

Glossary

A

Abbreviation

A shortened form of a word or phrase

Abstract

A brief summary of the main ideas and arguments presented in a research source

Academic journal

A collection of articles written by researchers and peer-reviewed by other experts in a particular field

Academic success center

The office responsible for on-campus tutoring

Academic writing

A text intended for instructors or students

Academic writing process

A strategy that breaks up a writing assignment into five stages: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and submitting

Accommodations

Personalized classroom assistance such as extra time on projects or a separate testing environment

Accuracy

When information is as correct and unbiased as possible

ACE

An acronym (Appealing, Consistent, Easy to read) for thinking about the layout and design of a text

Acronym

An abbreviation that helps you remember important terms

Action verb

A verb that indicates a physical or mental action

Active learning

Learning information through participation in activities

Active listening

Listening that involves paying attention, asking questions, and making connections

Active reading

A process for reading that focuses your attention, asks you to be reflective, and helps you make connections to your prior knowledge

Active voice

When a sentence is written so that the subject is performing an action

Ad hominem

An attack against a person's character

Adjective

A word that describes a noun or pronoun

Adjective phrase

A word group that modifies a noun or pronoun in a sentence

Adverb

A word that describes a verb, adjective, or another adverb

Agenda

A person's hidden motive

Anecdote

A long example told as a story

Annotating

A strategy for taking notes while reading

Annotation

An informal note or comment entered in the margin of a text as a reading strategy

Antecedent

The word that a pronoun renames in a sentence

Antonym

A word that has the opposite meaning of another word

APA (American Psychological Association) style

The research style guide created by psychologists used for academic documents such as journal articles and books

Apostrophe

A punctuation mark used for possessive nouns, contractions, and shortened numbers and words

Appeal to tradition

An argument that something is right because it has always been done that way

Argument

A reason why you should think or act a certain way

Article

A type of adjective (*a*, *an*, or *the*) that describes a noun or pronoun

Audience

The people who read your writing

B

Bandwagon

An argument that something is right because everyone is doing it

Bar graph

A graph that compares and contrasts groups of information

Base form

The simplest form of a verb, free of alterations for tense, number, and point of view

Bias

A person's opinions and preferences

Block quote

A special type of direct quote that indents the entirety of the quote and does not require the use of quotation marks

Body paragraphs

The paragraphs that contain the main points of a paper and use supporting details

Brackets

A pair of punctuation marks commonly used inside parentheses or quotation marks to add minor details to a sentence or insert missing text inside a quotation

Brainstorming

Exploring and developing ideas

C

Cause and effect

An organizational pattern used to explain the causes or effects of a topic

Chronological

An organizational pattern that arranges ideas or events in the order that they occurred

Claim

An argument or statement, usually supported by evidence

Clause

A word group that contains a subject and a verb

Cliché

A popular phrase that has been overused

CMS (*Chicago Manual of Style*)

A research style guide published by the University of Chicago Press

Collective noun

A noun that denotes a group but is treated as a singular noun

Colon

A punctuation mark used to introduce a list or quotation, end a salutation, and join related numbers

Combining root

A root that forms the base of a word but cannot stand alone

Comma

A punctuation mark used to separate items in a list; join compound sentences; mark introductory words, phrases, and clauses; add extra or unnecessary details to a sentence; and separate similar adjectives

Comma splice

A sentence error made when two independent clauses are combined with a comma but no conjunction

Common noun

A noun that represents a non-specific person, place, thing, event, or idea

Compare and contrast

An organizational pattern used to show the similarities and differences between two topics

Complete sentence

A sentence that contains at least one subject and one verb and expresses a complete thought

Complete thought

When a group of words is logically finished

Complex sentence

A sentence pattern in which an independent clause is connected to a dependent clause

Complexity

When a text has many connected parts

Composition

How the contents of an image have been selected and arranged

Compound adjective

An adjective that is made up of two or more words that describe a noun or pronoun

Compound-complex sentence

A sentence pattern containing at least two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause

Compound noun

A noun made up of two or more words

Compound sentence

Two independent clauses joined by a comma and a conjunction

Compound subject

A subject made up of two nouns or pronouns, usually joined by a conjunction

Concluding paragraph

A paragraph that ties together the ideas in a paper and summarizes the main points

Concluding sentence

A sentence that ends a paragraph or paper by reviewing the ideas just discussed

Conclusion

The result of a logical argument

Conclusion

A paragraph that ties together the ideas in a paper and summarizes the main points, also called a concluding paragraph

