

# Steps to Perfect MLA Format

(click links to get detailed instructions)

## Margins & Font

- 1" margins on all sides
- Times New Roman, 12 pt font

## Heading

- Date format: 01 August 2014
- May include word count

## Spacing & Indenting

- Double-space entire document
- Indent paragraphs with 1 tab

## Header w/ Page Number

- Double-click at top of page to open header
- Insert page number (don't type it)

## Title

- Centered, plain text
- Use title case (capitalize most words)

## Works Cited Page

- Starts on its own page
- Use hanging indent

You may choose to open a new document, search for MLA and use the template.

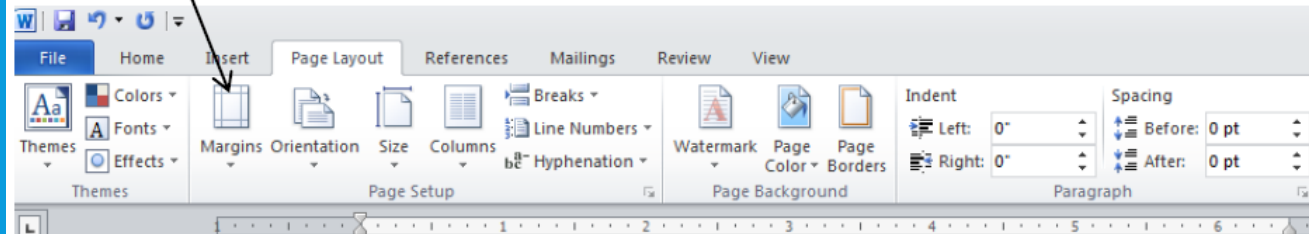
# Margins & Font

Margins

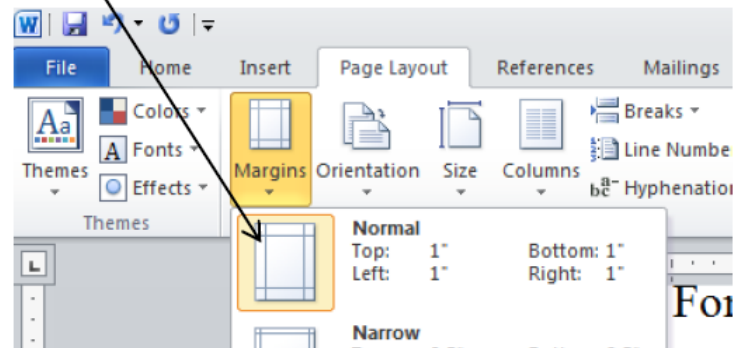
1" top, bottom, left & right

Page Layout tab

Click Margins



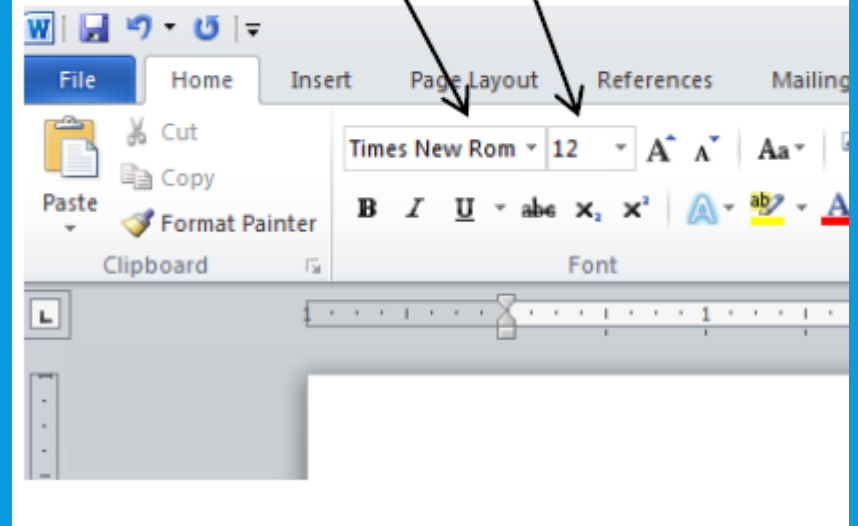
Click Normal



Font

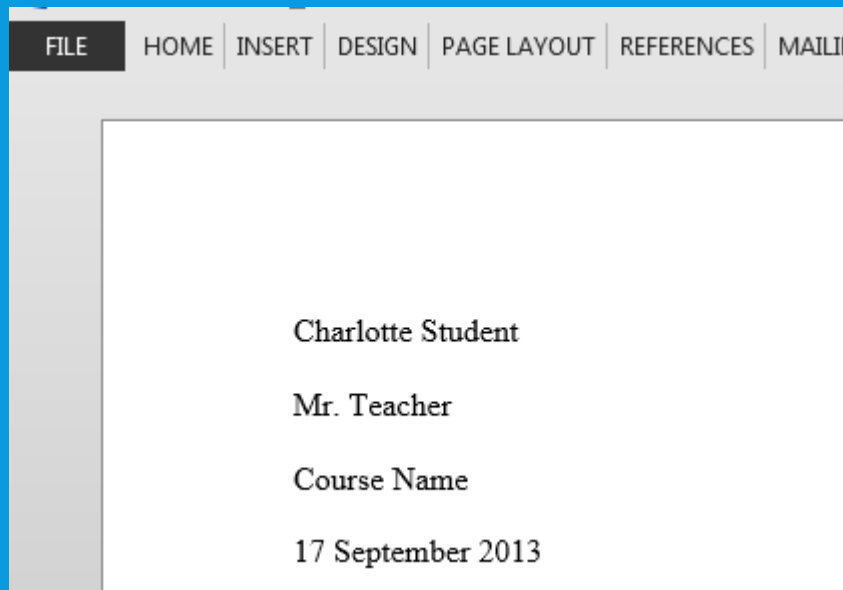
Times New Roman, 12 pt

Home tab



# Heading

Your heading should be in the upper left-hand side of your paper and include the following:

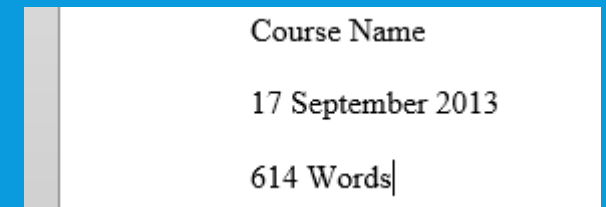


