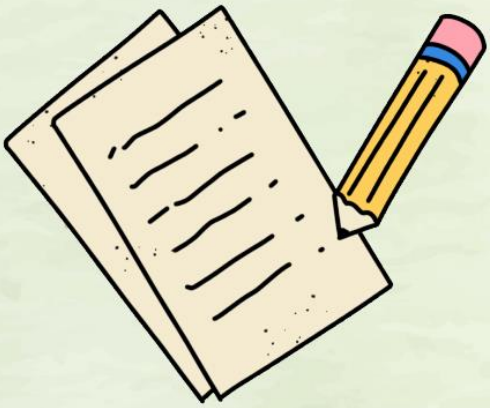
Microsoft Word

for Creative Thesis Writers

Cole Matinzi



Colophon

Microsoft Word for Creative Thesis Writers was printed at W.E.B. Du Bois library, with 1 copy being printed. It was drafted in Microsoft Word 2021, with graphics created in Canva. It uses the Sabon Next LT and Calibri type faces.

Microsoft Word for Creative Thesis Writers

Cole Matinzi

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Introduction

What's this about?

This manual covers the helpful tools in Microsoft Word 2021 that can be used when writing a creative writing thesis! The manual ranges from the initial stages of formatting and drafting to the final steps of exporting and printing your document. Given many students are used to working within the Google Workspace, this manual only assumes basic familiarity with Word.

Why write this manual?

I am working on a creative writing thesis myself! As I've gone along, I've managed to solve several issues I had been having, all using Word's tools. To hopefully help future writers, I decided to compile all the features/tools that I've found helpful into one space: this manual.

Using the Manual

This manual is written in the general order of how a thesis would be written. It begins with formatting, then transitions into general textual tips such as how to insert footnotes. From there it goes to editing and finishing up your document. The chapters are as follows:

- Chapter 1 – Standard Formatting in Word
- Chapter 2 – Helpful Writing Tools in Word
- Chapter 3 – Revising in Word
- Chapter 4 – Finalizing your Thesis in Word

However, not everyone needs help with *all* these steps in the writing process. The manual is written so you can jump around to different modules and chapters!

Chapter 1

Standard Formatting in Word

1.1 - Formatting the Body of your Thesis
1.2 - Formatting your Preface
1.3 - Formatting your Abstract

1.1 – Formatting the Body of your Thesis

The body of the creative writing thesis (the main content) uses standard MLA format. And while Word defaults to some of the necessary settings (margins), it is still important to know how to access the formatting tools to ensure everything is correct.

Change the Spacing

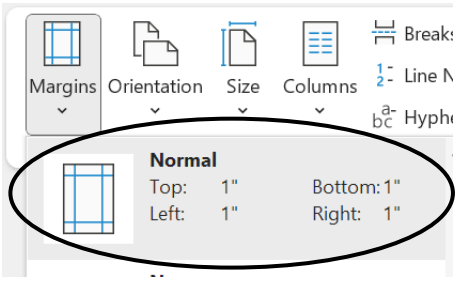
1. Click the **Home** tab.
2. Click **Line and Paragraph Spacing** in the **Paragraph** group and select your spacing.

Note: **2.0** spacing is required for the body of your thesis.

Change the Margins

1. Click the **Layout** tab.
2. Click the **Margins** button and select your margin size.

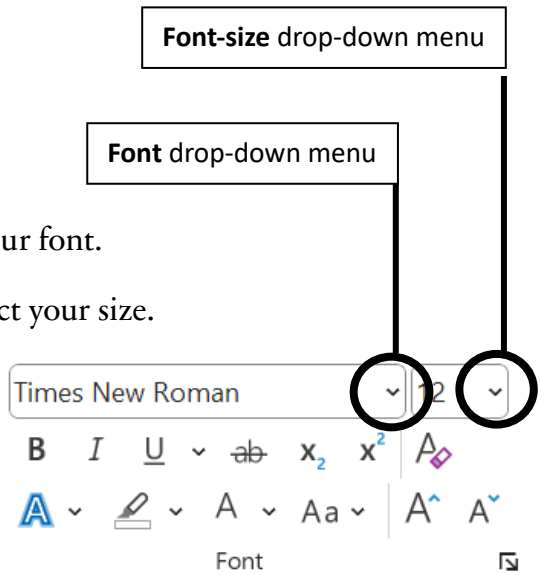
Note: The **Normal** option is required for your thesis. You can also add your own margins by clicking **Custom Margins** at the bottom of the **Margins** drop-down menu.



