

SHOULD MLA FORMAT BE A REQUIREMENT?



Shannon Hsu
Editor

YES

Most of us have experienced it before; the frustration that occurs when we proudly turn in our papers that we poured much time and effort into, only to discover when they're passed back to us that we've been marked down several points. But wait – there's nothing wrong with the paper! The material is fine, all the requirements are there, we cited our resources, we went through spell check several times, and hours of blood, sweat, and tears went into its creation... so what's the matter with it? Turns out we've been docked off on little things that seem trivial. An otherwise perfect paper becomes not-so-perfect. Margins, indentations, headings, spacing, page numberings, little, seemingly inconsequential things that wouldn't even come to mind when we proofread our papers... is it the teachers just being nitpicky?

The answer is no. It's not teachers just trying to find excuses to mark you down; it's the series of guidelines and requirements that have been set down by the Modern Language Association of America, better known as "MLA". Yes, MLA is a legit association – its format is used internationally and any respectable academic paper should be typed in the given format. Yes, it's also very tedious and a pain in the rear, but being an internationally used and recognized style of formatting, you won't be escaping from it anytime soon. In college, most professors will require you to use MLA format in typing up your papers as well. It's better to start practicing fixing all the kinks and getting used to learning to fix the little mistakes you get marked down on now, in high school, otherwise you may find yourself getting a lot more frustrated and confused in college when you see your professor has disregarded your paper entirely simply because it does not follow the complete MLA format. Many teachers will not be too strict on the MLA format now, so you will probably still get some leeway. For those who happen to have the not-so-strict language arts teachers, good for you, you've lucked out. But for those of you who don't, you're not losing anything, either. In fact, you're gaining more skills and knowledge in MLA format that will better prepare you for your future college papers and you'll be able to easily avoid the frustrations of an apparently not-perfect paper.

Okay, I know it's annoying, I've gotten countless papers back before with angry red marks in the margins where I didn't indent properly, or in the heading where I didn't follow the format 100%. At least I am learning from my mistakes now in high school, as opposed to later, in college, where the consequences may be much more severe. It's not the end of the world if you forget to, for example, adjust your margins to the exact widths every now and then, but chances are you'll get marked down for it anyway. Aren't you glad you're practicing catching all those small, irritating details now when it's not too late to nip your habits in the bud and fix them accordingly?

It's annoying. It's pointless. It's a waste of time. Who cares, it's not like the president or something is going to be looking at this paper. It's just a simple essay assignment. Why should we have to bother with making our papers match that annoying MLA format perfectly? These are some complaints that students have, or may present when they're venting their frustration with these OCD-esque details. Like I implied earlier, though, you'll be grateful and glad you're already used to using MLA and will know how to format everything in the way it is meant to be so that you don't get marked down again in the future, when it matters more. So you can stop your complaining and get ready to say hello to higher scores on college papers and even future high school papers. After all, practice does make perfect... or at least, something close to it.



Destiny Lopez
(11)

"No, because its too hard to remember."

Deandra Blunt
(11)

"Yes, it helps your paper."

Britney Gonzalez
(9)

"No, because you dont have to write so much."



Nupur Savalia
(10)

"Yes, because it is universal and versatile to use anywhere."

Bernard Quijada
(12)

"Yes, because it helps keep work organized."



Mr. Morrison
(Teacher)

"Yes, it helps in the long run."

Josh Sumahit
Reporter



NO

With almost every paper in a language art class, there is a specific layout in which students must follow. Besides having to have the correct margins, spacing, and paragraph form, we have to include MLA format. MLA format is having your name then your teacher then the class and last of all, the date and period. MLA format is not a big deal to have to include with each paper that you turn in. But I don't think that it should be required for papers and essays, nor should it be held in such ridiculously high importance to the final grade of the paper.

Yes, it is simple enough to do, but say one was to forget to include MLA format on an essay worth about 250 points. When their teacher went to grade the paper, they would immediately see that there was no MLA format therefore marking them down for that. Not only that, but we also have to worry about anything else that could be wrong with the paper. For example, a few misspellings, punctuation errors, and/or not having enough words – and the list goes on - were the errors that the paper that had been turned in had. They would already be docked tremendously in point values for those errors and to add to those points already being taken away, they also get docked for no MLA format.

Personally, I have forgotten to put MLA format on a few essays that I have written. Points were docked for that and possibly a few for any other mistakes I had on my essay. It may sound like I'm making a big deal about having to put MLA format on an essay, but in all honesty I am not. I am just questioning as to why it is required to have MLA format on any form of paper that has to be turned in.

Also, in regards to some teachers (not mentioning any names)... They don't accept papers that do not contain the exact format that the paper needed. MLA format is usually included in these specificities. It then becomes the student's responsibility and burden to make sure that their completed work is how the teacher wants it. And yes, it is also their responsibility to remember these things. But just because one little, almost insignificant aspect of the format was forgotten, we are docked points and maybe are even not able to turn in our work.

On the other hand, it is true that having that requirement for MLA teaches us responsibility - responsibility for our own actions and for having to follow the rules and instructions that were included in the assigning of the paper. But there must be a better way to gauge our ability to follow instructions and still produce a good paper at the same time without having to bother with the frustratingly tedious details that MLA forces us to include; otherwise we will be docked off points for it.

In addition, it's also very true that it may help us once we get out of high school and possibly in college, cause not only does it teach us a form of responsibility, but also it helps us get prepared for future assignments that require those certain formats. It all comes down to the student remembering what needs to be done at the end of the day.

