

CREDO STYLE GUIDE
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produced by:

**Department of English
Credo Christian High School
Langley, B.C.**

INTRODUCTION

What is a style guide? What does one include in it? If a style guide is a list of guidelines and rules for written work, then should any organization tie itself down to a prescribed list of regulations? Why not let the school do whatever each of its instructors determines? In short, why bother with a school style guide?

Style, in a nutshell, is the way things are done. In terms of writing, style is the way a document is done: its form, layout, rules for documentation, etc, especially as it pertains to the formal essay.

This style guide will attempt to create a standard to which all staff and students can approach essay writing. This is important for two reasons: First, it offers a consistent standard so that everyone is at the same high level of professionalism. Second, it gives the students a guide which crosses different subject areas. The latter is very important because students will learn it more effectively and thus be better prepared for the jungles of post-secondary study. Even if a certain professor demands different requirements, our students will be prepared for the standard. Knowing one system well will enhance students' ability to adapt to other requirements.

In addition to the basic requirements for documentation, we have included a number of other helpful writing skills for the benefit of staff and student alike. It is far from exhaustive--in fact, only a number of common problem areas are included.

Hopefully, this sixth edition, with its minor changes and improvements, will be used, copied, and improved regularly. Style requirements continue to change! Please feel free to suggest additions, deletions, and changes, as they are relatively easy to do.

For the department, Ron de Haan.

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The Writing Process

Writing Variables

Your consideration of the writing variables will help you to focus your writing and to maintain consistency of style throughout the writing assignment. Applicable to any kind of writing in any subject area, these variables are:

Audience

For whom are you writing? Your teacher, your six-year-old brother or sister, your employer, your student peers, your fellow employees, or your local Member of Parliament? Whatever the case, it will determine your vocabulary, subject content, complexity of sentences, and format. If you want to convince others that your ideas have merit, you have to understand the audience's situation.

Topic

What subject are you writing on? A well written essay has well researched information to back up the claims it makes.

Purpose

Why are you writing? If your answer is simply to get a mark and get the assignment over with, then your paper is going to lack purpose. People write to entertain, to inform, to instruct, to persuade. Decide why you are writing your essay; this will provide a focus for your work.

Persona

What voice are you going to use? Writers sometimes become other people to make their writing become more interesting. Experimenting with other points of view can also increase your understanding of the topic.

Format

What form is your writing going to take? Different forms of writing, such as letters, journals, reports, literary essays, research papers, persuasive essays, and reviews, have specific requirements that must be fulfilled.

KEY WORDS IN WRITING ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

Students and teachers ought to be clear in their understanding of question types; this is extremely important for a wide range of assignments, including exams and formal essays. Some of the more common key words are listed here with a brief explanation.

AGREE OR DISAGREE Support OR contradict a statement; give positive OR negative features; list advantages or disadvantages.

ASSESS Estimate the value of something based on some criteria; give an opinion as to its strong or weak characteristics.

COMMENT ON Give an explanatory note on the main or controversial features of a subject; provide, in addition, a personal opinion on a subject.

COMPARE Give an estimate of the similarity or dissimilarity of one thing to another; give an estimate of the relationship between two things.

CONTRAST Give an estimate of the difference (s) between two things.

CRITICIZE Give an opinion as to the relative merits of a thing, idea, or concept. In criticizing, make a judgement which approves, disapproves, or both.

DEFINE Give the meaning or scope of a word or concept and provide context by establishing its normal limits.

DISCUSS Present points of view on a subject as they might occur in conversation; provide the results of an imaginary examination by debate or argument.

EVALUATE Appraise or assess the value of something based on some known standard; give an opinion as to the advantages or disadvantages involved.

EXPLAIN Give an account of what something is, how it works, or why it is the way it is. Use paraphrasing, provide reasons/examples, or give a step-by-step account.

IDENTIFY Establish clearly the identity of something based on an understood set of considerations; recognize the unique qualities of something and state the criteria used to identify it; simply provide the name of something.

JUSTIFY Give facts, reasons, illustrations, or examples to support a particular, predetermined idea or point of view.

SUMMARIZE Give a brief account of the main points.

