Between work, school, family, and fun, people are busier than ever. Who has time to cook? Fast-food chains provide an easy solution to overscheduled people. Fast-food restaurants offer variety – from tacos and burritos to fried beef, chicken, and fish – and they are affordable. Most importantly, fast-food establishments are fast, thus offering people nourishment in very little time. However, how healthy is all of this fast food? Is fast food a fast way to poor health? Read on and see.

WHY WRITE A RESEARCH PAPER?

If you’re a college student, knowing how to write a research paper is invaluable. Finding a suitable topic, searching for credible information, and integrating your ideas with someone else’s are skills that will serve you well in college and in life. Additionally, writing a research essay provides you an opportunity to learn something about a topic you care about while honing your writing skills. Fortunately, when broken down into individual steps, writing a research essay is a straightforward process.

CHOOSING A TOPIC

Before researching a topic for your essay, make sure you’re interested in the topic. Particularly when you’re writing a research paper, which requires more time and effort than a simple paragraph, interest in your topic is crucial. Knowing your instructor’s
requirements – such as how long the essay must be, how many sources you must consult, how many sources you must cite, and when your essay is due – will help you determine if your topic is broad enough, or narrow enough, for your assignment. Bradley decided to research the general topic of “fast food.” His first step was visiting his college library. For more information on choosing a topic for a research essay, see Chapter 25.

USING THE LIBRARY

Your school library is the best place to begin researching your topic. It contains books, periodicals, and online sources to help you find the broadest range of information for your paper.

SEARCHING FOR BOOKS THREE WAYS

Your library contains an organizational system to help you locate its books. This system may be contained in a card catalog, on a computer in the library, or on a Web page. Regardless of where you find your library’s book listing, you can locate information about your topic three ways: by subject, by author, and by title. Bradley had heard of a book entitled Fast Food Nation by Eric Schlosser, and he wanted to use that book as a starting point for his research.
The diagram below represents a catalog entry for Schlosser’s book.

**Author**  
Schlosser, Eric.

**Title**  
Fast food nation : the dark side of the all-American meal / Eric Schlosser ; [with a new afterword].

**Imprint**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>CALL #</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRC-Circ Desk-2 Hour</td>
<td><strong>TX945.3 .S355 2002</strong></td>
<td>AVAILABLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC-Circ Desk-2 Hour</td>
<td><strong>TX945.3 .S355 2002</strong> c.2</td>
<td>AVAILABLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCC-3rd Floor</td>
<td><strong>TX945.3 S355 2002</strong></td>
<td>DUE 11-21-03 +1 HOLD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Edition**  
1st Perennial ed.

**Descrip**  
383 p. : ill. ; 21 cm.

**Note**  

**Bibliography**  
Includes bibliographical references (p. [356]-361) and index.

**Subject**  
Fast-food restaurants -- United States.

Food industry and trade -- United States.

Convenience foods -- United States.

**ISBN**  
0060938455 (pbk.)

**OCLC #**  
48450069
The entry above contains not only the subject, author, and title of the book, but it also contains the book’s publisher and publication date (Perennial 2002) and the call number. The call number tells you where the book is located in your library. Additionally, at Bradley’s college library, the catalog entry includes the campus (SCC) and the library floor where the book is located and whether or not the book is currently available.

Using the Call Number to Locate Books

The call number is printed on the spine of every book in the library. Depending upon how your library is catalogued, your call number may be a series of numbers and letters (for the Library of Congress filing system) or a series of numbers (Dewey decimal system). Either way, locating your book is the same.

1. Locate the call number on catalog entry of the book you seek. For instance, the call number of Eric Schlosser’s book *Fas Food Nation* is **TX945.3 S355 2002**.

2. Find the row of book shelves containing the letter T or letters TX. (The labels may not list the letters in your entry specifically, so search for the range of letters – TS – UE – for instance – that your entry falls within.)

3. Look down the rows of books until your find the numerical part of the call number.

Note: If your library has closed stacks (ones you are not allowed to search), write the call number on a request slip and give it to library personnel who can find the book for you.
Using Commercial Web sites for Research

Sometimes visiting online bookstores such as Amazon.com (www.amazon.com) or Barnes & Noble.com (www.barnesandnoble.com) can give you a good sense of how many books are available on your topic or of how your topic can be organized or sub-divided. Simply type keywords into the “search” field, press [enter], and view the lists that appear. One downside of using commercial Web sites for research is that they can be distracting. With many “pop-up” advertisements and offers, staying on track takes more effort than if you use your library’s sources. Additionally, while your search results may help you limit your topic, they will not help you find information about your topic unless you buy the books listed.

