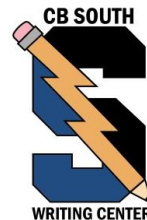


# MLA Guidelines

## Central Bucks South HS



*To Navigate this document, select the resource you need:*

[General formatting for a paper](#)



[Works Cited](#)

[Embedding Quotes](#)

[Quotes and Paraphrases](#)

[In text Citations](#)

[Example Paper](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

**Back**

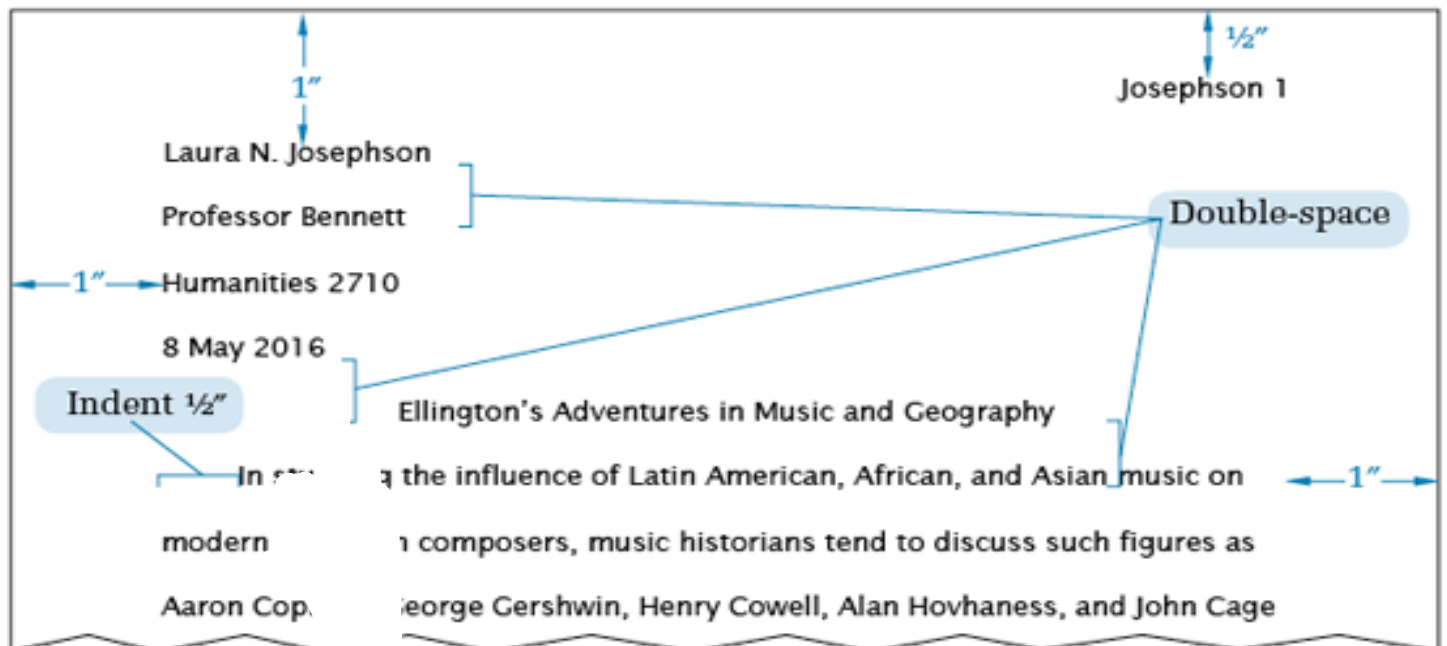
## General Formatting

### An MLA Style paper should:

- Be printed on white 8.5" x 11" paper
- Double-space everything
- Use 12 pt. Times New Roman (or similar) font
- Leave only one space after punctuation
- Set all margins to 1 inch on all four sides
- Indent the first line of paragraphs one half-inch
- Have a header with page numbers located in the upper right-hand corner (except the first page)
- Use italics to identify the titles of magazines, books, newspapers, academic journals, films, television shows, long poems, plays, operas, musical albums, works of art, websites.

### The first page of an MLA Style paper will:

- Have a title
- Double-space everything
- Include proper header in the top left-hand corner:
  - Your name
  - Instructor's name
  - Course Title
  - Due Date
- Center the paper title (use stand caps but no underlining, quotation marks, boldface type, or italics unless otherwise required).



