

Library  
&  
Learning  
Commons  
*Clatsop Community College*



# WRITING GUIDE



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# Learning Commons Guide to Writing

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This guide is not a substitute for instruction.  
It provides some helpful reminders  
and notes on resources available.

Produced by Writing Instructional Assistant Kate Summers

Clatsop Community College Library

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# Getting Started

<http://lrc.clatsopcc.edu/>

## Library and Learning Commons

You can search Articles & Newspapers, Streaming Videos, Citation Sources, and more. Grab a cup of coffee in the lounge and relax.

## People & Hours

Library Staff at the front desk can answer almost any question and Writing Instructional Assistants are available for drop-in writing and research help. Hours are [online](#) here.

### [REGULAR HOURS:](#)

Mon - Thurs 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Saturday CLOSED

Sunday noon - 5 p.m.



## Learning Commons

The Learning Commons, upstairs next to the fantastic student computer lab, has technology for checkout, group study tables, workspace, and tutoring areas. It also has a killer view.

## Study/Meeting Rooms

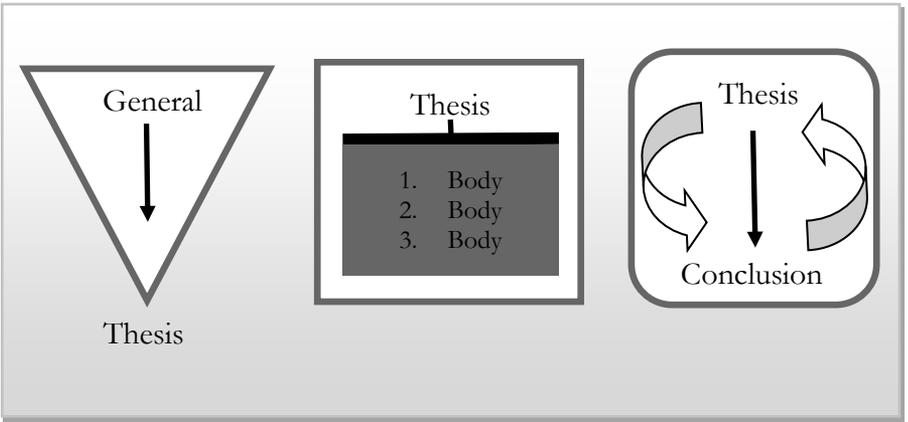
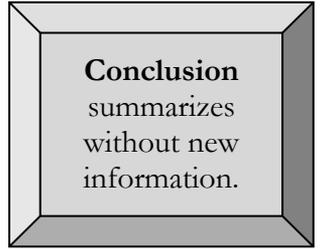
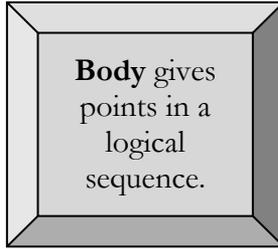
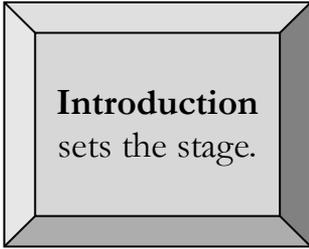
Three rooms are available for individuals or groups. Reserve at the front desk.

## Computers

The student lab has thirty computers and printing is free. There are many laptops for in-library use, and some for overnight checkout.

# Organization

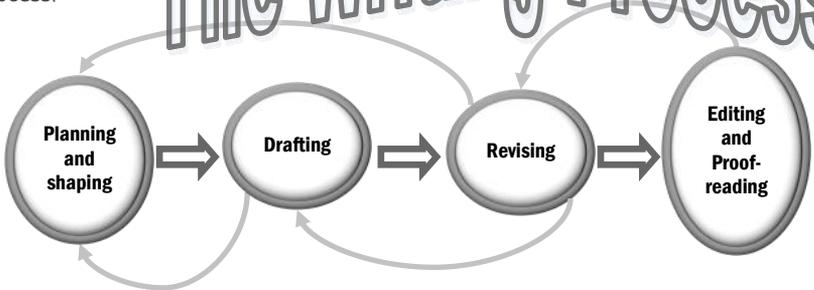
You need a beginning, a middle and an end.