Performing a Subject Search

Bradley’s first step was to search his library catalog for the subject, in his case, “fast-food.” He found that the subject has been sub-divided into five sub-categories: “Fast-food restaurants Great Britain,” Fast-food restaurants Kentucky employees,” “Fast-food restaurants social aspects East Asia,” “Fast-food restaurants United States,” and “Fast-food restaurants United States employees.” Since Bradley was interested in learning about fast-food in the United States, he searched for books under the “Fast-food restaurants United States” heading. Not only did he find Schlosser’s book, but Bradley also found several other recently published books. Make sure that at least some of the books you consult have been published in the past few years. Research becomes obsolete quickly, so you need to make sure that yours is up to date.
Performing an Author Search

If Bradley had wanted to find the book under the author’s name, he could have searched under $S$ for “Schlosser” until he found the book listing. At Bradley’s college library, two other authors had the last name “Schlosser.” If Bradley had not known his author’s first name, he would have had to look at each author’s entry to determine who the correct author was.

Performing a Title Search

The third way to locate a book is to search by title. Since Bradley knew part of the title of the book he wanted – *Fast Food Nation* – he could have found the book by searching for the first three words of the title. Keep in mind, however, that sometimes knowing part of the title is insufficient to find the book; in this case, ask a librarian for help finding the title you seek.

Tip: The words *a, an,* and *the* are not considered the first word of a book’s title.

Therefore, search for the *second* word in a title if a book’s title begins with one of these words.

Exercise 1: Locating Books in the Library

Visit your college library or its Web site to answer the following questions.

1. Perform a subject search for books about gambling. Write down the titles of three books.

   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
2. Perform an author search for books by Ernest Hemingway. Write down the titles of three books.

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

3. Perform a title search for *Into Thin Air*. Write down the name of the author.

____________________________________

4. Write down two subject headings for *Into Thin Air*.
   
   [Answers will vary.]
   
   - Mountaineering accidents -- Everest, Mount (China and Nepal)
   - Mountaineering expeditions -- Everest, Mount (China and Nepal)

5. Perform a title search for a book by Patrick O'Brian, Joyce Carol Oates, or Henry David Thoreau and write down the catalog information.

   Title: ____________________________________________
   
   Subject: __________________________________________
   
   Publication date: __________________________________
   
   Publisher: _________________________________________
   
   Call number: ______________________________________
FINDING PERIODICALS

Periodicals are publications that come out on a set schedule: daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly. Newspapers, journals, and magazines comprise the periodicals category. Periodicals often provide the most up-to-date research on a given topic; thus, they are valuable sources of information.

TWO WAYS TO FIND PERIODICALS

While magazines and newspapers are easy to spot in coffee shops and waiting rooms, the most helpful sources are found in the library or on the Internet.

PRINTED INDEXES

Using printed catalogs of periodicals such as the Reader’s Guide is a good place to begin your research if you don’t have access to a computer. The Reader’s Guide is a multi-volume text that lists more than 100 magazines. Articles in the Reader’s Guide are listed alphabetically according to subject and author.

[FIND SAMPLE ENTRY FROM LIBRARY]

While searching for articles using the Reader’s Guide can provide you with many sources, it can be cumbersome. Your library may not carry the magazines containing the articles you seek, and the search process itself can be slow if you are searching both the printed index and the library archives for your articles. Additionally, even if you find the articles you seek, you must read and take notes from them or make a copy of the article. If your library offers a compact disk version of the Reader’s Guide, you can use a
computer to locate relevant articles. Simply type in appropriate keywords and let the computer search the index for you.

**ONLINE DATABASES**

If you have access to a computer, searching online databases for helpful articles is the way to go. Online databases often contain full-text articles that you can print or email to yourself. You simply use keywords, or authors and titles if you know them, to locate articles on your topic. Some helpful online databases are:

- **Ebscohost** - Ebscohost offers thousands of articles from hundreds of periodicals, so your chances of finding relevant information are good. Many college libraries carry Ebscohost, but if yours doesn’t, try your local library.

- **Infotrac** - The Infotrac database combines a wide range of abstracts, full-text articles and indexing for scholarly journals and general interest magazines in all academic disciplines.

- **ProQuest General Reference** - This general database from ProQuest offers full-text access and indexing to magazines, scholarly journals and newspapers in a wide range of subjects including business, education, literature and political science.

- **CQ Researcher** - This full-text database from Congressional Quarterly provides detailed "reports" that include background, a chronology, current and future trends, related topics and a bibliography on current and controversial topics.

Britannica Online - This database provides full-text access to the Encyclopedia Britannica Online, Annals of American History Online, and Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged Online. It is also a subject directory to over 130,000 Web sites that have been "selected, rated and reviewed by Britannica editors."

