

APA-7 Essay Formatting Guide

By Arnold Strachan

Arnold's English

A Step-by-Step Guide for Formatting Essays in Microsoft Word



Arnold's English

TRANSFORM YOUR LIEE

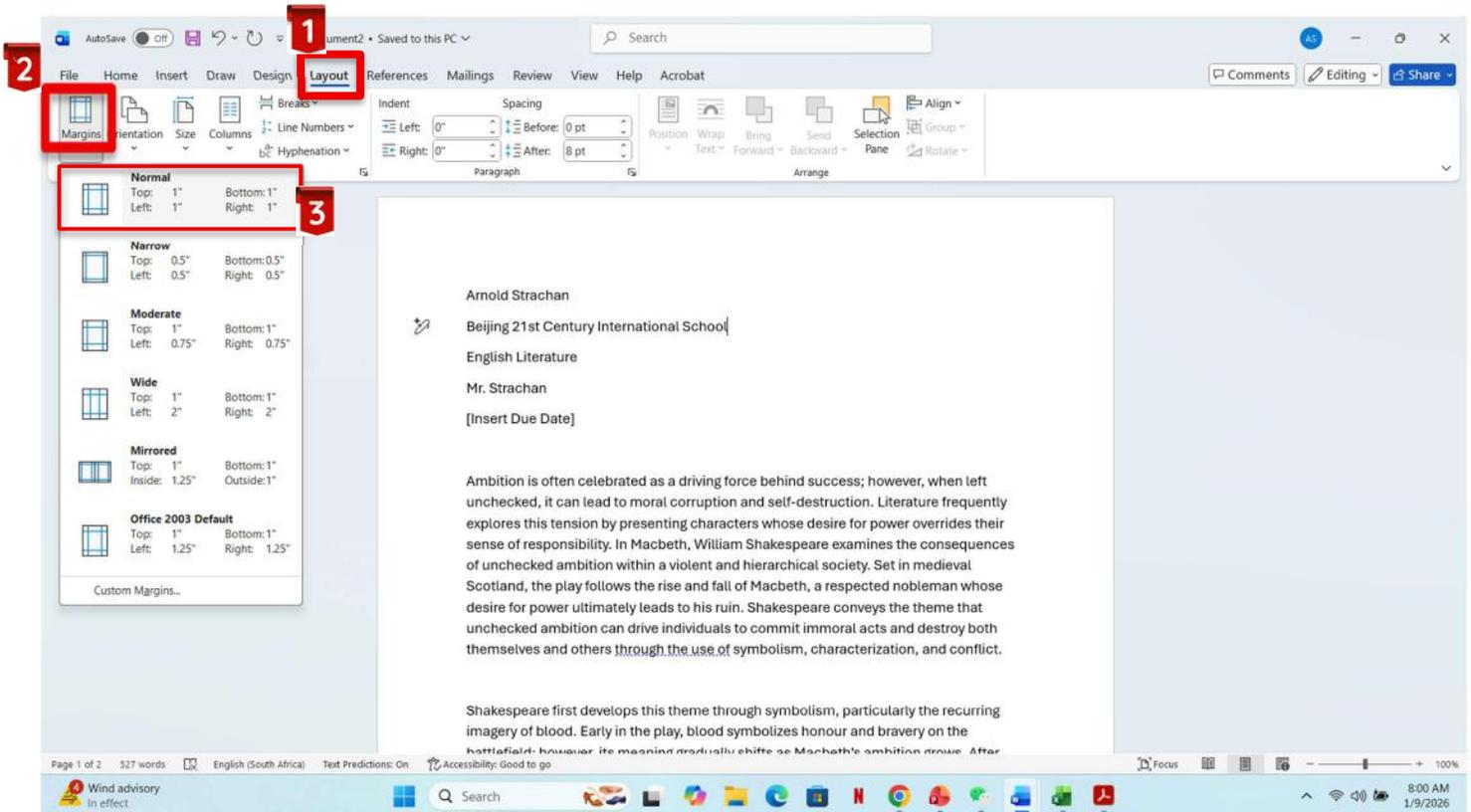
This guide shows you how to format academic essays using APA-7 style in Microsoft Word. These instructions are designed for students submitting university essays, IELTS preparation essays, or research assignments.

APA 7 Formatting Guide (Microsoft Word)

1. Page Setup – Margins

Set all margins to 1 inch (2.54 cm).

Step 1 click “Layout” → Step 2 click “Margins” → Step 3 click “Normal”



2. Font

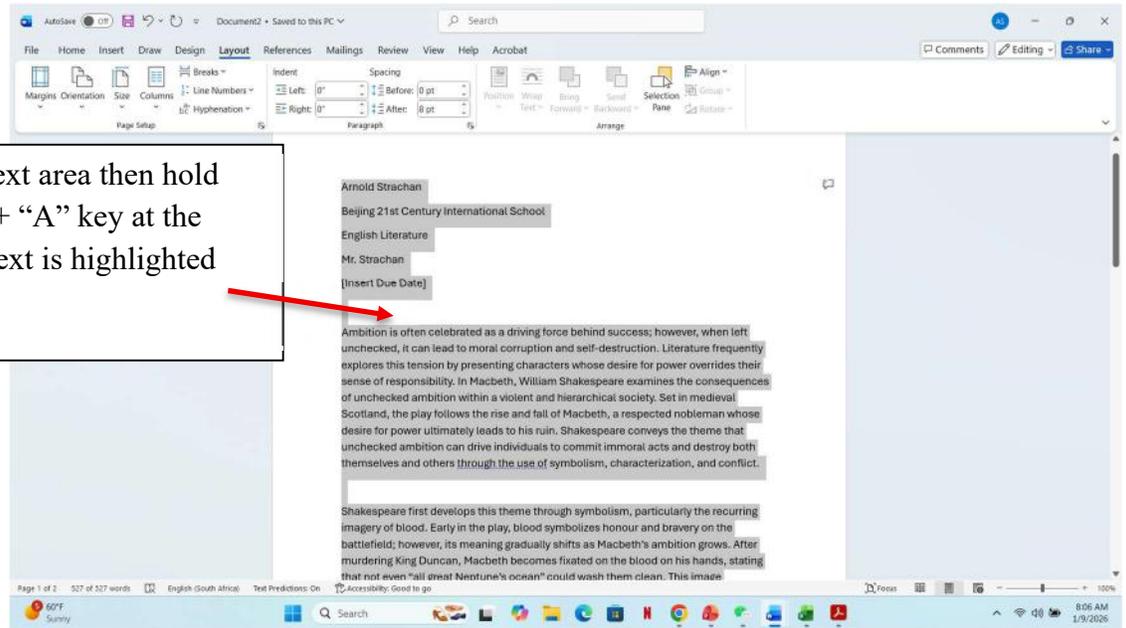
Use ONE of the following:

- Times New Roman, 12 pt (recommended)
- Arial, 11 pt
- Calibri, 11 pt

Step 1 Press Control + A to select all the text. **Step 2** click “Home” → **Step 3** click “Font” → **Step 4** click “Times new roman” → **Step 5** click “12”

