

# BSHS Writer's Guide



Mission Statement: To become thoughtful writers by applying foundational writing skills when writing to inform, persuade, and argue.

**General Assignment Checklist - Use this checklist as a guide for every formal paper that you submit at BSHS.**

**Content, Development, Organization**





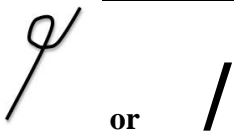
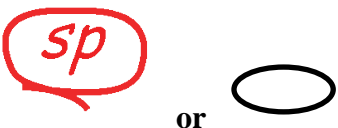
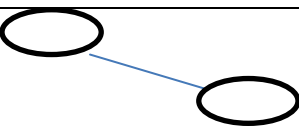
- ☐ I have met the standards of the BSHS Integrity Policy.
- ☐ I have met all the requirements of the assignment.
- ☐ I have organized my writing according to the task and audience.
  - For example: Is it a letter? Is it a formal report? Is it a research paper? Do I have multiple paragraphs?
  - I am addressing the audience specified by my teacher.

**Grammatical Conventions**

- ☐ I have read my paper out loud, or read the essay backwards (sentence by sentence) to myself to proofread my work. I have proofread my work for errors in:
  - spelling
  - punctuation
  - capitalization
  - verb tense consistency
  - subject/verb agreement
- ☐ I have had someone else read and correct my paper.

**Format**

- ☐ I have followed proper heading, header, and line spacing requirements. (See attached example)
- ☐ I have included a correctly formatted Works Cited list. (If required)
- ☐ I have included correctly formatted in-text citations. (If required)
- ☐ I have compared my paper to the sample MLA format paper in this guide.

Proofreading Marks	Corrective action to be taken
	Begin new paragraph
	Insert word/ punctuation
	Add a period
	Capitalize, or remove unnecessary capitalization
	delete
	Spelled wrong- correct spelling
<b>Awk</b>	Awkward sentence construction- reword for clarity
<b>Frag</b>	Sentence fragment- make sure you have a complete sentence
<b>WC</b>	Wrong or awkward word choice- use a different word
<b>RO</b>	Run-on sentence- break up the sentence
<b>REP</b>	Redundant; repetitive- use a different word or phrase
<b>So what? Not related</b>	Add content analysis. – Make sure you are connecting it back to your main point
<b>More! or More EXP.</b>	Add more explanation and detail to your sentence
	Verb tense shift - make sure all your verbs are in the same tense  Or  Subject/Verb agreement- make sure that verbs and subjects have the same tenses and pluralities.  (see most common errors sheet for examples)

## Most common errors in student writing-

### 1. Spelling mistakes

Many spelling mistakes occur when incorrect homophones (words with the same pronunciation, such as “right,” “rite,” and “write”) are used in a sentence.

*Incorrect:* “Watch you’re words! Spell check may not sea words witch are miss used because they are spelled rite!”

*Correct:* “Watch your words! Spell check may not see words which are misused because they are spelled right!”

### 2. Run-on sentences (no comma before a coordinating conjunction)

A coordinating conjunction (use the acronym FANBOYS to remember: **f**or, **a**nd, **n**or, **b**ut, **o**r, **y**et, and **s**o) connects two clauses that could be sentences on their own. If you forget to put a comma before the conjunction, it becomes a run-on sentence.

*Incorrect:* “While I am at school, my mom goes to work and my dog barks at the mailman.”

*Solution:* Check to see if the clauses before and after the conjunction could be sentences on their own. If so, insert a comma before the conjunction.

*Correct:* “While I am at school, my mom goes to work, **and** my dog barks at the mailman.”

### 3. Sentence fragments

A sentence fragment is a sentence that’s missing a subject (the thing doing the action) or a verb (the action).

*Incorrect:* “An epic all-nighter!”

*Solution:* Add a subject or verb to the fragment, as needed.

*Correct:* “**I pulled** an epic all-nighter!”