Conflict of interest

When an author has a personal stake in a topic that affects their purpose

Conjunction

A word that makes a connection between other words or a group of words

Conjunctive adverb

A transition word that shows contrast, comparison, sequence, and other relationships between clauses

Constraint

A limitation that affects your writing

Constructive criticism

Suggestions of specific ways that an author can improve their work

Container

The larger work that holds or contains a source

Context

How and when information is presented

Context clue

A word or phrase that helps you determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word

Contraction

A phrase that has been shortened into one word

Controlling idea

What an author wants to say about a topic

Coordinating conjunction

A conjunction that connects words or word groups of equal importance in a sentence

Coordination

A method for combining similar ideas

Correlative conjunctions

Conjunctions that connect two or more similar ideas and always appear in pairs

Count noun

A noun that can be counted

Credibility

What makes someone or something believable

CSE (Council of Science Editors) style

A research style created by the Council of Science Editors

D**Dangling modifier**

A modifier that has no word to modify

Dash

A punctuation mark used to add extra information, often with emphasis, to a sentence

Data

Technical information, usually numbers or percentages

Declarative sentence

A sentence that makes a general statement that informs the reader

Deductive reasoning

A type of logical reasoning that starts with a general premise and argues toward a specific conclusion

Demonstrative pronoun

A pronoun that takes the place of a noun phrase and acts as an adjective

Dependent clause

A word group that contains a subject and a verb but does not express a complete thought

Description

A passage that explains the appearance of someone or something using words that appeal to the senses

Design

Colors, fonts, and images included in a text

Development

Effective presentation of information and inclusion of supporting details

Devil words

Terms that stir up negative emotions in an audience

Digital planner

An online calendar or organizer

Direct object

A word that receives the action of a verb

Direct question

A sentence that asks the audience a question and usually ends with a question mark

Disabilities services

The office responsible for assisting students with learning disabilities or physical limitations

Drafting

A stage of writing that involves writing out ideas and support/ concluding sentences

E**Editing**

A stage of writing that involves proofreading for style, grammar, and spelling errors

Ellipsis

A punctuation mark used to indicate information has been removed from a quotation

Entertaining text

A text that explores a topic or event in a creative or humorous way

Ethos

An argument based on a person's credibility

Evidence

A piece of information, also called a supporting detail, that is used to support a main idea

Example

A specific instance or illustration that demonstrates a point

Exclamation point

A punctuation mark that conveys emphasis or strong feeling

Exclamatory sentence

A sentence that communicates emotion or surprise

Exclusive language

Disrespectful language that refers to a person's gender, ethnicity or culture, physical or mental ability, or sexual orientation

Expert analysis

An opinion or statement shared by someone who is knowledgeable about a topic

External stress

Outside sources of stress like class projects, job responsibilities, or family commitments

F**Fact**

A piece of information that most people generally agree to be true

False authority

An argument that claims a person's fame makes them an expert on a topic

FANBOYS

An acronym for the seven coordinating conjunctions

Field research

Research that involves personally collecting information through interviews and surveys

First draft

The first version of a text

First-person pronoun

A pronoun used to refer to the speaker of the sentence

Focus

Clear communication and support of a main idea

Font

The size and style of letters

Formality

The way a text conforms to certain standards

Format

The style and arrangement of a text

Fragment

A word group that is punctuated as a sentence but does not express a complete thought

Free-writing

A brainstorming strategy for getting your ideas down on paper

Fused sentence

A sentence error made when two independent clauses are joined with no punctuation or conjunction

Future-perfect tense

A verb tense used to describe an action that started in the past and will be completed in the future

Future-progressive tense

A verb tense used to describe a continuous action that will take place in the future

Future tense

A verb tense used to describe an action that has not yet taken place or to describe plans or instructions

G**Gender**

A basis for classifying feminine, masculine, and neutral words

Gender-neutral

Something that applies to all genders

Gender-specific

Something reserved for only one gender

General information

A word or word group that can be linked to a broad range of specific ideas and details

Genre

A type of writing

Gerund

A verbal that functions as a noun in a sentence and is formed by adding *-ing* to the end of the verb

Global learning

Learning information through seeing the big picture

Graphic organizer

A note-taking template for visually demonstrating relationships between ideas

Grouping

A brainstorming strategy that helps you organize your thoughts

H**Hanging indent**

A style that left-aligns the first line of an item and indents all subsequent lines

