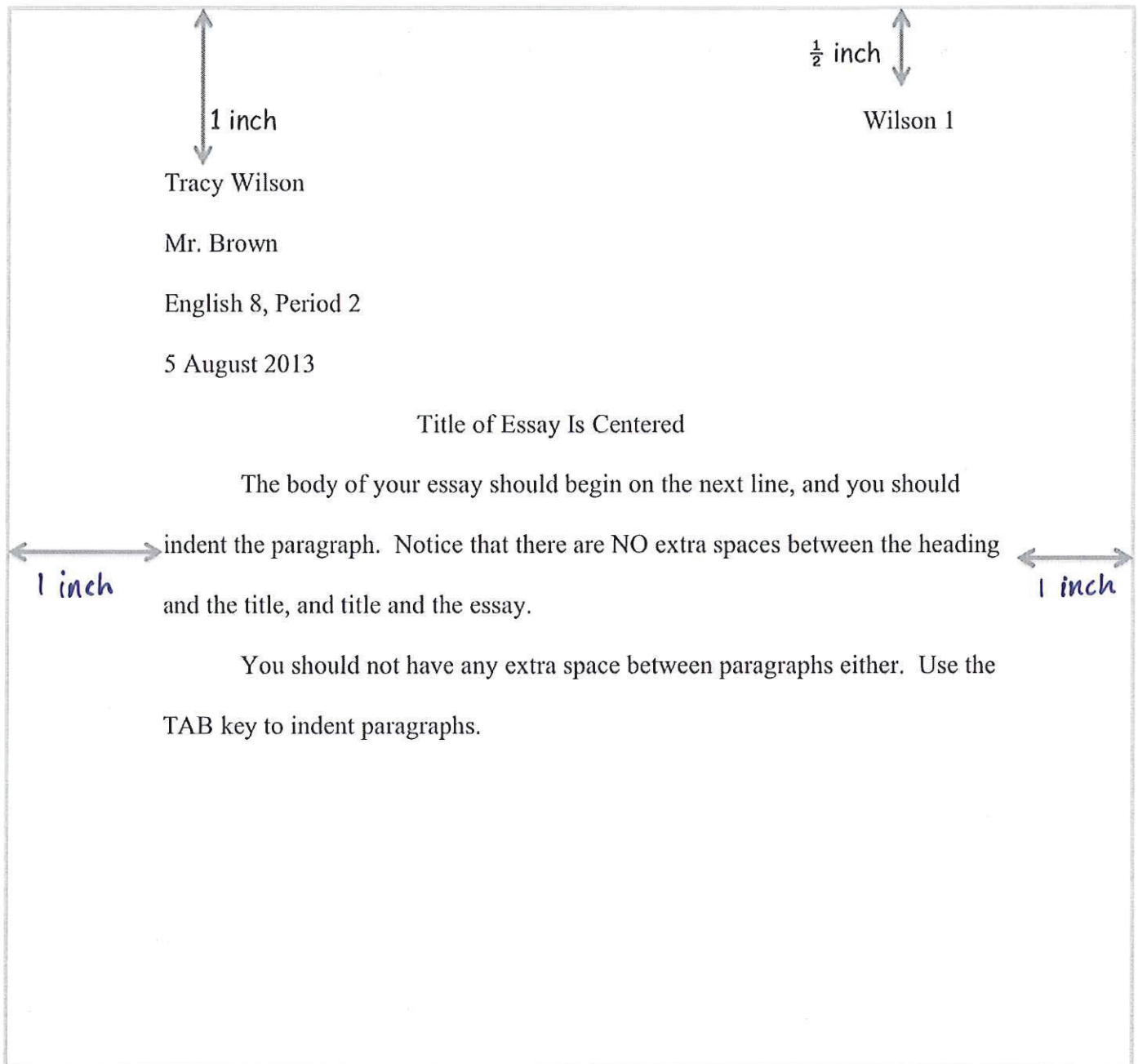


MLA Formatting Guidelines

Use the following guidelines for all English papers.

- You must use Times New Roman, size 12 font.
- You must double-space your work.
- Set your margins for 1 inch on all sides.
- Use the “Header” feature (found in Word under “View”) for your last name/page number ONLY. Your HEADING should be in the body of the document.



Standards of Formal English

Formal English is the language that writers use for serious occasions such as many academic papers, reports, letters, and speeches. It follows the rules of grammar and usage and does not include contractions and conversational expressions such as slang and colloquialisms. Use the following standards when writing in formal style.

1. Write in third person.

Examples When a student thinks carefully, he or she realizes...
 When one thinks carefully, he or she realizes...

- Do not use second person pronouns *you*, *your*, or *yours* except in direct quotations, in directions, and in letters which address the reader.
- Do not use first person pronouns *I*, *me*, *my*, *mine*, *we*, *us*, *our*, or *ours* except in direct quotations or unless the piece is personal writing.

2. Do not use contractions.

Example Writers do not use “don’t” in formal writing.

3. Do not use abbreviations.

Exceptions Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., Rev., A.M., P.M.

4. Do not use slang or non-standard English.

Standard English The boys did not have enough money, so the owner asked them to leave.

Non-standard The boys didn’t have enough *dough*, so the owner *booted them out*.

5. Spell out numbers from one to ninety-nine. Use numerals for numbers 100 and higher. Do not begin a sentence with a numeral.

Examples In the last forty-two minutes, the speaker made five points.
 The audience consisted of 255 people.
 Two hundred and fifty-five people were there.

6. Avoid “etc.” and exclamation marks.

****Not all writing you produce for your English classes will be written with this level of formality. If you are not sure, be sure to ask your teacher!****