## Works Cited

### 1. A Book with a Single Author

Format: Last name, first name. *Title*. City of Publication: Publisher, Date.

Example: Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*. New York: Penguin Books, 1986.

### 2. A Database

**CB Databases:** ABC-CLIO: History and Issues, Country Reports, Health and Wellness Resource Center, Literary Resource Center, Opposing Viewpoints in Context, Power Library, Science in Context, and Student Resource Center.

Format:

Author, last name first. "Title of Article." Title of Source, Publisher, Date. Name of Database, URL, Date Accessed.

Example:

Smith, Erin, et al. "Organic Food Is Nutritionally Superior." *Organic Food*, edited by Amy Francis, Greenhaven Press, 2015. At Issue. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*, <http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/EJ3010949207/OVIC?u=centralbucksouth&xid=a62e75de>. Accessed 10 Jan. 2018. Originally published as "Organic Farming and Nutrient Content," *Organic-Center.org*, July 2012.

### 3. An Article from a Magazine, Weekly or Monthly

Format:

Author, last name first. "Title." *Name of Magazine*. Date published with number first and no punctuation: page number.

Example:

Begley, Sharon. "A Healthy Dose of Laughter." *Newsweek*. 4 October 2017: 74-8.

#### 4. A Chapter/Article in an Anthology

Format:

Last, First M. "Section Title." *Book/Anthology*. Ed. First M. Last. City: Publisher, Year Published.

Website Title. Web. Date Month Year Accessed.

Example:

Sanders, Scott R. Introduction. *Touchstone Anthology of Contemporary Creative Nonfiction: Work from 1970 to Present*. Ed. Lex Williford and Michael Martone. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007. X-Xii. Print.

Example:

Miller, Arthur. "Tragedy and the Common Man" *Discovering Literature*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1993, pp. 1461-1464.

#### 5. A Classic Drama

Format:

Author, last name first. *Title*. City: Publisher, Year. Print.

Example:

Shakespeare, William, and Cyrus Hoy. *Hamlet*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1996. Print.

#### 6. A Modern Drama

Format:

Author, last name first. *Title*. Publisher, Date.

Example:

Miller, Arthur. *The Crucible*. Penguin Classics, 2003.

## 7. An Article with No Author

### Format:

“Title of Article.” *Title of Website*, Publisher/Sponsor, Date published, URL.

### Example:

“MLA Formatting and Style Guide.” *Purdue Online Writing Lab*, Purdue OWL, 2018,  
owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/05/.

## 8. A Film

### Format:

Director, last name first. *Title*. Production Company, Production Date.

### Example:

Gold, Jack, director. *Macbeth*. BBC Worldwide Ltd., 2000.

## 9. A Song

### Format:

Band name. *Title of song*, Producer, City, State Date.

### Example:

Neil Diamond. *Sweet Caroline*, American Sound Studio, Tennessee , June 1969.

## 10. An Advertisement

### Format:

Advertiser name. “Advertisement Title.” Magazine Title, vol. #, Date published, pages.

### Example:

Coca-Cola. “Red, White, & You.” *Top Design Magazine*, vol. 5, no. 15, 1 July 1986, p. 28.

## 11. A Political Cartoon

### Format:

Author last, first name. "Cartoon Title." *Website Title*, Publisher, Date Published, URL.

### Example:

Kelly, Alexandria. "College Graduation." *The Onion*, Onion Syndicate , 5 July 2012,

[www.theonion.com/college-graduation-1819590666](http://www.theonion.com/college-graduation-1819590666).

## 12. An Interview

### Format:

Begin with the name of the person interviewed. If the interview is part of a publication, recording, or program, enclose the title of the interview in quotation marks. Title of Source. Date.

### Example:

Gordimer, Nadine. Interview. New York Times. 10 Oct. 1991, C25.

## 13. A Government Website

### Format:

Website title. "Article Title." Publisher, Date Published. Date Accessed.

### Example:

United States Environmental Protection Agency. "Drinking Water Standards." EPA, 8 July 2004. Web.  
24 Jan. 2006.

## 14. Worldwide Website

### Format:

Author last name, first name. "Title of article." Title of Website Accessed. Date published. URL, date accessed.

