

## ESSAY EVALUATION MARKS

### 1. Typical Errors and Evaluation Marks

The most frequent student errors are listed below, followed by the professor's grading symbol in brackets.

- Sp** Spelling errors [sp] that word processors cannot identify, such as *their* for *there*, *then* for *than*
- punct** Punctuation errors such as unnecessary commas [NC], a semi-colon used rather than a colon, and a period preceding a reference
- agr** Agreement of pronoun with its antecedent. Example: "A disciple of Jesus will live their life simply."
- cap** Not capitalizing the Bible, or inconsistent capitalization
- CS** Comma spliced sentences, for example: "Jesus was the second Adam, he brought life rather than death."
- frag** Fragment sentences, for example: "Making him the one who re-opened paradise."
- DM** Dangling modifiers, usually a participle at the beginning of a sentence. Example: "Reading the book, it said that Jesus was the second Adam."
- W** Word usage errors, including using the wrong word [WW], using a word that does not fit the context [WC], using the wrong preposition for a noun or verb [W], including extra words [XW], or words missing [WM], using colloquial [QW], informal or popular culture "speechisms"
- diction, grammar** Sentences and clauses that require revision because of awkward [awk] phrasing and non-grammatical expression
- vague** statements of quantity, quality, or extent without examples or specifics to make the idea meaningful to the reader: *many, much, more, some, different, various, throughout*; vague temporal phrases, such as *in those days, back then, in biblical times*

### 2. Typical MLA Errors

- not citing indirect use of sources, i.e., using another person's ideas and facts without giving credit
  - \* technically this is plagiarism, so papers will be returned without a grade
- citing the editor of a reference work (e.g., Bible encyclopedia), rather than the author of the specific article
- incorrect citation format, most often putting a comma between author and page number, or period preceding the citation
- not citing in the essay items including on the Works Cited page (Works Cited is not a bibliography)
- not alphabetizing items in the Work Cited page
- no final period after a Works Cited item

### 3. Use of Personal Pronouns

- first person singular (*I*) is acceptable, but beware of overuse
- first person plural (*we, us, our*) is not appropriate or acceptable because student authors cannot assume their readers share common experiences, worldview or ideological perspective (e.g., religious belief)
- addressing the reader in the second person (*you*) is not appropriate or acceptable

### 4. Use of Quotes

- use quotes sparingly, only when it is not possible to paraphrase an author's words without losing an essential nuance or phrasing
- quotes must be grammatically integrated into sentences and paragraphs, including appropriate punctuation (comma or colon)
- never end a paragraph with a quote
- do not allow a quote to make the point: always interpret a quote to highlight the key concept or terminology — the reason a student is quoting rather than paraphrasing
- a string of quotes is not an academic essay

**Basic Writing Errors**

**Grade**

**Comments**