Change the Font Type or Size

1. Click the **Home** tab.
2. Click the **Font** drop-down menu and select your font.
3. Click the **Font-size** drop-down menu and select your size.

Note: Times New Roman and 12 size font is required for your thesis.



1.2 – Formatting your Preface

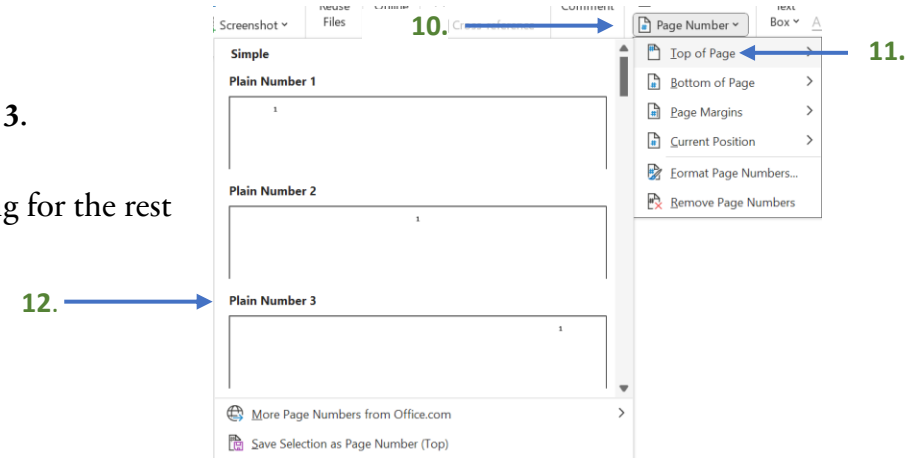
The preface is a 10-page prose document which precedes your thesis that is an overview of your experience as a writer. It contains slight variations in formatting on the title page, but otherwise uses the same formatting as the body of your thesis.

1. Navigate to the first page of your document (it should be blank).
2. Click on above **Paragraph** in the ribbon.
3. Select **1.15** from the drop-down menu.
4. Type the following content into your document, beginning from the first line on the page:

Your Name
Instructors Name
Class Name
Date Due

5. Click on in the **Paragraph** group.
6. Select **2.0** from the drop-down menu.
7. Press **Enter** to go to the line below the "Date Due" line.
8. Click **Center** in the **Paragraph** group, and then type your title.
9. Click the **Insert** tab.
10. Click **Page Number** above **Header & Footer** in the ribbon.
11. Click **Top of Page.**
12. Click **Plain Number 3**.

Note: Keep the 2.0 spacing for the rest of the document.



1.3 – Formatting your Abstract

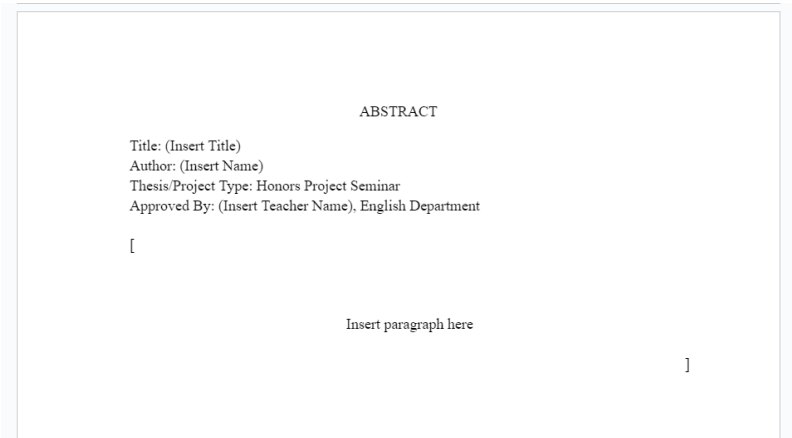
The Creative Writing Thesis requires an "Abstract" page that precedes the preface. The abstract briefly contextualizes the thesis and provides information such as the author and title. It also requires you to use different formatting from the main body of your thesis.