This is the date that the paper is due. Note the format is day first, then month, then year.

Your teacher may ask you to include your word count. Be sure you select (highlight) only the paragraphs of your paper—do not include the heading, title, outline, or citations. The word count will appear at the bottom left of your document.



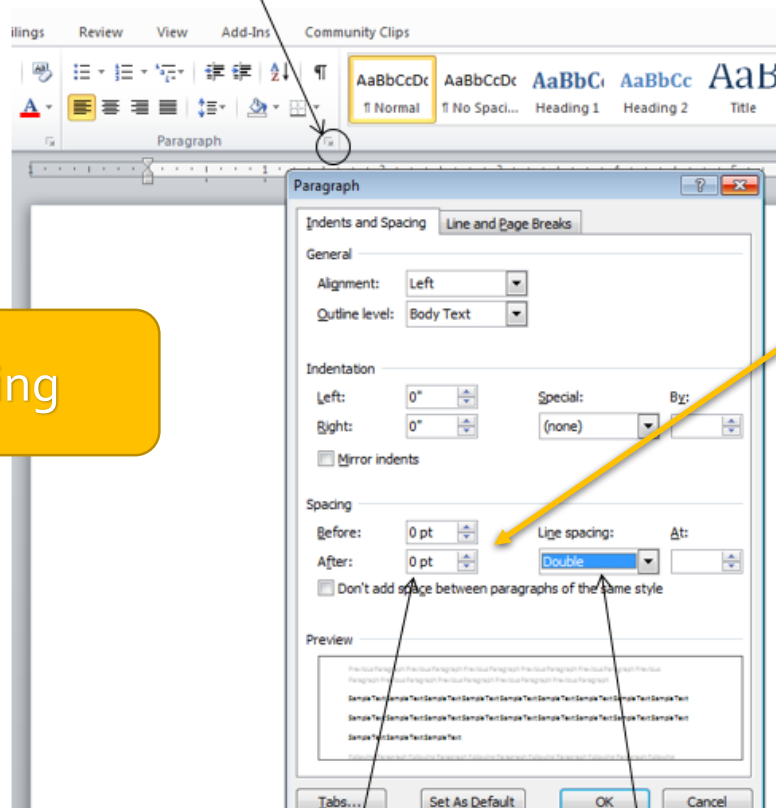
Include your word count as the next line in the heading like this:



# Spacing & Indenting

Clouds of smoke and rows of men in blue or red cover the field. Sounds of drums and gunshots fill the air. Cannons are blasting and people are falling. This is 1776 through 1781 during the fight for America's independence from the British. This war established a mindset

Find the Paragraph section (located under both the **Home** tab and the **Page Layout** tab)  
Click on the **tiny box with an arrow pointing down and right** to open the Paragraph dialog box:



Spacing

Indenting

Your entire paper should be double-spaced. You must change the spacing in the After box to 0 pt to avoid getting extra spacing between paragraphs.