ProQuest Psychology Journals - This database from ProQuest provides full-text access to 301 psychology journals from 1987 to the present.

Country Watch - This database offers a variety of information on specific countries including an overview of the country, political and economic conditions, and environmental issues. It also includes wire service stories for each country.

Ethnic Newswatch - This database, produced by ProQuest, offers full-text from over 200 newspapers, magazines and journals from ethnic, minority and native press from 1990 to the present, in both English and Spanish.

Another helpful online research source is the Longman research navigator, an online database giving access to thousands of periodical articles and the New York Times archives. Ask your instructor if this tool has been ordered for your class; if so, have your instructor give you the password to access the site.
Depending upon your paper topic, you may want to consult one or more of the online databases with a particular focus. These databases are helpful in finding information about a specific topic.

**Online Databases**

**General Information**

- Article First
- Biography & Genealogy Master Index
- Books in Print
- Britannica Online
- College Source Online
- Dissertation Abstracts
- Emerald Press
- Expanded Academic ASAP
- InfoTrac
- JSTOR
- Link +
- Marcel Dekker e-journal collection
- Project MUSE
- WorldCat

**Business/Economics**

- ABI/INFORM
- BNA Tax Management Library
Business and Company Resource Center
EconLit
Factiva (formerly Dow Jones)
General Business File
Mergent Online (formerly Moody’s/FIS Online)
Simmons Study of Media & Markets

Computers
ACM Portal (Publications of the Association for Computing Machinery)
Computer Literature Index
IEEE Digital Library (Publications of the IEEE Computer Society)

Government
American Factfinder (U.S. Decennial and Economic Censuses)
Census of the United States
FirstGov
GPO Access (U.S. Government Resources such as the U.S. Budget and Congressional Record)
GPO Monthly Catalog (U.S. Government Publications)
CQ Weekly Report
STAT-USA
Health/Medicine

CINAHL – Nursing & Allied Health

Linguistics & Language Behavior Abstracts

Medline

PsycINFO

SPORT Discus (sports medicine)

History

America: History & Life

Historical Abstracts

Humanities

Art Index

Grove Dictionary of Art Online

Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians

Music in Print

New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians

RILM Abstracts of Music Literature

Philosopher’s Index

Language and Literature

Contemporary Authors

MLA Bibliography
Math/Science

ACS Web Editions (Publication of American Chemical Society)

American Institute of Physics Journals Online

Applied Science & Technology Index

BasicBIOSIS

GeoBase

GeoRef

MathSciNet

Science Citation Index Expanded: Web of Science

Science Citation Index

ScienceDirect

Web of Science: Science Citation Index Expanded and Social Sciences Citation Index

Wiley InterScience (collection of full text journals)

Social Science

Anthropological Literature Online

Ethnic Newswatch

CommSearch (communications)

Gender Watch

Library Literature

PAIS (Public Affairs Information Service)

Political Science Abstracts
Exercise 2: Searching Online Databases

Search one of the online databases listed above for information on a topic or topics of your choice. Write down the information for three articles. An example has been done for you.

Example:

1. Name of online database: Ebscohost
   a. Keywords used for search: aerial photography
   b. Author (if listed): Lacayo, Richard; Dorfman, Andrea
   c. Title: “A God’s Eye View of the Situation”
   d. Full text available? Yes X No
   e. Magazine name: Time
   f. Pages: 1 page
1. Name of online database: ________________________________
   a. Keyword used for search: ________________________________
   b. Author (if listed): ________________________________
   c. Title: ________________________________
   d. Full text available? (circle one) yes    no
   e. Magazine name: ________________________________
   f. Pages: ________________________________
   g. Publication date: ________________________________

2. Name of online database: ________________________________
   a. Keyword used for search: ________________________________
   b. Author (if listed): ________________________________
   c. Title: ________________________________
   d. Full text available? (circle one) yes    no
   e. Magazine name: ________________________________
   f. Pages: ________________________________
   g. Publication date: ________________________________

3. Name of online database: ________________________________
   a. Keyword used for search: ________________________________
   b. Author (if listed): ________________________________

  g. Publication date: _____ Feb. 9, 2004 ________________________________
SEARCHING THE INTERNET

If you have online access, the Internet can provide you with quick, easy ways to research your topics. By simply entering a keyword or string of words into the search bar of any search engine, you can find thousands of information sources.