1. Navigate to the second page of your new document (it should be blank).
2. Click **Line and Paragraph Spacing** in the **Paragraph** group.
3. Select **1.15** from the drop-down menu.
4. Type "ABSTRACT" in all capital letters on the first line of a new page.
5. Select this text and click **Center** in the **Paragraph** group.
6. Press **Enter** to go to a new line.
7. Type the following, creating a new line for each category and filling in the blanks with the information that corresponds to your thesis:

Title: (Insert Title)
Author: (Insert Name)
Thesis/Project Type: Honors Project Seminar
Approved By: (Insert Teacher Name), English Department

8. Press **Enter** twice to skip a line.
9. Write a brief paragraph outlining the length, contents, and meaning of your thesis.

The final Abstract should look as such:


ABSTRACT

Title: (Insert Title)
Author: (Insert Name)
Thesis/Project Type: Honors Project Seminar
Approved By: (Insert Teacher Name), English Department

[

Insert paragraph here

]

Chapter 2

Helpful Writing Tools in Word

2.1 - Inserting Footnotes

2.2 - Inserting Endnotes

2.3 - Using Word's Watermark Tool

2.4 - Using the Word Count Tool

2.1 – Inserting Footnotes

Footnotes are pieces of information in the footer that contextualize marked text from the page. Footnotes are commonly used in essays and research papers to cite information; however, they can be useful for creative writers too! Footnotes allow you to fit in details or background information that may otherwise clutter the text.

1. Click to the right of a piece of text you want to add a footnote to.
2. Click the **References** tab.
3. Click **Insert Footnote** in the **Footnotes** group.

   A superscript "1" appears where you had your cursor.

   Example[1]

4. Scroll to the footer.

   A footnote (numbered 1) appears in the footer, which you can type into.

   [1]

5. Click next to any other piece of text.
6. Hold down **Alt** + **Ctrl** + **F**

   This inserts a footer without needing to navigate to the References tab!

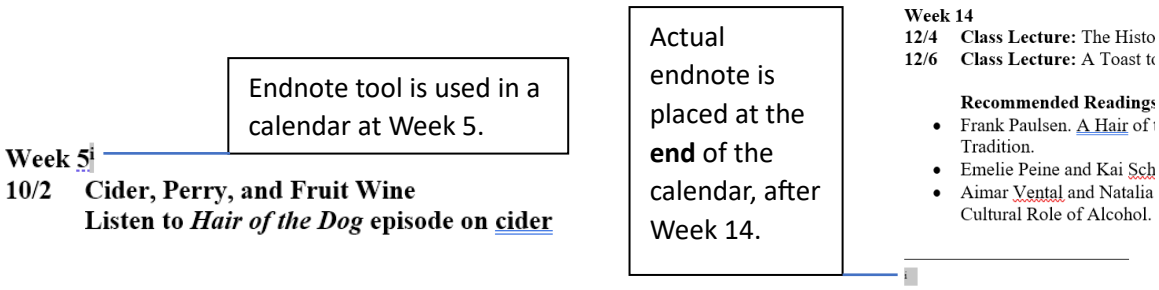
Note: As you add more footnotes, the footer expands. However, be sure that the information in your footnotes is relevant and important!

