My Research Paper Example

by

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English IV

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Topic Statement:

This is where you will type your topic statement.

Outline:

I. Introduction

II. Body Section 1

A. Body Section 1, Subtopic A

1. Body Section 1, Subtopic A, Sub-subtopic 1

2. Body Section 1, subtopic A, Sub-subtopic 2

B. Body Section 2, Subtopic B

III. Body Section 2

IV. Body Section 3

V. Conlusion

This is the opening sentence for the research paper; it should hook the reader’s attention. The use of an anecdote, quote, shocking statistic, or analogy is good way to overcome writer’s block when facing a blank page (Chase 1). Be sure to include in-text citations for all facts, figures, and statistics (“MLA”). A general rule to remember when confused about whether or not to cite a fact is to determine if it is general knowledge that most people would know (Chase 5). If it is not, be sure to cite it, and whenever in doubt, it is better to cite rather than be accused of plagiarism. Do not use “I” or “you” in formal research papers (Stas). Also, it is not appropriate to use contractions in a formal academic paper (Sheradin 10). For example, one should use “cannot” instead of “can’t.” In addition, notice where the period goes with a citation; the period goes after the parenthesis and there is a space between the last word of the sentence and the beginning parenthesis, but no space between the last parenthesis and the period. The last sentence of the first paragraph is usually the thesis statement (which does not require citation) unless the introductory section is longer than one paragraph; then, it is best to place it at the end of the last paragraph of the introductory section.

Notice the following paragraph is only double-spaced from the previous paragraph. The entire paper should be double-spaced only (Sheradin 9). Furthermore, in most cases, one double-spaces after a period no matter whether it is at the end of the sentence or within the source notation on the works cited page (Chase 15). With colons (:), one double spaces as well as if they are periods. All paragraphs should be five sentences long at the minimum. Also, notice that numbers are spelled out except in the following instances: percentages, dollar amounts, or beginning with 100 (Sheridan 10). The last sentence in a body paragraph should be transitional, meaning that it wraps up the topic of the current paragraph and mentions or leads into the topic discussed in the next paragraph and should not be so specific that a source has to be cited.

The topic sentences of each body paragraph should introduce the topic of the paragraph without being so specific that one will need to cite a source for it. By the way, “texting” is not acceptable in formal academic writing (Stas). For example, do not use “btw” for “by the way” (Stas). Use the computer wisely; use spell check as a last revision step. It is not always right, especially concerning people’s names, but it will make one recheck their spelling (Chase 85). The grammar check is less accurate, but one should try adding or deleting punctuation or combining or breaking apart sentences to see if the error line goes away.

The first sentence of the last paragraph or last paragraph of the conclusion section restates the thesis and should be fairly close in thought. Remember, no matter where one ends their paper, the works cited page always begins on the next page (Graham 50). In addition, be sure all works that are listed on the works cited page have been cited in the paper. If they have not, then that is called “padding” the works cited page and is considered a form of plagiarism. When the paper is finished, print it out one side per page and staple neatly in the upper left hand corner. Save the paper to one’s computer or to a disk or flashdrive in case the teacher has one re-do it. In addition, one should save often and to at least two different storage devices. Hopefully, this mock research paper will help you write a successful one!

Works Cited

Chase, Andrea. *Successful Writing Techniques*. New York: Random House, 2007. Print.

Graham, Steve. "Want to Improve Children's Writing?" *Education Digest* 76.1 (2010): 49-55.

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“MLA Works Cited: Electronic Sources (Web Publications).” *OWL: Purdue Online Writing*

*Lab*. Purdue University, n.d. Web. 21 November 2010.

Sheradin, Tracy. “How to Help High School Students Write Excellent Research Papers.”

*English Journal*. May 2007: 9-12. Print.

Stas, Lynn. “Working in the Secondary English Classroom.” *Teachers Online*. US Department

of Education. April 2007. Web. 9 May 2007.