

Ornithology Research Project

My Bird: _____

Name: _____

Due Date: _____

Overview: You will complete a research project about your assigned bird. This is your opportunity to learn about what makes your bird species special! It may seem like a big task to answer all of the questions, but this packet should help you through every step of the way.

Step 1: Research: The first step is finding out all you can about your bird, but you need to do this part really carefully.

1. Find reliable sources. What is a reliable source? It is a book, article, or online information written by someone who knows for sure what he or she is talking about.
 - a. Reliable sources include nonfiction books from the Grymes library, which are in the classroom for now, as well as encyclopedias in the Grymes or local public library.
 - b. There are some great sources online, but there are also some to avoid. How can you tell if the online source is good? Sources I give you are OK to use. Others that end in .org , .edu, and .gov might be good sources of information. Do not use Wikipedia as a source, because some of the information is high quality, while some information is incorrect--there is no way for you to tell.
2. Write down the special information you need so that anyone can find that source again. Look at the Source Sheets on pages 4-7 in this packet. This information will be used for something called citing. Citing is letting people who read your report and listen to your oral presentation know where you learned important information.
 - a. How do you cite? This is pretty simple, but you need to see many examples to get the idea. Look at the *Science Buddies* "Writing a Bibliography:MLA Format" in this packet to see how to cite your sources of information.
 - i. **You will have a Works Cited page at the end of your report--it will be a page of its own attached at the end.**
 1. It will use the MLA format. Your parents might recognize this! This is putting the special information about your source in a certain order with periods or commas between the information. Then you put the sources in alphabetical order... look at the *Science Buddies* "Writing a Bibliography:MLA Format" in this packet to see how to cite sources of information. Write *Works Cited* in the center at the top of the Works Cited page.
 - ii. Any facts you use, or ideas that aren't your own, you will **UNDERLINE in your written report**. That tells me when I read it that you found the information in one of your sources listed on your *Works Cited* page.

3. After you have written down the special information for citing the source, take notes about your bird on the same piece of paper. Repeat for each source.
- a. Write down information **that you can find** about
 - i. The Bird's Classification

What type of bird is it (songbird, wading bird, raptor, water bird, or something else)? Can you find its Genus and species names?

Bonus: Extra information about the characteristics of birds in your bird's category in general will help add points
 - ii. Keys to Identification

What are some good ways to identify your bird if you are outdoors in its natural home area?

How can you tell your bird from lookalikes?
 - iii. Habitat

Where else in the world does this type of bird live (that is, what is its range)? Does where it lives depend on the time of year (does the bird migrate)?

Describe in what types of habitats the bird is found (grasses, shrubs, deciduous forest, riparian (river) areas, etc.)?
 - iv. Food

What does the bird eat: insects, seeds, nuts, nectar, fruit, worms, shrews, mice, other birds, etc?
 - v. Nesting

Does the birds build a nest?

How (males and females build it together? with twigs, moss, or leaves, etc.?) and where does the bird create its home (in a hollow tree high above ground, in grasses on the ground, in man-made outdoor structures, etc.)?

How many eggs does the bird lay at once in a clutch?

What are the hatchlings like?

How are they fed?
 - vi. Behavior

Where does the bird forage (look for food)?

What does the bird do to establish its own territory?

How does the bird attract a mate?

How does the bird avoid predators?
 - vii. Other

This is your chance to include anything fascinating or unique about your bird and add points to your grade (see the rubric)

Step 2: Oral Presentation You need to make note cards of what you want to tell your classmates and me about the bird. You're going to give a short talk, 3-5 minutes long, so you don't need to include every single detail from your written report.

1. **Prepare** and **practice** giving a talk on your bird, including the content as stated on the rubric.
2. **Draw or create an image of your bird** to use during your oral presentation according to your goals on the rubric.

Step 3: Writing: You need to write up your findings in a report.

1. The first paragraph introduces the topic. Tell a little bit about the bird in Virginia, and tell what kinds of information will be shared.
2. The second, third, and other paragraphs tell the facts you learned about the bird during the research. Be sure to underline facts or other people's opinions that you found in your resources.
3. Each paragraph should have a topic, and all of the sentences in the paragraph should be about that topic.
4. Indent for each new paragraph
5. **You will include the Works Cited page at the back.**

Suggested Online Resources

(These will be emailed to your parents, too.)

Absolutely make sure to look up your bird on the first one listed!

<http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/search.aspx>

<http://www.pwconserve.org/wildlife/index.htm>

<http://birds.audubon.org/birdid/common-name>

<http://www.biokids.umich.edu/critters/Aves/pictures/>

For (maybe) making your *Works Cited* page faster and easier, you can try your hand at Easybib.com, using the MLA tab.