### Example:

Distefano, Vince. "Guidelines for Better Writing." How to Improve Your Writing. 2012.

<http://www.howtoimproveyourwriting.org/guidelines>, 9 January 2017.

## MLA WORKS CITED

The Works Cited page must be included at the end of your research paper. The entries listed in the Works Cited page need to correspond to the works you cited in the text of your paper.

### I. General Guidelines

- Works Cited page on a separate page at the end of your research paper. Margins and headers should be consistent with your paper.
- The page should be labeled Works Cited (not in quotes or italicized) and it should be centered at the top of the page.
- Citations are double spaced. Do not skip space between citations.
- Indent the second and subsequent lines of citations.
- When citing an article or a publication originally issued in print form but retrieved from an online database, type the online database name in italics.
- Online sources: include a location to show readers where you found the source. Many databases use a DOI (digital object identifier). Use a DOI in your citation if you can; if not available use the URL. Delete “http://” from URLs. The DOI or URL is usually the last element in a citation and should be followed by a period.
- All works cited entries end with a period.
- Capitalize each word in the titles of articles, books, etc, but do not capitalize articles (the, an), prepositions, or conjunctions unless one is the first word of the title or subtitle.
- Use italics (instead of underlining) for titles of larger works (books, magazines) and quotation marks for titles of shorter works (poems, articles)
- Entries are listed alphabetically by the author's last name (or, for entire edited collections, editor names). Author names are written last name first; middle names or middle initials follow the first name. Do not list titles (Dr.) or degrees (MA) with names but include suffixes like Jr.

### II. Basic Book Format

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Publication Date.

- If more than one author list them in the same way they are presented in the book with first name given in last name, first name format and the subsequent name in first name last name format
- If three or more authors list only the first author followed by the phrase et al. (means “and others”).
- If you two or more books from the same author list them alphabetically by title and for the second and remaining books use three hyphens and a period.



### III. Articles

#### a. In a Reference Book (e.g. Encyclopedias, Dictionaries)

- cite as you would any other work in a collection but do not include the publisher information.
- e.g. "Ideology." *The American Heritage Dictionary*. 3rd ed., 1997.

#### b. In a Magazine

- list the article's author, title of the article in quotations marks, and italicize the periodical title. Follow with the date of publication. Abbreviate the month.
- The basic format is as follows: Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Periodical*, Day Month Year, pages.

### IV. Electronic Sources

- Include a URL or web address to help readers locate your sources. Because web addresses are not static (i.e., they change often) and because documents sometimes appear in multiple places on the web (e.g., on multiple databases), MLA encourages the use of citing containers such as Youtube, JSTOR, Spotify, or Netflix in order to easily access and verify sources. However, MLA only requires the www. address, so eliminate all https:// when citing URLs.
- Online newspapers and magazines sometimes include a "permalink," which is a shortened, stable version of a URL. Look for a "share" or "cite this" button to see if a source includes a permalink. If you can find a permalink, use that instead of a URL.
- Basic Format: Author. Title. Title of container (self contained if book), Other contributors (translators or editors), Version (edition), Number (vol. and/or no.), Publisher, Publication Date, Location (pages, paragraphs and/or URL, DOI or permalink). 2<sup>nd</sup> container's title, Other contributors, Version, Number, Publisher, Publication date, Location, Date of Access (if applicable).

**Back**

## Embedding Quotes

### ➤ When to use a direct quote:

- to show that an authority supports your point
- to present a position or argument to critique or comment on
- to include especially moving or historically significant language
- to present a particularly well-stated passage whose meaning would be lost or changed if paraphrased or summarized

### ➤ Other points to consider:

- It's often conventional to quote more extensively from sources when you're writing a humanities paper, and to summarize from sources when you're writing in the social or natural sciences--but there are always exceptions.
- **For a literary analysis paper**, for example, you'll want to quote from the literary text rather than summarize, because part of your task in this kind of paper is to analyze the specific words and phrases an author uses.

### Embedding a direct quote:

Others point to the fact that “cash money isn’t the only way workers are compensated, of course — health insurance, retirement-account contributions, education and transit subsidies and other benefits” (Desilver) are included in the package that employees expect employers to pay.