Search Engines

A search engine uses words and phrases to sift through Web sites. By using a search engine, you gain access to thousands of sites related to your topic. Getting so many “hits” or matches to your keyword search creates a problem, however. How do you know which sites will help you the most? Narrowing your search by using other, more specific keywords can help you focus on the Web sites that offer the most relevant information. For instance, Bradley’s search on Google for “fast food” resulted in more than seven million matches! The results ranged from sites offering information about fast-food nutrition, to possible fast-food-oriented lesson plans for instructors to use for their classes, to sites advocating consumer freedom of choice. If an Internet search is your first attempt at finding information, be prepared to limit your searches several times.
Popular Search Engines

AltaVista at www.altavista.com
America Online Search at http://search.aol.com
Ask Jeeves at www.askjeeves.com
Dogpile at www.dogpile.com
Excite at www.excite.com
* Google at www.google.com
Hotbot at www.hotbot.com
Infoseek at www.infoseek.com
* Teoma at www.teoma.com
* Yahoo at www.yahoo.com
My Virtual Reference Desk at www.refdesk.com
Web Search at http://websearch.about.com

* These sites are recommended by librarians.

Search Directories

Sometimes an easier way to find information about your topic through the Internet is to use search directories. Search directories organize links – springboards to other sites – around specific topics.

Upon visiting the Google home page, if you click on the directories tab, you will be presented with a list of categories. For “fast food,” Bradley clicked on the “recreation”
tab. He was immediately presented with another list of categories that included a “food” listing. Bradley clicked on this tab and was presented with a “fast-food” heading. Clicking on this tab gave Bradley eighteen links to fast-food-related sites, some arguing the benefits of fast food and others arguing against it. Since Bradley still wasn’t sure of his essay’s focus, he clicked on five or six links until he had decided how to narrow his topic.

**Evaluating Internet Sources**

Since the Internet has put multiple research sources – academic organizations’ Web sites, online databases, search engines – literally at our fingertips, access to information has never been easier. In fact, we are able to learn more information more quickly about more topics than ever before. However, for all of these benefits we pay a price: sometimes the sources found are not current or credible, in which case our research is compromised. How, then, do we determine what sources can help us without leading us astray? Here are some general guidelines by which to evaluate your Internet sources.

*Test your sources according to each of the following four criteria in order to determine whether or not your source is credible:*

**1. What type of source are you viewing?**

Until very recently, a small number of online domain names made determining the type of source fairly straightforward, with:
“com” indicating a commercial, or for-profit, site; (Ex: www.amazon.com the online bookseller);

“org” indicating some sort of organization, often cause-based; (Ex: www.npr.org, the website for national public radio);

“gov” informing us that a site was sponsored and run by the government; (Ex: www.senate.gov, the website for the United States Senate);

“mil” telling us we had reached a military site; (Ex: www.navy.mil, the website for the United States Navy);

“net” identifying an internet service provider (Ex: www.whitehouse.net);

“edu” connecting us to educational sites, such as those of universities or other learning institutions; (Ex: www.csus.edu, for the California State University at Sacramento); and a

“~” or tilde informing us that an individual, rather than an organization, was responsible for the information viewed; (Ex: www.dde.com/~Kjohnson/birdcare.htm).

Now, however, though examples of these domain names still exist in plenty, we soon will have many more to choose from, thus making the whole source evaluation process trickier. Look for the following in the near future:

“aero”: indicates aviation groups

“biz”: indicates a business

“coop”: identifies a cooperative such as a farm coop or credit union

“info”: anyone may use this domain name
“museum”: indicates a museum

“name”: to register a family name

“pro” identifies a certified professional such as a certified public accountant or physician

Once you’ve determined the type of source you want to use, ask yourself three more basic questions:

2. **How current is the information provided?**

Information is only helpful if it’s timely to the topic at hand. Look for a recent revision or posting date at the top or bottom of the WebPages. If the last site update was completed two years ago, for instance, chances are this site won’t be much help. Another way to determine whether or not a site is current is to evaluate the links provided by that site, if any links are available. Current, functional links are a positive sign that the site has been recently tended. If, however, the links you click on are outdated or nonfunctional, this site may not be as recent as you need.

3. **What is the purpose of the Web site?**

Make sure you know what the slant or bias of the Web site you’re viewing is. For instance, is the site offering just a broad overview of the topic you’re researching? If so, the information provided might not meet your in-depth needs. Make sure, too, that the site’s purpose includes a broad enough population for your needs. If the information provided targets only children, for instance, you may need to look elsewhere. Finally, be aware that if the source has a particular bias, that you are aware of such a bias:
http://forces.org, for instance, strongly advocates smokers’ rights; if you seek to learn about the dangers of smoking, this site is probably not for you.

4. **What credentials does the site offer?**

Make sure that the site offers some credible qualifications, such as affiliations with educational or professional organizations. While individuals may have much to offer on the topic you research, you will have an easier time verifying your information if it was posted by someone who has completed studies or extensive research on the subject, which should be mentioned on the site.