<http://www.easybib.com>

SOURCE SHEET : BOOK

Author's Last Name _____

Author's First Name _____

Book Title _____

City of Publication _____

Publishing Company _____

Publication Date _____

SOURCE SHEET: ENCYCLOPEDIA AND DICTIONARY

Author's Last Name _____

Author's First Name _____

Title of Article _____

Title of Encyclopedia _____

Date _____

SOURCE SHEET: MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Author's Last Name _____

Author's First Name _____

Article Title _____

Periodical Title (Name of Newspaper or Magazine)

Volume Number _____

Date _____

Page Number(s) of the Article _____

SOURCE SHEET: WEBSITE OR WEBPAGE

Author's Last Name _____

Author's First Name _____

Title of the Page Used _____

Title of the Site _____

Editor _____

Date of Publication (When did somebody put it online?) _____

Name of Sponsoring Institution or Organization (ex. a college or university, or some official group, such as the National Audubon Society)

Date of Access (What date did YOU look at the information online?) _____

URL (What does it say in your browser bar?) _____



Writing a Bibliography: MLA Format

Below are standard formats and examples for basic bibliographic information recommended by the Modern Language Association (MLA). For more information on the MLA format, see http://www.mla.org/style_faq (http://www.mla.org/style_faq).

Basics

Your list of works cited should begin at the end of the paper on a new page with the centered title, *Works Cited*. Alphabetize the entries in your list by the author's last name, using the letter-by-letter system (ignore spaces and other punctuation.) If the author's name is unknown, alphabetize by the title, ignoring any *A*, *An*, or *The*.

For dates, spell out the names of months in the text of your paper, but abbreviate them in the list of works cited, except for May, June, and July. Use either the day-month-year style (22 July 1999) or the month-day-year style (July 22, 1999) and be consistent. With the month-day-year style, be sure to add a comma after the year unless another punctuation mark goes there.

Underlining or Italics?

When reports were written on typewriters, the names of publications were underlined because most typewriters had no way to print italics. If you write a bibliography by hand, you should still underline the names of publications. But, if you use a computer, then publication names should be in italics as they are below. Always check with your instructor regarding their preference of using italics or underlining. Our examples use italics.

Hanging Indentation

All MLA citations should use hanging indents, that is, the first line of an entry should be flush left, and the second and subsequent lines should be indented 1/2".

Capitalization, Abbreviation, and Punctuation

The MLA guidelines specify using title case capitalization - capitalize the first words, the last words, and all principal words, including those that follow hyphens in compound terms. Use lowercase abbreviations to identify the parts of a work (e.g., *vol.* for *volume*, *ed.* for *editor*) except when these designations follow a period. Whenever possible, use the appropriate abbreviated forms for the publisher's name (*Random* instead of *Random House*).

Separate author, title, and publication information with a period followed by one space. Use a colon and a space to separate a title from a subtitle. Include other kinds of punctuation only if it is part of the title. Use quotation marks to indicate the titles of short works appearing within larger works (e.g., "Memories of Childhood." *American Short Stories*). Also use quotation marks for titles of unpublished works and songs.

Format Examples

Books

Format:

Author's last name, first name. *Book title*. Additional information. City of publication: Publishing company, publication date.

* Start Here

Examples:

Allen, Thomas B. *Vanishing Wildlife of North America*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1974.

Boorstin, Daniel J. *The Creators: A History of the Heroes of the Imagination*. New York: Random, 1992.

Hall, Donald, ed. *The Oxford Book of American Literacy Anecdotes*. New York: Oxford UP, 1981.

Searles, Baird, and Martin Last. *A Reader's Guide to Science Fiction*. New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1979.

Toomer, Jean. *Cane*. Ed. Darwin T. Turner. New York: Norton, 1988.

Encyclopedia & Dictionary

Format:

Author's last name, first name. "Title of Article." *Title of Encyclopedia*. Date.

Note: If the dictionary or encyclopedia arranges articles alphabetically, you may omit volume and page numbers.

Examples:

"Azimuthal Equidistant Projection." *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. 10th ed. 1993.

Pettingill, Olin Sewall, Jr. "Falcon and Falconry." *World Book Encyclopedia*. 1980.

Tobias, Richard. "Thurber, James." *Encyclopedia Americana*. 1991 ed.

Levinson, David, and Melvin M. Ember, eds. *Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology*. 4 vols. New York: Henry Holt, 1996. Print.