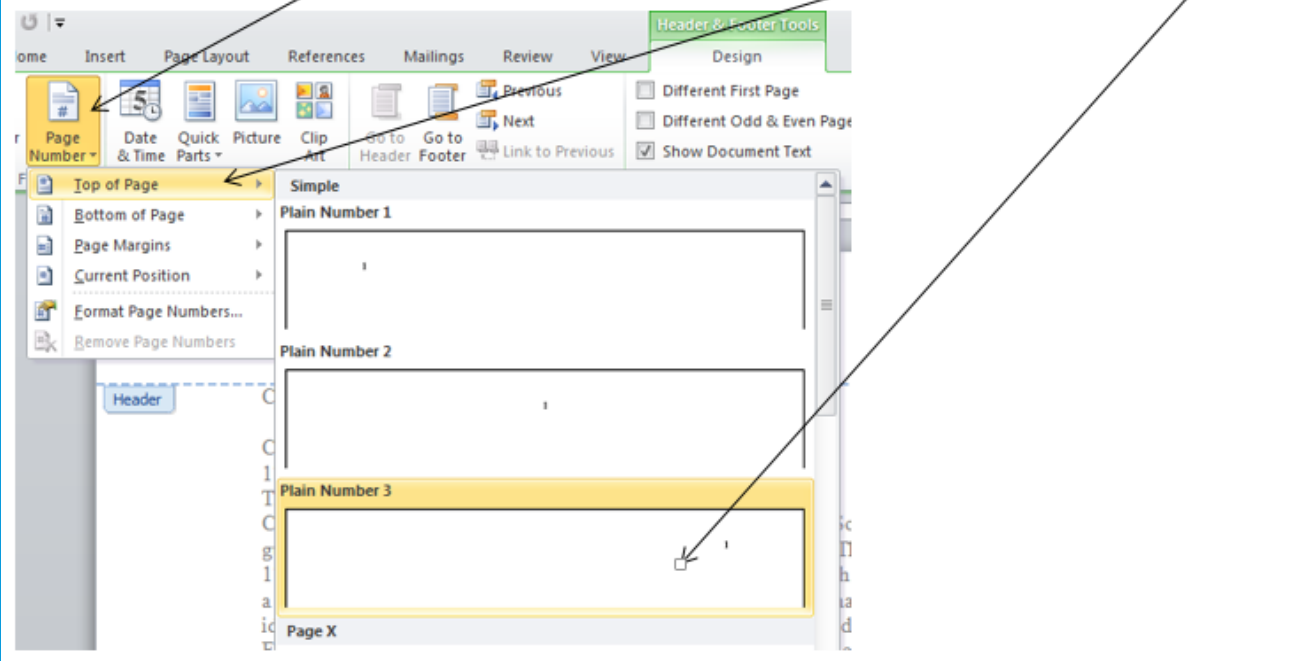
Each paragraph should be indented 1/2". The easiest way to accomplish this is to press Tab once on your keyboard. Make sure that you do not include an extra double-space between paragraphs.

In the Spacing section, change **After** to 0 pt, and change **Line spacing** to Double. Then click **OK**.

# Header with Page Numbers

The header of your paper contains your last name and the page number. It is aligned at the right-hand side of the page and located ½" from the top. To do this, double-click at very top of your document to open the header. To insert the page number:

From the **Insert** tab, choose **Page Number** and hover your mouse over the words **Top of Page**. Choose **Plain Number 3** from the list. **Plain Number 3** will automatically place your header to the right side of the page.



Then type your last name and space once in front of the page number. **You must highlight your last name and page number and change the font to Times New Roman and font size to 12 pt.** You may return to the body of your paper by double-clicking in the middle of the page. If you need to go back and edit your header, double-click at the top of the page.

Inserting the page number automatically puts the correct page number at the top of every page.