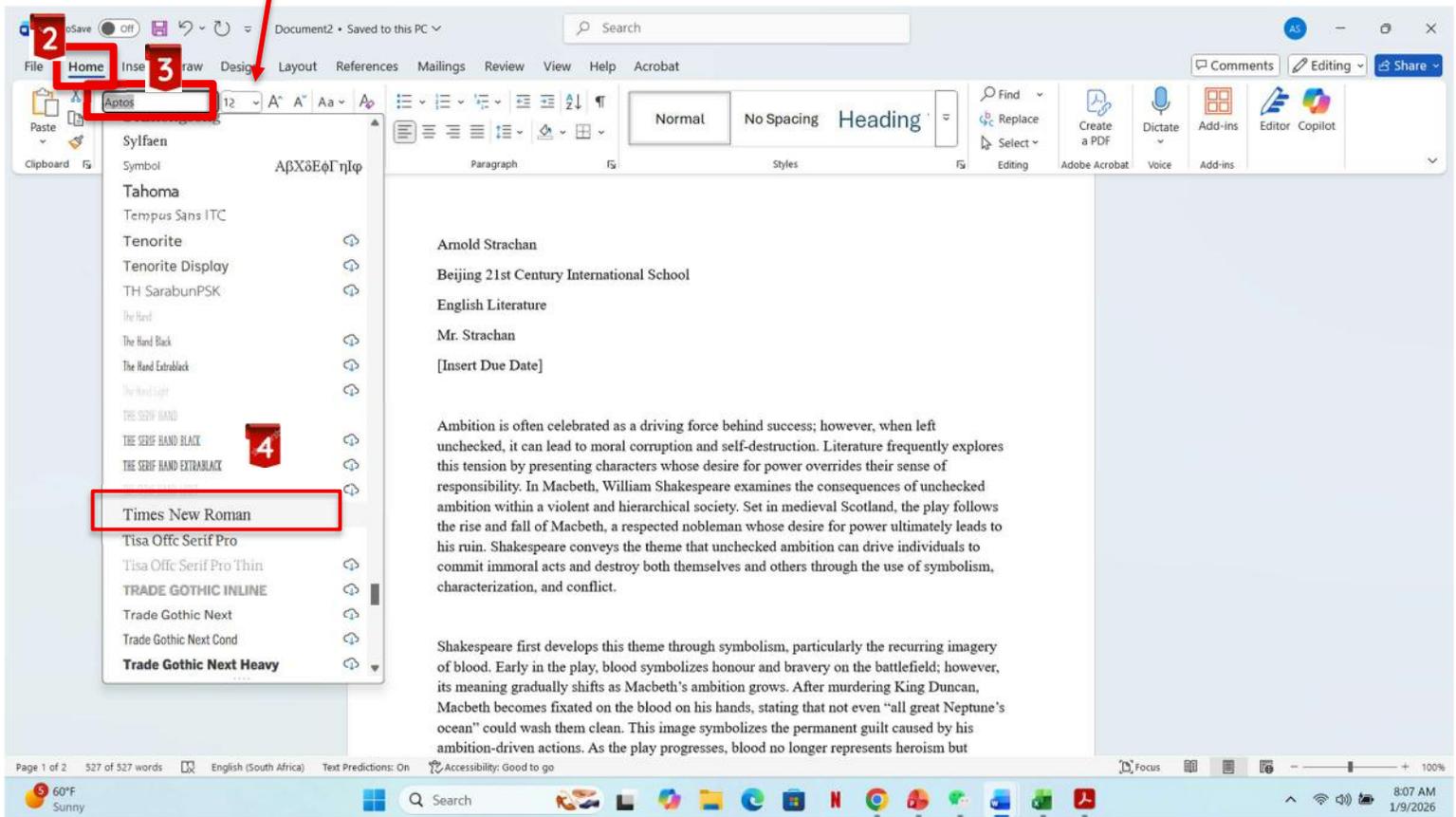
1

Step 1- click in the text area then hold down the “ctrl” key + “A” key at the same time until the text is highlighted like this.



Choose size 12

5

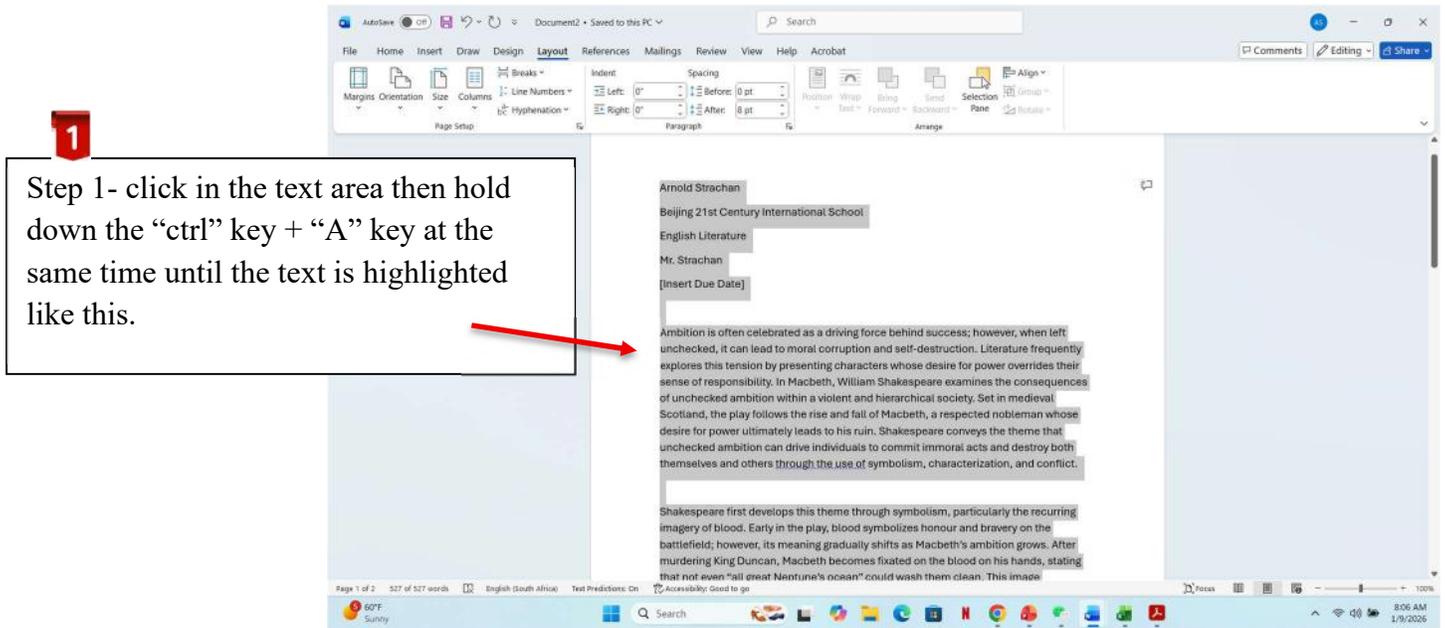


3. Line Spacing

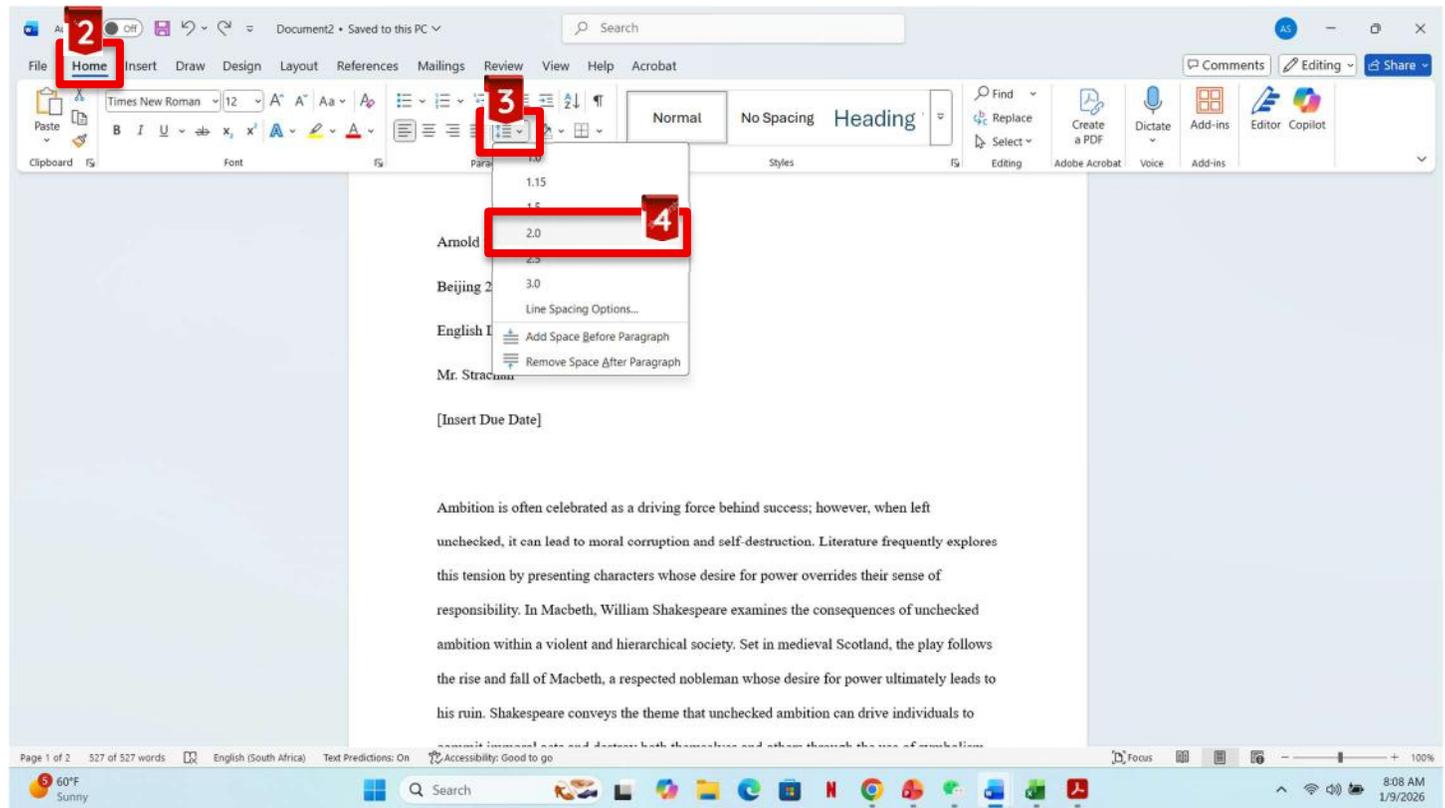
Double-space the entire document.