### Entry on Works Cited page should look like this:

Desilver, Drew. "For most workers, real wages have barely budged for decades." *Pew Research Center*, 9 Oct. 2014, [www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/10/09/for-most-workers-real-wages-have-barely-budged-for-decades/](http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/10/09/for-most-workers-real-wages-have-barely-budged-for-decades/). Accessed 10 Oct. 2017.

**Embedding multiple citations:**

Unemployment rate has also decreased immensely for black and African American workers. The “black-vs.-white employment gap is the smallest...in almost 20 years” (Johnson). Reported in September 2017, 7% of black or African Americans are unemployed, the lowest rate since 2000. This is down 8% since the Great Recession (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).

**Entry on Works Cited page should look like this:**

Johnson, Jason. "Black Unemployment Hits Historic Low. Should Trump Get Credit or Are We Getting Played?" *The Root*, 10 Aug. 2017, [www.theroot.com/black-unemployment-hits-historic-low-should-trump-get-1797665938](http://www.theroot.com/black-unemployment-hits-historic-low-should-trump-get-1797665938). Accessed 24 Oct. 2017.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Unemployment Rate: Black or African American [LNS14000006], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LNS14000006>, October 22, 2017.

### Embedding a direct quote and analysis:

Because a healthy growth rate for the United States' economy is around 2-3%, predictions of continual economic advancement remain true (see Figure 1). Additionally, according to the most recent forecast at the Federal Open Market Committee meeting on September 20<sup>th</sup>, economists predict that "U.S. GDP growth will [overall] rise... 2.4 percent in 2017," a healthy average for economic growth (Amadeo).



Figure 1: This graph of real gross domestic product shows the fluctuations in rGDP since the 1950's. However, since the recession (shown by the major dip in the graph in 2009), rGDP has fluctuated, yet overall remained healthy (above 0%).

### Entry on Works Cited page should look like this:

Amadeo, Kimberly. "US Economic Outlook: For 2017 and Beyond." *The Balance*, 20 Sept. 2017, [www.thebalance.com/us-economic-outlook-3305669](http://www.thebalance.com/us-economic-outlook-3305669). Accessed 23 Oct. 2017.

U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Real Gross Domestic Product [A191RL1Q225SBEA], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/A191RL1Q225SBEA>, October 23, 2017.

**Embedding extracts from a longer quotation:**

In fact, some economists argue that the recent natural disasters may be doing more good than harm for the economy: “Locals are focusing on rebuilding and repairing...these latter activities will eventually bring in jobs and economic activity, possibly making these natural disasters a net booster of economic activity in 2018” (Avallone).

**Entry on Works Cited page should look like this:**

Avallone, Mark. "The Economic Impacts of Recent Hurricanes And Tax Reform." *Forbes*, 12 Oct. 2017, [www.forbes.com/sites/markavallone/2017/10/12/the-economic-impacts-of-recent-hurricanes-and-tax-reform/#567131fc2371](http://www.forbes.com/sites/markavallone/2017/10/12/the-economic-impacts-of-recent-hurricanes-and-tax-reform/#567131fc2371). Accessed 24 Oct. 2017.

**Referencing research without a direct quote:**

Despite their beliefs that the economy would keep going down, the United States' GDP skyrocketed and reached an all-time high of 16.7 trillion dollars at the end of 2016 (U.S. BEA).

**Entry on Works Cited page should look like this:**

“U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Real Gross Domestic Product” [GDPC1], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/GDPC1>, October 12, 2017.

Although the unemployment rate dropped from 4.4 percent to 4.2 percent this month, the number of people working was reported to have dropped by 33,000 (BLS).

**Entry on Works Cited page should look like this:**

*U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics*. bls.gov, Civilian Unemployment Rate [UNRATE], <https://www.bls.gov/web/empsit/cpseea01.htm>, accessed 9 Oct. 2017.

**Back**

- **Paraphrase Definition:** involves putting a passage or several passages from source material into your own words
- **Summary Definition:** involves putting the main idea(s) into your own words, including only the main point(s). Once again, it is necessary to attribute summarized ideas to the original source. Summaries are significantly shorter than the original and take a broad overview of the source material.

### **Mix of direct quotation and paraphrase:**

Consumer confidence measures the degree of optimism that consumers feel about the overall state of the economy. The latest consumer confidence measured in this past March shows that confidence “rose again as a result of the index of consumer sentiment increasing from 96.3 to 97.6” (Yahoo Finance). The University of Michigan determines these numbers through telephone calls to consumers asking for their expectations regarding the future economy. The consumer sentiment has fluctuated since 2011, but still mainly increased over the years to the present 96.8 (University of Michigan).