# Title

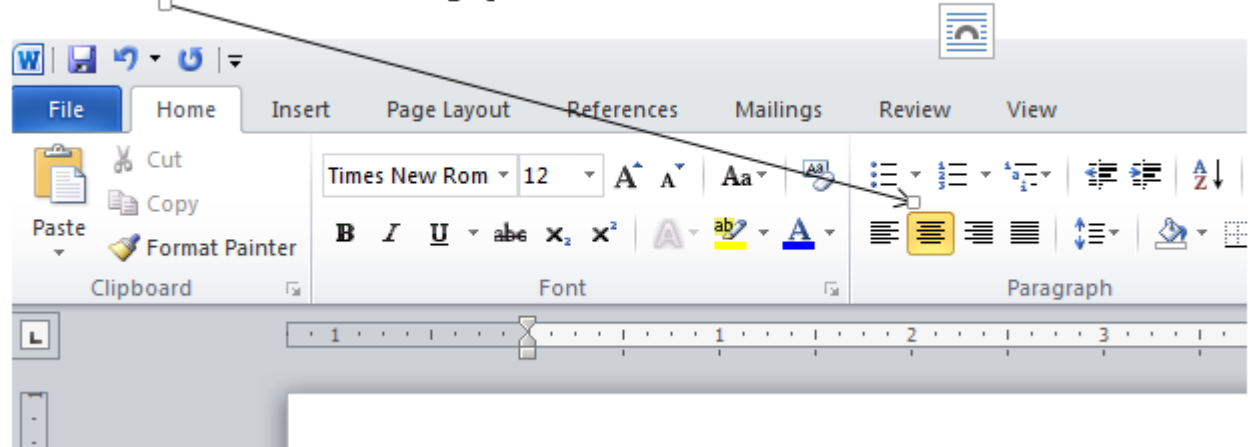
614 Words

The American Character

Clouds of smoke and rows of men in blue or red cover the field. Sounds of drums and

Your title should be centered across the page.

Use the **Center** button in the Paragraph section of the toolbar.



Do not italicize or underline your title, put it in quotation marks or boldface, type it in all capital letters, or use a larger font size. Italicize only words you would italicize in the text (e.g., the title of a book). Use quotation marks for the titles of articles, essays, stories, and poems published within larger works, chapters of books, and pages in Web sites. Do not use a period after your title.

The rules for capitalizing titles are strict. In a title or subtitle, capitalize the first word, the last word, and all principal words, including those that follow hyphens in compound terms. Therefore, capitalize the following parts of speech: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and subordinating conjunctions. Do not capitalize the following parts of speech when they fall in the middle of a title: articles, coordinating conjunctions, and the *to* infinitives.

Use a colon and a space to separate a title from a subtitle, unless the title ends in a question mark or an exclamation point. Include other punctuation only if it is part of the title or subtitle

*(MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th ed. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009. Print.)*

# Works Cited Page

(click links to get detailed instructions)

## [Insert Page Break](#)

- Your Works Cited page is the last page of your paper. Insert a page break to be sure it stays at the top of the last page, even if you make changes to your paper.

## [Hanging Indent](#)

- You will need to set up a hanging indent for your list of citations so that it is formatted with the first line at the left margin and remaining lines indented ½”.

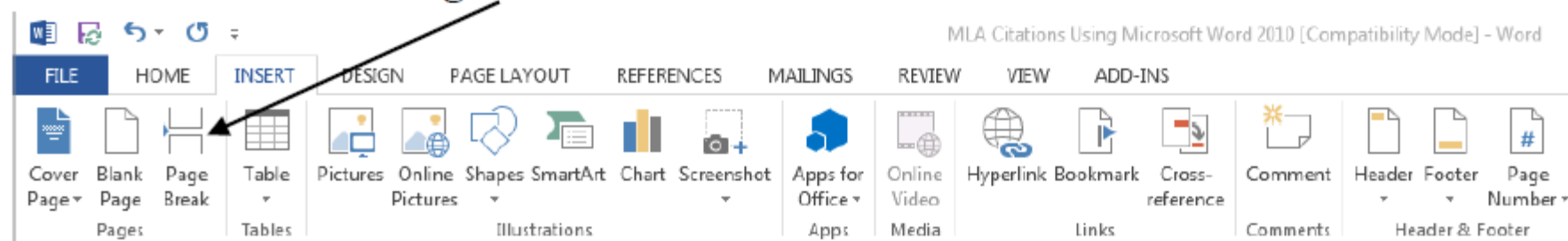
## [Sample & Resources](#)

- The page number in the header should continue from the rest of the document (for example, if your paper is pages 1-6, your Works Cited page would be page 7).
- The entries should be double-spaced and *alphabetized* by the first word in the citation.

