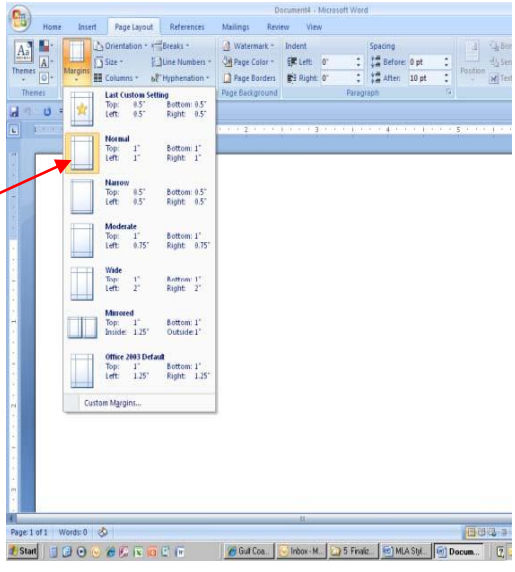
How to Set Up a Research Paper Using MLA Style

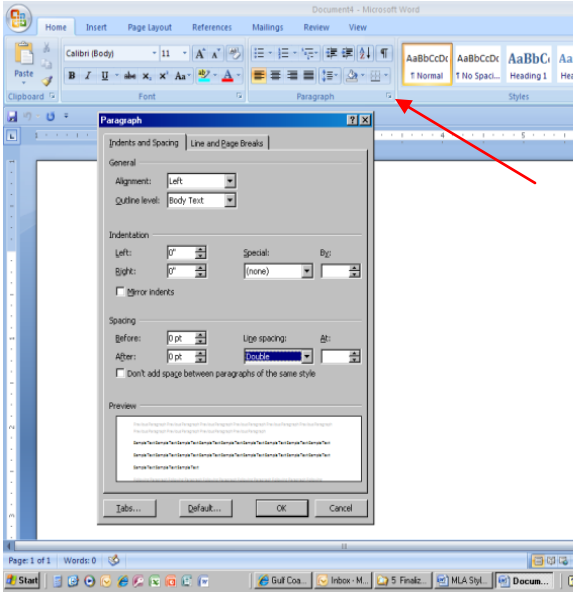
I. Set all margins to 1”

1. Select the **Page Layout** tab.
2. Click on the **Margins** icon.
3. Choose **Normal** margin setting.
(1" for each of the margin settings)



II. Set paragraph settings

1. On the **Home** tab, click the arrow in the **Paragraph** group.
2. Under **Spacing** “Before and After” set both values to 0 pts.
3. Under "Line Spacing," select Double.
4. Click **OK**.



III. Set the Font

1. Change the font Times New Roman, Calibri or another plain legible font.
2. Change the size to 12 points.

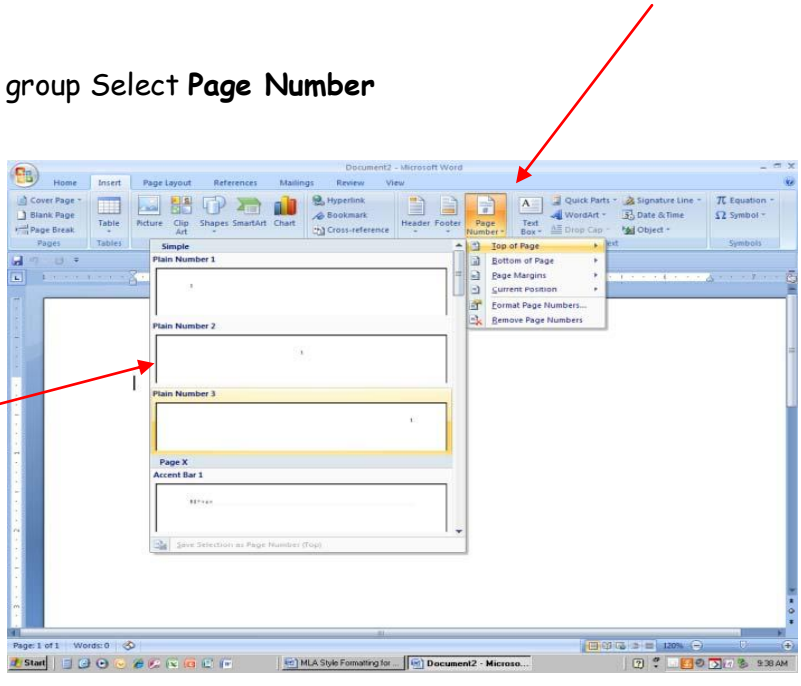
IV. Create a Header with your last name and the page number. (Every page of a research paper in MLA style format has a header in the upper right-hand corner, about 1/2" from the top of the page.)

