.g. can’t, won’t, didn’t, doesn’t)

Strong sentences in English start with who is doing whatever the thing you are discussing. So, names tend to go at the start, rather than the middle or end of strong, formal sentences.

Quotations go in quotation marks, with the person’s name coming in the sentence, right before you start quoting. They do not go in italics.

Use statements rather than rhetorical questions. So, no “Where would Canada be without the Charter of Rights and Freedoms?” (Instead, clearly state *exactly* where Canada would be without it.)

If I have asked you to cite your sources, use footnotes[[1]](#footnote-1) for the basics, and then a Works Cited Page (which is its own page) at the end, with full bibliographic information in APA format
(e.g. Labor Laws and Issues. (n.d.). Retrieved February 09, 2016, from https://www.usa.gov/labor-laws)

Use [www.bibme.org](http://www.bibme.org) or similar to create your bibliographic information.

1. Like this. Use “Insert Footnote” under the “References” tab in Word. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)