# Insert Page Break

Make sure your cursor is placed just below the last paragraph of your paper and then follow directions below:

To create a page break (which will ensure that your Works Cited begins at the top of a new page), go to the **Insert** tab and choose **Page Break**.



Now you can make changes to your paper without worrying that your Works Cited page will move around.



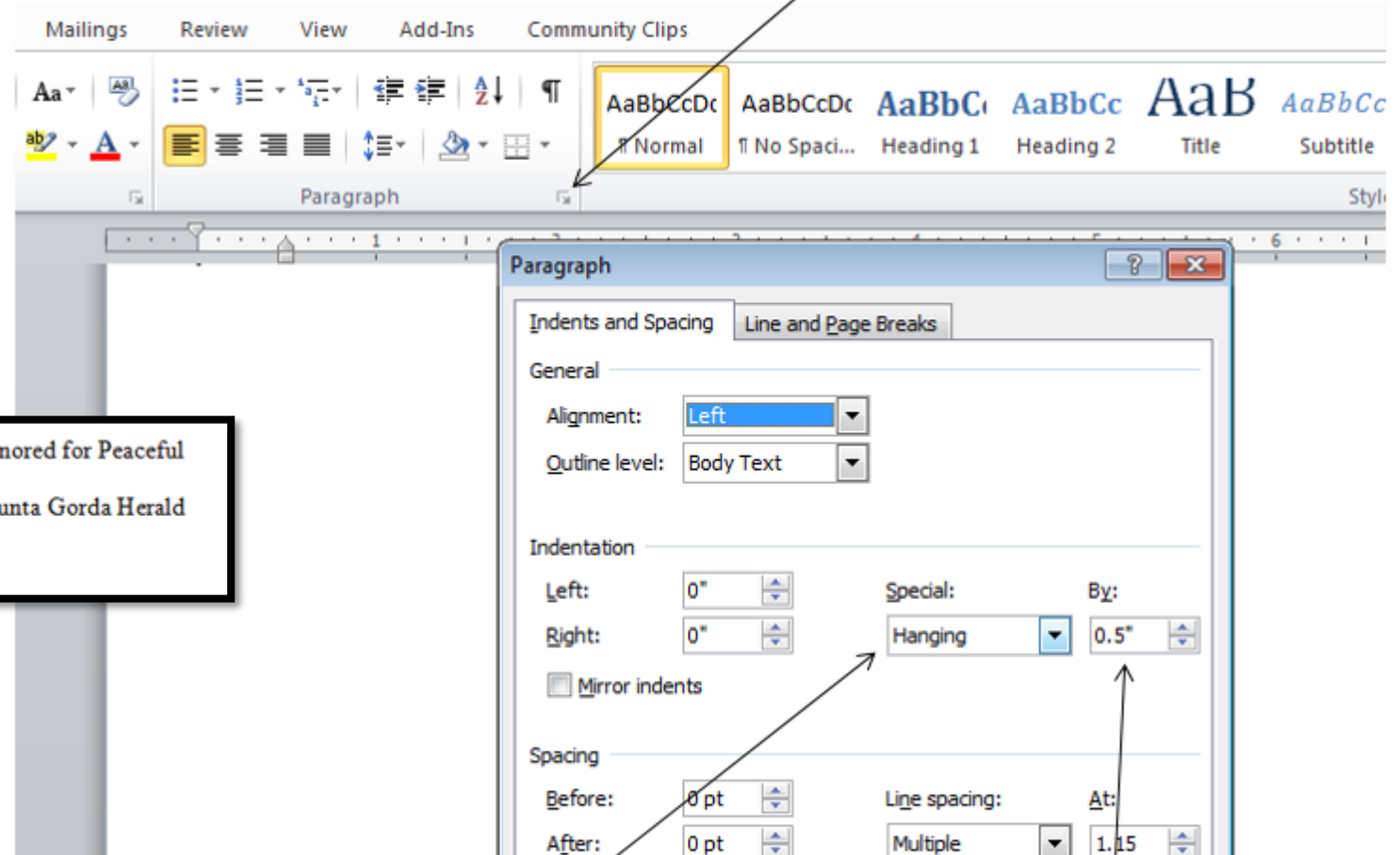
# Hanging Indent

The hanging indent will automatically indent the second and third lines of a citation for you.