MECHANICS

Mechanics include such items as underlining, titles, abbreviations, capitalization, hyphens, numbers, etc, etc. Sometimes punctuation is included under this heading and vice-versa.

Capitalization

God and His pronouns

Proper nouns and proper adjectives

First word of a sentence,

First word in a formal statement

First word of a direct quotation

Geographical names

the North, the South (but not directions i.e. "Go south on 216th")

Business firms and organizations

Historical events

Calendar items

Nationalities, races and religions

Brand names (but not the item)

Titles of people, books, poems, etc.

Language courses and courses followed by a number

Examples:

Mexico City

a city in Mexico

Glacier National Park

a national park

Twenty-ninth Street

across the street

Cultus Lake

a skier's lake

North America

northern B.C.

Credo Christian High School

our high school

Kwantlen College

a college in Langley

The American Revolution

a successful revolution

The Fourth of July

the fifth of July

English, French, Math 12

social studies, math.

History 12

a course in world history

President Clinton

the president of our club

Toyota Forerunner

Ivory soap

And then, did she say, "What is going on?"

Italics (or **underlining** if you hand write or can't italicize):

Book titles	eg: John Steinbeck's <i>The Pearl</i> is a classic
Newspapers	eg: <i>The Vancouver Sun</i> is not right wing at all!
magazines	eg: My favourite magazine is, of course, <i>Reformed Perspective</i>
journals,	eg: An informative journal is the <i>Canadian Journal of Education</i>
plays	eg: Who could forget <i>Hamlet</i> or <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> ?
names of ships	eg: Have you sailed the good ship <i>Lollipop</i> ?
long poems and musical compositions	
foreign words or phrases	eg: are you part of the <i>ad hoc</i> committee?

Quotation Marks go around the following:

articles, essays,	eg: you simply must read "Family Planning" in <i>RP</i> !
short stories,	eg: "The Sentry" in <i>Great Short Stories</i> is superb.
poems,	eg: Hopkins's best poem is "God's Grandeur."
songs,	eg: I like "Yesterday" by the Beatles.
chapters of books,	eg: Chapter 5, "Getting Started" in <i>Computers</i> is
helpful.	
figures of speech	eg: "The Great White Shark" he is.

Numbers

Some rules are as follows:

1. Do not begin a sentence with a numeral.
2. Numbers of more than two words should be written in numerals.
3. Hyphenate all compound numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine.
4. Hyphenate fractions used as adjectives.
5. Write out numbers like second, twenty-fifth, etc, when used ordinally.

PUNCTUATION

In this section we restrict ourselves again to those areas which seem to be the most problematic in punctuation: quotation marks; semicolon; colon; apostrophe; dash, parentheses. The comma is too complex and fickle to include here, except how it relates to other punctuation.

Semicolon:

1. Use a semicolon between independent clauses not joined by *and, but, or, nor, for, yet*.

E.G: Take with you only valuable things; leave behind the bulky stuff.

2. Use a semicolon between independent clauses joined by such words as *for example, for instance, besides, moreover, furthermore, therefore, however, instead, hence*.

E.G: Holiday traffic is often scary; for instance, three people were injured Christmas day.

3. Use a semicolon between items in a series, especially if the items contain commas.

E.G. The following members are now in the School Board: Bob Hellewell, Chairman; Derek Hoogerdijk, vice-chair; Colin Vandelft, secretary.

Colon

1 Use a colon to mean “note what follows.”

E.G: Here’s what you take along: lotion, volleyball, pop, and a smile.

2. Use a colon when the second of two independent clauses reinforces the first.

E.G: These seats are the most durable kind: they are reinforced with double stitching.

3. Use a colon for time, Bible texts, volume and page for magazines, and after the salutation of a business letter.

E.G: 4:30 P.M. John 3:16. *Harper’s* 198:12. Dear Mr. Vanderboom

Apostrophe

1. Use an apostrophe to form the possessive of a singular noun.

E.G: Harry's coat; Ron's opinion; Gus's hat.

NOTE: for nouns of two syllables which end in *s* it is permissible to add an apostrophe without the *s*: E.G: Jesus' love; Julius' girlfriend.

