



# THE MANSON ESSAY

# FOREWARD

**THE MANSON ESSAY** is a major paper written by all MCI juniors. The objectives of the Manson Essay are to write a thesis paper using different types of sources, to access and use information in support of that paper, to provide a logical defense of a point of view in both written and oral formats, to demonstrate competency in formal documentation of primary and secondary sources, to apply word processing skills, and to develop organization, independent learning, and time management skills.

**THE CONTEST IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER** was a part of MCI at least as early as 1871. Until 1875 it was open to all students, but in 1875 it became a contest for the junior class. It was originally held the week of graduation. For a period of time the girls received a prize for an oration and the boys for an original paper. In 1875 a prize was provided by Dr. Howe.

**DR. JOHN C. MANSON LATER** left a sum of money as a prize for the essay and oration “for essays to be written by members of the junior class, with the best of them to be spoken in public” (Bud Lewis, former English department head). John W. Manson later added additional money to fund the prize. In the 1920s, juniors were sequestered in the one-room library for a day to write the Manson Essay.

**TODAY STUDENTS RESEARCH** and write a paper for both their history and English teachers and then present a speech version in front of their classes before being selected to participate before the public at the annual Manson Essay Exhibition. Judging is based on the written grades of both English and history teachers and the oral performance. Final selection of the winner is based one half on the written and one half on the spoken version.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	1
POLICIES	2
TOPIC SELECTION, THESIS, AND FORMAT	2
PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS	3
WORKS CITED PAGE	3/4
SOURCES	5
THE WRITING PROCESS	5
PLAGIARISM	5
ONLINE RESOURCES	6
EVALUATING SOURCES	6
SAMPLES AND RESOURCES	7

## POLICIES:

- A timeline will be provided to the students by their Humanities teachers early in the junior year.
- Students will hand in a written proposal outlining topics of their choosing, thesis statements, and a research plan to be approved by both Humanities teachers.
- A Bones Essay and an Annotated Bibliography will also be required and graded.
- Rough drafts must be turned in to both Humanities teachers and assessed by both using the rubric.
- Final drafts must be turned in to both Humanities teachers and graded by both using the rubric.
- Teachers will consult with each other on final draft grades before handing the papers back.
- In addition to the above major grades, students' class work will be assessed as participation grades.
- A Manson Essay classroom speech will also be required. Students will use public speaking guidelines, considering audience and appeals, to present their arguments to their classmates and teachers.
- Juniors with exemplary Manson Essays and effective speeches will be invited to participate in the esteemed Manson Essay Exhibition.
- In cases where there is not agreement, the student and the teachers will meet and make a final decision.

## TOPIC SELECTION:

The topic must have real evidence available and relate to a relevant US or global issue. Biographies are not acceptable. Students must take a position on the topic.

## THESIS STATEMENT:

An acceptable thesis statement must be a **single declarative sentence that defends a position**, is consistently and thoroughly defensible throughout the text of the essay, is approved by both Humanities teachers, and is typed separately at the beginning of the paper as well as in its appropriate place in the introductory paragraph. Example: The consumption of chocolate improves academic achievement.

## FORMAT:

The Modern Language Association (MLA) rules for formatting must be used in the Manson Essay. The text of the paper should be typed in 12 point font, double spaced, with last name and the page numbers in a running header in the upper right corner of every page. Following the MLA style rules, the first page will also contain the paper title, date of submission, and author's name. Consult the Purdue Online Writing Lab for more details:

[Purdue OWL MLA Formatting and Style Guide](#)



## PARENTHETICAL DOCUMENTATION:

When you use another's words, facts, or ideas in your paper, you must acknowledge it in the body of your paper. Supplying the author's last name and page number(s) in parentheses is usually enough to identify the source and location. The purpose of this parenthetical documentation is to guide the reader easily to fuller information in the Works Cited list at the end of the paper. The general form is: (author's last name page(s)).

<b>Single Author</b> (Hopkins 47)	<b>Authored Electronic Source</b> (Cook)
<b>Multiple Authors But Fewer Than Four</b> (Allen and Buys 15) (Allen, Buys and Giallombardo 21)	<b>When Using Two Sources by Same Author</b> (Waite, "US History for High School" 25) Includes the title too, in order to distinguish the work.
<b>More Than Three Authors</b> (Allen et al. 245)	<b>Interview</b> (Shorey)
<b>Author Named in Sentence</b> As Allen says, "blah blah" (47)	<b>Anonymous Electronic Source</b> ("Research is My Life")
<b>Anonymous Work</b> ("Writing Essays Makes You Smarter" 58)	<b>Two or More Sources in Single Citation</b> (Waite 225; Giallombardo 219)

## WORKS CITED PAGE:

The Works Cited page is included at the end of the essay. MLA style requires that the list of Works Cited start on a new page at the end of your paper. List alphabetically all the sources used in your research, entries must be double-spaced, and formatted properly. Formatting rules include:

- Continue page numbering from the body of your paper.
- Center the title "Works Cited," one inch from the top.
- Alphabetize entries by the author's last name. If no author, alphabetize by the title (ignore A, An, The).
- Use a hanging indent (this means the first line lies at the margin and following lines are indented, opposite of paragraph indentation).