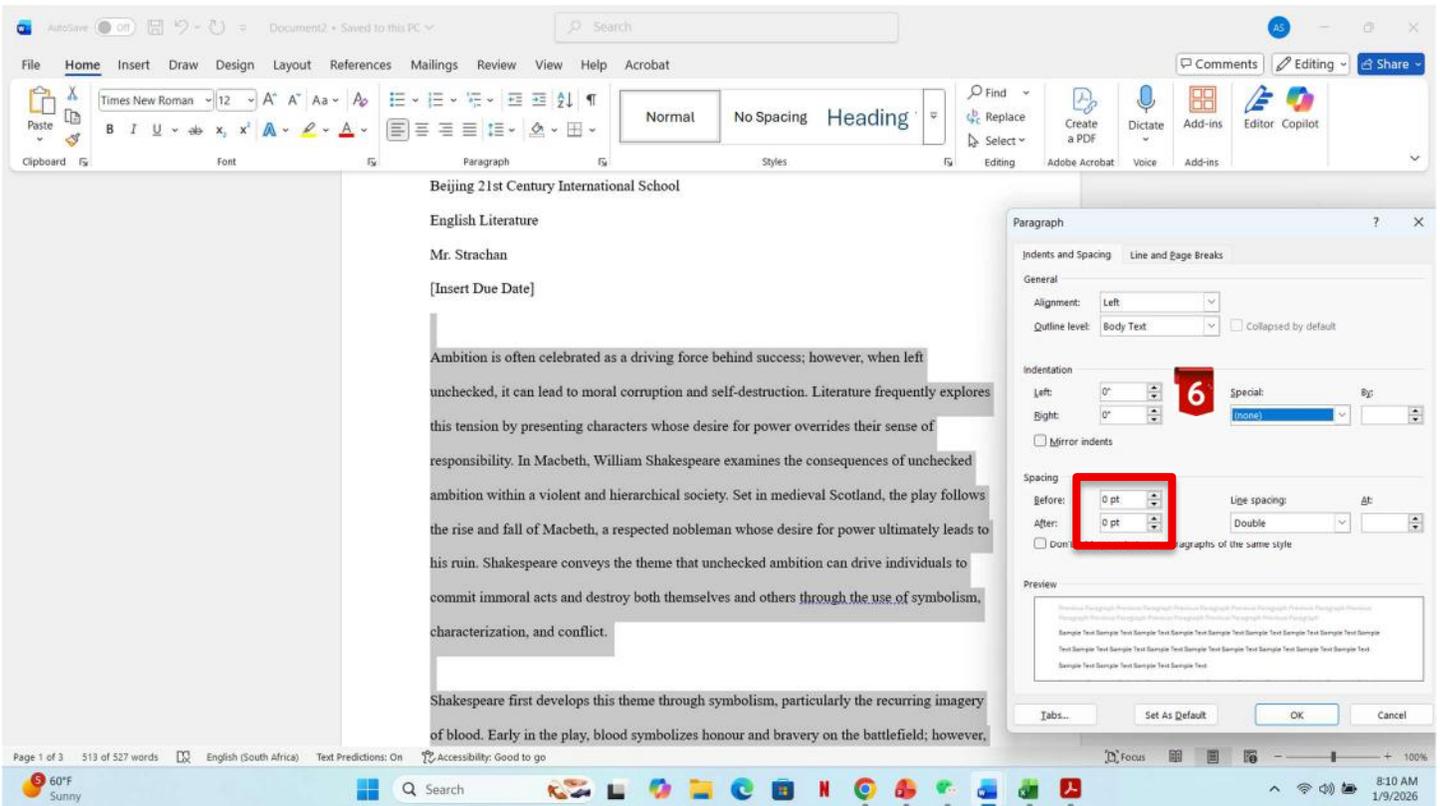
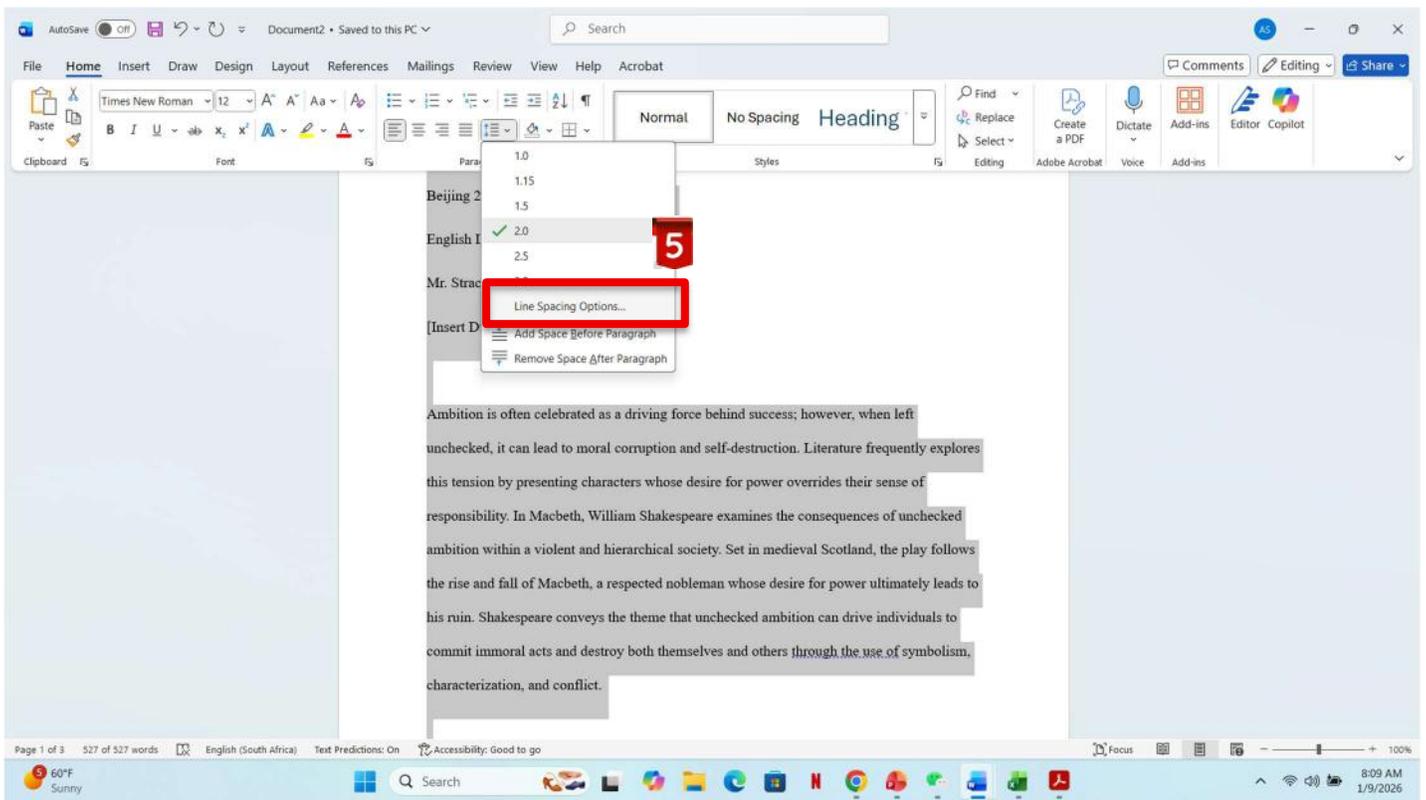
Remove extra spacing before and after paragraphs.

