

## Writing a "LitKult" Term Paper ("Hausarbeit")

1. After reading primary literature and conferring with your instructor, *choose a fairly general topic* which interests you. (For example, you have enjoyed reading Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* in a seminar and have some interesting ideas about its first-person narration techniques; your instructor suggests that you read Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* for comparison/contrast.)

2. *Browse through the secondary literature (and possibly more primary literature or films)* which you think to be important with regard to your general topic. (You are fascinated by *Catcher in the Rye* and want to pursue the comparison with *Huckleberry Finn*; you surf through the library catalog and the MLA bibliography [cf. point 5 below], as well as peruse the books on the relevant shelves in the "Anglistik" section of the UB and check through the internet.)

3. Now *reduce your broad topic to a more specific hypothesis or question* which you feel you can "prove" or answer by analysis of the primary text(s), drawing on the relevant secondary literature. (You decide to pose the question "Is Holden Caulfield in *The Catcher in the Rye* a modern *Huckleberry Finn*?" )

4. Develop a *working outline* ("Gliederung"); have it approved by your instructor before you go on! For each major point in your outline, at least two subpoints are necessary. You may of course change the outline as you progress in writing your paper. Choose whether to write an Anglo-American outline (as practiced in your "Text Production" course; see the sample outline below) or a German "1.1.; 1.1.1; 1.1.2"-type of outline. It would be best to ask your seminar teacher which to apply. Also, please ask your teacher whether the outline headings should appear in your text. The German teachers tend to prefer inclusion of all the numbering and headings (e.g. 3.1.2. Functions of Sub-Standard and Profane Language in *Huckleberry Finn* and *The Catcher in the Rye*). The native speakers usually prefer to see only the main outline headings, without numbers or letters, in your final term paper text; this would divide the paper into clear sections without constantly breaking up the flow of the argument. At any rate, your paragraphs should be so well developed and the transitions in the argument so clear that the line of argumentation can easily be followed.

### **Sample Working Outline:**

**I. Introduction** > thesis question: Do the similarities between *HF* and *Catcher* in narrative point of view, language, and theme make Holden Caulfield simply a twentieth-century Huck Finn?

#### **II. Point of View**

1. First-Person
2. Frame
3. Naive/Ironic?

#### **III. Language**

1. Vernacular
  - 1.1 Slang/dialect

1. 2. Sub-standard/profane
2. Events recounted (orality)
  - 2.1 "Tall-tale" rhetoric
    - 2.1.1 Hyperbole
    - 2.1.2 Outrageous simile/metaphor
  - 2.2 Voice(s)
  - 2.3 Implied reader
3. Repetition of expression

#### IV. Themes

1. Hypocrisy/"phoniness"
2. Seeking freedom – or escape?
  - 2.1 From conventions/social pressures
  - 2.2 From discrimination
  - 2.3 From impending adulthood
3. Interaction with others
  - 3.1 Family (father/siblings); authority figures
  - 3.2 Race and gender
  - 3.3 Social environment
4. Symbols
  - 4.1 Of process (river...)
  - 4.2 Of permanence (museum...)

V. **Conclusion** > return to the thesis or answer the thesis question, then place it in a slightly larger context.

(e.g. ... Holden Caulfield is in many ways a 20th-century Huck Finn, but no “free territory” is available for the New Yorker Holden to escape to. Telling his own story does not liberate him from facing the restraints of what Huck rejects as “sivilization”; Holden narrates the novel from a psychiatric ward, which much postmodern fiction sees as the perfect metaphor for a constrictive, absurd twentieth century world...)

**5.** Now is the time to search for *further secondary literature* on specific points.

-Seriously work with the Modern Language Association (MLA) International Bibliography  
<http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itweb/siegen?db=MLA>

-Key books and articles not available in our library should be ordered as soon as possible through Interlibrary Loan ("Fernleihe": <http://www.ub.uni-siegen.de/cms/index.php?id=15>)

-You should be *compiling a bibliography* in a folder on your computer, keeping the entries in alphabetical order. This helps you to keep track of the material you have used, and makes printing out the final bibliography easy. Please note that **MS Word 2007** offers a sophisticated reference function for organizing your data.

*Sample Bibliography Entry:* Graham, Sarah. *J.D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye*. London: Routledge, 2007. S11 ELLU 1194

**6.** The most important step now is to take notes. Put the information from a particular article or book *relevant to one point in the working outline in one file (or sub-file) in your Word term paper folder*. This system assures that you can easily collate all the notes for each point! Include author and page references for quotations.

*Sample Note:*

III.A.2. Huck's language was condemned in the late nineteenth century as rough, ungrammatical, obscene; but his malapropisms unmask hypocritical adults (e.g. pompous Duke of Bridgewater > Huck calls him "Duke of *Bilgewater*" ["bilge water" = dirty water in the bottom of a ship]); Huck's ungrammatical speech "punctures the inflated moral claims of Miss Watson" (Leonard 209)

**7.** Using the outline, the bibliography and the notes, write a properly documented library paper. This means that you have to indicate in your text exactly where you have borrowed or quoted from secondary literature. You may do so by using parenthetical references. (For details, see the "Fluid MLA Style Sheet" below; this style sheet refers you to "The Owl", a Purdue University Writing Center website which presents all the MLA conventions clearly and constantly updates them.)

