

WRITING AND RESEARCH HANDBOOK

What are the basic tools for building strong sentences, paragraphs, compositions, and research papers? You'll find them in this handbook—an easy-to-use “tool kit” for writers like you. Check out the helpful explanations, examples, and tips as you complete your writing assignments.

Writing Good Sentences

A sentence is a group of words that expresses a complete thought. Every sentence has a subject and a predicate.

Using Various Types of Sentences

How you craft a sentence—as a statement, question, command, or exclamation—depends on the job you want the sentence to do.

Type	Job It Does	Ways to Use It
Declarative	Makes a statement	Report information <i>October is National Pizza Month.</i>
Interrogative	Asks a question	Make your readers curious <i>Why is pizza so popular?</i>
Imperative	Gives a command or makes a request	Tell how to do something <i>Spread the toppings on the pizza dough.</i>
Exclamatory	Expresses strong feeling	Emphasize a surprising fact <i>Every second, Americans eat about 350 slices of pizza!</i>

Varying Sentence Structure and Length

Many sentences in a row that look and sound alike can be boring. Vary your sentence openers to make your writing interesting.

- **Start a sentence with an adjective or an adverb.**
Suddenly the sky turned dark.
- **Start a sentence with a phrase.**
Like a fireworks show, lightning streaked across the sky.
- **Start a sentence with a clause.**
As the thunderstorm began, people ran for cover.




Check It Out

For more about how to vary sentence length and structure, review Unit 20, *Sentence Combining*, pages 516–523.

Many short sentences in a row make writing sound choppy and dull. To make your writing sound pleasing, vary the sentence length.

- **Combine short sentences into longer ones.**
Tornadoes are also called twisters. They are spinning clouds. The clouds are funnel shaped.
Tornadoes, also called twisters, are spinning funnel-shaped clouds.
- **Alternate shorter sentences with longer sentences.**
Tornado winds are powerful. They can hurl cows into the air, tear trees from their roots, and turn cars upside down.

Using Parallelism

Parallelism is the use of a pair or a series of words, phrases, or sentences that have the same grammatical structure. Use parallelism to call attention to the items in the series and to create unity in writing.

Not Parallel Gymnasts are strong, flexible, and move gracefully.

Parallel Gymnasts are strong, flexible, and graceful.

Not Parallel Do warm-up exercises to prevent sports injuries and for stretching your muscles.

Parallel Do warm-up exercises to prevent sports injuries and to stretch your muscles.

Not Parallel Stand on one leg, bend the other leg, and you should pull your heel.

Parallel Stand on one leg, bend the other leg, and pull your heel.

Revising Wordy Sentences

Revise wordy sentences to make every word count.

- **Cut needless words.**

Wordy We need to have bike lanes in streets due to the fact that people like to ride their bikes to work and school, and it's not safe otherwise.

Concise We need bike lanes in streets so that people can safely ride to work and school.

- **Rewrite sentences opening with the word *there*.**

Wordy There are many kids riding their bikes in the street.

Concise Many kids ride their bikes in the street.

- **Change verbs in passive voice to active voice.**

Wordy Bikes are also ridden by grown-ups who want to keep fit.

Concise Grown-ups who want to keep fit also ride bikes.

TRY IT OUT

Write four sentences, one of each type—declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory—about food, sports, or another topic that interests you.

Writing Good Paragraphs

A paragraph is a group of sentences that relate to one main idea. A good paragraph develops a single idea and brings that idea into sharp focus. All the sentences flow smoothly from the beginning to the end of the paragraph.

Writing Unified Paragraphs

A paragraph has **unity** when the sentences belong together and center on a single main idea. One way to build a unified paragraph is to state the main idea in a topic sentence and then add related details.

Writing Topic Sentences A **topic sentence** gives your readers the “big picture”—a clear view of the most important idea you want them to know. Many effective expository paragraphs (paragraphs that convey information) start with a topic sentence that tells the key point right away.

Elaborating Topic Sentences Elaboration gives your readers a specific, more detailed picture of the main idea stated in your topic sentence. Elaboration is a technique you can use to include details that develop, support, or explain the main idea. The following chart shows various kinds of elaboration you might try.

Revising Tip

To make a paragraph unified, leave out details that do not relate to the topic sentence.

Topic Sentence: The state of Florida is known for its alligators.