The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers is available in the MCI library if you need help with a particular citation, or you can access specific instruction here: [Purdue OWL MLA Sample Works Cited Page](#)



In the 8th Edition of MLA, you include the “core elements” of the sources. Core elements are those basic pieces of information that should be common to all sources, from books to articles, from lectures to tweets. The MLA core elements (with the punctuation that should follow each element) are as follows:

1. Author. (Last Name, First Name; Online nicknames and handles are now acceptable if real name isn't known)
2. Title of source.
3. Title of container,
4. Other contributors, (State specific role, followed by the word “by” and then first and last name)
5. Version, (Abbreviate ed. for Edition and rev. for Revised)
6. Number, (Use vol. for Volume and no. for number, with commas in between)
7. Publisher, (Include only name of publisher, not business words like LLC; use UP for University Press)
8. Publication Date,
9. Location. (Page Numbers (use p. for one page, pp. for page range), URL (Permalink, omit the http://) or DOI. For online journals, DOI is preferred over URL.

**A basic citation format should look like the following. You would omit elements that do not exist or are unnecessary:**

Author. “Title of Source.” Title of Container, Other contributors, Version, Number, Publisher’s name, Date of Publication, Location.

## **EXAMPLES OF CITATION FORMAT:**

### **Book with One Author:**

Jacobs, Alan. *The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction*. Oxford UP, 2011.

### **Online Database Journal Article:**

Hannah, Daniel K. “The Private Life, the Public Stage: Henry James in Recent Fiction.” *Journal of Modern Literature*, vol.30, no. 3, 2007, pp. 70-94. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.uwf.edu/stable/30053134](http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.uwf.edu/stable/30053134).

### **Website:**

“Woman Gives Birth to Grandchild.” CNN.com, 15 Oct. 2006, [www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/asiapcf/10/15/japan.granny.reut/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/asiapcf/10/15/japan.granny.reut/index.html).

## SOURCES:

Remember that this is a research paper, not a book report or a journal. You must use several different sources and types of evidence in your paper. Consult the rubric for details; **a minimum of ten is required for a distinguished score; fewer than four will fail the paper.** You must have evidence of a variety of types of sources, including a book and a periodical originally published in a print newspaper or magazine. A paper with only one type of resource will result in a failing grade. A paper that is primarily from only one source will also result in a failing grade. You must use print and non-print resources.

**Encyclopedias, including online encyclopedias such as Wikipedia, are not considered reliable, so will not be counted as one of papers required sources.** Why? In the academic world, original sources are preferred. Encyclopedias may be consulted to illuminate the topic or further research possibilities. Use them as a research tool by consulting the encyclopedia's cited sources; they are typically original sources and are acceptable.

Consider that sources may not have equal merit.

- Is the author an expert?
- Why is the person writing the article? (For example, do not limit a paper on gun control to sources from the NRA.)
- What is the context of the information?
- Is the material outdated? (Don't quote teen crime statistics from a 1982 source to show teen crime today.)

## PLAGIARISM:

Your teachers will review proper note taking, use and integration of quotations and citation. Long sections of other people's work, credited or not, are not acceptable. Quotes should be used to support the student's words, not the other way around. Using another's words, ideas, or statistics without giving proper credit is dishonest and will be penalized according to MCI policy listed under "Academic Integrity" in the [MCI Student Handbook](#).

## THE WRITING PROCESS:

As with any formal paper, the Manson Essay should demonstrate the attributes of good writing.

- Students should investigate several topic and thesis ideas before settling on one.
- They should determine the body of evidence available and review it for accuracy and relevance.
- Students will then present a Written Proposal to their Humanities teachers for consideration.
- Once the topic and thesis have been approved, a Bones Essay that outlines their basic argument and an Annotated Bibliography that outlines the usefulness of each resource will be required.
- Upon completion of these, students should select relevant supporting evidence from their research and integrate it into their own text using quotes sparingly when an authority says something key to the thesis or when a statement is extremely well-worded. In these cases the quote should be introduced with information about the author. Evidence from a lyric or literary sources, as well as Statistics must be quoted.
- The paper must be typed. Be sure to save your work in a few places. Some teachers will request the essay be written in GoogleDocs and shared with them so they can track your progress; others may prefer printed copies or files submitted in Google Classroom or via email. Be sure to comply with your Humanities teachers' individual requests.