### **Entry on Works Cited page should look like this:**

“University of Michigan, University of Michigan: Consumer Sentiment” [UMCSENT], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/UMCSENT>, October 12, 2017.

"Consumer confidence is at a 13-year high in America." *Yahoo Finance*, 17 Mar. 2017, [finance.yahoo.com/news/consumer-confidence-is-at-a-13-year-high-in-america-143433905.html](https://finance.yahoo.com/news/consumer-confidence-is-at-a-13-year-high-in-america-143433905.html).

An increase, after four straight months of 0.1 percent growth. The increase in core CPI is a good sign for an economy that has had low and stagnating inflation. The inflation rate is good, but not ideal. Low inflation has continued “causing the Fed to delay raising rates” (US consumer prices accelerate in August), continuing stimulus oriented activities to raise inflation rates to the goal of 2 percent.

**Entry on Works Cited page should look like this:**

"US consumer prices accelerate in August." *CNBC*, 14 Sept. 2017,  
[www.cnbc.com/2017/09/14/us-consumer-price-index-aug-2017.html](http://www.cnbc.com/2017/09/14/us-consumer-price-index-aug-2017.html). Accessed 10 Oct.  
2017.

**Back**

## In-Text Citations

1. **When the Works Cited Page contains only one work by an author you are citing, the in-text citation should include only the author's last name and the page number in the parentheses. A period is placed AT THE END of the in-text citation.**

### Example from Research:

In a recent study conducted regarding the human consumption of water, the study found that, "Approximately 400 billion gallons of water are used in the United States per day" (Smith 24).

### Example from Literature:

In *Of Mice and Men*, John Steinbeck establishes the setting through descriptive imagery, stating "In front of the low horizontal limb of a giant sycamore there is an ash pile made by many fires; the limb is worn smooth by men who have sat on it" (Steinbeck 2).

### Example from Modern Drama:

John Proctor illustrates the importance of a name when he chooses to sacrifice his life to protect his name, stating "You came to save my soul, did you not? Here! I have confessed myself; it is enough!" (Miller 149).

### Example from Classic Drama:

The Weïrd Sisters establish an unsettling mood in the opening scene, chanting "Fair is foul, and foul is fair/ Hover through the fog and filthy air" (Macbeth 1.1.12-13).

### Example from an Interview:

When asked about his childhood in Sierre Leone, Ishmael remarked that "[they] went from children who were afraid of gunshots to now children who were gunshots" (Beah).

### Example from two works by the same author:

Willy shouts at Linda, " 'Biff Loman is lost. In the greatest country in the world a young man with such – personal attractiveness, gets lost. And such a hard worker. There's one thing about Biff – he's not lazy' " (Miller, *Death of a Salesman* 15).

Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman*. New York: Penguin Publishing, 1963.

Miller asserts that "the common man is as apt a subject for tragedy in its highest sense as kings were" (Miller, "Tragedy and the Common Man" 1461).

### Example from a government website:

Studies have found that "Long-term consumption of arsenic-contaminated water has been associated with the development of skin conditions and circulatory system problems, as well as increased risk of cancer of the bladder, lungs, skin, kidney, nasal passages, liver, and prostate" (United States Environmental Protection Agency).



**Note: When the author's name is mentioned in your sentence, you do NOT need to include it in the in-text citation. Include only the page number.**

**Example:**

In his novel, *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald begins to characterize Nick Carraway through first-person narration when he writes, "In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since" (1).

- 2. When the work has no author, then the in-text citation should include the title of the source or a shortened form of the title in quotes and the page number (if given) in the parentheses:**

**Example:**

Research suggests that young people who spend more than 2 hours per day on social media are more likely to report poor mental health, including psychological distress ("Toxic Mirror").

- 3. When a direct quotation of more than four lines is used, it is known as a block quotation. Introduce it with a colon and indent the entire quotation one inch from the margin and double space it. Do not place quotation marks around the quotation. Place the in-text citation (author and page number) AFTER the punctuation that closes the quotation.**

**Example:**

Nick Carraway shows the reader a glimpse into his complex history with Jay Gatsby:  
Only Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this book, was exempt from my reaction—Gatsby, who represented everything for which I have an unaffected scorn. If personality is an unbroken series of successful gestures, then there was something gorgeous about him, some heightened sensitivity to the promises of life, as if he were related to one of those intricate machines that register earthquakes ten thousand miles away (Fitzgerald 2).