Descriptions	Alligators look like dinosaurs from millions of years ago.
Facts and statistics	Alligators can weigh as much as six hundred pounds.
Examples	Alligators eat a wide variety of foods, such as fish, insects, turtles, frogs, and small mammals.
Anecdotes	Silvia almost fainted when she came home to find an alligator paddling around in her swimming pool.
Reasons	Face-to-face encounters with alligators are now common because people have built golf courses over the animals' habitat.

Writing Coherent Paragraphs

A paragraph has **coherence** when all the sentences flow smoothly and logically from one to the next. All the sentences in a paragraph *cohere*, or “stick together,” in a way that makes sense. To be sure your writing is coherent, choose a pattern of organization that fits your topic and use transition words and phrases to link ideas.

Organizing Paragraphs A few basic patterns of organization are listed below. Choose the pattern that helps you meet your specific writing goal.

- Use **chronological order**, or time order, to tell a story or to explain the steps in a process.
- Use **spatial order** to order your description of places, people, and things. You might describe the details in the order you see them—for example, from top to bottom or from near to far.
- Use **order of importance** to show how you rank opinions, facts, or details from the most to least important or the reverse.

Using Transitions Linking words and phrases, called **transitions**, act like bridges between sentences or between paragraphs. Transitions, such as the ones shown below, can make the organization of your paragraphs stronger by showing how ideas are logically related.

To show time order or sequence

after, at the beginning, before, finally, first, last year, later, meanwhile, next, now, second, sometimes, soon, yesterday

To show spatial relationships

above, ahead, around, at the top, below, beyond, down, here, inside, near, on top of, opposite, outside, over, there, under, within

To show importance or degree

above all, first, furthermore, in addition, mainly, most important, second

Check It Out

For more about transitions, see page 120.

TRY IT OUT

Copy the following paragraph on your paper. Underline the topic sentence. Cross out the sentence that is unrelated to the topic sentence. Add a transition to make a clear connection between two of the sentences.

A local artist creates weird and funny sculptures from fruits and vegetables. First he uses a sharp knife to carve faces that look like animals, such as bears and pigs. He glues on tiny beans to make eyes. Finally he uses beet juice to paint the mouth. Although the process sounds easy, it requires great imagination. The octopus sculpted from a banana is the silliest work of art I've ever seen.

Writing Good Compositions

A **composition** is a short paper made up of several paragraphs, with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion. A good composition presents a clear, complete message about a specific topic. Ideas flow logically from one sentence to the next and from one paragraph to the next.

Making a Plan

The suggestions in the chart below can help you shape the information in each part of your composition to suit your writing purpose.

Introductory Paragraph

Your introduction should interest readers in your topic and capture their attention. You may

- give background
- use a quotation
- ask a question
- tell an anecdote, or brief story

Include a **thesis statement**, a sentence or two stating the main idea you will develop in the composition.

Body Paragraphs

Elaborate on your thesis statement in the body paragraphs. You may

- offer proof
- give examples
- explain ideas

Stay focused and keep your body paragraphs on track. Remember to

- develop a single idea in each body paragraph
- arrange the paragraphs in a logical order
- use transitions to link one paragraph to the next

Concluding Paragraph

Your conclusion should bring your composition to a satisfying close. You may

- sum up main points
- tie the ending to the beginning by restating the main idea or thesis in different words
- make a call to action if your goal is to persuade readers

Drafting Tip

Sometimes you'll need two paragraphs to introduce your topic. For example, the first paragraph can tell an anecdote; the second can include your thesis statement.

Drafting Tip

A good conclusion follows logically from the rest of the piece of writing and leaves the reader with something to think about. Make sure that you do not introduce new or unrelated material in a conclusion.

Revising Tip

Use the cut-and-paste features of your word processing program to experiment with the structure—the arrangement of sentences or paragraphs. Choose the clearest, most logical order for your final draft.

Using the 6+1 Trait® Model

What are some basic terms you can use to discuss your writing with your teacher or classmates? What should you focus on as you revise and edit your compositions? Check out the following seven terms, or traits, that describe the qualities of strong writing. Learn the meaning of each trait and find out how using the traits can improve your writing.

Ideas The message or the theme and the details that develop it

Writing is clear when readers can grasp the meaning of your ideas right away. Check to see whether you're getting your message across.

- ✓ Does the title suggest the theme of the composition?
- ✓ Does the composition focus on a single narrow topic?
- ✓ Is the thesis, or main idea, clearly stated?
- ✓ Do well-chosen details elaborate the main idea?