2.2 – Inserting Endnotes

Endnotes behave very similarly to footnotes. However, as their name implies, they are placed at the *end* of a chapter, section, or book. For individuals who find their footers getting overrun by footnotes, endnotes may be a better option.

1. Click to the right of a piece of text you want to add an endnote to.
2. Click the **References** tab.
3. Click **Insert Endnote** in the **Footnotes** group.

   The note is placed at the end of the chapter or section (example shown below).



4. Click next to another piece of text.
5. Hold down **Alt** + **Ctrl** + **D**

   This inserts an endnote without needing to navigate to the References tab!

2.3 – Using Word's Watermark Tool

Throughout the year thesis writers are expected to submit drafts of their work. It is important that it is clear you are submitting a draft, as you do not want your early submissions confused with your final work! This can be accomplished by using the **Watermark** tool to add text to the background of your document.

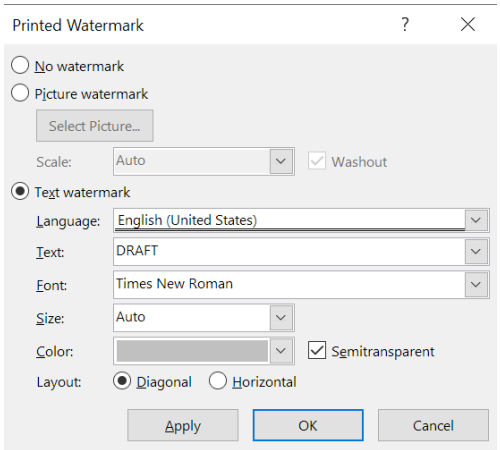
1. Click the **Design** tab.
2. Click the

button in the **Proofing** group.

   The following menu appears.

3. Click **Custom Watermark** at the bottom of the menu.

   The following menu appears.



4. Click the **Text watermark** button and then enter the watermark of your choosing into the **Text** box.

   Clicking **Horizontal** causes the watermark to appear horizontally across the page, while **Diagonal** will cause it to stretch from the bottom left to the top right of the page.

5. Click **OK**

   A faint watermark now appears on your document.

Having read through this work I would argue that this does belong in the journal. There are a number of things that work well here but what is at the forefront of this piece is the descriptions. Immediately we are given a wide variety of such to start off this piece, all the way from the precise setting to what exactly prompted Sal's eyes to be "sluggishly broken open." Initially, the prospect of these descriptions continuing throughout the piece was worrying, as it felt as if it would overwhelm the actual narrative. However, the author manages to balance it all so well that they continue to breathe life into the piece. We are given all these interesting details, but they are broken up with injections of slight humor and relatability such as "that morning stretch of rejuvenation" and "mix the two outfits-call it good." It makes the piece intriguing and more enjoyable.

The author also makes every single image in this piece clear to the reader, with the idea of Sal struggling to pour his coffee and jumping into his car the one that resonated with me most. There are never any issues trying to figure out what is happening in the entire work, which is difficult to pull off at any length.

The producer and his dialogue that we get here is also quite impressive. This is particularly because the author does not need to stop to give us a breakdown of Sal's boss, the demeanor we can expect has already been conveyed throughout the story with Sal's panic. While reading through the producer's "rant" I read it automatically in the tone of an enraged Hollywood producer, and every piece of that paragraph felt real. The dialogue is realistic, the tone is clear, and it fits perfectly into the piece.

Finally, the ending only furthered my belief that this piece belongs in the journal. It is abrupt, and quick, just as Sal's actual death was. It also highlights the duality of Hollywood, with the PR style movie dedication being used to cover up much darker circumstances. Of course, the statement on people's relationships with their jobs is important as well and adds even more power to this ending.