Step 1 Press “Ctrl” + “A” keys to select all the text. **Step 2** click “Home” → **Step 3** click “Line & Paragraph Spacing” → **Step 4** select “2.0”
Step 5 Then: “Line Spacing Options” → **Step 6** choose “Before: 0 pt | After: 0 pt”



Step 1- click in the text area then hold down the “ctrl” key + “A” key at the same time until the text is highlighted like this.

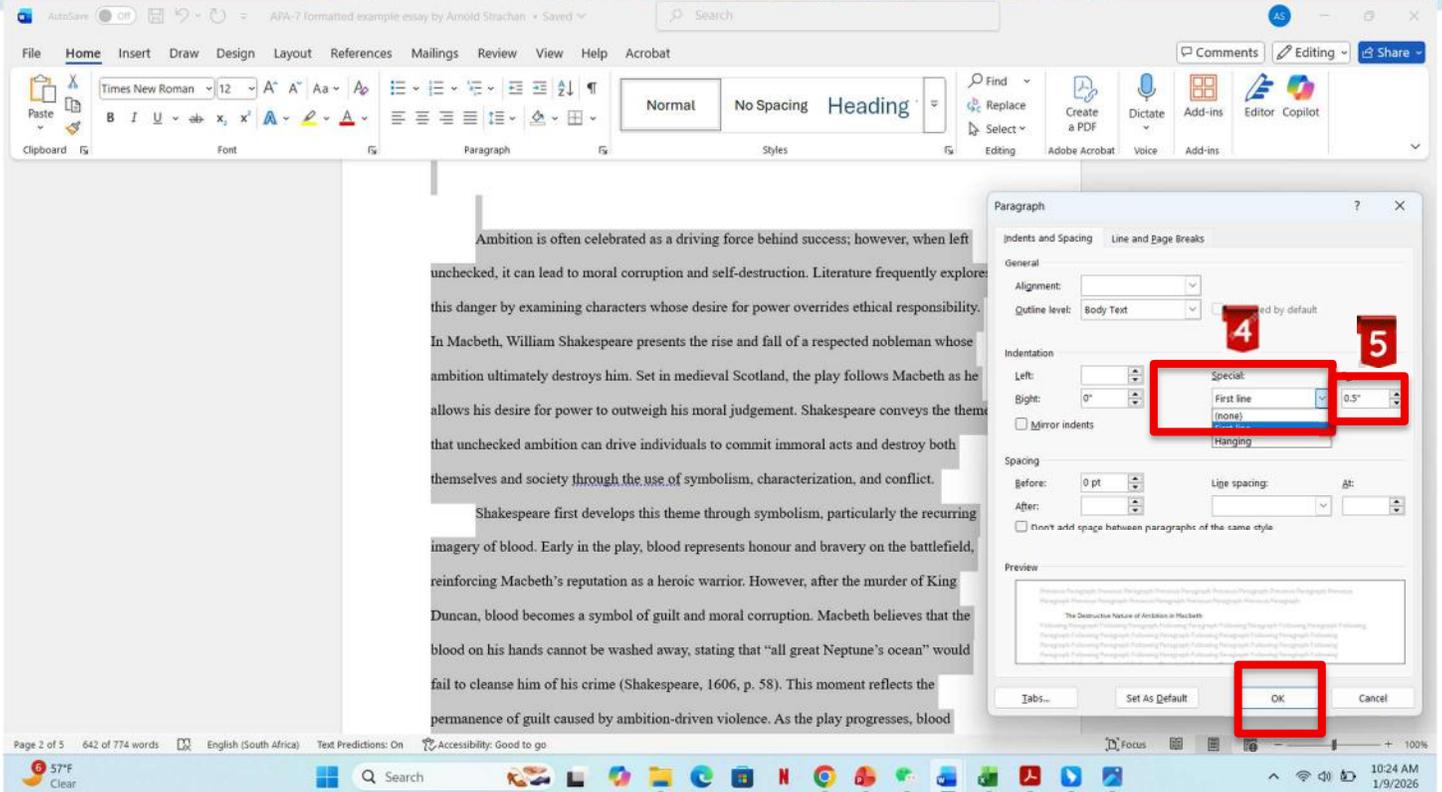
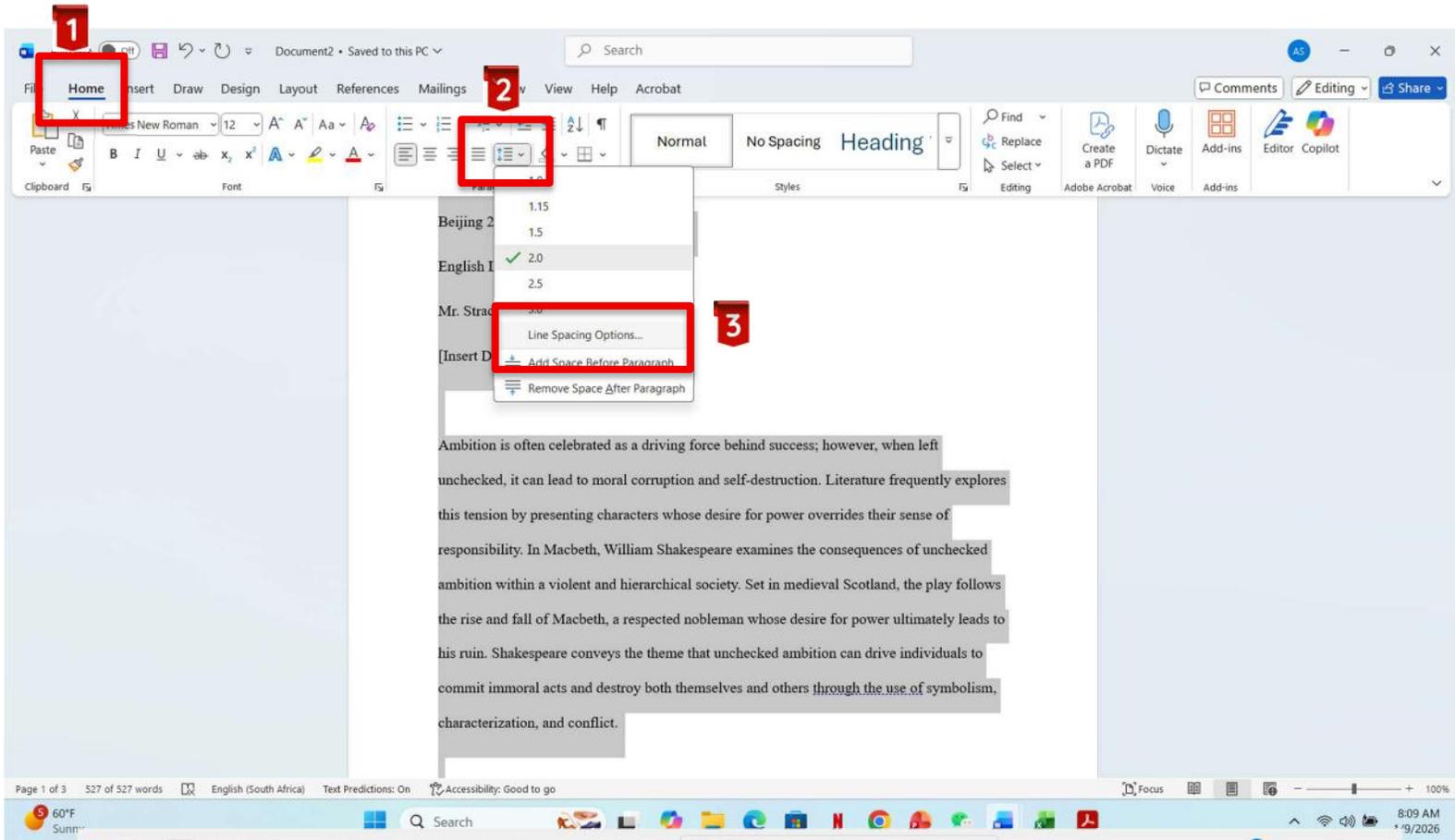




4. Paragraph Indentation

Indent the first line of each paragraph by 0.5 inch (1.27 cm).