While you may still find sources that don’t always help you as much as you’d like, following these basic guidelines can help you find and evaluate the sources you do find.

For more information on evaluating Internet sources, see text Chapter 25.

**Exercise 3: Finding Internet Sources**

Choose three search engines from Chapter 25. Then, search for information on a topic of your choice. Write down the names of the links you would most likely use for a research essay.

**Example:**

Search engine: Google

Topic: fantasy football league
Exercise 4: Evaluating Internet Sources

Use a search engine or search directory to find three links on one of the topics below.

Click on each link and fill in the blanks below to evaluate each link.

Some possible topics

Narcolepsy

Kleptomania

Depression
Steroid use
California Recall process
Speed reading
Low-carbohydrate diets
Oil drilling
Fire prevention
Interview techniques
Charter schools
Herbal remedies
Acupuncture
Investing
Scholarships
Identity theft
Vegan diets
Macrobiotics
Street gangs
Prison etiquette
Breast Cancer
Wicca
Recreational drugs
Home schools
Overpopulation
Family planning
Workplace violence

National parks protection

Electric vehicles

Sleep disorders

Example:

Topic: Prison etiquette

Link: Prison/Cantine

Address: www.siu.edu/~siupress/titles/s01_titles/cantine_prison.htm

Brief description: **Prison Etiquette. The Convict's Compendium of Useful Information.** Edited by Holley Cantine and Dachine Rainer.

Site evaluation: This looks like part of a book; it looks OK except that the information comes from the World War II period, so it might be too old for today.

Topic: ________________________________

1. Link: ________________________________

Address: ________________________________

Brief description: ________________________________

__________________________________________

Site evaluation: ________________________________
WRITING AN EFFECTIVE THESIS STATEMENT

Now that you’ve scoured the library and the Internet for information about your topic, you’re ready to begin planning your essay. Begin drafting a thesis statement so you have
some means of organizing your ideas. Remember: at this early stage, your thesis statement is just a guide; you can always revise it later if you want to write about a different aspect of your topic.

Bradley had been reading extensively about how fast food was contributing to people’s weight problems. Specifically, he identified three aspects of fast food that were particularly harmful to people: high fat content, high salt content, and large portions.

Thus, Bradley’s thesis statement read as follows:

By offering huge portions, high-fat food, and high-sodium food, fast-food restaurants are harmful to people’s health.

Bradley includes a map of his essay by listing the three areas he intends to focus on.

For more information on how to write a thesis statement, see Chapter 26.

ORGANIZING YOUR RESEARCH

Now that Bradley has a thesis statement, he can begin sorting through his research to find details that will support his thesis. Specifically, Bradley wants to find information showing that fast food’s high fat content, high salt content, and large portions are harmful to people’s health. Bradley has made a scratch outline to make clear the points he wants to develop.

Thesis Statement: By offering huge portions, high-fat food, and high-salt food, fast-food restaurants are harmful to people’s health.
1. High-fat foods hurt people’s health
2. High-sodium foods hurt people’s health
3. Huge portions hurt people’s health

Bradley begins organizing his research by making four piles of his findings: one pile for articles about large portions, one pile for articles about high-fat foods, one pile for high-sodium foods, and one pile for articles containing information on more than one support point.

As Bradley reads through each pile, he marks important information in the articles and takes notes to help him recognize important details.

Bradley’s next step is to translate his research into a form that he can use in his paper.

For more information on organizing your ideas, read chapters 25 and 28.

**TAKING NOTES**

If you’ve ever seen a great movie and then given a friend the “highlights” of the movie afterward, you know how to take notes. Note-taking is simply the act of writing down the highlights of whatever you’re reading, seeing, or listening to. Good notes should do two things:

- Summarize important information
- Jog your memory
The important thing to remember about taking notes is that they are tools to help you write a paper; they should not be fully developed ideas themselves.

**Summarizing Important Information**

Good notes should be brief summaries of information you’ve read or heard. Thus, they should include all titles, headings, and key terms from the book, article, or lecture you’re referring to. For instance, Bradley read numerous articles on fast food, highlighting information as he went. One paragraph Bradley highlighted read:

> The super combination may be great for your wallet, but it’s lousy for your health. It’s more food than you want or need. Fast foods offer calories but very little nutritional value. Too much fat, sugar, and sodium lead to obesity and high blood pressure as well as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

As Bradley took notes from this article, he paid attention to the highlighted passages. Then, he wrote down the following information.