2. For plural noun possession, the apostrophe follows the pluralized noun:

E.G: girls' gym; Joneses' tennis court;

NOTE: Plural nouns that don't end in *s* are treated as singular. E.G: Women's room.

3. Personal pronouns *his, hers, its, yours, ours, theirs*, and the relative pronoun *whose* **do not** require an apostrophe.

E.G: Is it yours, hers or mine? This is baseball at its best. Well, whose book is this?

4. Use an apostrophe and an *s* to form the plural of letters, numbers, abbreviations and signs.

E.G: Mississippi is spelled with four *s*'s, four *i*'s and two *p*'s.

Instead of a 3 and an 8 he had written two 3's

How many +'s in this exercise?

If you've seen one UFO, you've seen all the UFO's you need!

Dash, Parentheses, (and Comma)

The simplest rule to apply for these “interruptions” in a simple sentence is as follows:

Commas are used to enclose added information in a sentence.

Parentheses are used to enclose directions or clarification in a sentence.

Dashes are used to enclose an abrupt break in thought in a sentence.

E.G: Allard, who refuses to smoke, is very health conscious.

English students (whom we identified earlier) fare better than Italian students.

The referees--highly paid, no less--should not have gone on strike.

NOTE: Be sure that material within these “interruptions” can be omitted without changing the original meaning or structure of the sentence.

Quotation Marks

1. Commas and periods always go inside the closing quotation marks.

E.G: I realize that he said “I’ve seen enough.”
 “In the meantime,” he continued, “I plan to give you a raise.”

2. Semicolon and colon always go outside the closing quotation marks.

E.G: The following can be considered “highbrow reading”: Homer, Eliot and Pound.

3. Question marks and exclamation marks go inside if the question is included in the quotation, and outside if the question is part of the larger sentence.

4. If the quotation and the whole sentence both have a question, the question or exclamation mark goes inside. The quoted part takes precedence.

E.G: “Are the players ready?” asked the referee.
 Were you surprised when he said “Pull over”?
 Did you ever ask yourself, “Where will I be ten years from now?”
 What a pain you are!” she exclaimed.

NOTE: Normally, only one end mark is used at the end of a quotation.

Wrong: Did you ask if Frank said “I love everything.”?
 Correct: Did you ask if Frank said “I love everything”?

5. Use single quotation marks for a quotation within a quotation.

E.G: Her exact words were, “For tomorrow, read Frost’s ‘Mending Wall.’”

6. Longer quotations are set off from the text, and indented on both sides. Thus there is no need to use quotation marks. Normally, this longer quotation is introduced by a colon (See Manuscript Form).

Usage

A selection of the more common errors in usage.

Affect, Effect

Affect is a verb. “You **affect** me wonderfully”

Effect is most commonly a noun. “Your **effect** on me is wonderful”

Effect can be used as a verb meaning “to bring about”: “He **effected** a change in rules.”

Allusion, Illusion

Allusion is an indirect reference. “He made an **allusion** to his parents.”

Illusion is like the deceptive mirage in the desert. “His **illusion** is magic.”

Alot, allot, a lot

Alot is not a word and never should be. It should be written as “He drank **a lot**.”

Allot is a verb to do with sharing. “She allotted each person his share.”

Alright, alright, all right.

All right is the only correct way to write this expression. “He told me he was **all right**.”

Altogether, All together.

Altogether is an adverb meaning completely. “Nick was not **altogether** crazy.”

All together means what it says. “They were **all together** in one place.”

Among, Between.

Among is involved with more than two things. “He is **among** the best in the business.”

Between deals with two persons or things. “Make a choice **between** white and red.”

Amount, Number

Amount refers to masses or bulks, not items. “They bought a large **amount** of sugar.”

Number refers to countable things. “They bought a large **number** of apples.”

(see fewer, less.)

Centre around

Say centred upon, not around. “His work **centred upon** his students.

Compare to, with

Use **To** when comparing two unlike things; **With** when comparing two similar things.

Continual, Continuous

Continual is a stop-and-go things that repeats, ie, windshield wipers.

Continuous is an uninterrupted flow, ie, waterfalls.

Convince, Persuade

The first involves believing; the second involves action:

“**Convince** me to trust you, and then **persuade** me to jump.”