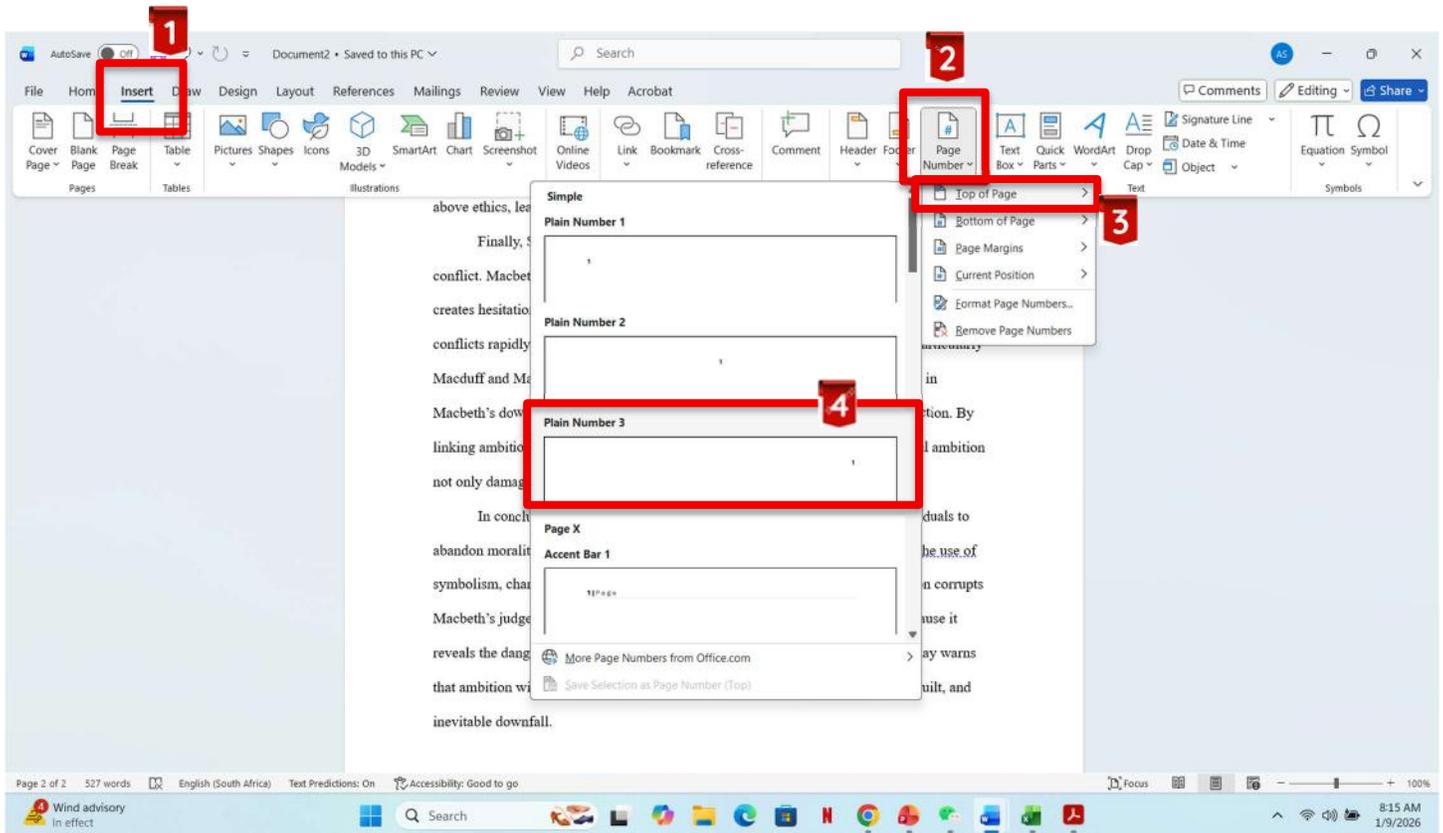
Step 1 Press “Ctrl” + “A” keys to select all the text **Step 2** click “Paragraph” → **Step 3** click “line spacing options” → **Step 4** click “First line” → **Step 5** click “0.5” → **Step 6** delete any spaces between paragraphs.



5. Page Numbers

Insert page numbers in the top right corner, starting on page 1.

Step 1 click “Insert” → **Step 2** click “Page Number” → **Step 3** click “Top of Page” → **Step 4** click “Plain Number 3”



6. Title Page (Student Paper)

Step 1 type the following information in this order

Essay Title (bold)