#### **4. Quoting Dialogue and Text**

If you are incorporating a quotation featuring both exposition and a character's speech into your text, use double quotation marks around the quotation and single quotation marks around the character's speech that is within the quotation:

Early in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, Miss Baker, upon meeting Nick Carraway, makes the first reference in the novel to the title character: "‘You live in West Egg,’ she remarked contemptuously. ‘I know somebody there’" (11).

#### **5. Quoting Only Dialogue**

If you quote only the speech, use double quotation marks around it:

Early in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, Miss Baker tells Nick Carraway that he must be familiar with someone she knows from West Egg: "You must know Gatsby" (11)

**Back**

Anne Green

**General format:**

- Times New Roman
- 12-point font
- Double spaced throughout

Mrs. Smith

**Correct MLA Heading:**

- Double spaced
- Left justified
- Name, teacher name, course title, and date (day, month, and year) in that order

Honors English 10

11 November 2010

**Title format:**

- Evenly double spaced
- 12-point font, Times New Roman, not bolded, underlined, etc.

**Sinners Teaching Saints: Religious and Moral Conscience in *Jane Eyre***

An eternal struggle plagues the Earth and is ravaging

**Header:**

- Student last name (not shown here) and page number

**Margins:**

- 1-inch margins throughout
- Left justified

in the minds and hearts of every sinner, however intangible, with omnipresent control—God. Their piety is not only the cause of their fear and trepidation. Since the beginning of history, this incredibly convoluted war has been raging: the war of religion. Although this war is a physical conflict, there is also a mental struggle that spares no one, for it is ingrained in the minds of everyone who has ever considered God's existence. One such mind, touched by the pureness and consistency of faith, belongs to Jane Eyre. Charlotte Brontë's masterful writing in her most famous novel, *Jane Eyre*, encompasses the wavering consequences of conviction from the eyes of a girl—who grows into a woman—with an evolving faith. Throughout her journey, Jane encounters religion in many different settings, but she is consistently perplexed by the effects of dedication to a God above. Developed through Jane's first person narrative position, Brontë provides social commentary on the role of religious fundamentalism in the Victorian Era.

Jane's religious devotion stems not from personal passion, but from confinement in a fundamentally religious society; thus her conviction fluctuates, reflecting a common—but rarely discussed—sentiment among believers. As a pious child at the boarding school, Lowood School, Jane is told to pray and read the Bible, but she witnesses teachers' negligence and cruelty. She learns a

**Indentation:**

- One tab (or 5 spaces)

substantial amount about her religion in Lowood, but she does not reflect upon the implications of such beliefs until much later in her schooling, when typhus fever is spreading around the school. Jane recounts in great detail that fateful moment when she first began to think for herself, as “[her mind] recoiled baffled; and for the first time glancing behind, on each side, and before it, it saw all round an unfathomed gulf... it shuddered at the thought of tottering, and plunging amid that chaos” (Brontë 79). Unlike many children, Jane is skeptical and thoughtful about her faith; she hesitates to make conclusions and instead follows her conscience. This sincere and unapologetic view of religion is present throughout the novel, accomplished by the sympathetic narrator. Brontë uses Jane’s reflective narration to make *Jane Eyre* “in both purpose and effect primarily a novel of the inner life, not of man in his social relations” (Kaplan). The honest nature of Jane’s narration gives the book a unique view of religion from a perspective that is often left unanalyzed.

Brontë’s utilization of Jane’s personal reflections additionally pinpoints the consequences of such dedicated and strict religious views: conflict and resolution, working in harmony. As soon as Jane leaves the rigidity of Lowood to become a governess, a harmonious connection forms between Jane and her employer, Edward Fairfax Rochester: a connection none other than love. The one thing that stands between them is “the fiery aspect of the feminine...in the shape of [Rochester’s] mad wife Bertha” (Chitham). Unfortunately, Jane is unaware of Bertha’s existence in the attic of Thornfield until the day of her wedding with Mr. Rochester, which is consequently cancelled. This realization hurt Jane and sent her into a painful depression and a consequent impulse—from her conscience and her religion—to run away. This internal and external conflict is Brontë’s illustration of ardor clashing with morality, and her language contains overflowing emotion:

‘Little Jane’s love would have been my bane, had I not been without it,

My heart is broken. But Jane will give me a new heart, I am sure, if I am not too badly hurt by this. I am sure, if I am not too badly hurt by this, I will be able to love her again. I will be able to love her again, I am sure, if I am not too badly hurt by this.’