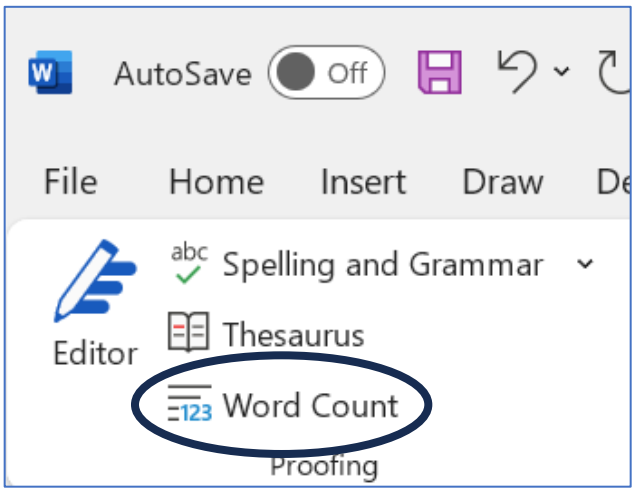
Overall, I was extremely impressed by this piece from start to finish. And if we move beyond literary analysis, I think the biggest reason it belongs in this journal is that it is fun to read. It is something you want to read again and again, and as a result I would absolutely support this piece came up during a meeting.

There was no hope for him this time: it was the third stroke. Night after night I had passed the house (it was vacation time) and studied the lighted square of window: and night after night I had found it lighted in the same way, faintly and evenly. If he was

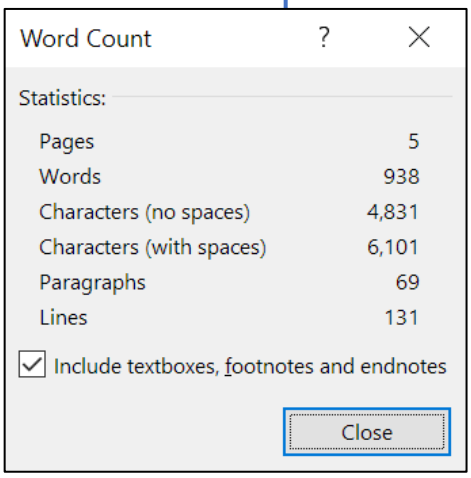
2.4 – Using the Word Count Tool

The Word Count tool displays far more than just word totals; it also includes helpful information such as paragraph and character counts. It is very useful for ensuring you're in line with length requirements.

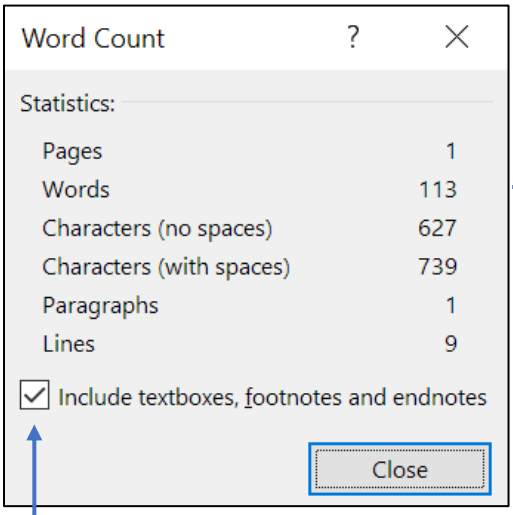
1. Click the **Review** tab at the top of the screen.
2. Click the **Word Count** button.



The **Word Count** tool



3. Click **Close**.
4. To find the word count of a selected space, select any amount of text.
5. Click on the **Word Count** button.



The Word Count now displays the word count for **only** the selected text.

Unchecking this box removes any content in textboxes, footnotes, or endnotes from the Statistics.

Chapter 3

Revising in Word

3.1 - Using Word's Editor Tool

3.2 - Using Word's Thesaurus Tool

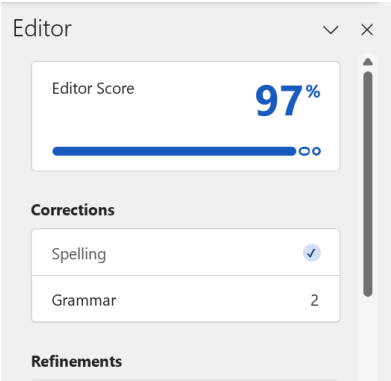
3.3 - Using Word's Read Aloud Tool

3.4 - Revising with the Reviewing View

3.1 – Using Word's Editor Tool

Word's built-in editor tool finds errors and provides suggestions for things such as vocabulary, punctuation, and conciseness. It is a great resource for pointing out grammatical mistakes and is helpful for thesis writers since it scans the entire document in seconds.