[script]

super size good deal but too much

obesity and disease from too much fat, sugar, salt

Bradley’s notes include all of the important details from the original passage, but they are far shorter. Thus, when Bradley writes his paper, he can easily find the details he needs for support without having to re-read the entire article.

For more information on summarizing information, read chapter 31.

**Jogging Your Memory**

In addition to providing important information in an easy-to-find format, good notes should also serve to remind you of what else you’ve read. When Bradley read disease in his notes, he was reminded of high blood pressure, heart disease, and cancer. Remembering more of the article than just what he’d written was helpful to Bradley because later, when he remembered something he hadn’t written down, he had a general idea from his notes of where to locate the information he sought.

**Note-taking Methods**

Good note-taking simply requires time and attention. You can use 3x5 cards, separate pieces of paper, or computer files for your notes. Just be sure you’re comfortable with whatever method you adopt.

Bradley carried a three-ring binder, so he opted to use pieces of paper to keep his notes. Bradley divided his binder into three sections – huge portions, high fat, high salt – and then filed his notes under each heading as he finished them. When the time came for Bradley to write each section of his essay, he removed the relevant section of notes, replacing it when he was finished.
Tip:

As you take notes, remember the following:

Write on one side only of the paper or card.
Write the topic, or important terms, at the top of each page or card.
Write information from only one article or chapter per piece of paper or card.
Write the author’s name, source of information, and page number at the bottom of each piece of paper or card.

DEVELOPING SPECIFIC DETAILS

Now that you’ve found wonderful information, you need a place to put it. The information you find from research serves as the specific details for your research paper. Just as you use your own experiences and observations to support your ideas, in writing a research paper you must use others’ ideas to back up your own. For more information on finding specific details, read chapter 12.

INTEGRATING RESEARCH INTO YOUR WRITING

After finding the information you need in order to make your point, you need to find a way to gracefully weave your research into your essay. If you simply “plug in” others’ ideas without signaling to your reader that the ideas they’re reading come from a particular source, you risk – at best -- losing credibility and – at worst -- stealing others’ ideas.
QUOTATIONS

Quotation marks indicate that the words enclosed in them belong to someone else. For quotations that are more than four lines long, indent the entire quotation one inch or ten spaces on the left and double-space the quotation. Do not use quotation marks when you indent a quotation.

Direct Quotation

To use a direct quotation, type the words you wish to use exactly as they appear in the article. One quotation that Bradley considered using reads,

“The super combination may be great for your wallet, but it’s lousy for your health. It’s more food than you want or need. Fast foods offer calories but very little nutritional value. Too much fat, sugar, and sodium lead to obesity and high blood pressure as well as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer” (Gard).

The words Bradley quoted were exactly the same as the ones in the article.

Partial Quotation

You may not always want to use an entire paragraph from an article you read. To use part of a quotation, simply use an ellipsis (three spaced periods in brackets) to indicate an omission in the original quotation. Bradley chose to use part of the quotation above, so he used ellipsis to show where the break in the original quote was.
“The super combination may be great for your wallet, but it’s lousy for your health. […] Too much fat, sugar, and sodium lead to obesity and high blood pressure as well as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer” (Gard).

The ellipsis here tells the reader that information in the original quotation is missing. By documenting the source, however, Bradley offers his reader a way to consult the article and read the missing information.

For more information on using quotation marks, see chapter 52.

Leading into a Quotation

In using quotations, you need to prepare your reader for someone else’s information. By leading into a quotation, you give proper credit to the authority you’re citing, and you increase your credibility by showing that you’ve consulted other sources for information. Bradley wants to use the following quotation in his paper.

The super combination may be great for your wallet, but it's lousy for your health. It's more food than you want or need. Fast foods offer calories but very little nutritional value. Too much fat, sugar, and sodium lead to obesity and high blood pressure as well as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer (Gard).
To prepare the reader for the information to come, Bradley needs to include the writer’s name, the title of the article, and the source of the article. Three ways to lead into this quotation place these three pieces of information first:

In her article “Three Habits to LOSE” from Current Health, Carolyn Gard claims, “The super combination . . . .”

In “Three Habits to LOSE” from Current Health, Carolyn Gard claims, “The super combination . . . .”


Later in his paper, when Bradley wants to refer to this article, he can simply use the author’s last name to introduce the quotation.

Gard argues with this point, saying that other habits “are bad for your health.”