Magazine & Newspaper Articles

Format:

Author's last name, first name. "Article title." *Periodical title* Volume # Date: inclusive pages.

Note: If an edition is named on the masthead, add a comma after the date and specify the edition.

Examples:

Hall, Trish. "IQ Scores Are Up, and Psychologists Wonder Why." *New York Times* 24 Feb. 1998, late ed.: F1+.

Kalette, Denise. "California Town Counts Down to Big Quake." *USA Today* 9 21 July 1986: sec. A: 1.

Kanfer, Stefan. "Heard Any Good Books Lately?" *Time* 113 21 July 1986: 71-72.

Trillin, Calvin. "Culture Shopping." *New Yorker* 15 Feb. 1993: 48-51.

Website or Webpage

Format:

Author's last name, first name (if available). "Title of work within a project or database." *Title of site, project, or database*. Editor (if available). Electronic publication information (Date of publication or of the latest update, and name of any sponsoring institution or organization). Date of access and <full URL>. website

Note: If you cannot find some of this information, cite what is available.

Examples:

Devitt, Terry. "Lightning injures four at music festival." *The Why? Files*. 2 Aug. 2001. 23 Jan. 2002 <<http://whyfiles.org/137lightning/index.html>>.

Dove, Rita. "Lady Freedom among Us." *The Electronic Text Center*. Ed. David Seaman. 1998. Alderman Lib., U of Virginia. 19 June 1998 <<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/subjects/afam.html>>.

Lancashire, Ian. Homepage. 28 Mar. 2002. 15 May 2002 <<http://www.chass.utoronto.ca:8080/~ian/>>.

Levy, Steven. "Great Minds, Great Ideas." *Newsweek* 27 May 2002. 10 June 2002 <<http://www.msnbc.com/news/754336.asp>>.

Sample

Sample Bibliography: MLA Works Cited Format (http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_mla_works_cited_examples.shtml)

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Buddies.



You can find this page online at: http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_mla_format_examples.shtml



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(http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/terms_conditions.shtml).

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Research Sources	Student shows evidence of using more than two reliable sources.	Student shows evidence of using two reliable sources.	Student shows evidence of using one reliable source.	Student does not show evidence of using at least one reliable source.
Works Cited Page, MLA	Works Cited page is submitted, and all sources are cited according to MLA standards.	Works Cited pages is submitted, and most sources are cited according to MLA standards.	Works Cited page is submitted, but sources are not cited according to MLA standards.	Works Cited page is not submitted on time or is incomplete.
Oral Presentation Preparedness	Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.	Student seems moderately prepared but might have needed a few more rehearsals	Student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear rehearsal was lacking.	Student does not seem at all prepared to present.
Oral Presentation Image	Student uses an image of the assigned bird that shows his or her own considerable work/creativity and which makes the presentation better.	Student uses an image of the assigned bird that shows his or her own work and which makes the presentation better.	Student uses an image of the assigned bird that does not show his or her own work, but the image makes the presentation better.	Student uses no image of the assigned bird or uses one that detracts from the presentation.
Oral Presentation Content	The student presents three or more relevant facts in addition to the bird's classification, keys to identification, habitat, food, nesting, and behavior.	The student includes facts about the bird's classification, keys to identification, habitat, food , nesting, and behavior.	The student includes facts about most of the following: the bird's classification, keys to identification, habitat, food, nesting, and behavior.	The student does not include facts about most of the following: the bird's classification, keys to identification, habitat, food, nesting, and behavior.
Written Report, Structure and Neatness	The student writes in complete sentences. Paragraphs are organized by topic, and all but up to five words are spelled correctly.	The student writes in complete sentences. Paragraphs are somewhat organized by topic, and/or all but six to fifteen words are spelled correctly.	The student writes in complete sentences. Paragraphs are disorganized, and/or there are sixteen to thirty words illegible or misspelled.	The student does not write in complete sentences, and/or paragraph structure is lacking, and/or thirty-one or more words are illegible or misspelled.
Written Report, Content	Written report includes three or more relevant facts in addition to the bird's classification, keys to identification, habitat, food, nesting, and behavior.	Written report includes facts about the bird's classification, keys to identification, habitat, food, nesting, and behavior.	Written report includes facts about most of the following: the bird's classification, keys to identification, habitat, food, nesting, and behavior.	Written report does not include facts about most of the following: the bird's classification, keys to identification, habitat, food, nesting, and behavior.
Points to Grade	23-28 pts. = A http://rubistar.4teachers.org	17-22 pts. = B	12-16 pts.= C	7-11 pts. = D