Up the blood rushed to his face; forth flew his arms; he sprang, he held his

arms out; but I evaded the embrace, and

**Correct format of quotation spanning more than 4 lines:**

- Indent 10 spaces
- Punctuation before citation
- No quotation marks (except for quote within a quote)
- Continue double spacing

‘Farewell!’ was the cry of my heart as I left him. Despair added, ‘Farewell for ever!’ (Brontë 339)

Without such a passionate narrator, the contrast of desire and fundamental duty would not be as prominently stressed to readers, thus hindering Brontë’s expression of discontent. This internal conflict burns in Jane’s heart throughout the rest of the book; she constantly regrets leaving Edward but feels that she is justified in leaving him from both biblical and societal perspectives. This enduring conflict is Brontë’s first analysis of the feelings associated with “morality without a Mediator,” (Kime and Kerry) or actions in the name of good instead of the name of God.

Brontë does not end with Rochester as a means of conflict, as she adds St. John—who serves as a foil to Edward—to demonstrate the complicated nature of religious obligations in the Victorian Era. From the moment we meet him, it is clear that St. John is the complete opposite of Rochester: physically and morally righteous, selfless, and quiet; he is even scholarly, living in books to prepare for his impending missionary service trip. Furthermore, “[St. John] has different attitudes to strangers and loved ones” (Essaka), which is observed gradually, as a result of his sudden characterization; “he is charitable to [strangers] but less indulgent to those who have come into his fold” (Essaka), which is a stark contrast to Mr. Rochester’s open friendliness. Although Jane’s relationship with Edward is complicated, her relationship with St. John takes even more unpredictable turns: first they discover that they are cousins, and later he asks her to marry him. This seemingly sweet story (as marriage of cousins was not unheard of in this time period) has a sour undertone, though, because of Jane’s previous exposure to true and passionate love; St. John wanted her only as a missionary in India, loving Jane no more than any other family member (Kaplan). As a response to his persuasive proposal, Jane answers strongly, “I will give my heart to God...*you* do not want it” (Brontë 434). St. John does not mean to harm her, and he only wants what is best for her by entreating her to become a missionary—this is where the nature of his character becomes blurry. At the end of the book, readers are left questioning Brontë’s opinion on St. John and his literary purpose. Surely he is meant to develop the religious aspect of the story, as he is extremely sacrificial and seemingly without fault; however, his lack of love for God and other people is debasing (Brontë 20) and has

often been pinpointed as his downfall (Essaka). St. John's position as Rochester's foil displays Brontë's opinions on love and its crucial place in all aspects of society.

Through Jane's interactions with these two contrasting men, Brontë provides additional reflections on the constrictive—and sometimes unintentionally negative—nature of fundamentalist religion. The first critical instance occurs in Lowood, where young Jane is accused of being a liar by the supervisor of the school. Brontë introduces Mr. Brocklehurst, a harsh and judgmental man, who is driven by his religious conviction to shame this young girl and call “one of God's own lambs...a little castaway—not a member of the true flock, but...an interloper and an alien” (65). Jane's narrative provides a means of expressing her own opinion by demonstrating the hypocrisy of the misguided people who act in the name of their religion. Much later in the book, Jane runs away from Thornfield, Edward's estate, to demonstrate her moral strength: notably, she does not denounce him for his attempt to marry two wives, but instead, she leaves him because of his deception and her fear of its impending impact if she does not flee. The first moment she sees Edward after the failed wedding, Jane directly confesses to the reader that “[she forgives] him... [because] there [is] such deep remorse in his eye, such true pity in his tone...such unchanged love in his whole look and mien” (Brontë 317) even though she proceeds to run away the next morning. This escape scene could be quickly interpreted as indecisive or impulsive, but it is in reality a moment of profound clarity and independence on Jane's part. Without her personal views of faith, Jane could have followed a much more dependent—or alternately, angry and hostile—path that would be led by direct interpretations of the Bible. The final (and arguably most telling) moment involving rebellion against traditional religious interpretations comes in Jane's rejection of St. John's marriage proposal. Instead of conforming to his wants and wishes, for women in this age had suppressed voices, Jane declines on the grounds that she deserves love and control over her own life. “Jane rejects St. John's offer because she rightly perceives that his understanding of human love is deficient,” Joshua Essaka says in an analysis of St. John's character, “partly because it is insufficiently emotional, but, more importantly, because it fails to value Jane as the distinct human being that she is.” Jane Eyre clearly possesses an incredible strength and confidence of character that are uncharacteristic of women in