### 4. No comma after an introductory phrase

An introductory phrase provides some background information and is usually followed by a comma. The comma is optional when the phrase has fewer than five words and starts with a preposition.

*Incorrect:* “While a Thanksgiving commercial played on the TV she was at the library trying to study for her final exams.”

*Correct:* “While a Thanksgiving commercial played on the TV, she was at the library trying to study for her final exams.”

*Correct:* “At long last I made it home,” and “At long last, I made it home.”

## 5. Wordiness

A sentence is wordy if it uses more words than necessary to convey meaning. Wordiness often makes writing unclear.

*Incorrect:* “Jessica ended up having to walk all the way home due to the fact that she missed the last train leaving Central Station.”

*Solution:* Identify long phrases that can be replaced with a single word. Eliminate words that have the same meaning. Eliminate weak words, such as “basically,” and “sort of.” Eliminate nonessential information.

*Correct:* “Jessica **walked** home **because** she missed the last train.”

## 6. Tense agreement

Avoid inappropriate shifts in tense.

*Incorrect:* “When I went to the coffee house, I buy two cookies.”

*Correct:* “When I went to the coffee house, I bought two cookies.”

## 7. Comma misuse (inside a compound subject)

A compound subject uses a conjunction to connect more than one noun phrase.

*Incorrect:* “My roommate, and his brother, went to see a movie.”

*Correct:* “My roommate and his brother went to see a movie.”

## 8. Subject-verb agreement

Singular subjects take singular verbs, and plural subjects take plural verbs.

*Incorrect:* “Michael study at the library every day.”

*Correct:* “Michael **studies** at the library every day.”

This is adapted from the Grammarly Blog at:

<http://www.grammarly.com/blog/2013/top-10-student-writing-mistakes-finals-edition/>

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Your Name

last name page #

↑ on all pages **including** 1

Teacher's Name

Class Name (English 9, Living Environment, etc.)


21 January 2014

**center title→**

Tracking Bigfoot

The legendary creature has many names: Bigfoot, the Abominable Snowman, Sasquatch, Alma, the Yeti, and the Wildman. Yet it doesn't seem to have many friends. In fact, few people have ever gotten close to a Bigfoot. There are plenty of Bigfoot enthusiasts, however. These people spend their lives looking for evidence that the tall, hairy primate exists.

What does Bigfoot look like? In the United States, descriptions are pretty much the same. People remember seeing a seven or eight-foot tall animal walking upright on two feet and having fur that is tan, brownish-red, or black (Stein and MacNee 9).

- **double space text**
- **one inch margins**
- **12 point Times New Roman**
- **use parenthetical citations for quotes and paraphrases (not sure? Follow [Mrs. Rossi's advice on in-text citations!](#))**
- **set before and after spacing to 0**
- **[Screenshot video of MLA format set up.](#)** 

## Sample Works Cited Page:

### Works Cited

Caldicott, Helen. If You Love This Planet: A Plan to Heal the Earth. New York: Norton, 1992. Print.

Czapski, Silvia. "Grassroots Environmentalism in Brazil." The Conservationist. July- Aug. 1991: 42-47. Print.

Forests: The Shadow of Civilization. Chicago: U of Chicago Press. 1992. Print.

Kahak, E. "Perceiving the Good." The Wilderness Condition: Essays on Environment and Civilization. Ed.

Max Oelshaeger. San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1992. 21-39. Print.

**\*\* Use NoodleTools if you have questions \*\***

### Works Cited page rules:

- All works cited in paper must be listed.
- List alphabetically according to first word of entry.
- Double-space the entire page.
- Indent each line in an entry after the first five spaces. A left margin start indicates a new entry.
- Begin each entry with a capital letter.
- End each entry with a period.
- Title the page Works Cited and center the title.
- The entire page should be in 12 point Times New Roman with no bold.
- Do **NOT** number the entries.
- Number the page as the last in your paper.
- Omit URLs (unless your teacher asks for them)