Bower, Gordon. "Honoring the Past: Former Superintendent Hugh Adams Honored for Peaceful Integration of Schools." *Charlotte Sun* [Punta Gorda] 11 Aug. 2010: Punta Gorda Herald  
S. Print.

This indentation was created using a hanging indent. So much easier than using tabs or spaces!

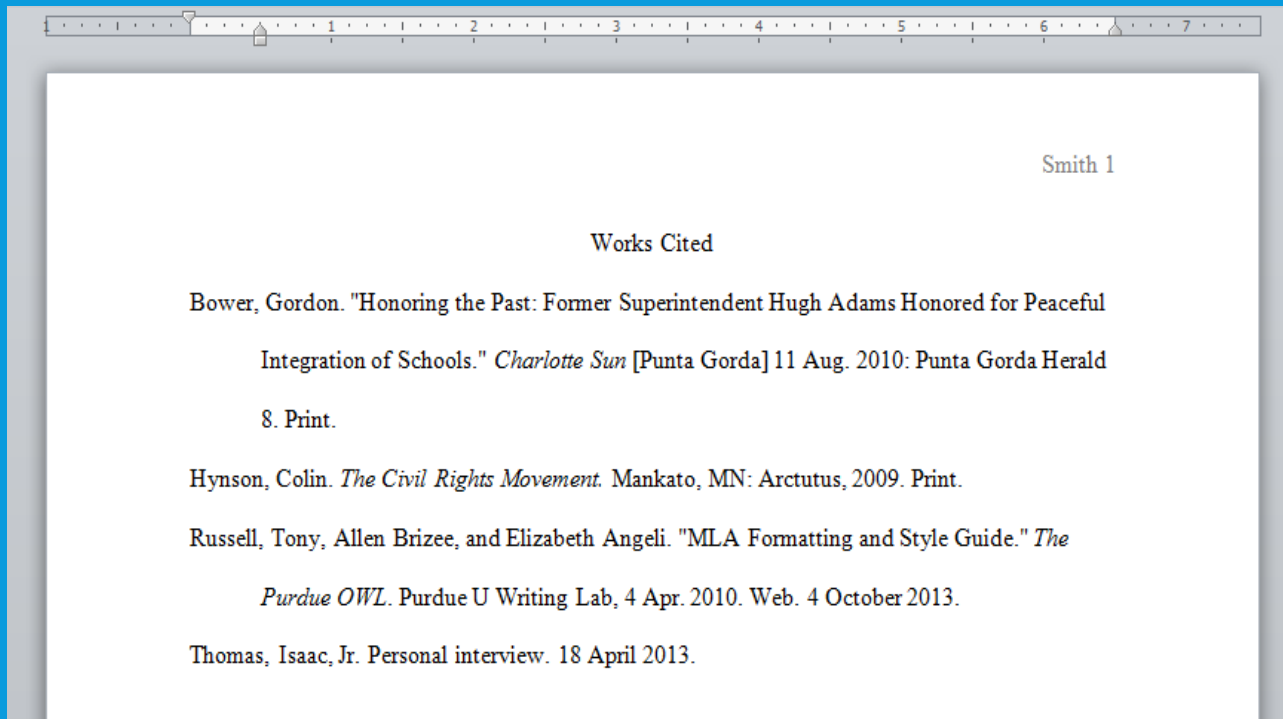
Under the **Home** tab or **Page Layout** tab, click on the **tiny box with an arrow pointing down and right** to open the Paragraph dialog box:



In the **Indentation** section, choose **Hanging** under Special and it should default to 0.5" here.

# Sample Page & Resources

Sample of a Works Cited page:



**Purdue Online Writing Lab:**

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/1/>

OWL is a wonderful resource. Look at the sections on the left to get see the guidelines for citing different types of resources.

**Citation Machine:** <http://citationmachine.net>

This is a citation generator, however, it does make mistakes, so be sure to check the citations against Purdue Online Writing Lab (website above) or what your teachers has taught you.

**MLA Citation Wizard:**

<http://21cif.com/tools/cite/mla/index.html>

This is a citation generator, however, it does make mistakes, so be sure to check the citations against Purdue Online Writing Lab (website above) or what your teachers has taught you.

***MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers***

We also have several copies of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed., which you may borrow from the library.

This MLA Guide is available on the  
CHS Media Center Website

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