**Correct citation:**

- **Author named prior to cited material in sentence**

her time period. This strength of morality and integrity is what leads Jane to denounce traditionally accepted aspects of religion.

Charlotte Brontë's honest reflections on fundamentalist religion, introduced through Jane's narration, give readers a unique perspective of the unspoken feelings of Victorian women. Brontë's message to readers is made clear by Jane's clearly daring actions and equally bold language that subtly "critique...evangelical religion" (Chitham). Although this critique was vocalized to readers through Jane's voice, the characters of Edward Rochester and St. John cannot be overlooked; they are the personification of both ends of the spectrum of religious severity—an angry but passionately loving cynic-turned-believer and a peacefully devoted missionary who gives his life for perfect strangers, but does not display affection for his own family. Despite the unresolved state of St. John's religious purity and the questions left about Mr. Rochester's faith by the end of the novel, it is difficult to dismiss the direct associations between the paths of their lives and the nature of their characters. In this subtly apparent way, Brontë is warning readers—or rather revealing to them a societal phenomenon—that mere recitations, quotes from scripture, and ancient words are not flexible enough to replace conscious choices guided by morality. *Jane Eyre's* timeless message fills hearts and minds not with answers but with questions of personal morality that immortalize a true heroine: Charlotte Brontë.

Page number progresses from  
previous page

## Works Cited

Chitham, Edward. "Jane Eyre: Overview." *Reference Guide to English Literature*, edited by D. L. Kirkpatrick,

2nd ed.

go.gale

&it=r&asid=8b2663b25c8a58ead3b5106bc351a3c2. Accessed 2 Nov. 2016.

**Correct Works Cited format:**

- First line of each entry left justified

urce Center,

=centralbuck

**Correct Works Cited format:**

- Correct title centered, normal font

20001069

Essaka, Joshua. "'Almost My Hope of Heaven': Idolatry and Messianic Symbolism in Charlotte Bronte's Jane

Eyre."

go.gale

it=r&asid=3cdefa8493d35fc5d5fd4cd0329a4235. Accessed 2 Nov. 2016.

**Correct Works Cited format:**

- Second line and on hanging indent

02, p. 81+. *Literature Resource Center*,

centralbucksouth&v=2.1&id=GALE%7CA114009679&

Kaplan, Carla. "Girl Talk: *Jane Eyre* and the Romance of Women's Narration." *Nineteenth-Century Literature*

*Criticism*, edited by Kathy D. Darrow, vol. 217, Gale, 2010. *Literature Resource Center*,

**Correct Works Cited format:**

- Alphabetized by first word in each entry

&sw=w&u=centralbucksouth&v=2.1&id=GALE%7CH1420093642

2591d2eb8b010. Accessed 2 Nov. 2016. Originally published in

*Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, vol. 30, no. 1, Fall 1996, pp. 5-31.

Kime, Bradley, and Paul Kerry. "Religion and Jane Eyre." *Brigham Young University*, 19 Apr. 2013,

jur.byu.edu/?p=713. Accessed 4 Nov. 2016.

**Back**

### Acknowledgments

**This document was collaboratively made with help from the following:**

CB South English and Social Studies Departments, 2017

CB South Writing Tutors, 2022

“Formatting a Research Paper.” *The MLA Style Center*, Modern Language Association of America, 2019, [style.mla.org/formatting-papers/](https://style.mla.org/formatting-papers/).

*The Purdue OWL Family of Sites*. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2022, [owl.english.purdue.edu/owl](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl). Accessed 23 Apr. 2022.

**Back**