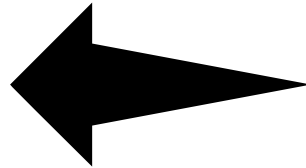


# Common errors seen in Research Papers at WDHS

Over the years many Research Papers have been submitted to the History Department at Waterdown District High School. Here are some helpful hints from the countless students that have gone before you:

1. **DO NOT** write in first person in an academic paper. Avoid “I,” “you,” and “we” statements – always write in the third person.

2. **ALWAYS WRITE AN ACADEMIC PAPER IN PAST-TENSE.**



3. Place your footnote number after the period in a sentence.

i.e. Waterdown is an amazing city that was founded by aliens in 1689.<sup>1</sup>



4. Make sure that your footnote numbers go at the end of the sentence, even if whatever you are citing is located earlier.<sup>2</sup>

5. Make sure your quotations are a) used properly & b) formatted properly. Consult the separate sheet explaining what they should look like.

6. **DO NOT** use the same word more than once in the same sentence.

i.e. Canada is an amazing country because Canada is the second largest country in the world.



7. Avoid the phrase “This essay will . . .” You don’t need to say that – it’s obvious.

8. **Make sure your text remains the same colour, font and size** throughout your essay.

9. Only use “Ibid” (Latin for “in the same place”) if a note refers to the same work as the previous note. If that previous note is on the previous page, don’t use “Ibid.”

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<sup>1</sup> This is entirely false.

<sup>2</sup> Like this.

10. For its first appearance in your paper, make sure you write out the full name of something which you want to identify with an acronym for the rest of your paper. Write the acronym in brackets following the full name. Once you have done this you can use only the acronym for the rest of the paper.

i.e. The Flamborough Archives is operated by volunteers from The **Waterdown-East Flamborough Heritage Society (WEFHS)**. Founded in the early 1980s, the **WEFHS** has amassed an impressive amount of artifacts over the past thirty years.

11. Be mindful of capitalizations. Some general tips:

❖ Capitalize the first word in quotations, provided the quoted material is a complete sentence.

❖ Capitalize the names of people, specific places, and things:

○ For example:

We don't capitalize the word "bridge" unless it starts a sentence, but we must capitalize *Brooklyn Bridge* because it is the name of a specific bridge.

OR

The word "country" would not normally be capitalized, but we would have to write *China* with a capital "C" because it is the name of a specific country.

OR

The word "province", while not normally capitalized, would be written with a capital if it is in the name of an organization, such as *The Provincial Board of Education*.

12. Always write a date using numerals (i.e. 1956, not nineteen fifty-six).

13. Spell out numbers zero through nine and then use numerals thereafter.

14. Avoid blanket statements, unless you can support them with concrete examples or data. (example: "All Canadians love Tim Horton's" coffee is not demonstrably accurate. Instead, "A significant portion of the Canadian population drinks Tim Horton's coffee")

15. Remember that **you** are responsible for getting your Final Research Paper in on time. Access to Wi-Fi, inkless printers, and poor connections are not acceptable excuses for submitting something late. Make sure to anticipate issues and leave enough time to respond to them. Late is late (and results in a 10% deduction per day).<sup>3</sup>

16. Make sure to include a Bibliography (or Works Cited page) at the end of your essay. **This is where you list all the sources you consulted, even if you didn't directly cite them in the body of your essay.**

- Sources are listed alphabetically in a Bibliography (or Works Cited page)
- DO NOT number the sources listed in your Bibliography (or Works Cited page)



17. In Canada, the major global wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are written as follows: The First World War (or “The Great War”) and the Second World War.

World War I and World War II are the American monikers and are fine to use. HOWEVER, do not write them as “World War 1” and “World War 2” – use the roman numerals, or write the number in full (World War One and World War Two).

18. Do not base your papers on, nor cite:

- History.com
- Wikipedia.com
- Any website that provides famous or inspirational quotes

19. Do not rely solely on newspaper articles as sources for a research paper.

20. Avoid starting your essay with a quote (someone else's words) or a definition – never use lines like “The Oxford dictionary defines *glorious* as meaning . . . .”

21. Always try and have someone look over your work before submitting a piece for evaluation. If you are not comfortable doing this, find a place where you can read your paper out loud (this will help you catch syntax errors).

22. Avoid writing unanswered rhetorical questions in your paper – replace them with concrete statements. “Did the new Canadian Flag represent an emerging new identity in the country?” should read “The new Canadian Flag represented a new identity emerging in the country.”

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<sup>3</sup> Medical issues, as well as other extenuating circumstances will be discussed on a case by case basis.

23. Always refer to a person in a research paper by their full name first, and then their last name if they are mentioned again.

Example: Robert Flosman hails from the Czech Republic and its noted for his rugged looks. Flosman is a famous teacher at Waterdown District High School, as well as a noted pumpkin farmer in West Flamborough.

24. Please do not write your essay on your phone . . .