Organization The arrangement of main points and supporting details

A good plan of organization steers your readers in the right direction and guides them easily through your composition—from start to finish. Find a structure, or order, that best suits your topic and writing purpose. Check to see whether you've ordered your key ideas and details in a way that keeps your readers on track.

- ✓ Are the beginning, middle, and end clearly linked?
- ✓ Is the order of ideas easy to follow?
- ✓ Does the introduction capture your readers' attention?
- ✓ Do sentences and paragraphs flow from one to the next in a way that makes sense?
- ✓ Does the conclusion wrap up the composition?

Voice A writer's unique way of using tone and style

Your writing voice comes through when your readers sense that a real person is communicating with them. Readers will respond to the **tone**, or the attitude, that you express toward a topic and to the **style**, the way that you use language and write sentences. Read your work aloud to see whether your writing voice comes through.

- ✓ Does your writing sound interesting when you read it aloud?
- ✓ Does your writing show what you think about your topic?
- ✓ Does your writing sound like you—or does it sound like you're imitating someone else?

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Word Choice The vocabulary a writer uses to convey meaning

Words work hard. They carry the weight of your meaning, so make sure you choose them carefully. Check to see whether the words you choose are doing their jobs well.

- ✓ Do you use lively verbs to show action?
- ✓ Do you use vivid words to create word pictures in your readers' minds?
- ✓ Do you use precise words to explain your ideas simply and clearly?

Sentence Fluency The smooth rhythm and flow of sentences that vary in length and style

The best writing is made up of sentences that flow smoothly from one sentence to the next. Writing that is graceful also sounds musical—rhythmical rather than choppy. Check for sentence fluency by reading your writing aloud.

- ✓ Do your sentences vary in length and structure?
- ✓ Do transition words and phrases show connections between ideas and sentences?
- ✓ Does parallelism help balance and unify related ideas?

Conventions Correct spelling, grammar, usage, and mechanics

A composition free of errors makes a good impression on your readers. Mistakes can be distracting, and they can blur your message. Try working with a partner to spot errors and correct them. Use this checklist to help you.

- ✓ Are all words spelled correctly?
- ✓ Are all proper nouns—as well as the first word of every sentence—capitalized?
- ✓ Is your composition free of sentence fragments?
- ✓ Is your composition free of run-on sentences?
- ✓ Are punctuation marks—such as apostrophes, commas, and end marks—inserted in the right places?

Presentation The way words and design elements look on a page

Appearance matters, so make your compositions inviting to read. Handwritten papers should be neat and legible. If you're using a word processor, double-space the lines of text and choose a readable font. Other design elements—such as boldfaced headings, bulleted lists, pictures, and charts—can help you present information effectively as well as make your papers look good.

Revising Tip

Listen carefully to the way your sentences sound when someone else reads them aloud. If you don't like what you hear, revise for sentence fluency. You might try adding variety to your sentence openers or combining sentences to make them sound less choppy.

Check It Out

See the Troubleshooter, pages 248–267, for help in correcting common errors in your writing.

Evaluating a Composition Read this sample composition, which has been evaluated using the 6+1 Trait® model.

Ideas The introduction hooks readers by connecting to their experience. It includes a thesis statement, which is developed in the following paragraphs with an example.

Organization The body paragraphs are arranged in order of importance.

Sentence Fluency A variety of sentence types helps the writing flow smoothly.

Organization Transitions effectively link ideas within and between paragraphs. Ideas flow naturally from one to the next.

Word Choice Nouns and verbs are strong and precise.

Voice The personal voice reveals something about the writer's personality.

Conventions The composition is free of errors in grammar, spelling, usage, and mechanics.

Joining the Team

It's not always easy to take a risk and try something new. It's much easier to play it safe and to keep doing the same things you always do. But sometimes having just a little curiosity about something is all you need to make a decision that can change your life for the better.

Last fall I made such a decision, and I haven't regretted it for a moment. I decided to join the school track team, even though I've never competed in any sport before. I like to run with my dog in the park, and I wondered what it would be like to run as part of a team. So how do I know I made the right decision? I made a list of three questions—from the least important to the most important—to help me think through my decision. Did becoming a member of the track team give me a sense of pride? Did I improve my physical fitness? Did I find running competitively enjoyable? Here's what I discovered as I answered these questions.

