

Writing Center Tip Sheet

Outlining

It's that form we all learned in fourth grade, but once teachers stopped making us do it, it's easy to forget how. Outlining is a valuable resource in studying for tests, organizing papers, and researching a topic. Here are the basics:

Title—reflects the overall chapter or your research goal

I. Divide and Conquer: Split up chapter headings or research topics into manageable chunks, or categories. Give them large Roman numerals to distinguish them.

A. Subtopic: Put specific information regarding each topic under their appropriate category. Signal this with a capital letter.

1. Details: If you find even more specific details about each sub-topic, use a number to signify its importance.

For Example:

Art of the High Renaissance

I. High Renaissance Painters

A. Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519)

1. famous works: *Mona Lisa*
2. Studied under Andrea del Verrocchio.

II. High Renaissance Sculptors

A. Tullio Lombardo (1460-1532)

1. Sculpture: *Adam*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY

As your notes become more detailed, the outline becomes longer. Don't worry if you get confused between subtopics and details—the main purpose of an outline is to ensure that you are categorizing all of your important information under the appropriate topics.

For outlining help, or if you have any questions, stop by the Writing Center on the second floor of the library.