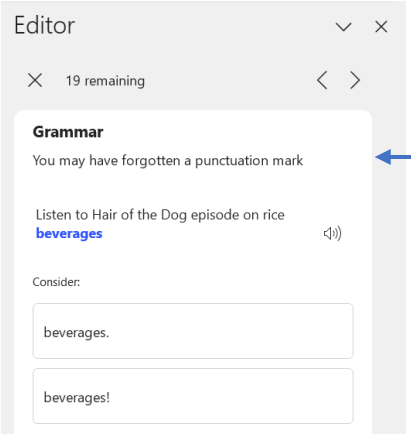
Revising with the Editor Tool



1. Click the **Review** tab.
2. Click **Editor** in the **Proofing** group.

   A menu appears on the right side of your screen.
3. Click any option without a checkmark next to it.

   A new menu appears.



Word's suggestion may not always be correct. Always double check!

   Clicking the buttons underneath **Consider** automatically changes the original text to the new, recommended text. Click **Ignore Once** at the bottom of the window to ignore a suggestion.
4. Click < > to cycle through recommendations.

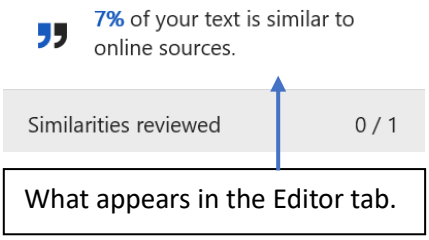
Checking for Plagiarism with the Similarity Tool

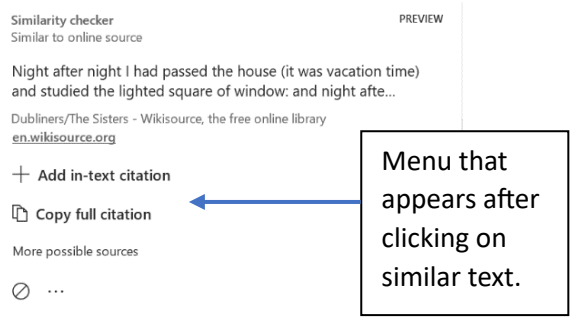
The similarity tool is an anti-plagiarism tool that says if you have material similar to online sources.

1. Click the **Review** tab.

2. Click **Editor** in the **Proofing** group.
3. Click the button underneath the **Similarity** heading.

   Allow Word to check the document (this may take a few moments). If it detects similar text, it will underline it in blue.