First, I feel proud of what I have contributed to the team. I haven't finished first or second or even third in a race yet. But I like and admire my teammates, and cheering them on at track meets makes them feel good. And that makes me feel good about myself too.

Second, joining the track team has made me more physically fit. I used to hate running laps and doing crunches. After a while, though, I started to see the results of doing my exercises, and now I don't mind. My strength and endurance have increased, and my time is improving in every event. Better physical fitness is giving me more energy for other activities, such as babysitting for my little brother.

Above all, I know I made a wise decision to join the track team because I enjoy running more than I ever imagined I could. I've discovered that I have a competitive streak in me. I want to win, and I know I can win if I keep practicing. My dog definitely appreciates the fact that I can keep up with him now, and we run together in the park nearly every day. That's fun for both of us!

All kinds of benefits can come with trying something new. So if there's something you're curious about—learning to cook like a gourmet, performing in a school play, or raising money for charity, for example—I strongly recommend that you give it a try!

Writing Good Research Papers

A research paper reports facts and ideas gathered from various sources about a specific topic. A good research paper blends information from reliable sources with the writer's original thoughts and ideas. The final draft follows a standard format for presenting information and citing sources.

Exploring a Variety of Sources

Once you've narrowed the topic of your research paper, you'll need to hunt for the best information. You might start by reading an encyclopedia article on your topic to learn some basic information. Then widen your search to include both primary and secondary sources.

- **Primary sources** are records of events by the people who witnessed them. Examples include diaries, letters, speeches, photos, posters, interviews, and radio and TV news broadcasts that include eyewitness interviews.
- **Secondary sources** contain information that is often based on primary sources. The creators of secondary sources conduct original research and then report their findings. Examples include encyclopedias, textbooks, biographies, magazine articles, Web site articles, and educational films.

When you find a secondary source that you can use for your report, check to see whether the author has given credit to his or her sources of information in **footnotes**, **endnotes**, or a **bibliography**. Tracking down such sources can lead you to more information you can use.

If you're exploring your topic on the Internet, look for Web sites that are sponsored by government institutions, famous museums, and reliable organizations. If you find a helpful site, check to see whether it contains links to other Web sites you can use.

Evaluating Sources

As you conduct your research, do a little detective work and investigate the sources you find. Begin by asking some key questions so you can decide whether you've tracked down reliable resources that are suitable for your purpose. Some important questions to ask about your sources are listed in the box on the next page.

Research Tip

Look for footnotes at the bottom of a page. Look for endnotes at the end of a chapter or a book. Look for a bibliography at the end of a book.



Ask Questions About Your Sources

- ✓ **Is the information useful?**
Find sources that are closely related to your research topic.
- ✓ **Is the information easy to understand?**
Look for sources that are geared toward readers your age.
- ✓ **Is the information new enough?**
Look for sources that were recently published if you need the most current facts and figures.
- ✓ **Is the information trustworthy and true?**
Check to see whether the author documents the source of facts and supports opinions with reasons and evidence. Also check out the background of the authors. They should be well-known experts on the topic that you're researching.
- ✓ **Is the information balanced and fair?**
Read with a critical eye. Does the source try to persuade readers with a one-sided presentation of information? Or is the source balanced, approaching a topic from various perspectives? Be on the lookout for **propaganda** and for sources that reflect an author's **bias**, or prejudice. Make sure that you learn about a topic from more than one angle by reviewing several sources of information.

Giving Credit Where Credit Is Due

When you write a research paper, you support your own ideas with information that you've gleaned from your primary and secondary sources. But presenting someone else's ideas as if they were your own is **plagiarism**, a form of cheating. You can avoid plagiarism by citing, or identifying, the sources of your information within the text of your paper. The chart below tells what kinds of information you do and don't need to cite in your paper.

DO credit the source of . . .	DON'T credit the source of . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • direct quotations • summaries and paraphrases, or restatements, of someone else's viewpoints, original ideas, and conclusions • photos, art, charts, and other visuals • little-known facts or statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information that can be found in many places—dates, facts, ideas, and concepts that are considered common knowledge • your own unique ideas

Citing Sources Within Your Paper The most common method of crediting sources is with parenthetical documentation within the text. Generally a reference to the source and page number is included in parentheses at the end of each quotation, paraphrase, or summary of information borrowed from a source. An in-text citation points readers to a corresponding entry in your **works-cited list**—a list of all your sources, complete with publication information, that will appear as the final page of your paper. The Modern Language Association (MLA) recommends the following guidelines for crediting sources in text.