Confusing? Don't worry! We can help!

We can help  
with any part  
of this  
process!

# The Writing Process



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# Thesis Statement



EXAMPLE: The college library could attract more students if it offered free massages, sleeping bags, and new movie screenings.



*It states the entire essay's subject— the topic that you discuss.*



*It conveys the essay's purpose— either informative or persuasive.*



*It indicates your focus— the assertion that presents your point of view.*



*It uses specific language— not vague words.*



*It may briefly state the major subdivisions of the essay's topic.*

(Troyka 37)

**Most instructors want to find your thesis statement at the end of your introduction.**

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# Transitions

*“I just kicked butt on my biology quiz. I think I got an A in that class.  
Is your dog feeling any better?”*

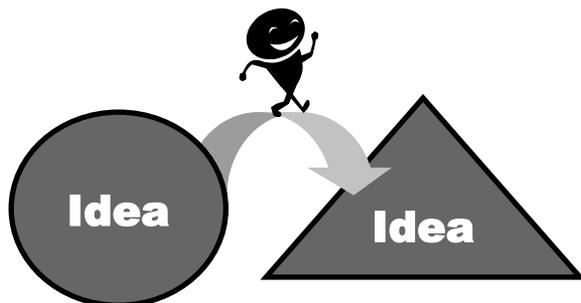
What? Would you say that to your friend?

The speaker should have used a transition like this:

*“I just kicked butt on my biology quiz. I think I got an A in that class.  
But enough about me—  
you look bummed. Is your dog feeling any better?”*

Transitions bring your reader from one idea to the next throughout your whole piece of writing. Well-placed transitions eliminate abrupt jumps or breaks between ideas.

“Transitional devices are words or phrases that help carry a thought from one sentence to another, from one idea to another, or from one paragraph to another.” (Weber and Stolley)



## Transition Words and Phrases

and, again, and then, besides, equally important, finally, further, furthermore, nor, too, next, lastly, what's more, moreover, in addition, first (second, etc.), in brief, as I have said, as I have noted, as has been noted, indeed, in any case, absolutely, positively, naturally, surprisingly, always, forever, perennially, eternally, never, emphatically, unquestionably, without a doubt, certainly, undeniably, without reservation, for example, for instance, in this case, in another case, on this occasion, in this situation, take the case of, to demonstrate, to illustrate, as an illustration, to illustrate

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# Comma and Semicolon



## Avoid Comma Errors

- ◇ Don't insert a comma as you write simply because you pause or take a breath before moving on.
- ◇ As you write, if you're unsure about a comma, insert it and circle the spot. Check its use later during editing.

## Comma Examples

(Troyka 397)

For example, I like to read books.

Action, drama, and comedy are featured in the DVD area.

Some tutors feature compelling, dynamic approaches.

“Some teachers,” she joked, “believe his or her class is your only class!”



## Uses of a Semicolon

While a period signals the complete separation of independent clauses, a semicolon indicates only a partial (“semi”) separation. Use a semicolon in only two situations.

- ◇ A semicolon can replace a period between sentences that are closely related in meaning.
- ◇ A semicolon belongs between sentence structures that already contain one or more commas and with certain lists.

## Semicolon Examples

(Troyka 421)

Writing Instructional Assistants have spent hours helping students; as a result, more students seek them for help.

This sentence is one example; others can be found above.

See more at [“Commas vs. Semicolons in Compound Sentences”](#) by OWL at Purdue

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# Active v. Passive Voice

*Verbs in a sentence have either an active or a passive voice.*

## Active Voice:

In the active voice, the subject and verb relationship is straightforward: the subject is a be-er or a do-er and the verb moves the sentence along.

The library staff approved the new headphone policy.

## Passive Voice:

In the passive voice, the subject of the sentence is neither a do-er or a be-er, but is acted upon by some other agent or by something unnamed.

The new headphone policy was approved by the library staff.