Data

Data is a plural noun, and, like criteria and phenomena, demands plural forms of verbs and adjectives. “These **data** agree with those which were presented to the group.”

Different from, Different than

In Canadian usage, both uses are acceptable.

Fewer, Less

Like number and amount, fewer refers to items that can be counted, and **less** refers to things measured in terms of volume. “I’ll take **fewer** apples and **less** apple sauce.”

Good, Well

Good is an adjective. “You are a good singer.”

Well is an adverb. “My, my, you sing **well!**” “I feel **well**” (Meaning I am healthy)

Wrong: “I played good, didn’t I?” or “How am I? I’m good, thanks!”

Imply, Infer, Insinuate

Imply is to suggest; **Infer** is to deduct or figure out. **Insinuate** is similar to imply but has negative overtones.

Irregardless

There is no such word. *Regardless* will suffice, and to do more is redundant.

Lend, Loan

Loan should be kept as a noun. “Banks give **loans**.”

Lend should be kept as a verb. “Banks **lend** money.”

Lie, Lay

Lie is an intransitive verb meaning to recline or rest. “Do **lie** down!” (No direct object)

Lay is a transitive verb meaning to place or put down. “**Lay** the book right there.”

(Requires object)

Complication: Lay is the past tense of lie (recline): “Yesterday, I **lay** on that couch.”

Loose, Lose

Loose is usually an adjective. “He got **loose**.”

Lose has lost an *o* and is a verb. “Did you **lose** your dog?”

Past, Passed

Passed is a verb only. “He **passed** me going too fast.”

Past is more versatile, but is never a verb. “About your **past**.” “About **past** events.”

Principal, Principle

Principal is a pal. It thus refers to a person.

Principal is also chief. It thus refers to the **principal** person in an organization.

Principle refers to rule or law. “Don’t ignore the **principles** of physics.”

Respectfully, Respectively.

Respectfully is an adverb meaning “with respect.”

Respectively means “in the order previously mentioned.” “Frank and Joe are the older and younger, **respectively**.”

Supposed to, Used to

Be sure to add the *d* since it is silent when this phrase is spoken.

Unique

This word means “one of a kind.” “More unique” or “very unique” are nonsense

Whose, Who’s

Whose is a pronoun. “**Whose** book is this?” “John is the man **whose** son is gone.”

Who’s is a contraction of “who is.” “**Who’s** the principal actor here?”

Manuscript form

You are what you write. In academic writing the marker only sees you through the work you have presented. If your essay or story or report or journal or whatever, is written on torn, dirty paper, or if you produce all sorts of facts to back your statements without citing the source, or if your work is shoddy in any other way, it reflects the time and effort you have put into this work. In short, you have devalued this work. More importantly, it is a reflection of you and your dedication to the task at hand. Hence it is important to not only have the right stuff but also to present it professionally.

The following guidelines are designed for the more formal work, i.e., formal essays, reports, and projects that would normally be typed, though not necessarily so.

Obviously, certain instructors will require somewhat different formats, especially for the less formal assignments; however, for the more formal written output these guidelines should be applicable.

1. **Write on one side of the paper only.**
2. **Double-space the lines of prose.**
3. **Your margins should be 1 inch all the way around but for the left margin which gets 1 1/4 inch.**
4. **The title page should have the title, student's name, subject, instructor's name, school's name, and date. The following is a common model used in universities:**

THE INCAS
past and future

by:
Wendy de Student
89024

for:
Mrs. S. Vandergugten
Bible 9
CCHS
Sept. 11, 2012

5. **Number all pages after title page, preferably at the top right-hand corner.**
6. **Staple together with one staple in the top left-hand corner.**

Essay Documentation

There are a variety of citing methods in formal essay writing. This style guide will present the APA (American Psychological Ass'n) method of documentation, which appears to be quite common in local universities.

Bibliography (or References):

Books

One author:

Warriner, John E. (1982). *English grammar and composition*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

Two or more authors:

Bell, James B., & Corbett, P.J. (1982). *The little English handbook for Canadians*. Toronto: John Wiley and Sons, Ltd.