Check It Out

To see the relationship between parenthetical documentation and a works-cited list, study the sample research paper on pages 689–690.

- **Put in parentheses the author’s last name and the page number where you found the information.**

Sundiata would later be known by such titles as “Lord Lion,” “Lion of Mali,” and “Father of the Bright Country” (Koslow 12).

- **If the author’s name is mentioned in the sentence, put only the page number in parentheses.**

According to Philip Koslow, Sundiata would be known by such titles as “Lord Lion,” “Lion of Mali,” and “Father of the Bright Country” (12).

- **If no author is listed, put the title or a shortened version of the title in parentheses. Include a page number if you have one.**

The facts of his life as a king are known, but many details about his early life are uncertain (“Sundiata”).

Preparing the Final Draft

Ask your teacher how to format the final draft. Most English teachers will ask you to follow the MLA guidelines listed below.

- Put a heading in the upper left-hand corner of the first page with your name, your teacher’s name, and the date on separate lines.
- Center the title on the line below the heading.
- Number the pages one-half inch from the top in the right-hand corner. After page one, put your last name before the page number.
- Set one-inch margins on all sides of every page; double-space the lines of text.
- Include an alphabetized, double-spaced works-cited list as the last page of your final draft. All sources noted in parenthetical citations in the paper must be listed.

On the next page, you’ll find examples of how the sources you use for your research paper should be written and punctuated in a works-cited list, the final page of your paper.

MLA Style

MLA style is most often used in English and social studies classes. Center the title *Works Cited* at the top of your list.

Source	Style
Book with one author	Price-Groff, Claire. <i>The Manatee</i> . Farmington Hills: Lucent, 1999.
Book with two or three authors	Tennant, Alan, Gerard T. Salmon, and Richard B. King. <i>Snakes of North America</i> . Lanham: Lone Star Books, 2003. [If a book has more than three authors, name only the first author and then write "et al." (Latin abbreviation for "and others").]
Book with an editor	Follett, C. B., ed. <i>Grrrrr: A Collection of Poems About Bears</i> . Sausalito: Arctos, 2000.
Book with organization or group as author or editor	National Air and Space Museum. <i>The Official Guide to the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum</i> . Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002.
Work from an anthology	Soto, Gary. "To Be a Man." <i>Hispanic American Literature: An Anthology</i> . Ed. Rodolfo Cortina. Lincolnwood: NTC, 1998. 340–341.
Introduction in a published book	Weintraub, Stanley. Introduction. <i>Great Expectations</i> . By Charles Dickens. New York: Signet, 1998. v–xii.
Encyclopedia article	"Whales." <i>World Book Encyclopedia</i> . 2003.
Weekly magazine article	Trillin, Calvin. "Newshound." <i>New Yorker</i> 29 Sept. 2003: 70–81.
Monthly magazine article	Knott, Cheryl. "Code Red." <i>National Geographic</i> Oct. 2003: 76–81.
Online magazine article	Rauch, Jonathan. "Will Frankenfood Save the Planet?" <i>Atlantic Online</i> 292.3 (Oct. 2003). 15 Dec. 2003 < http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/2003/10/rauch.htm >.
Newspaper article	Bertram, Jeffrey. "African Bees: Fact or Myth?" <i>Orlando Sentinel</i> 18 Aug. 1999: D2.
Unsigned article	"Party-Line Snoops." <i>Washington Post</i> 24 Sept. 2003: A28.
Internet	"Manatees." <i>SeaWorld/Busch Gardens Animal Information Database</i> . 2002. Busch Entertainment Corp. 3 Oct. 2003 < http://www.seaworld.org/infobooks/Manatee/home.html >.
Radio or TV program	"Orcas." <i>Champions of the Wild</i> . Animal Planet. Discovery Channel. 21 Oct. 2003.
Videotape or DVD	<i>Living with Tigers</i> . DVD. Discovery, 2003. [For a videotape (VHS) version, replace "DVD" with "Videocassette."]
Interview	Salinas, Antonia. E-mail interview. 23–24 Oct. 2003. [If an interview takes place in person, replace "E-mail" with "Personal"; if it takes place on the telephone, use "Telephone."]



Evaluating a Research Paper Read this sample research paper, which has been evaluated using the 6+1 Trait® model.