Hasty generalization

An argument about a large group based on a small amount of evidence

Header

Information, including a page number, that goes at the top of a page

Heading

In an outline, it is a clear statement of one of the main points of a paper

In an MLA paper, the information in the top left corner of the first page that includes your name, your instructor's name, the course name and number, and the date

Hedging word

A vague, indecisive word or term

Helping verb

A verb that is added to a main verb to create a new verb that grammatically fits the sentence

Homonym

A word whose pronunciation sounds similar to that of another word

Hyphen

A punctuation mark that links together words or word parts

I**Idiom**

A phrase—unique to a certain language—that has become a cliché

Imperative sentence

A sentence that makes commands and often addresses the implied subject

Implied main idea

A main idea that is not directly stated

Implied subject

The subject of a sentence when the speaker is talking directly to the audience

Inclusive language

Language that is respectful of people's differences

Indefinite pronoun

A pronoun that does not rename a specific noun

Independent clause

A word group that includes a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought

Indirect object

A word that receives the direct object

Indirect question

A sentence that tells the audience about a question and usually ends with a period

Inductive reasoning

A type of logical reasoning that uses specific premises to reach a general conclusion

Inference

A logical conclusion based on your prior knowledge and the information in a text

Infinitive

A verbal that can function as a noun, adjective, or adverb in a sentence

Informative text

A text that gives the audience information about a topic

Inline quotation

A quote that fits into a sentence without a formal introduction

Interjection

A word or group of words that adds emphasis or emotion

Internal stress

Fears and anxieties that are not easily recognized as sources of stress

Interrogative sentence

A sentence that asks a question

In-text citation

A note in a paragraph that tells the reader which words and ideas come from a source

Introduction

The paragraph used to introduce the main idea at the beginning of a paper, also called an introductory paragraph

Introductory paragraph

The paragraph used to introduce the main idea at the beginning of a paper

Intuitive learning

Learning information through creative methods and abstract ideas

Inverted word order

When the verb comes before the subject in a sentence

Italics

Slanted letters most often used to set apart titles of longer works, important words, and foreign terms

J**Jargon**

Overly technical language

K**Keywords**

A list of terms—fields of study, trends, or topics—relevant to the main ideas in a research source

KWL chart

A chart that helps you think about what you know, what you want to know, and what you learned

L**Layout**

The way text and images are arranged on a page or screen

Learning style

The different ways that people learn new information

Legend

Part of a chart or graph that shows how the groups of information are displayed

LibGuides

A website that contains helpful resources for a particular major or course

Line graph

A graph that uses a line to show changes over time

Linking verb

A verb that links the subject to a description

Listing

Writing down every word or phrase that comes to mind during a set amount of time

Logic

A method for carefully thinking through a topic to find a reasonable conclusion

Logical argument

An argument that makes a reasonable claim, usually using facts and statistics

Logical fallacy

A faulty, or incorrect, argument that appears logical and persuasive

Logos

An argument based on logic

M**Main idea**

The statement or argument that an author tries to communicate

Main verb

The verb that expresses the primary action or state of being of a subject in a complete sentence

Major detail

A detail that supports and proves the main idea of a paragraph

Mind mapping

A method for making visual connections between topics

Minor detail

A detail with specific information that supports a major detail in a paragraph

Misplaced modifier

A modifier that is too far away from the word it modifies

MLA (Modern Language Association) style

The research style guide created by a group of scholars dedicated to research in modern languages

Modifier

A word or group of words that adds extra information to a sentence

Multitasking

Working on more than one task at a time

N**Narrowed topic**

A topic that you have made more specific by considering your purpose, audience, and constraints

Non-count noun

A noun that cannot be counted

Noun

A word that represents a person, place, thing, event, or idea

Number

A basis for agreement between singular or plural words

O**Object of a preposition**

A word that completes the meaning of a prepositional phrase

Objective case

The form a word takes when used as the object of a preposition, direct object, or indirect object of a sentence

Objective pronoun

A pronoun that functions as an object in a sentence

Order of importance

An organizational pattern that arranges information in order of importance

Organizational pattern

The structure of a written text, used to arrange the main points of a work

Outline

A tool developed during pre-writing that provides a visual of a paper's organization and ideas

Outlining

Grouping information into topics and subtopics

P**Page header**

In an MLA paper, the page number and author's last name, which appear in the top-right corner of the document

Page margin

The amount of space between the words and the edge of the paper

Page number

A way to help the audience find information in a text

Paragraph

A short piece of writing that focuses on one main idea

Parallelism

A method for showing a relationship between ideas by using similarly structured words, phrases, or clauses