Several authors:

Bell, James, B., et al. (1982). *The little . . .*

Other hard sources:

Journal and Magazine articles:

Gunnink, Allard (Ed.). (1993). A great essay! *Educational Journal*, 21(1), pp. 342-351.
(note that volume is also italicised, while issue number is parenthesized)

Encyclopedia reference:

Messer, Thomas. (1980). Bibliography. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. 3.

(Note: if author is not found, use the editor's name):

DeJong, S. (Ed.). (1999). Jogging. *Encyclopedia Canadiana*, Vol. 7.

Bible:

(1983) *NIV study Bible*. New International Version. Grand Rapids, Mi: Zondervan Publishing.

NOTES:

Title is *italicized* or underlined; *but not both* !

Only the first word in book or article title is capitalized (exception: proper names).

Indent all lines after the first.

Sources are listed in alphabetical order.

Double space each line.

Bibliography for Electronic Sources:

CREDO POLICY STATEMENT

Students are encouraged to utilize electronic sources for their research assignments with the following provisos:

1. E-sources must be documentable, that is, they must have a legitimate source;
2. Legitimate E-sources are those sources which, for the most part, would otherwise be available in hard copy form (ie, *Macleans*, *Clarion*, *English Journal*, novels, etc);
3. Personalised web pages which share views and opinions about a topic (Joe Smith's page about Shakespeare, or Grisham fans' web page) are not legitimate because they do not have traceable sources;
4. Research will be assessed partly in accordance with the quality of the sources cited.
5. Citation and bibliography rules, as noted in the Credo Style Guide, apply irrespective of the sources.

Magazine:

VanPopta, I. (2001). Impressive methods of journalism. [Electronic version]. *Education Today*, 32 (2), pp. 69-79.

On-line (only) magazine:

de Haan, R.(2002). Electronic sources: The way of the future. *On-line Journal of Literature*, 31, (2). Retrieved September 12, 2001, from <http://www.oljol.edu/bce/cite/ca.html>

Newspaper article:

VanBeelen, Henk. (2000, February 14). People who fail English. *New York Times*. Retrieved March 21, 2001, from <http://www.nytimes.com>

Web-site document with no author or date listed:

English riddles for the new millenium. (n.d.). Retrieved September 13, 2002, from <http://www.engliddlefortrue lovers/can/bc.html>

CD ROM reference:

Helder, M.J. (Ed.). (1992). Oxford English dictionary computer file, on disc. CD-ROM. Information access September, 2002.

THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS TO USE (CITE) SOURCES IN THE BODY OF YOUR ESSAY:

E.G: The best way to cite sources was outlined by Bell and Corbett (1982) in *Handbook for English Canadians* when they promoted the APA system.

E.G: Warriner (1982) maintains that, “The only consistent way to cite sources is to use the APA method of documentation” (pp. 56-7).

E.G: Another opinion came in the early eighties: “It is clear that a superior method of documentation is that of the APA” (Bell & Corbett, 1982, p. 23).

E.G: To document well is to use APA, say many experts (Bell and Corbett, 1982; Warriner, 1982).

- NOTE:**
1. If the same source is repeatedly used, then only the page number needs to be cited.
 2. The period goes after the parenthesis, and the punctuation inside the quotation is left out.
 3. Long quotations (more than 25 words) are not enclosed in quotation marks. Instead, they are set off from the body of the essay by indenting both sides:

E.G: My essay has attempted to show what Bell and Corbett (1982) and Warriner (1982) say when they, too, defend the more appropriate, and easier, method of documentation:

If a student wants to produce a professional, well-documented paper, he or she would be best served if one method were adopted for documentation. This method, in the humble opinion of these two authors, is the APA method, as it is the easiest and clearest method. (Warriner, 1982, p. 44)

[Note that this longer quotation is also double spaced, and that period is at end of quote]

SOME GENERAL GUIDELINES:

1. All citations should be listed on reference page, and all references should be used.
2. Footnotes and end notes are now restricted to explanatory notes you may need to direct your reader.
3. Most universities rule that if a student copies, quotes, or paraphrases from a book or other source without citing, (giving credit to the author) it is plagiarism, and thus academic theft. Hence it is quite serious. Be sure, therefore, to cite all the sources properly. If in doubt, be sure to check!