**Taking Notes**

Now that a preliminary outline has been prepared and specific areas of consideration have been

established, read intensively those sources that contain information relative to the working

outline and begin taking notes.

• Be selective.

• Be accurate

• Read critically. Do not assume that everything you read is truthful or valid.

There are several ways to record and compile notes when conducting research, including

handwritten note cards, photocopying, highlighting, downloading, and cutting and pasting. An

explanation of note taking using note cards is provided in this guide. **Use the note taking**

**system prescribed by the teacher**.

**Using Direct Quotations and Paraphrasing**

**Direct Quotations**: According to the MLA, “When you believe that some sentence or passage

in its original wording might make an effective addition to your paper, transcribe that material

exactly as it appears, word for word, comma for comma” (46).

• Enclose all direct quotations in quotation marks, even on your note cards.

• Copy the quotation exactly as it appears in the original source, including spelling,

internal punctuation, and capitalization.

• If you are **certain** the original contains an **error**, use the word **sic** (from the Latin for thus

or so) to let the reader know that the error is accurately reproduced. Refer to the section

on **Alteration of Quoted Material** on page 13 for information on how to use sic.

**Paraphrasing**: To paraphrase a passage, restate the material ***in your own words***. Read the

material carefully, absorb the idea, close the book, and write the idea in your own words. Check

your version against the original to make sure you have accurately and completely conveyed

the author’s ideas.

• Do **not** use **more than three words in succession** from the original source.

• Do **not** follow the identical structure/sentence pattern(s) of the original passage or simply

change the order of the words in the sentence.

• Do **not** distort the meaning of the original passage.

• **Do** use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology retained in the

paraphrase.

**Note Cards**

While writing note cards from sources, keep these guidelines in mind:

• Write only on the front of cards.

• Address only one idea per card.

• Write the appropriate slug from the working outline at the top of the index card to

indicate the subject.

• Write the first item given on your bibliography card (author’s name, editor’s name, or

article title) on the bottom of the card.

• Use quotation marks for exact quotations.

• Give **exact** page number(s) for print sources.

**Generic Example of a Note Card:**

Title from Preliminary Framework Outline

(Main idea of the card)

Quote or paraphrase from the source is written on the body

of the card. Be sure to use quotation marks for direct

quotations, and quote the original ***exactly*** as it appears,

using exact spelling and punctuation (Author’s last name and page number).

**Note: There is no comma between the author’s name and page number**

**Actual Note Card Example 1: Paraphrase**

1. Use a title from the Preliminary Framework Outline to describe the content of the note card.

2. Paraphrase a short passage from the original source (5 lines or fewer).

3. Write the author’s **last** **name** and the exact page with **no comma**. **Note: If there is no author, use the first item on your bibliography card (article title, book title).**

**Anglo-Saxon Life**

Illness and disease remained in constant

residence. Tuberculosis was endemic, and so

were scabrous skin diseases of every kind:

abscesses, cankers, and scrofula. . . . Lepers. . .

[lived] on the outskirts of villages and cities (Chua-Eoan 47).

**Your Assignment**: Using your sources, create 15 notecards in the following way:

1. All notecards must have a title from your preliminary framework.
2. **Five** notecards can be direct quotes from your original source.
3. **Ten** notecards ***from three different sources*** must be paraphrased from an original source. ***Write on the back of the card the original passage you are going to paraphrase word-for-word***. ***On the front side of the card, write your paraphrase of the original material.***
4. All twenty note cards must contain an MLA ***in-text citation*** in order for the assignment to be accepted and graded.
5. **Notecards are due on Monday, October 10 to turnitin.com by 11:59 p.m.**