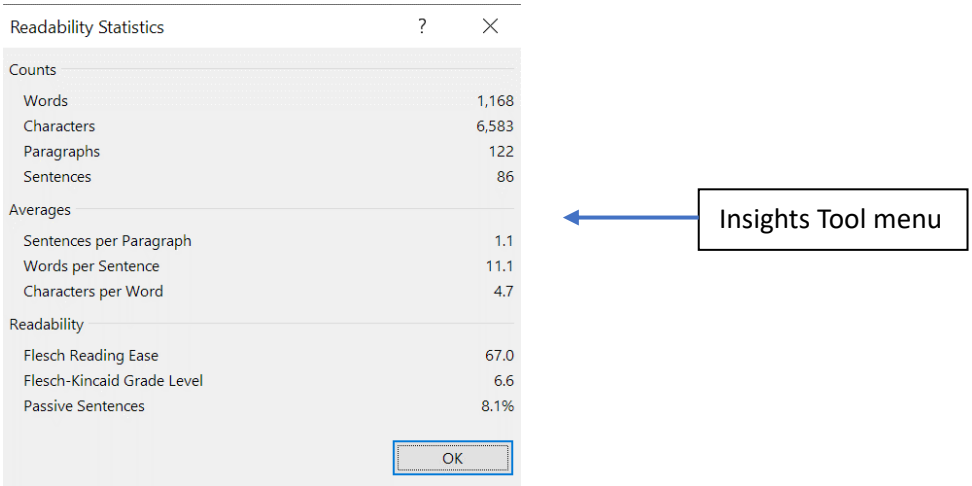


Clicking **Add in-text citation** cites the text for you by placing it in quotes and adding the source in parentheses afterwards. **Copy full citation** does just as its name states and allows you to paste the full citation into the document.

Checking Document Stats with the Insights Tool

The Insights tool is a more in-depth version of the Word Count tool. It gives you helpful information beyond the typical word count statistics. It has 3 categories: Counts (word count, character count, etc.), Averages, and Readability.

1. Click the **Review** tab.
2. Click **Editor** in the **Proofing** group.
3. Click **Document stats** underneath the **Insights** heading.



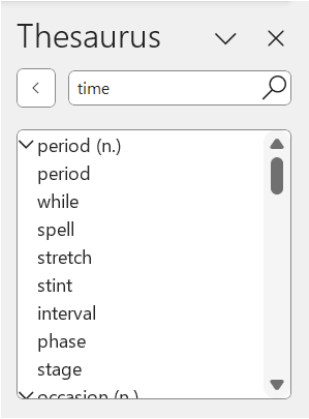
4. Click **Ok**.

3.2 – Using Word's Thesaurus Tool

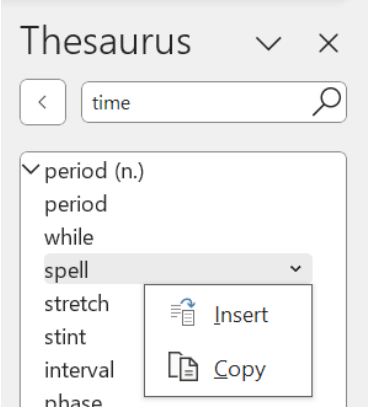
Word has a built-in thesaurus tool that helps streamline the editing process. For those who have spent time switching between the web and their writing when looking for synonyms, this tool will be especially useful.

1. Click the **Review** tab.
2. Select any word on your document.
3. Click **Thesaurus** in the **Proofing** group.

   A menu appears on the right side of the screen.



4. Hover over a word the thesaurus suggests.
5. Click the drop-down menu that appears.



   To replace the word you select, click **Insert**. Click **Copy** to copy it.

3.3 – Using Word's Read Aloud Tool

Reading your writing aloud is one of the easiest ways to identify mistakes or awkward sentences. Word makes this process even easier as the Read Aloud feature can read your writing to you!

1. Select the text you want read aloud.
2. Click the **Review** tab.
3. Click **Read Aloud** in the **Speech** group.

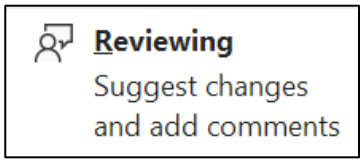
   The text will be read out loud, and this menu appears in the top right of the screen.

These buttons perform different actions. From left to right: The **Rewind** button restarts the sentence that is being read, the **Play** button can be used to stop and start the reading, the **Fast Forward** button will skip to the next line, the **Settings** button allows you to change the voice or reading speed, and the **X** closes the menu.

3.4 – Revising with the Reviewing View

Writers spend most of their time in the Editing view in Word, however there are multiple other useful views, particularly **Reviewing** which helps assist with revision. It allows you to suggest changes without editing the actual document.

