

# Frequently asked questions about the course

## Writing a Humanities Source Paper

Many instructors who are fine writers do not want the hassle of trying to teach writing along with their course content. That is where I come in.

I will teach students writing skills so the companion course instructor can concentrate on teaching the humanities content.

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### **Please note the following dates:**

- June 1 last day to apply.
- June 15 students will be notified about their acceptance and the orientation schedule
- Orientation last week in July or first week in August (dates, times TBA)
- Aug. 15 security deposit due
- Sept. 5 remainder of tuition due

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### **What are the instructor's qualifications?**

Linda Gorton Aragoni had her first experience with teaching at a distance in the late 1980s and has since taught at three online colleges. She holds two master's degrees and a graduate certificate in instructional design for online learning. In addition, she has worked as a writer, reporter, and editor for newspapers, magazines, journals, books, and training materials. Currently, she publishes the website [you-can-teach-writing.com](http://you-can-teach-writing.com) and writes a [blog of vintage novel reviews](#). Click to [view her CV](#).

### **What is a source paper?**

You may not know what a source paper is, but I am sure you have heard the term research paper. Both terms refer to writing that relies on published evidence (facts and opinions) from individuals or groups to prove its point. We call those individual or groups sources.

The source paper is usually just "five-paragraph essay" length instead of being a long, drawn-out project.

Writers of source/research papers summarize the evidence and provide information about the source so readers could check the information for themselves.

### **What will students learn in the course?**

Students learn how to plan a paper, present evidence, and use the Modern Language Association (MLA) format. They will learn strategies and tools suitable for most nonfiction writing situations, which will make them more efficient writers.

Students write three 400- to 800-word papers and one longer research paper of 1,500 to 3,000 words.

## How is instruction delivered?

The course has a "live" component in which all the class members meet online with the instructor. The live component mimics a traditional classroom through two-way audio, video, and graphics. Students must attend the instructor-led online sessions at the stated times.

Between live sessions, students use an online forum for additional discussion, homework activities, etc. They can participate in the class forum at their convenience, providing they meet the deadlines for completing work.

## Who should take Writing a Humanities Source Paper?

Writing a Humanities Source Paper is primarily for upper level home school students with artistic interests

Students can take this course in conjunction with a classroom humanities course such as literature, history, and religion or art history. It could also be taken to give an academic spin on some hands-on training. For example, it might be combined with music lessons or with participation in a drama production.

The course is not about producing literary or artistic work. Students will be digging out information that other people have written about the humanities.

## How are the writing and humanities course integrated?

When students apply to take the humanities source paper writing course, they have to tell me about their planned companion course. Students should work with their humanities course instructor to identify appropriate writing topics as early as possible. If I have questions about how to meet that instructor's needs, I will attempt to contact her/him.

I will give out the course assignments schedule during Orientation. Students must make sure they complete course work for Writing a Humanities Source Paper in time to get feedback, make revisions, and submit the work to the companion course instructor on time.

(I also offer a similar [course designed for students with more technical interests](#).)

## How does someone apply to take the course?

Students can apply by completing a [simple online form](#).

## Why must students attend an orientation session?

The orientation familiarizes students with the course protocol and gives them a chance to see if the course is suitable for them. After students complete orientation, they have until Aug. 15 make up their minds and pay their security deposit if they plan to take the fall course.

The orientation will be the last week of July or the first week of August. Date(s) and time(s) to be determined.

## How large are the classes?

Humanities Source Paper classes will have 8 to 16 students. I must have a minimum of 8 students registered by the security deposit deadline or I will cancel the class.

## What equipment must students have?

Students must have

- Computer with Internet access (preferably high speed) and enough memory that they can keep a text editor (like Notepad) open during online sessions
- Speakers and microphone,
- Keyboard
- email account they check regularly

Students need a free [WizIQ](#) account for live sessions, but do not need to download any software to use the site.

## Do students have to buy any books?

All materials required for writing a humanities source paper are available online. Being able to thumb through a copy of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* is useful, but not essential. The 7th edition (ISBN: 9781603290241) is due out in April, 2009. Once it is in print, earlier editions will be obsolete, so if you are thinking of buying, be sure to get the seventh edition.

## How are grades determined?

Students will have at least one written assignment a week during the course. Students will get their assignments back with comments by e-mail usually within 72 hours, but always within a week.

I will provide an end-of-course grade based on students' ability to employ a strategic writing process and on how well they handle the conventions of writing and formatting. Students should submit their papers to their humanities course instructor to get feedback on the *content* of their papers.

## When are classes scheduled?

By deliberate design, the class schedule is not a typical school schedule. The sessions are planned to allow students to learn and write efficiently.

Students have their most frequent instructor contact early in the term when they are doing short writing activities to learn the process of preparing a paper. As writing assignments get longer, students have fewer live sessions; they can use that time for writing their papers.

Students can get help throughout the course in the course forum.

The dates on which live classes are scheduled are listed below.

August	September	October	November	December
Monday 8/31	Tuesday 9/1	Monday 10/5	Monday 11/2	Monday 12/7
	Thursday 9/3	Monday 10/19	Monday 11/16	
	Tuesday 9/8			
	Thursday 9/10			
	Monday 9/14			
	Tuesday 9/15			
	Thursday, 9/17			
	Monday, 9/21			
	Thursday, 9/24			

Students vote for their preferred time slot when they apply for the course; majority vote wins.

## How much credit can students earn in the course?

The amount of "seat time" and the writing required in this course are easily equivalent to a half semester of college work. Using the standard formula for converting college work to high school credits, home schools could award a half year of English credit for this humanities source paper writing course.

## What does the Humanities Source Paper course cost?

Course tuition is \$300, which covers the cost of the orientation, 15 live classes, asynchronous forums, and evaluation of written work. All payments go through PayPal.



A security deposit of \$100 is required by August 15. The remaining \$200 tuition is due by September 5. If a student withdraws prior to the first class session, \$75 of the deposit will be refunded.

## Whom do I contact with questions about the course?

Contact Linda Aragoni through the [course questions form](#).