**Following Up After a Quotation**

The danger in finding a lot of wonderful information to use in your paper is forgetting to include your own views. Remember: Your research is only supposed to support your ideas; it should never make up the bulk of your argument. A safe way to ensure that you explain your ideas fully in relation to each quotation is to use two lines (or more) of your own writing for every quotation you use. Read how Bradley explains the importance of the quotation by using his own words.
According to “Three Habits to LOSE,” “The super combination may be great for your wallet, but it’s lousy for your health. [...] Too much fat, sugar, and sodium lead to obesity and high blood pressure as well as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer” (Gard). The fat, sodium, and “super” sized portions harm people’s health as they satisfy people’s appetites. But are the high-profile diseases of heart disease, diabetes, and cancer really worth getting “fries with that”? Hopefully as the dangers of fast food become better known, people will slow down and turn away from the fast route to poor health.

Bradley explains his reader not only that he has found relevant information to support his views, but also that he understands this information. Thus, the reader is more likely to be persuaded by Bradley’s argument. Keep in mind that the more complex your topic is, the more explanation you will need to provide to explain the relevance of your research. Eventually, you should strive to write two lines of explanation for every one line of someone else’s.

PLAGIARISM

Passing off someone else’s ideas as yours is plagiarism, and it’s an offense that can result in failure or expulsion. Be very careful to provide complete information about the sources you use; otherwise, you risk cheating.

With so much pressure on students to succeed, cheating can be tempting. Especially with the presence of the Internet, finding a few sentences, a paragraph, or an entire essay
online is not difficult. However, your instructor has been reading your work over the 
course of the term and he or she will recognize a different writing style or a piece of 
information that did not come from ordinary class discussions. Additionally, it’s as easy 
for your instructor to search for plagiarized papers online as it is for you. Be very careful 
to give credit to the sources you consult to avoid the penalties of dishonest writing.

**DOCUMENTING YOUR SOURCES**

Aside from giving people you’ve cited the proper credit, documenting your sources 
allows your reader to see that you have taken the time and made the effort to incorporate 
others’ ideas into your writing. This increases your credibility and makes you more 
persuasive. This chapter shows you how to use a simple version of documentation 
published by the Modern Language Association (MLA). Specifically, this chapter 
addresses parenthetical documentation and the list of works cited.

**PARENTHETICAL CITATION**

After you have used someone else’s words or ideas, you must give the writer’s name and 
the page number of the publication you cited in parentheses at the end of the borrowed 
material. The parenthetical citation serves to point your readers to your list of works 
cited where they can learn more about the source you’ve cited. Consider the citation in 
the paragraph below.

> Additionally, the levels of sodium in fast-food are extremely high. A healthy 
daily level of sodium is 2,400 milligrams for most people (Jiang 2029). Since the
average fast-food meal of large hamburger and fries contains nearly 2,000 milligrams of sodium (Liebman, Hurley), people are ingesting nearly the maximum level of sodium at one sitting. The high sodium levels in fast food alone make it harmful to most people’s health.

In the first citation, Bradley references the article in his list of works cited by using He Jiang’s last name, followed by the page number of the citation, in parentheses after the borrowed information. In the second citation, Bradley does not provide a page number since he is referencing an online source.

Tip
To use parenthetical citation, remember the following:

- The parenthetical citation comes after the borrowed information but before the period.

- Use only the last name of the author in the citation.

- No comma separates the author’s last name from the page number.

- In using more than one source by the same author, give an abbreviated form of the book titles between the author’s last name and page number in the parentheses. (Gard, Health 45)

**LIST OF WORKS CITED**
The greatest benefit you give readers of your research paper is knowledge. At the end of your paper, your readers should know considerably more about your topic than they did
before reading it. Hopefully, your work will be interesting enough that some of your readers may want to learn still more about your subject. This is where the list of works cited comes in. The list of works cited gives your readers all the information they need to pursue additional study of your topic through the sources you’ve identified. Your list of works cited also gives credit to those writers whose articles gave you information for your paper.

The list of works cited below covers commonly occurring types of documentation according to the Modern Language Association (MLA).

When preparing your Works Cited list, remember the following:

Use a new page to begin your Works Cited list.

Number the Works Cited page consecutively with the rest of your essay.

Place the title Works Cited in the center of the first line, one inch from the top of the page.

Alphabetize the list according to the author’s last name.

Separate each item in a Works Cited entry by a period.

Indent the second and subsequent lines of each entry five spaces (one-half inch).

Double-space your list of Works Cited.
**Books by One Author**

Place the author’s last name first, with a comma between the last and first names. Underline the title of the book. List the city of publication, publisher’s name, and year of publication.


**Books by Two Authors**

List the second author first name first.


**Books by Three or More Authors**

Use “et al” (“and others”) to indicate the second and subsequent authors.


**Two or More Books by the Same Author**

List books in alphabetical order according to title. After the first entry, use three unspaced hyphens instead of the author’s name.