The Early Life of King Sundiata of Mali

In the beginning of the thirteenth century, a boy named Sundiata Keita was born near the kingdom of Kangaba, a region of West Africa. Sundiata was no ordinary boy. In fact, he grew up to become the founder and first king of the West African empire of Mali. The facts of his life as a king are known, but many details about his early life are uncertain ("Sundiata"). To find out more about Sundiata as a boy, historians have had to play the role of detectives searching for clues.

Some historians have had to get their information about Africa's past from storytellers, called *griots*. Griots are like living history books, because they tell stories about things that happened a long time ago. These stories are passed down from generation to generation. In the 1960s, West African historian D. T. Niana wrote down Sundiata's story. This story was told to him by Djeli Mamoudou Kouyata, a griot from the nation of Guinea (Koslow 12). Kouyata's version of Sundiata's life as a child may be based on fact, but no one knows for sure if the events he described really happened.

Kouyata said that Sundiata's father was named Maghan Kon Fatta and his mother was named Sogolon. Maghan Kon Fatta was king of the Mandingo people, who lived in and near present-day Mali. Sogolon was one of his many wives. When Sundiata was born, a prediction was made that he would rise to greatness someday. However, many obstacles stood in his way.

Sundiata faced one of his biggest challenges when he was a young child. He had been born with a disability. He crawled around like a baby until he was seven years old (McKissack and McKissack 49). People teased him and called him names, but Sundiata showed incredible courage. One day Sundiata announced to his mother that he was going to walk. According to the griot Kouyata's story, "Sundiata then told a blacksmith to make him the heaviest possible iron rod, and then, with trembling legs and a sweaty brow, he proceeded to lift himself up, bending the rod into a bow in the process" ("Mali," Part I, 3). People were amazed that Sundiata had accomplished such an incredible feat.

However, Sundiata's troubles were not over. Kouyata tells that Sundiata and his mother were in danger after Maghan Kon Fatta died. Sundiata's half-brother had become the king of Kangaba, and he thought that Sundiata would be a threat to him. To escape certain death, Sundiata and his mother went into exile. (continued)

Ideas The title suggests the paper's theme. The central idea is clearly expressed in the introduction.

Word Choice Special terms are defined. Carefully chosen words show that the truth of the story is not certain.

Sentence Fluency A variety of sentence lengths and structures helps the writing flow smoothly.

Ideas Parenthetical citations (using MLA style) give credit to the source of ideas.

Conventions Writing is free of errors in spelling, grammar, usage, and mechanics.

Organization

Information is organized in chronological order.

Organization The conclusion sums up the information and ties the ending to the beginning.

Voice The writer sounds curious and fascinated about the topic.

Presentation Like every good research paper, this one ends with a properly formatted list of works cited. There's an entry for every work used as a source of information. Remember to put your works-cited list on a separate sheet of paper.

The story goes that over the next few years, Sundiata grew stronger and wiser. He became an excellent hunter and warrior. By the time he was fifteen years old, Sundiata had fought his first major battle. His heroism and leadership in battle caught the attention of Mansa Tankura, king of Mema. When Sundiata was eighteen years old, he became an adviser to this king. Kouyata describes the teenage Sundiata this way: "He was a tall young man with a fat neck and a powerful chest. Nobody could bend his bow. Everyone bowed before him and he was greatly loved" (Koslow 14).

Sundiata would grow up to be the founder and first king of the empire of Mali. He would be known by such titles as "Lord Lion," "Lion of Mali," and "Father of the Bright Country" (Koslow 12). These are facts about Sundiata's adult life. However, the legends about his early life are more interesting than the facts. As a young boy, did Sundiata really overcome a disability and miraculously learn to walk? As a teenager, did Sundiata really become a military hero and a royal adviser? The answers to these questions remain a mystery.

Works Cited

- Koslow, Philip. *Mali: Crossroads of Africa*. New York: Chelsea, 1995.
 "Mali: Africa's Empire of Empires." *Kennedy Center African Odyssey Interactive*. John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. 2 Nov. 2000 <<http://artsed.kennedycenter.org/aoi/events/theater/empire.html>>.
- McKissack, Patricia, and Fredrick McKissack. *The Royal Kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhay*. New York: Holt, 1994.
- "Sundiata Keita." *Encyclopedia of World Biography*. Detroit: Gale Research, 1998.