

San Ramon Valley High School



MLA Citation Guide

From MLA Handbook 7th Ed.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own. If you take words, ideas, images, data, or information from a source and put them in your paper or presentation without citing them properly, you are guilty of plagiarism. You are still guilty of plagiarism even if you do it unintentionally. A well cited paper or presentation makes it easy for the reader to distinguish which words or information are your own, which come from other sources, and what source each quote or particular bit of information came from.

When do you need to cite?

You need to cite whenever you are using someone else's words or ideas. This includes direct quotes, summaries or paraphrases.

When in doubt you should always cite your source!

Quotations must be identical to the author's original wording, using a narrow portion of the source. Wording must match the source precisely word for word and must be attributed to the original author. See MLA Citation Guide handout for format.

Summaries are significantly shorter than the original text and involve putting the main idea(s) into your own words, including only the main point(s). Remember to still cite your source.

Paraphrase involves putting a passage from a source into your own words in the same order as presented in the original source. Paraphrase takes a somewhat broader portion of the text and condenses it slightly, and is generally shorter than the original passage. Be sure to leave out your own opinions and comments and cite your source.

Style guide

Format

- ◇ Double spaced
- ◇ 12 point font
- ◇ Times New Roman or similar font
- ◇ 1 inch margins (go to “file” → “page setup”)
- ◇ Insert page numbers (“insert” → “page numbers”)

Italics

Italicize the names of *books, plays, periodicals (newspapers, magazines, and journals), web sites, online databases, films, television and radio broadcasts, works of visual art.*

Quotation Marks

Use quotation marks for the titles of “articles,” “essays,” “short stories,” “poems,” “chapters of books,” “pages in web sites,” “individual episodes of tv and radio broadcasts,” and “songs.”

Style

- ◇ Title
 - Snappy and interesting
 - Same format as the rest of the text—NO underline.
- ◇ Use third person unless otherwise directed
- ◇ Tense
 - When referring to literature → use present tense
 - Anything else → stay consistent
- ◇ Avoid contractions

Parenthetical Citation

Citing Sources

Use **Parenthetical Citations** throughout the text of your paper to acknowledge the source of the information gathered. Be sure each quotation and bit of information is cited parenthetically, and that each parenthetical citation refers clearly to an entry in your Works Cited page.

Examples

Author

“The animals were not mistreated” (Hermens 43).

Some critics have said that Ellison “created stories about the power of the imagination” (Tong 22).

No Author—Electronic Source

In fresco painting, “the pigments are completely fused with a damp plaster ground to become an integral part of the wall surface” (“Fresco Painting”).

Beauvoir “sees Marxists as believing in subjectivity as much as existentialists do” (Historychannel.com).

Other Issues

Long Quotes— Anything longer than three lines gets blocked out (double indented) one tab. For an example— see the back of this handout.

Question/exclamation marks—go inside the quote

“Do we have to go?” (Pike 54).

Ellipses—use to cut out part of the text. NOTE: Do not start or end a quote with ellipses.

“The natives were getting restless. . . as the drum beats rose higher” (Schmitz 63).

Works Cited / Works Consulted

Works Cited

- All citations are done on a separate page titled either “Works Cited” or “Works Consulted.”
Works Cited – texts you actually quote, summarize, or paraphrase
Works Consulted – any text you look at in the course of your research
- Entries should be alphabetical and double spaced.
- If your entry is longer than a single line, indent every subsequent line.
- Do not number the entries
- When in doubt – *look it up in the MLA Handbook*
- Good websites for reference are: *owl.english.purdue.edu*, *easybib.com*, and *citationmachine.net*

Book

Basic entry includes: 1) author, 2) title, 3) publication information, and 4) medium of publication

Example—One author:

Finegan, Katie. *Reading for Success*. Tucson: U of Arizona P. 2006. Print.

Example—Editor:

Johnson, Steve, ed. *Bike Riding for Beginners*. New York: Dell, 2008. Print.

Magazine/Newspaper/Periodical

Basic entry includes: 1) author, 2) article title, 3) publication information, and 4) medium of publication

Example:

Albinson, Matt. “Ultimate Frisbee.” *Sports Illustrated* 6. June 2005: 17-19. Print

Electronic Sources

Basic entry includes: 1) author, 2) article title, 3) website title, 4) publisher information, 5) medium of publication, and 4) date of access

- *MLA requires the use of special abbreviations to indicate information is not available. Use n.p. to indicate that neither a publisher nor a sponsor name has been provided. Use n.d. when the Web page does not provide a publication date.*

- *The new guidelines do not require you to post the URL of a site*

Example – Work from a Web Site:

“Important Dates in the Women’s Rights Movement.” *History Channel.com*. History Channel. 2003. Web. 13 March 2003.

“How to Make Vegetarian Chili.” *eHow.com*. eHow, n.d. Web. 24 Feb. 2009.

Example—Online Image

Neil, Tyson. *French Horn Close Up*. Flickr. 02 Dec 2005. Web. 09 Feb 2008.

Encyclopedia or Dictionary

Don’t include the editor. When the material is alphabetical, then there is no need for volume or page numbers.

Example – No author:

“Noon.” *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. Print

Sample Parenthetical Citation

Quotation

The fox was "peculiarly interested in the rotting log," and wanted what was inside (Pinkerton 115).
or

According to ancient wisdom, "you shouldn't bite the hand that feeds you" (Hutchins 30).

Paraphrase/Summary

The theorist claims that people tend to pick purebred dogs that look like them, while people who choose non-purebreds have no physical relation at all (Mullowney 325).

Block Quote—Three lines or more

The 1994 film *The Ref* offers a fairly recent example of this reversal and of the cynicism it both grows out of and feeds into. As a review on the ABC News Web site *Mr. Showbiz* notes:

Judy Davis and Kevin Spacey are a married couple who for the life of them can't stop bickering. Denis Leary is the burglar who's taken them hostage on Christmas Eve. Writers Marie Weiss and Richard LaGravanese have built a...platform...from which Leary can freely launch himself into his monologues. (Lafferty 42)

A closer look at this film tells us more. It is Christmas Eve yet the married couple is very bitter. Even though it should be the happiest time of the year these two people cannot stop recriminating each other.

Sample Works Cited Page

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1987. Print

Astin, Alexander W. *Achieving Educational Excellence*. Washington: Jossey-Bass, 1985. Print

Burka, Lauren P. "A Hypertext History of Multi-User Dimensions." *MUD History*. Web. 5 Dec. 2009.

Christie, John S. "Fathers and Virgins: Garcia Marquez's Faulknerian *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*." *Latin American Literary Review* 13.3 (Fall 1993): 21-29. Print

Darling, Charles. "The Decadence: The 1890s." Humanities Division Lecture Series. Capital Community College, Hartford. 12 Sept. 1996. Print.

Shulte, Bret. "Putting a Price on Pollution." *Usnews.com*. *US News & World Rept.*, 6 May 2007. Web. 24 May 2009.