Paraphrase

Rewording the words of another person in order to explain the text's purpose or to add clarity to the author's argument

Parentheses

A pair of punctuation marks used to add extra information to a sentence or introduce an abbreviation

Parenthetical information

In-text details that are set off by parentheses and provide extra information

Participle

A verb form that can function as an adjective

Participle phrase

A phrase that uses a present or a past participle to introduce the rest of the sentence

Parts of speech

The categories that classify each type of word found in a sentence

Passive reading

Reading without comprehension

Passive voice

When a sentence is written so that the subject is receiving an action

Past participle

A verb form that can function as an adjective or as part of a perfect-tense verb to show completed mental or physical action

Past-perfect tense

A verb tense used to describe an action that was completed before another past-completed action

Past-progressive tense

A verb tense used to describe a continuous action that occurred at a certain time in the past

Past tense

A verb tense used to report on an event or reflect on a past experience

Pathos

An argument based on emotion

Peer review

Working with another person in order to give feedback on each other's papers
When scholarly articles are reviewed by other experts in a particular field

Period

A punctuation mark used to end sentences that make a statement or relay information

Person

The point of view—first-, second-, or third-person—indicated by the form a word takes on in a sentence

Personal pronoun

A pronoun that renames a specific person, animal, object, or place

Personal writing

A text intended for anyone

Persuasive text

A text that convinces its audience to adopt a belief or take an action

Phrase

A word group that does not form a complete thought

Pie chart

A chart that uses pie slices to show percentages of a whole

Plagiarism

Using the words or ideas of a source without giving credit to the author

Planner

A place for you to organize your schedule and record any important tasks or responsibilities

Plural noun

A noun that represents multiple people, places, things, events, or ideas

Popular source

A document that has been written for the general public

Possessive case

A pronoun form that shows possession or functions as an adjective

Possessive pronoun

A pronoun that shows possession of another noun

Post hoc

The assumption that one event caused a second, unrelated event

Predicate

The part of a sentence that indicates what a subject says or does and includes a main verb + any corresponding helping verbs

Prefix

A word part added to the beginning of a root in order to create a new word

Premise

Two or more pieces of evidence used to support a logical argument

Preposition

A word that shows a relationship among people, places, things, events, and ideas

Prepositional phrase

A group of related words that starts with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun

Pre-reading

Preparing yourself to learn from your reading

Present participle

A verb form that can function as an adjective as part of a progressive-tense verb to express a continuous action

Present-perfect tense

A verb tense used to describe an action that was started in the past and has not yet been completed

Present-progressive tense

A verb tense used to describe a continuous action that is happening in the present or will happen in the near future

Present tense

A verb tense used to describe an event or action that is happening now

Pre-writing

A stage of writing that involves making decisions, planning ideas, and identifying assignment guidelines

Primary source

An original document, such as a firsthand account, speech, research result, or work of art

Prior knowledge

What you already know about a topic

Procrastination

Putting off work until the last minute

Professional writing

A text intended for managers, coworkers, or customers

Pronoun

A word that takes the place of a noun in a sentence

Pronoun case

The form a pronoun takes based on its function—subjective, objective, or possessive—in a sentence

Pronoun reference

The connection between a pronoun and the noun it renames

Pronoun-antecedent agreement

The consistency in gender and number between a pronoun and the person, place, thing, idea, or event it renames in a sentence

Proper noun

A capitalized noun that represents a specific person, place, thing, event, or idea

Purpose

The goal of a text

The goal of an image

Purpose statement

A sentence that tells the audience exactly what points will be covered in a longer text

Q**Question mark**

A punctuation mark used at the end of a sentence that asks a question

Quotation

The direct words of a source

Quotation marks

A pair of punctuation marks used to repeat someone else's words

R**Reading comprehension**

Understanding and remembering what you have read

Reference list

A list of publication details for each source used in a text

Reflection

The thoughts or feelings of the author

Reflective learning

Learning information through independent study

Reflective text

A text that shares a personal experience or belief

Regular word order

When the subject comes before the verb in a sentence

Relative pronoun

A pronoun used to introduce a dependent clause

Relevance

When information is clearly related to the text around it

Research database

An online collection of scholarly articles and academic journals

Research journal

A record of the overall research process

Research notes

A detailed record of source information you find during your research

Research style

A set of standards used for research writing within a particular discipline

Research writing

The process of conducting research and using sources to compose arguments

Revising

A stage of writing that involves revising for focus and development

Root

The main part of a word which contains its basic meaning

Root word

A root that can stand alone without any other word parts

Running head

In an MLA paper, the page number and author's last name, which appear in the top-right corner of the document

