

Student Name

Mr. Smythe

College Writing-0

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Describe an Experience That Has Had a Significant Impact On You

### Formatting Your Paper

1. All formatting requirements follow MLA style. The header on each page is your last name and page number. Use the insert page number command.
2. MLA format does not use a title page. Instead, use the format shown above flush left: your name, instructor name, course name, due date. The only addition I ask for is a hyphen and your period number after the course name.
3. Titles should be centered, in the same typeface and size as your body. Do not use boldface, italics, underlining or quotation marks unless correctly punctuating the title of another work, i.e.: Child Abuse in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Note that for your application essay you should include the prompt before your essay title.

### Tips for Word Processing a Paper

1. Use a computer or word processor not a typewriter. This allows you to revise your work without having to start from scratch each time.
2. Make sure that you have a copy of the manual or know how to use on-line help for the software you are using unless you are completely familiar with it.
3. Choose a readable typeface, preferably a serif or roman type. (They have feet on the bottom of letters.) This handout is done in Times New Roman, standard to both Macs and PCs. Avoid sans-serif (footless) typefaces like Helvetica or Gill Sans since they are very hard to read. *Script fonts like this are also very difficult to read.* Make sure to use the same typeface throughout your paper.
4. Choose the size of your typeface; 12 point type like this is usually best. Don't choose sizes under 12 point like this 9 point type since it is hard to read or **use this 18 point type since it**

is overly large and wastes space. Use 12 point throughout your paper; don't use different sizes or fonts for titles or headlines.

5. Set your margins before you begin. The usual standard is one inch all the way around, but make sure to follow the format required by your instructor. The defaults on Microsoft Word are fine for me.

6. Set your line spacing before you begin. Most of your papers should be double spaced. If your program allows variable spacing, double your type size (i.e.: if you are using twelve (12) point type, set your spacing at twenty four (24)).

7. Choose "unjustified" or "left only" justified type. Justification is the process where the computer changes the spacing between words in order to create perfect columns. This makes the paper much more difficult to read and is unnecessary for anything other than newspaper or magazine articles which must fit into columns. This adjustment may be within your program or it may be a setting on your printer. By the way, this paragraph has been justified. Don't make the same mistake.

8. Use headers or footers (common headings at the top or bottom of your paper), rather than typing them on each page. Most programs will allow you to place things like page markers which will automatically print the correct page number in the same place, regardless of how you edit your text.

9. Use "best" or "letter quality" for your printer rather than "draft." This will produce higher quality, more readable type. This choice may be made from within your word processing program, or you may have to adjust settings on the printer itself. This doesn't usually apply to laser printers.

10. If you are using a dot matrix printer, adjust your paper in the printer. Make sure that your printing begins and ends where it should so that your margins are accurate. Otherwise it looks as if you printed it at the last minute and didn't bother, or didn't have time, to correct it.

11. Learn shortcuts in your program. Most word processors have "find and replace" functions that allow you to find certain letter combinations and replace them automatically. This is useful if you are repeatedly typing a long phrase such as "biochemical engineering." You might just type "bioe" each time and then let the computer replace that with the correct words after you are finished writing.

12. Use other functions, such as spell checkers, grammar checkers, and thesaurus. Sometimes these are built into the program, and sometimes they are separate. They won't be 100% accurate, but they are helpful tools in the writing/editing/ proofreading process.

13. **SAVE.** Save your work often and on several different disks. (I save all my work on four different disks!) You never know when a disk might crash or you might lose one. Also, be sure to save each revision of your writing under a different name. That way you can compare any changes and go back if you need to.