1. Click **Editing** in the top right corner (above the ribbon).
2. Click **Reviewing**.



Adding to the document now appears in red text, while deleting any text turns it red and places a line through it. This stays even after you return to the Editing view.

aids ~~helps assist~~

Chapter 4

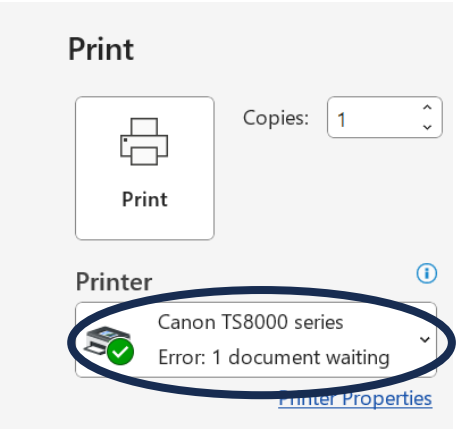
Finalizing your Thesis in Word

4.1 - Printing your Thesis
4.2 - Exporting as a PDF

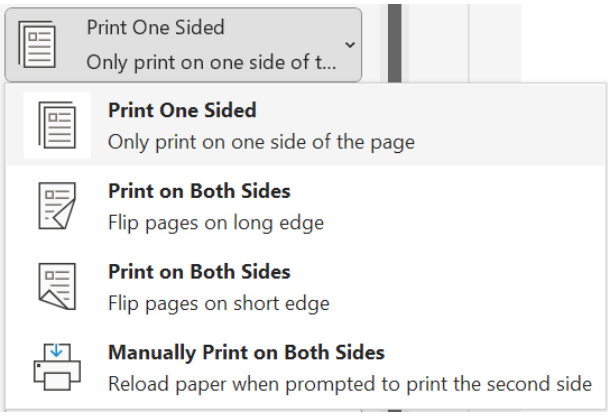
4.1 – Printing your Thesis

Word allows you to print documents without leaving the application, however, this only applies to personal printers. Instructions on how to print from a university printer can be found here: https://www.umass.edu/it/uprint

1. Click **File**.
2. Click **Print**.
3. Click the drop-down under **Printer** and ensure you have the correct printer selected (you may have to scroll to view them all).

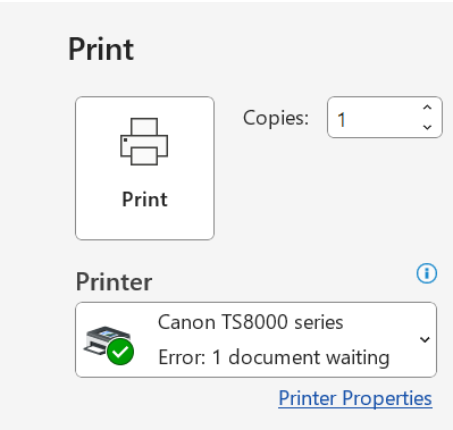


4. Click the **Print One-Sided** drop-down menu. Select the option you require.



Note: The **second option** is used for printed theses.

5. Click inside the text box next to **Copies** and type in the number of copies you need.



6. Click **Print**.

4.2 – Exporting as a PDF

You are required to convert your document into a PDF to submit it online. And this step is especially important as converting to a PDF also makes printing your thesis a more straightforward process on university printers.

1. Click **File.**
2. Click the **Export** option near the bottom of the screen.

3. Click **Create PDF/XPS**.

XPS is Word's version of PDFs, however Word will default to saving as a PDF in this case.

4. Name your file (e.g., LastnameThesis).
5. Click **Save**.

PDF's automatically save to the Downloads folder on your computer (find easily by opening Files and navigating to the This PC view).

Meet the author

Cole Matinzi

About Me

Hi! I'm Cole Matinzi, a college senior who is writing a creative honors thesis. Writing a thesis comes with its problems, so I've put as many solutions as I could inside this manual. Hopefully the things I have learned can help you!

Fun facts

- I love writing
- **I have a dog named Blaze**
- **I like hiking**

Contents

This manual explains different features of Microsoft Word that will help you during your writing process!

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