1. Select the **Insert** tab

2. In the **Header and Footer** group Select **Page Number**

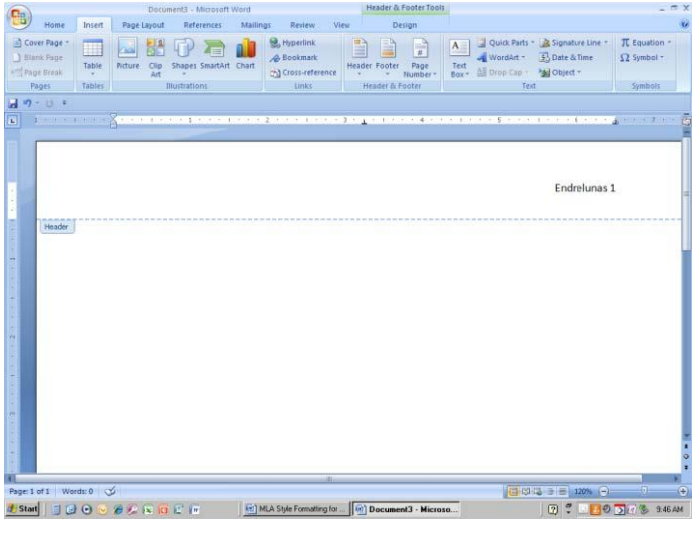
3. Select **Top of Page**.

4. Click on "Plain Number 3"



5. Type your last name and one blank space.

6. Double click below the header to return to the body of your paper



V. Type the Paper

1. Type your name and press the **Enter** key once.

2. Type your teacher's name and press the **Enter** key.

3. Type the course name and press the **Enter** key.

4. Type the date using this format (1 June 2008) and press the **Enter** key.

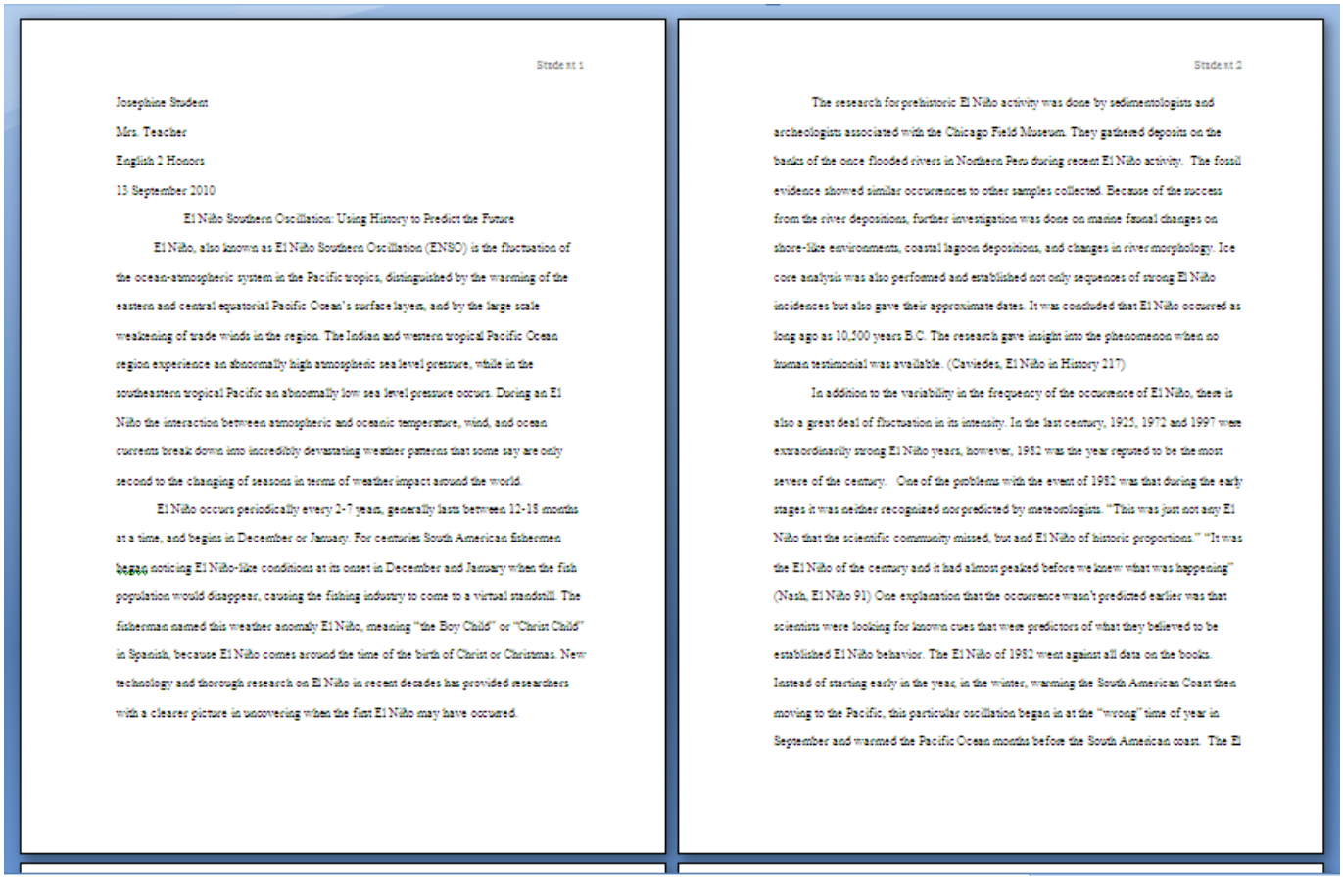
5. Click **align center**. Type the title of your paper. Make sure to capitalize the first letter of each word other than articles. Press the **Enter** key once.