**8.** At the end of your library paper you should always include a section entitled *Bibliography* or *Works Cited*, which is a list of all material consulted or quoted in the course of writing your term paper. Refer to the "Fluid MLA Style Sheet" mentioned in 7 for a link to details.

**9.** Proofread your paper carefully before you hand it in! Most profs/instructors do NOT want you to have fellow students read and correct your paper. Make sure you ask your teacher about this BEFORE you ask a friend to proofread it for you.

How long should your paper be? Check with your teacher about his/her expectations, particularly since the guidelines for this vary according to "Studiengang" and credit points.

Contact Cathy Waegner ([waegner@anglistik.uni-siegen.de](mailto:waegner@anglistik.uni-siegen.de)) if you have any questions about the info in this document.

Seth Hulse, May 2010

## **Fluid MLA Style Sheet**

Are you writing an English-language research paper, BA thesis, MA thesis, Staatsarbeit, or anything else within literary or cultural studies (*Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaften*)? If the answer is YES, you will not only need to locate the most current MLA citation guidelines but you will also need to know how to use them. For professors and veteran MLA users as well as for those who have yet to experience the joy of giving justice to and the exact location of the voices and ideas of other scholars referenced in an academic work, the new *fluid* MLA style sheet will be of great help.

Since MLA citation rules and codes often change, leaving students, academics, and formal style sheets out of date, the University of Siegen Anglistik has decided to refer students and researchers of literature and culture to Purdue University's ***The Owl, Online Writing Lab***®, an expansive and *fluid* site that offers the latest MLA guidelines along with examples showing inexperienced MLA users the ropes of citation. The site constantly updates its examples in line with changes coming from the Modern Language Association. **On a further note, failure to properly cite sources will most certainly lead to failing papers and damaged academic reputations.**

*The Owl* main page: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

The three most important citation areas:

**MLA Formatting Quotations:** Mechanics of inserting quotes and block quotes into the text

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/03/>

**MLA In-Text Citations:** What you should write in the citation parentheses

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/>

**MLA Bibliography:** How to structure and format each different type of source in the *Works Cited*

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/05/>

**New Microsoft Word 2007 Reference Feature:** It should also be noted that students and researchers with the latest version of MS Word 2007 may explore Microsoft's new *Reference* feature, which helps you to organize and insert references.

**\*If you are writing a paper in linguistics/"Fachdidaktik"/social sciences these guidelines are not for you!**

## DIE BEWERTUNG VON HAUSARBEITEN IM TEILBEREICH LITERATUR- UND KULTURWISSENSCHAFT (LITKULT)

Die folgenden Kriterien (adaptiert von Petzold) werden bei der Korrektur und Benotung von Ihren Hausarbeiten, Bachelor- und Masterarbeiten sowie Arbeiten im Rahmen der 1. Staatsprüfung angewendet.

### I. Inhalt / Argumentation

- # Einleitung führt zum Thema hin
- # These klar formuliert
- # Kernbegriffe geklärt
- # Argumentation auf die These ausgerichtet
- # Zielführende, logische Gliederung
- # Argumentation schlüssig und folgerichtig
- # Sinnzusammenhang / Übergänge klar
- # Schlussfolgerung ergibt sich aus Argumentation
- # Produktivität überwiegt Reproduktion

### II. Umgang mit der Primärliteratur .....

- # Zitiergenauigkeit (Text, Belege)
- # Lesegenauigkeit / Verständnis
- # Zitate stützen eigene Aussage
- # Verdeutlicht, was mit Zitat gezeigt werden soll?
- # Verhältnis der Zitate zum eigenen Text angemessen
- # Analyse und Interpretation überwiegen

### III. Umgang mit der Sekundärliteratur .....

- # Angemessene Verwendung von Sekundärliteratur
- # Zitier- und Paraphrasiergenauigkeit (Text, Beleg)
- # Verweise auf Sekundärliteratur wenn angebracht/notwendig?
- # Zitate stützen eigene Aussagen, ohne diese zu ersetzen?
- # Verdeutlicht, was mit Zitat gezeigt werden soll?
- # Qualität der Quellen berücksichtigt?
- # Verhältnis Zitate zum eigenen Text angemessen?
- # Auseinandersetzung mit der Sekundärliteratur?

### IV. Form .....

- # Umfang, Deckblatt, Seitenzahlen
- # Inhaltsverzeichnis, Kapitelunterteilung
- # Vollständigkeit der Bibliographie
- # Einheitlichkeit der Form
- # Typographische Richtigkeit (überflüssige Formatierungen vermeiden)
- # Form hält sich an das *style sheet* (Zitierweise/Bibliographie)

### V. Sprache .....

- # Orthographische / lexikalische Richtigkeit
- # Grammatikalische Richtigkeit
- # Sprachliche Genauigkeit (Bezüge, Ausdruck)
- # Sinnvolle Absätze
- # Stil einer wissenschaftlichen Arbeit angemessen?