S**Salutation**

A phrase that greets the person or group receiving a letter

Scholarly article

A research source written by an expert and published in an academic journal

Scholarly source

An academic document that has been written for an expert audience

Scope

The focus of a writing assignment

Secondary source

A document that discusses information from a primary source

Second-person pronoun

A pronoun that directly addresses the audience: you

Semicolon

A punctuation mark used to combine two independent clauses and separate long list items

Sensing learning

Learning information through logical methods and objective facts

Sentence outline

An outline that uses full sentences to represent a paper's structure

Sentence patterns

A set of distinct clause combinations that can make up a sentence

Sequential learning

Learning information through a step-by-step process

Signal phrase

A phrase used to identify source information—like the title and author—within a sentence

Signal/signpost word

A word that makes transitions between ideas by showing order or making connections

Simple sentence

A sentence made up of one independent clause

Single quotation marks

Punctuation marks used to mark a quote or title within a quote

Singular noun

A noun that represents one person, place, thing, event, or idea

Slang

Casual words or expressions specific to a particular group of people

Source

An original document or firsthand account that a writer consults for research

Spatial

An organizational pattern used to describe a topic by its physical characteristics

Specific information

A word or idea with a narrow focus

Spin

Making a topic seem more positive than it actually is

Statistic

A number or percentage that represents research data

Straw man

Changing an opponent's argument to make it easier to attack

Stress

Emphasis, either written or spoken

Student services

The office responsible for academic advising and career services

Study breaks

A time, usually about five minutes long, to help you reenergize and refocus

Subheadings

In an outline, they are at least two sub-points that come under a main point

Subject

The person, place, thing, event, or idea a sentence is about

Subject pronoun

A pronoun used as the subject of a sentence

Subjective case

The form a word takes when it functions as the subject of a sentence

Subjective pronoun

A pronoun that functions as the subject in a sentence

Subject-verb agreement

When a subject and verb used in a sentence match in number and point of view

Submitting

A stage of writing that involves formatting a text and sharing it with its audience

Subordinating conjunction

A conjunction that introduces a dependent clause

Subordination

A method for combining unequal ideas

Suffix

A word part added to the end of a root in order to change the meaning of a word

Summary

A few sentences that explain a large amount of information

Support sentence

A sentence that explains and supports the topic sentence

Supporting detail

A piece of information, also called evidence, that is used to support a main idea

Syllable

The basic unit of a word's pronunciation

Syllabus

A course overview with information about instructor office hours, class policies, major projects, and assignment due dates

Synonym

A word that has the same meaning as another word

T**Table of contents**

A list of chapters or sections and their page numbers within a book or document

Tense

How a verb indicates when it took place: past, present, or future

Test anxiety

Strong feelings of stress or fear before a test

Textspeak

Abbreviations, emoticons, and other phrases used in text messages or social media

The Cornell method

A strategy that divides a page of notes into four sections

Thesis statement

A sentence that expresses the main idea of a longer work

Third-person pronoun

A pronoun that refers to the person, people, or thing(s) being talked about in a sentence

Time budget

A tool to plan the amount of time you want to spend on certain activities

Tone

The positive, negative, or neutral attitude that an author expresses about a topic

Topic

The general subject of a text

Topical

A general organizational pattern used for equally important main points

Topic outline

An outline that uses short phrases to represent a paper's structure

Topic sentence

A sentence that states the main point of a paragraph

Transition

A word, phrase, or sentence that shows order and makes connections between ideas

V**Verb**

A word that represents an action, relationship, or state of being

Verbal

Verb forms that function as other parts of speech (adjectives, adverbs, nouns) in a sentence

Verbal learning

Learning information through written and spoken words

Visual clue

A picture, graph, icon, color, or shape that adds to the meaning of a text

Visual learning

Learning information through pictures, shapes, and colors

W**Word choice**

Also called diction, the words an author uses to convey a particular message

Word family

A group of words that share the same root meaning

Working bibliography

A running list of sources you plan to use in your paper

Working outline

An informal outline with no special formatting or structure

Works-cited page

A section at the end of an MLA-style research paper that includes full bibliographic information for each source cited in the document

Workspace

A location free from distractions and clutter for working and studying

Writing center

A service that provides writing assistance

Writing process

A strategy that breaks up a writing assignment into five stages: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and submitting

Writing prompt

An assignment, with special guidelines, that asks you to write about a specific topic

Writing schedule

A method for planning dedicated writing time