Student Name

School Name

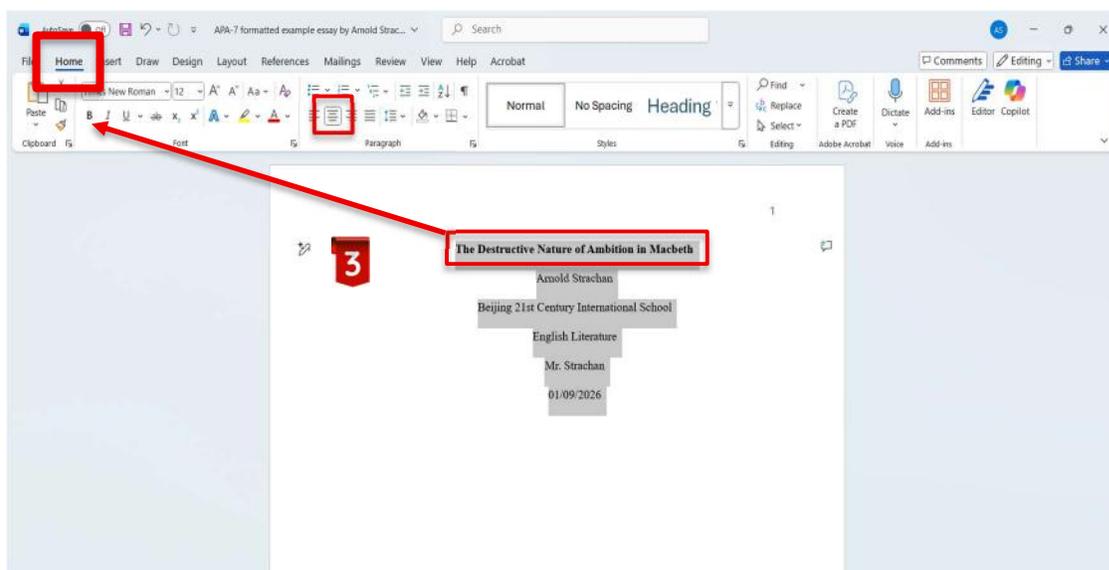
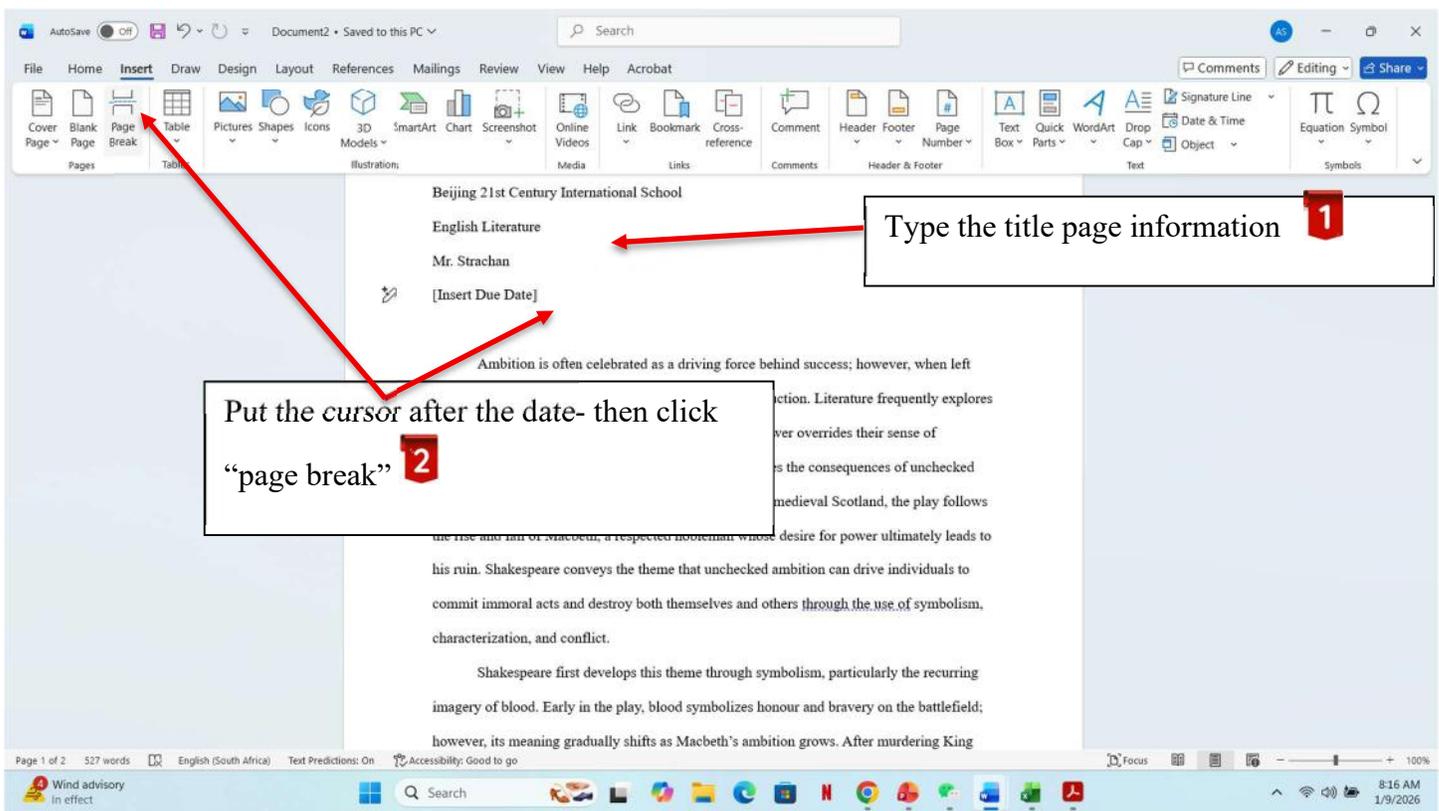
Course Name

Teacher Name

Due Date

Step 2, Insert a page break after the information

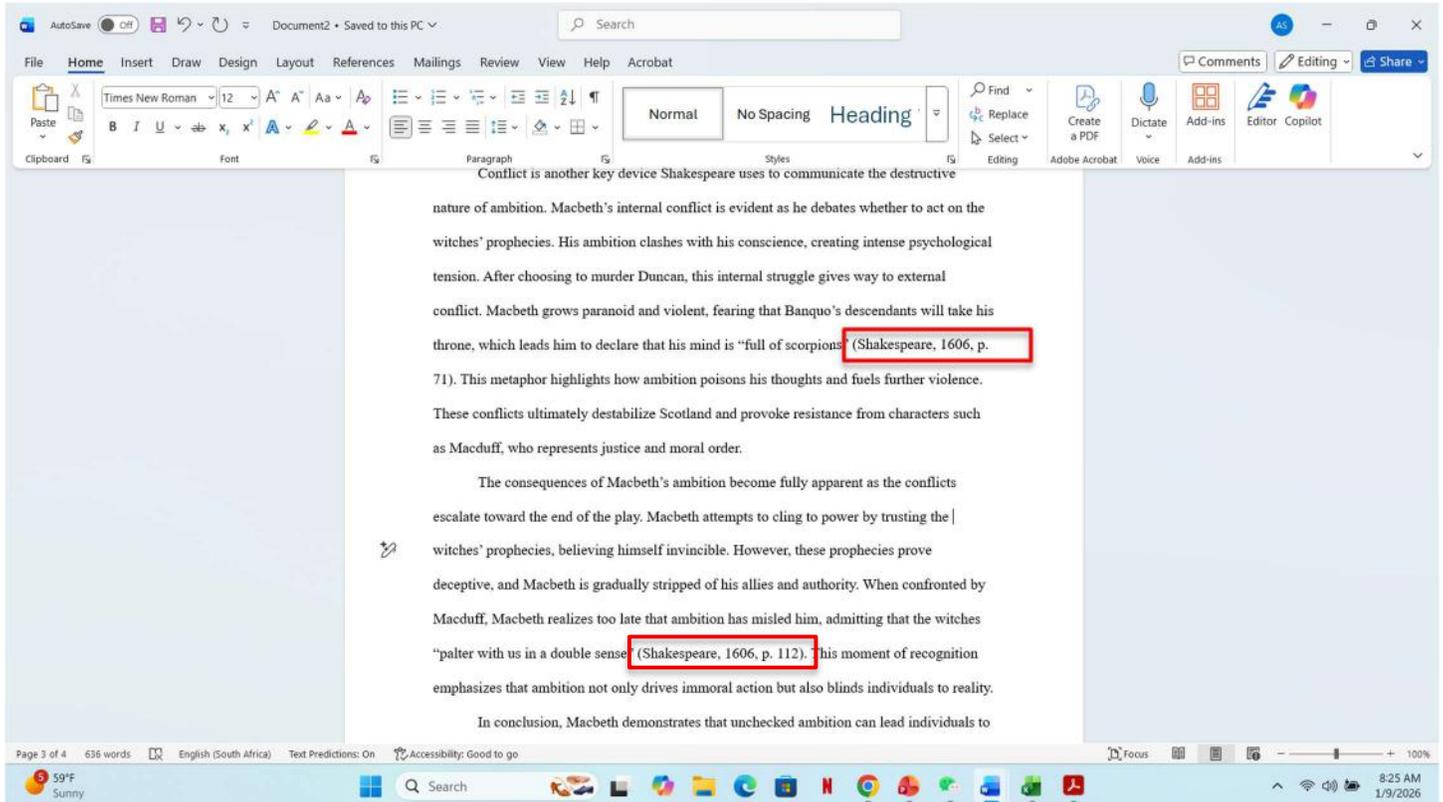
Step 3 Everything is double-spaced and centered. Title is in bold text



7. In-Text Citations (APA 7)

Example: (Golding, 1954)

For quotes: (Golding, 1954, p. 67)



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Word document with the following text:

Conflict is another key device Shakespeare uses to communicate the destructive nature of ambition. Macbeth's internal conflict is evident as he debates whether to act on the witches' prophecies. His ambition clashes with his conscience, creating intense psychological tension. After choosing to murder Duncan, this internal struggle gives way to external conflict. Macbeth grows paranoid and violent, fearing that Banquo's descendants will take his throne, which leads him to declare that his mind is "full of scorpions" (Shakespeare, 1606, p. 71). This metaphor highlights how ambition poisons his thoughts and fuels further violence. These conflicts ultimately destabilize Scotland and provoke resistance from characters such as Macduff, who represents justice and moral order.