**Edited Book**


Translation

Revised Edition

Book Chapter

Selection from an Anthology or Edited Collection

Pamphlet

Magazine Article
After the title of the magazine, placing the day first, then the month, then the year.

**Newspaper Article**

The final letter and number *C1+* indicate the page number of the article. The plus indicates that the article is continued on a non-consecutive page in the section. Otherwise, the page number would read *C1-2.* Note that when citing newspaper titles, you should omit *The* from the title. *The Sacramento Bee* is simply listed as *Sacramento Bee.*


**Article from Online Database**

The first date is the user’s database access date, and the second date tells when the article was initially published in hard copy.


**Television Program**

Personal Interview


Film


Videocassette/DVD


Music Recording

Exercise 5: Putting Sources into MLA Format

Put the following sources into MLA format according to the guidelines in this chapter. An example has been done for you.


MODEL ESSAY

Read the following research essay and answer the questions that follow.

A Fast Way to Fat

If you drive down nearly any freeway, you’ll see signs for fast-food restaurants: McDonald’s, Taco Bell, KFC, and Burger King, to name a few. These establishments offer tasty, reasonably priced meals that appeal to children and adults alike. In fact, people like fast food so much that one in five Americans ate fast food at least once daily...
in 1997 (Carroll 14), and more than half of Americans eat fast food at least once per week (Liebman and Hurley). But is all this fast food good for us? According to the Surgeon General in 2001, 60 percent of adult Americans are overweight (Weir). One major cause of the weight gain, say nutrition experts, is fast food (Carroll 14). Despite its mass appeal, fast food harms people’s health through its high-fat content, high-sodium content, and huge portion size.

Perhaps the most well-known downside of fast food is its high fat content. According to Bonnie Liebman and Jayne Hurley in “Fast-Food 2002: The Best and Worst,” one large Old Fashioned Shake at Burger King contains 1,200 calories and 64 grams of fat (Liebman and Hurley). Since the average American expends fewer than 2,000 calories per day says Norman Paul, MD, one Burger King milk shake takes up nearly one day’s full calorie load. If people combine shakes like these with a Whopper and large fries at 760 and 500 calories, and 15 and 13 grams of fat, respectively (Liebman, Hurley), that’s 2,460 calories for just one meal! Clearly the high fat content of fast food works against people’s desire to stay thin.

Another factor creating health risks for fast-food fans is the high sodium content in many fast-food courses. According to Dr. Paul, “too much salt can exacerbate high blood pressure and ultimately endanger the life of someone who suffers from hypertension” (Paul). Additionally, according to one study, too much sodium can increase the risk of stroke in 32% of overweight people, increase the risk of coronary heart disease mortality in 44% of overweight people, and 61% increase the risk of death from cardiovascular disease in 61% of overweight people (Jiang 2027). Since more than half of the American population is overweight, these risks apply to the majority of
people. Additionally, the levels of sodium in fast food are extremely high. A healthy daily level of sodium is 2,400 milligrams for most people (Jiang 2029). Since the average fast-food meal of a large hamburger and fries contains nearly 2,000 milligrams of sodium (Liebman and Hurley), people are ingesting nearly the maximum level of sodium at one sitting. The high sodium levels in fast food alone make it harmful to most people’s health.

The final fast-food factor contributing to poor health lies in portion size. Despite Chuck Hutchcraft’s urging in his article “Think Big” to “indulge – it’s a lot more fun (Hutchcraft), consuming those huge “super size” portions can be dangerous. With the pressure from advertisers to buy and eat extra-large servings of fast food (Moore), the tempting tastes, and low cost of fast food, people have many reasons to indulge in the “super sized” fries and soda even when they know it’s not healthy. However, such huge portions can be deadly. A “king” size order of Burger King’s French fries contains 1,070 milligrams of sodium and 600 calories (Liebman and Hurley). Even if people only eat fries for a snack, they’re loading their bodies with much of the fat and sodium for an entire day. Though economically the extra-large portions seem to be a great deal, Americans pay the ultimate price of their health when they overindulge in “super” deals.

Murder, natural disasters, and drug addiction are causes of death that routinely make the headlines. However, an insidious, seemingly harmless force has brought about an “obesity epidemic” (Schlosser 242). Fast food is this insidious force. According to “Three Habits to LOSE,” “The super combination may be great for your wallet, but it’s lousy for your health. [. . .] Too much fat, sugar, and sodium lead to obesity and high blood pressure as well as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer” (Gard). The fat, sodium,
and “super” sized portions harm people’s health as they satisfy people’s appetites. But are the high-profile diseases of heart disease, diabetes, and cancer really worth getting “fries with that”? Hopefully as the dangers of fast food become better known, people will slow down and turn away from the fast route to poor health.
Works Cited