**THE DIGITAL MAINE LIBRARY** is a collection of research databases made available through the Maine State Library. These databases give you full-text access to magazines, academic journals, newspapers, dictionaries, and reference works. “Full-text” means you will be able to read, print, save, or email relevant articles as soon as you locate them: <https://library.digitalmaine.org/>

- No password required from school computers. From home you will have to register and create a username and password
- Digital Maine Library also contains a wide range of specialized databases, such as:
  - Academic One File: includes peer-reviewed, full-text articles for all academic disciplines
  - Business Premium Collection: a combination of popular business databases
  - ERIC – Education: includes articles and documents on education research and practice
  - Health Reference Center Academic: includes reliable information on all aspects of medicine and health.
  - Global Newsstream: includes the full-text of many US and international news sources. The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, China Daily, and The London Free Press are among the newspapers included.

**GALE DATABASES** is a collection of research databases made available through Cengage Learning. These databases give you full-text access to magazines, academic journals, newspapers, dictionaries, and reference works. “Full-text” means you will be able to read, print, save, or email relevant articles as soon as you locate them: <http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itweb/huskies>

- Password: huskies

## EVALUATING SOURCES:

In order to ensure that you choose relevant and academic resources for your paper, you should use the following points of consideration for each one:

- Read the background, preface or other introductory commentary--What does the author want to accomplish? Browse through any sub headings, the table of contents or the index. This will give you an overview of the source. Is your topic covered in enough depth to be helpful? If you don't find your topic discussed, try searching for some synonyms in the index.
- Check for a list of references or other citations that look as if they will lead you to related material that would be good sources.
- Determine the intended audience. Are you the intended audience? Consider the tone, style, level of information, and assumptions the author makes about the reader. Are they appropriate for your needs?
- Try to determine if the content of the source is fact, opinion, or propaganda. If you think the source is offering facts, are the sources for those facts clearly indicated? Note: .com sites are commercial; .org, .edu, and .gov sites are typically more reliable.
- Do you think there's enough evidence offered? Is the coverage comprehensive?
- Is the language objective or emotional?
- Are there broad generalizations that overstate or oversimplify the matter?
- Does the author use a good mix of primary and secondary sources for information?
- If the source is opinion, does the author offer sound reasons for adopting that stance? (Consider again those questions about the author. Is this person reputable?)
- Check for accuracy.
- How timely is the source? Is the source twenty years out of date? Some information becomes dated when new research is available, but other older sources of information can be quite sound fifty or a hundred years later. Discern!
- Do some cross-checking. Can you find some of the same information offered elsewhere?
- How credible is the author? If the document is anonymous, what do you know about the organization?
- Are there vague or sweeping generalizations that aren't backed up with evidence?
- Are arguments very one-sided with no acknowledgement of other viewpoints?

# RUBRIC, SAMPLE PAPERS, AND QUICK REFERENCES:

The Manson Essay Rubric and other rubrics for the various process-building assignments along the way can be found at the link below. Humanities teachers will provide copies to all students as well via Google Classroom.

[Manson Essay Resources](#)

## Essay Examples:

[Purdue OWL MLA Sample Paper](#)

[Sample Manson Essays](#)

## MLA Style Guide:

[The MLA Style Center](#)

# MCI FORMATTING FOR FIRST PAGE:

Student's Last Name pg#

Name

Teacher/ Teacher

Junior Humanities Periods X & X

XX February 2018

Don't Text and Drive

Thesis: The US must enact tougher laws to punish cell phone use while driving.

When a cell phone goes off in a classroom or at a concert, we are irritated, but at least our lives are not endangered. When we are on the road, however, irresponsible cell phone users are more than irritating. They are putting our lives at risk. Many of us have witnessed drivers so distracted by dialing and chatting that they resemble drunk drivers, weaving between lanes, or nearly running down pedestrians in crosswalks. A number of bills to regulate use of cell phones on the road have been introduced in state legislatures, and the time has come to push for their passage. The US must enact tougher laws punishing cell phone use while driving. Drivers using phones are seriously impaired and laws on negligent and reckless driving are not sufficient to punish offenders.

No one can deny that cell phones have caused traffic death...

(borrowed from Diana Hacker)





MAINE CENTRAL INSTITUTE

295 MAIN STREET + PITTSFIELD, MAINE, U.S.A

(+1) 207.487.3355 + [WWW.MCI-SCHOOL.ORG](http://WWW.MCI-SCHOOL.ORG)