The consequences of Macbeth's ambition become fully apparent as the conflicts escalate toward the end of the play. Macbeth attempts to cling to power by trusting the witches' prophecies, believing himself invincible. However, these prophecies prove deceptive, and Macbeth is gradually stripped of his allies and authority. When confronted by Macduff, Macbeth realizes too late that ambition has misled him, admitting that the witches "palter with us in a double sense" (Shakespeare, 1606, p. 112). This moment of recognition emphasizes that ambition not only drives immoral action but also blinds individuals to reality.

In conclusion, Macbeth demonstrates that unchecked ambition can lead individuals to

The document interface includes the Microsoft Word ribbon (File, Home, Insert, Draw, Design, Layout, References, Mailings, Review, View, Help, Acrobat), a search bar, and a taskbar at the bottom showing the system clock as 8:25 AM on 1/9/2026.

8. References Page

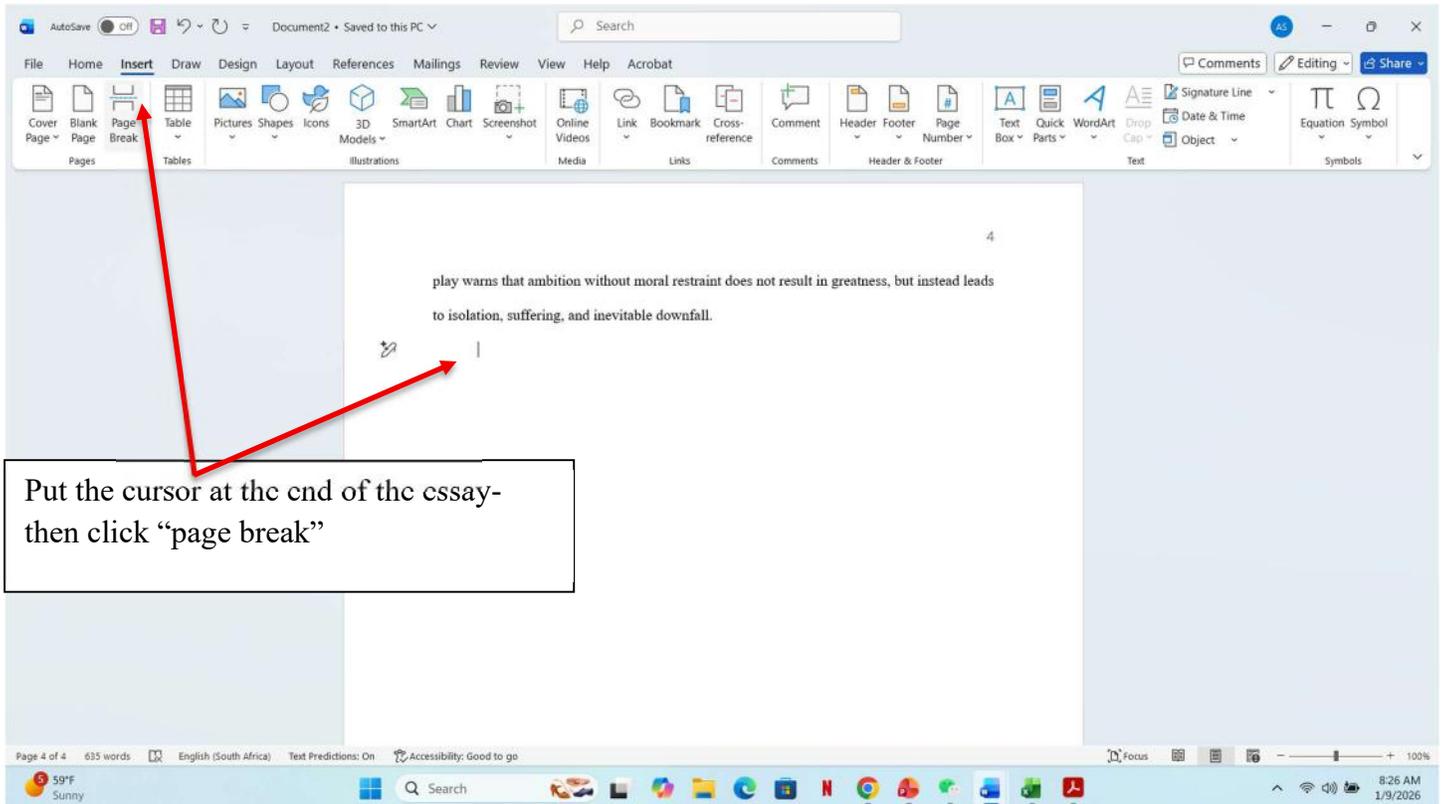
Start on a new page.

Title: References (centered, bold)

