

Model Research Paper

The following final draft of a research paper closely follows the guidelines for MLA style given on the preceding pages. (Note: The pages of the model paper are smaller than 8½ × 11, and the margins of the paper are less than one inch wide to allow room for annotations.)

Mabry 1
 Roderick W. Mabry
 Ms. Johnson
 English I
 17 November 2003

Mabry 1

HEADING
 your name
 your teacher's name
 your class
 date

The Rise of Radio

It nestles on your nightstand, occupies a prominent place in your entertainment center, and rules the road from the dashboard of your car: the radio. This simple appliance is so common that most people take it for granted, yet radio is a relatively new invention. In fact, the first commercial radio station, KDKA in Pittsburgh, did not go on the air until 1920 (Stark 120). Before long, however, the new medium dramatically affected the nation's entertainment, information delivery, and economy.

The invention of radio was made possible by a number of earlier developments. German physicist Heinrich Hertz, drawing on established mathematical principles, discovered the existence of radio waves in 1887. Eight years later, in Italy,

THESIS SENTENCE:
 tells focus of the paper

TOPIC SENTENCE:
 tells focus of the paragraph and is a sub-topic of the thesis

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FIRST REFERENCE:
 Full name of inventor is used.

SECOND REFERENCE:
 last name only

This parenthetical citation indicates that paraphrased information in the paragraph comes from Yenne, page 77. Yenne refers to Yenne, *Bill* on the works cited page.

In the Baker citation, no page number is listed because this information comes from an unpaginated online source.

Guglielmo Marconi successfully completed the first wireless transmission of Morse code signals. An American invention helped move radio closer to reality: Lee De Forest's 1907 Audion, which made it possible to transmit sounds, not just signals. A full decade before KDKA debuted, De Forest broadcast a live performance by famed Italian tenor Enrico Caruso from New York City's Metropolitan Opera House (Yenne 77).

Few people were equipped to hear that landmark broadcast, however, because radio was still very much a do-it-yourself project; most people built their own receivers. In 1921, one such "tinkerer," twenty-eight-year-old Franklin Malcolm Doolittle of New Haven, Connecticut, even used his homemade transmitter to broadcast the Yale-Princeton football game from his home (Gelman 80). The first commercially produced receivers became available in 1920, when a Pittsburgh department store began offering sets for ten dollars. The response was so enthusiastic that Westinghouse began mass producing the appliances (Baker).

When radio found its way into the majority of American households, it brought the nation together in an unprecedented

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way. Radio reached into “once dreary homes, reducing the isolation of the hinterlands and leveling class distinctions” (Henderson 44). At first radio programming simply duplicated existing forms of entertainment: singers, musicians, comedians, lecturers. Coping with technical difficulties left little time for creating new types of shows. Later, as the technical problems were resolved, programmers began adapting existing formats and experimenting with new types of shows, including variety shows, serials, game shows, and amateur hours (“Radio as a Medium of Communication”). As programming expanded, radio truly became, in researcher Amy Henderson’s words, “a theater of the mind” (144).

When parenthetical documentation follows closing quotation marks at the end of a sentence, the period should be placed after the parentheses.

These parentheses contain only the page number because the author is named in the text.

The introduction of radio also radically altered the way people learned about events in the outside world. For the first time in history, everyone could receive the same information simultaneously. As sociologists Robert and Helen Lynd, writing in the 1920s, noted, “With but little equipment one can call the life of the rest of the world from the air . . .” (qtd. in Monk 173). Live coverage gave news events an immediacy far greater than newspapers or newsreels could provide. In fact, most people

This citation tells us that the quotation from Robert and Helen Lynd was found in a book edited by Linda R. Monk.



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first learned of such historic events as the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor from the radio (Stark 120).

Note again how strong topic sentences control the content of the paragraph and develop a subtopic of the thesis sentence.

Equally important was radio’s impact on the economy. The first, and most noticeable, effect was to add a new consumer product to people’s wish lists. Most early sets were strictly functional—“a box, some wire, and headphones” (Baker). Once the initial demand was satisfied, however, manufacturers began stimulating repeat sales by offering new models each year, with the goal of placing a “radio in every room” (Collins 10).

The parenthetical citation for Henderson is placed directly at the end of the paraphrase.

The demand for sets was a boon to manufacturers, but it struck fear into some other segments of the economy. Newspapers worried that radio would drive them out of business (Henderson 90). Similarly, members of the traditional entertainment industry feared that the new technology would cut into the sales of tickets and recordings (Stark 120).

Surprisingly, advertisers were slow to realize the opportunities radio offered. At first, most business people assumed that profits would come solely from the sale of sets and replacement parts. In addition, paid advertising was considered

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improper for what was initially viewed as a "new, pure instrument of democracy" (Welner). Instead, early programs were underwritten by "sponsors," with companies receiving only a brief, discreet acknowledgment in return for their support. Eventually, however, this approach gave way to the direct advertising that is familiar today (Welner).

Reviewing the rise of radio makes clear how instrumental the medium was in shaping the nation's entertainment, information delivery, and economy. Today, with the advent of television and the Internet, radio is no longer the primary source of news and entertainment for most people, nor is its impact on the economy as far-reaching. Still, each day millions of listeners wake, work, and play to the rhythms of radio, and many would be lost without it. The radio may have been muted, but it has not been unplugged.

Mabry ends his paper with a concluding paragraph that is entirely his own statement. First, he restates the thesis in the form of a conclusion. Then, he places the history of the radio in its modern context.

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