6. Click **align left**.

7. Press the **Tab** key to indent 1/2 inch to begin your first paragraph. Type your paper.

*PLEASE NOTE - Do not use the enter key at the end of a line; allow the word processor to automatically wrap the text to the next line. Hit the enter key only **once** at the end of each paragraph, and use the **tab** key to indent each new paragraph.*

Example of Research Paper in MLA Format



Student 1

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13 September 2010

El Niño Southern Oscillation: Using History to Predict the Future

El Niño, also known as El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is the fluctuation of the ocean-atmospheric system in the Pacific tropics, distinguished by the warming of the eastern and central equatorial Pacific Ocean's surface layers, and by the large scale weakening of trade winds in the region. The Indian and western tropical Pacific Ocean region experience an abnormally high atmospheric sea level pressure, while in the southeastern tropical Pacific an abnormally low sea level pressure occurs. During an El Niño the interaction between atmospheric and oceanic temperature, wind, and ocean currents break down into incredibly devastating weather patterns that some say are only second to the changing of seasons in terms of weather impact around the world.

El Niño occurs periodically every 2-7 years, generally lasts between 12-18 months at a time, and begins in December or January. For centuries South American fishermen began noticing El Niño-like conditions at its onset in December and January when the fish population would disappear, causing the fishing industry to come to a virtual standstill. The fishermen named this weather anomaly El Niño, meaning "the Boy Child" or "Christ Child" in Spanish, because El Niño comes around the time of the birth of Christ or Christmas. New technology and thorough research on El Niño in recent decades has provided researchers with a clearer picture in uncovering when the first El Niño may have occured.

Student 2

The research for prehistoric El Niño activity was done by sedimentologists and archeologists associated with the Chicago Field Museum. They gathered deposits on the banks of the once flooded rivers in Northern Peru during recent El Niño activity. The fossil evidence showed similar occurrences to other samples collected. Because of the success from the river depositions, further investigation was done on marine faunal changes on shore-like environments, coastal lagoon depositions, and changes in river morphology. Ice core analysis was also performed and established not only sequences of strong El Niño incidences but also gave their approximate dates. It was concluded that El Niño occurred as long ago as 10,500 years B.C. The research gave insight into the phenomenon when no human testimonial was available. (Caviedes, El Niño in History 217)

In addition to the variability in the frequency of the occurrence of El Niño, there is also a great deal of fluctuation in its intensity. In the last century, 1925, 1972 and 1997 were extraordinarily strong El Niño years, however, 1982 was the year reputed to be the most severe of the century. One of the problems with the event of 1982 was that during the early stages it was neither recognized nor predicted by meteorologists. "This was just not any El Niño that the scientific community missed, but and El Niño of historic proportions." "It was the El Niño of the century and it had almost peaked before we knew what was happening" (Nash, El Niño 91) One explanation that the occurrence wasn't predicted earlier was that scientists were looking for known cues that were predictors of what they believed to be established El Niño behavior. The El Niño of 1982 went against all data on the books. Instead of starting early in the year, in the winter, warming the South American Coast then moving to the Pacific, this particular oscillation began in at the "wrong" time of year in September and warmed the Pacific Ocean months before the South American coast. The El