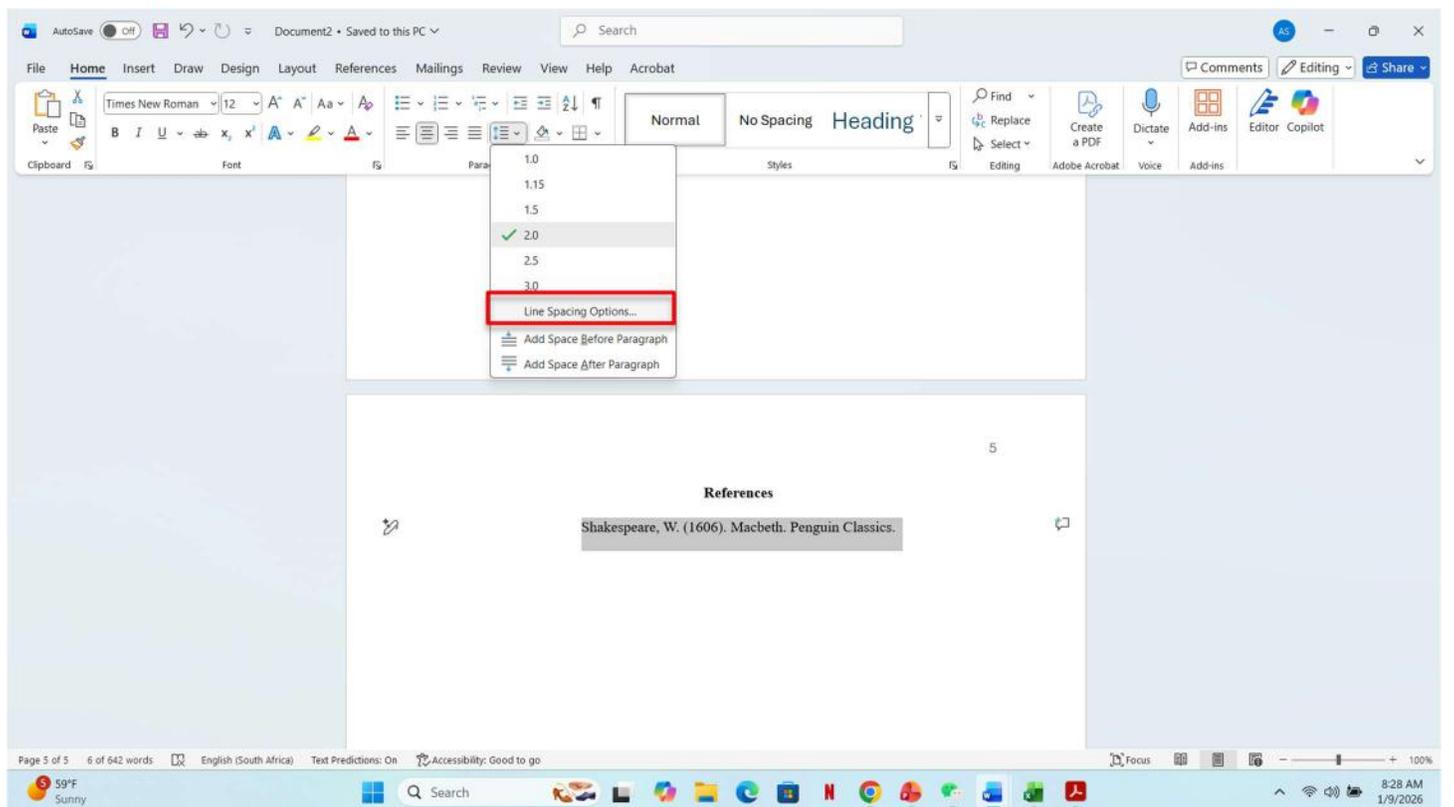
Double-spaced

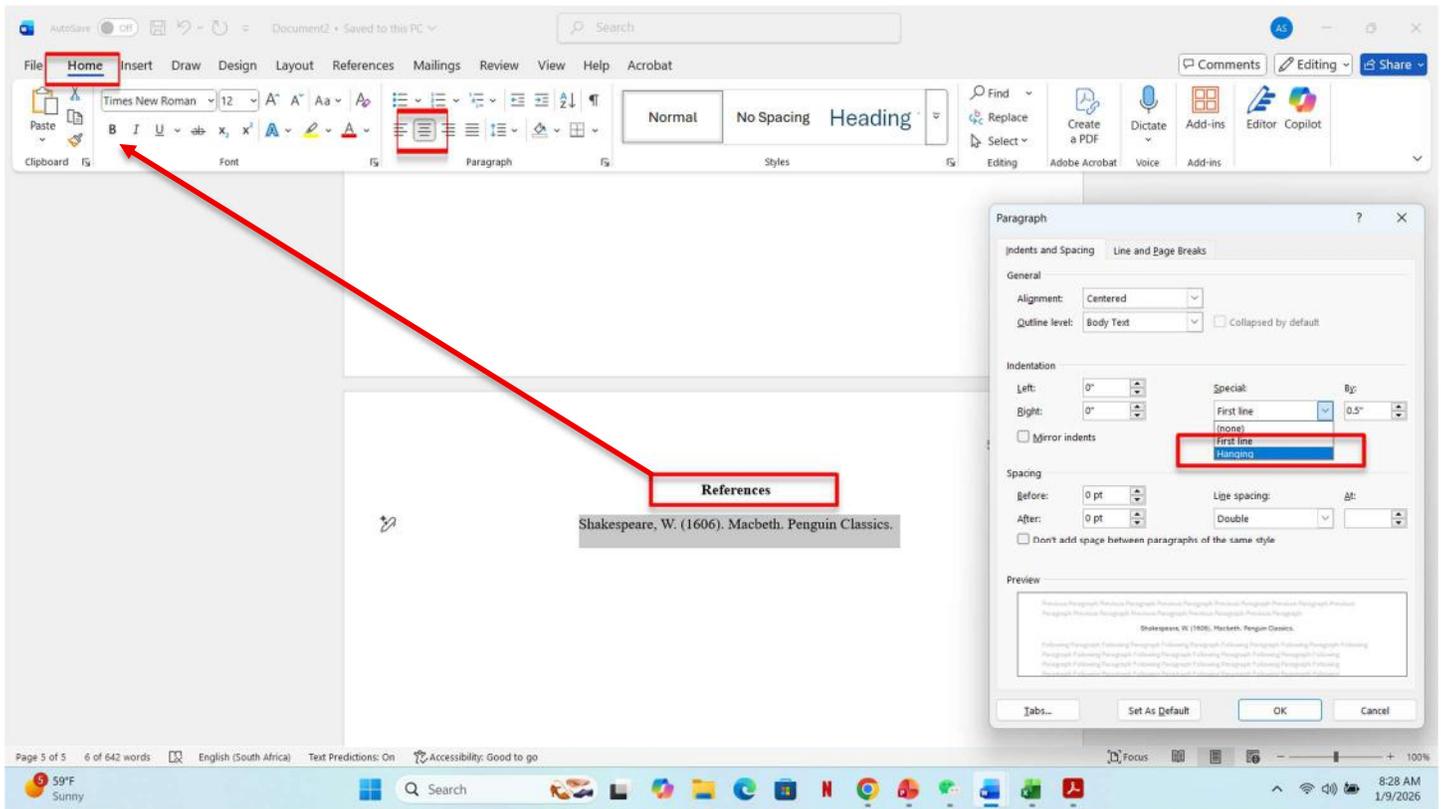
Hanging indent: 0.5 inch

Word path: Paragraph → Special → Hanging → 0.5”



Put the cursor at the end of the essay- then click “page break”





9. Example of a Correctly Formatted APA Essay

The following example shows a correctly formatted academic essay using APA-7 style, including title page, paragraph indentation, citations, and references.

The Destructive Nature of Ambition in Macbeth

Arnold Strachan

Beijing 21st Century International School

English Literature

Mr. Strachan

01/09/2026

Ambition is often celebrated as a driving force behind success; however, when left unchecked, it can lead to moral corruption and self-destruction. Literature frequently explores this danger by examining characters whose desire for power overrides ethical responsibility. In *Macbeth*, William Shakespeare presents the rise and fall of a respected nobleman whose ambition ultimately destroys him. Set in medieval Scotland, the play follows Macbeth as he allows his desire for power to outweigh his moral judgement. Shakespeare conveys the theme that unchecked ambition can drive individuals to commit immoral acts and destroy both themselves and society through the use of symbolism, characterization, and conflict.

Shakespeare first develops this theme through symbolism, particularly the recurring imagery of blood. Early in the play, blood represents honour and bravery on the battlefield, reinforcing Macbeth's reputation as a heroic warrior. However, after the murder of King Duncan, blood becomes a symbol of guilt and moral corruption. Macbeth believes that the blood on his hands cannot be washed away, stating that "all great Neptune's ocean" would fail to cleanse him of his crime (Shakespeare, 1606, p. 58). This moment reflects the permanence of guilt caused by ambition-driven violence. As the play progresses, blood imagery continues to reappear, reinforcing the idea that Macbeth's ambition has permanently stained his conscience.

Characterization further reveals how ambition corrupts Macbeth's moral identity. At the beginning of the play, Macbeth is portrayed as loyal and honourable, unwilling to act without justification. He acknowledges the seriousness of killing Duncan and recognizes the king's rightful authority. However, once he begins to imagine himself as king, his ambition overwhelms his sense of morality. Macbeth admits that he has "no spur" to justify his actions except his ambition, which he recognizes as dangerous (Shakespeare, 1606, p. 42). This self-awareness makes his moral decline more striking. As the play continues, Macbeth becomes increasingly ruthless, arranging the murder of Banquo and later Macduff's family to secure his power, demonstrating how ambition reshapes his character into that of a tyrant.

Conflict is another key device Shakespeare uses to communicate the destructive nature of ambition. Macbeth's internal conflict is evident as he debates whether to act on the witches' prophecies. His ambition

clashes with his conscience, creating intense psychological tension. After choosing to murder Duncan, this internal struggle gives way to external conflict. Macbeth grows paranoid and violent, fearing that Banquo's descendants will take his throne, which leads him to declare that his mind is "full of scorpions" (Shakespeare, 1606, p. 71). This metaphor highlights how ambition poisons his thoughts and fuels further violence. These conflicts ultimately destabilize Scotland and provoke resistance from characters such as Macduff, who represents justice and moral order.

The consequences of Macbeth's ambition become fully apparent as the conflicts escalate toward the end of the play. Macbeth attempts to cling to power by trusting the witches' prophecies, believing himself invincible. However, these prophecies prove deceptive, and Macbeth is gradually stripped of his allies and authority. When confronted by Macduff, Macbeth realizes too late that ambition has misled him, admitting that the witches "palter with us in a double sense" (Shakespeare, 1606, p. 112). This moment of recognition emphasizes that ambition not only drives immoral action but also blinds individuals to reality.

In conclusion, Macbeth demonstrates that unchecked ambition can lead individuals to abandon morality, embrace violence, and ultimately destroy themselves. Through symbolism, characterization, and conflict, Shakespeare illustrates how ambition transforms Macbeth from a respected hero into a tyrant consumed by guilt and paranoia. This theme is significant because it reveals the dangers of valuing power over ethical responsibility. Ultimately, the play warns that ambition without moral restraint does not result in greatness, but instead leads to isolation, suffering, and inevitable downfall.

References

Shakespeare, W. (1606). *Macbeth*. Penguin Classics.

Need help improving your academic writing?

Visit:

arnoldenglish.com

Free resources, essay feedback, and IELTS writing strategies.