“Computerized grammar checkers can pick out a passive voice construction from miles away and ask you to revise it to a more active construction. There is nothing inherently wrong with the passive voice, but if you can say the same thing in the active mode, do so (there are exceptions). Your text will have more pizzazz as a result, since passive verb constructions tend to lie about in their pajamas and avoid actual work.” (Darling)

**Stay Active!**

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# MLA and APA Format And Citations

## MLA (Modern Language Association) Style

[“WOU MLA style aid”](#)

## MLA Format & Style Guide by OWL at Purdue

[“OWL MLA”](#)

## APA (American Psychological Association) Style

[“WOU APA style aid”](#)

### EasyBib



Online resource for citation creation and Works Cited generator. Simplifies the work, but always double check your results.

### Plagiarism



If you copy someone else's words or work, intentionally or unintentionally, you have plagiarized.

Kate Summers  
Professor J Professorson  
English 333  
12 February 2019

#### Toward a Understanding of Modern Language Association Format

While researching aboriginal storytelling in the Australian outback, I found several students who had difficulty formatting their writing papers. Most instructors desire students to use Modern Language Association, or MLA formatting. These students did not always understand what MLA formatting meant. Most writing guides have entire sections dedicated to not only the formatting of student papers, but also citation. Citation is an important part of MLA formatting. “When students grasp MLA format, they can conquer their papers.” (Oz 99) My goal in this example paper is to show why students need MLA formatting, how they can use it, and where to find more information about MLA.

To achieve this goal, I have organized my paper into three main sections. In the first section, I provide an account of one student who asks about MLA formatting and citation. In the

Example paper:  
Summers 1  
1" margins, Times New Roman- 12pt,  
double space, tab in paragraphs, page  
numbers in header. [Find more here.](#)

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# More Help

## Writing Instructional Assistants

Kate and Louie can answer many of your writing questions. Just drop in during Learning Commons open hours.

## Tutoring Center

The [Writing Center](#) is located in Columbia 115B. Students can make an appointment or drop in for tutoring with Bernie Wood.

## College Librarian

Candice Watkins, the college Librarian, is available for research assistance. Candice also is happy to help students with writing questions when other tutors are not available. Ask for Candice at the front desk of the library, or email at [CWatkins@clatsopcc.edu](mailto:CWatkins@clatsopcc.edu)

## Instructors

No one knows your assignment better than your instructor. Find your instructor's office hours for in-person questions, or contact him or her via email.

## Peers

In many cases, other students in your class may have the same or similar questions as you do. Join your peers to work together on sticky questions.

## Save, save, save

We have all heard stories of students losing important work. Consider saving your writing on a “cloud” drive such as Google Drive or Dropbox. Your work would then be available from any computer with internet access. Thumb drives are easy to lose and hard to replace.

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# Notes

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# Library Writing Help

**Kate Summers**

[KSummers@clatsopcc.edu](mailto:KSummers@clatsopcc.edu)

*Hours*

M 9:30 A.M.– 4:00 P.M.

Tu 9:30A.M– 2:00 P.M.

We 9:30 A.M.– 3:00 P.M

**Bernie Wood**

[BWood@clatsopcc.edu](mailto:BWood@clatsopcc.edu)

*Hours*

Tu 2:00 P.M.– 5:00 P.M.

Th 12:00 P.M.— 3:00 P.M.

**Louie Opatz**

[LOpatz@clatsopcc.edu](mailto:LOpatz@clatsopcc.edu)

*Hours*

We 3:00 P.M.– 6:00 P.M.

Th 3:00 P.M.– 6:00 P.M.

**Candice Watkins**

[CWatkins@clatsopcc.edu](mailto:CWatkins@clatsopcc.edu)

*Hours*

Drop in help available.

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## Works Cited

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Weber, Ryan, and Karl Stolley. "Purdue Online Writing Lab." *Purdue OWL: Transitions and Transitional Devices*. Purdue University, 02 Feb. 2011. Web. 22 Jan. 2014.

Darling, Dr. Charles. "The Passive Voice." *The Passive Voice*. Capital Community College Foundation, 2004. Web. 11 Feb. 2014.



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