I believe that virtually all of the teachers here at Valencia High School do care for our well being, even if they don't show it. MLA isn't an issue of whether or not the teacher feels like making their students miserable. But in some way or form, the things they do and how they do things, shows that they care at the end of the day. MLA format is a simple, minor structural asset to a paper, and the scale on which many of us are graded on for it is pretty much bordering OCD. We aren't perfect and are bound to make the miniscule mistakes that always cost us so many points Why must we be forced to remember MLA format, even if it could be a great asset, but at the same time so minor?



TIME TO DO YOUR DUTY

By: **Boyoung Kim**
Reporter

With the intensifying urgency to slow and prevent further climate change and also reduce our carbon footprint, recycling has become popular, being a relatively easy solution that does not entail much individual sacrifice. The push toward taking environmentally conscious steps has, perhaps overly, promoted recycling as a friendly way to give back to our planet. Indeed, recycling does provide numerous worthy benefits to the welfare of the environment. However, its other consequences calls into question the extent to which we should recycle.

The positive environmental outcomes of recycling are well-known. It conserves natural resources while reducing landfill occupation from waste. Less energy is used in the production of recycled materials while reused resources cut back on the demand for new resources. The recycling process decreases the amount of pulpwood necessary to construct paper, which lessens the demand to replant while increasing the supply of trees; this in turn contributes to more oxygen conversion and thus healthier air. Recycled aluminum can production uses only 5 percent of of the energy needed to produce the metal material. Reduction of landfill waste from recycling materials minimizes both land and water pollution emitted by incinerators and landfills. The conservation of the space that landfills take up also preserves space and therefore prevents excessive habitat destruction.

On the other hand, recycling can be ironically detrimental as well. The recycling factories in themselves transmit copious amounts of pollutants in the air. The process requires toxic substances, energy, and water, sometimes even more than is required to produce virgin materials. Paper and aluminum are two primarily recycled products that impose hazards to the environment. The efforts to fabricate new paper from used paper employ additional harmful chemicals to create the image of a virgin product. Both recycling and the transportation of these recyclables to and from factories and between communities consume precious fossil fuels, as the construction of original materials similarly does.

Recycling imposes both benefits and detriments to the environmental condition of our planet. It is difficult to discern which outweighs the other for neither facets of the argument are flawless and provide a perfect solution. Moreover, recycling seems to function as a source of personal comfort in feeling eco-friendly, which may have no effect on, or even increase, consumption levels. A more environmentally conscious approach to global warming, therefore, should not focus on recycling but rather on consumption reduction. We have been taught to recycle, reduce, and reuse; however, many wrongfully concentrate on solely recycling while not adjusting reducing or reusing habits. This does not mean that we should entirely remove recycling as an obligation. Reducing and reusing should become the first priorities towards achieving a greener goal. Then, once those water bottles and cans and sheets of paper served their every possibly innovative purpose, we can close the loop by dutifully and proudly placing them in recycle bins.

Silence is Golden... Or So They Tell Me

BEN CERCEA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Did you miss me? Good. Time to start, there has been a lot going on in the world and there is very little time to small talk.

Google and Bing have some of the funniest suggestions ever. Examples? Ok I will give you a few but only a few. If you type "where" in Bing the first thing that shows is "where to meet nice guys" and "where is my stimulus check" Well, I don't know the answer to the first question but the second one is really easy, the stimulus check will never come. Or if you type the letter "j" in Google the craziest thing pops up--Justin Bieber. Isn't he ten? Did you know they have a web site dedicated to women looking like Justin Bieber?

So according to the job description of CHP officers the responsibilities of officers are to seize criminals and enforce traffic laws. Who knew guiding ducklings was considered a task? I swear, I don't make this up but an officer had to escort 2 different group of ducklings and their mother. This isn't rare actually but the idea of it is, how shall we say it...unique. I can picture it right now. A cop chasing ducks along the highway. Did I mention they stopped the freeway? What would happen if those ducks were ugly? Would he continue to help them or would he leave them to waddle out of safety? Nobody will ever know.

You know you are drinking a little too much when you are the first person to be banned from drinking--anywhere. A woman by the name of Laura Hall is not allowed to possess, purchase, or even look at alcohol in England and Wales. Maybe in a year, she is twenty, she can come over here and drink. I wonder if she will try to get this prestigious award in any other providence. Maybe she should try Ireland next or better yet Scotland.

Apple has released a new gadget that will change the world--the iPad. To me, the iPad sounds like an elderly diaper pad. Nothing else to say about this product except is it protected against "accidental spills?"

Crime shouldn't be funny but, well, in some cases they can be. Mix influential drugs with a private school and what do you get? Nothing--hopefully. But mix those same influential drugs and a man rolling around on the grass of a private school and you get something quite funny--nude crime. If I was the cop who had to tase him I couldn't take that situation seriously. I wonder where they tased him?

Stop thinking gross things! Gosh. Continuing now. Disney is the happiest place on Earth. Well, it got even happier. Why? Free food--and wine. The California Food and Wine festival kicked off this weekend and is free with admission. They don't give an age requirement though. Does this mean...free food?

It has been nice chatting with you but it is off to Ireland to explore my grandest wish--take over the world. I need to start off somewhere, why not there?

EL TIGRE...



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Jack Dauley
Wan Po
Michelle Powell
Vivian Hernandez

Advisor
Rachel Schiff

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