

MLA Style for Academic Work (2016-2017)

The Purpose of Citing Sources

- 1) to give credit (**cite**) to other people's ideas, creations, and information (**sources**) used within your academic work, and
- 2) through your **Works Cited list** at the end of your academic work, to direct your readers to your sources.

MLA Style

The Modern Language Association of America (MLA) style is only one citation method. Details about this style are found in

- the *MLA Handbook* (8th ed.) available in the MRU Bookstore and at the MRU Library InfoDesk
- the *MLA Style Center* at style.mla.org/ for information on formatting research papers and sample papers in MLA style.

The guiding principles of the *MLA Handbook* (8th ed.) are

[*MLA* 3-4]

- include common features (e.g., author, title) found in most sources in a citation,
- there is more than one correct way to create a citation for a source, and
- citations should be useful for readers by giving enough information to locate the source.

This guide is based on the *MLA Handbook*, 8th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

Avoiding Plagiarism: Citation Principles for Academic Work

Within essays, term papers, and any other written assignments (as in all academic work), you must identify (i.e., reference, document, cite) all quotations, paraphrases, ideas, and images from someone else's work. You must name the original author or source and surround quoted material with quotation marks or set it in a block format as described in this handout. Copying any material and submitting it as your own (**plagiarism**) is an academic offence. Plagiarism may result in failure on the assignment and, in some cases, expulsion from a course. For more information, see the *Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism* and the section on "Plagiarism & Cheating" on page 14 of the MRU *Student Conduct Guide*.

In-Text Citations: Citing Sources within Your Academic Work [MLA 54-58]

Whenever you use a quotation or summarize or paraphrase someone else's ideas or research, you must cite the sources. Your in-text citations and Works Cited list should correlate. **In-text citations** include two parts:

- 1) usually the **surname of the author(s)**, but sometimes a title, whichever is the first element in your Works Cited list,
- 2) the **page number** (if available or other location indicator) appears in parenthesis (**parenthetical citation**) after the author's name if the name is not included in your sentence.

Example: (Laurence 167)

For more examples of how to incorporate in-text citations into your work turn to page 2 of this handout.

Citing Short Quotations (four typed lines or fewer in your text) (see example on page 2) [MLA 75-76]

When you incorporate a direct quotation into a sentence, you must surround it with quotation marks and cite its source.

Citing Long Quotations (more than four typed lines in your text) (see example on page 2) [MLA 55, 75-77]

Keep your quotations as brief as possible, but if the quotation extends beyond four lines of type in your text, it should be formatted as follows:

- Use a **block format** in which all lines of the quotation are **indented a half-inch** from the left margin,
- Do not use quotation marks around the long quotation,
- Generally, the quotation should be **introduced with a complete sentence** followed by a colon, and
- Include a **parenthetical citation** after the closing punctuation (usually a period).

Citing Paraphrases or Summaries (see example on page 2) [MLA 57-58]

- When you put someone else's information into your own words by summarizing or paraphrasing, you must cite the author in your work.

Note: Page numbers in square brackets refer to the *MLA Handbook* (8th ed.).

Citing Indirect Sources (see example below)

[MLA 124]

- If one of your sources quotes, paraphrased or mentions another source and you wish to use this information in your work, you must cite the original source as well as the source in which you found it.
- In your parenthetical citation, write **qtd. in** (quoted in) before the citation for the source you accessed.
- Whenever possible try to find the original source.

Sample In-text Citations**Short Quotation (Author's name in a sentence)**

Richmond and Smith state that “educational success is a well-established determinant of Aboriginal well-being” (14).

Short Quotation (Author's name in a parenthetical citation)

The authors state that “educational success is a well-established determinant of Aboriginal well-being” (Richmond and Smith 14).

Long Quotation

In “Where the World Began,” Margaret Laurence reflects on the influence that her hometown has on how she sees the world:

A strange place it was, that place where the world began. A place of incredible happenings, splendors and revelations, despairs like multitudinous pits of isolated hells. A place of shadow-spookiness, inhabited by the unknown dead. A place of jubilation and of mourning, horrible and beautiful. It was, in fact, a small prairie town. Because that settlement and that land were my first and for many years my only real knowledge of this planet, in some profound way they remain my world, my way of viewing. (164)

Paraphrase

Margaret Laurence writes that her early years of living in a small prairie town shape her understanding of the world (164).

OR The author writes that her early years of living in a small prairie town shape her understanding of the world (Laurence 164).

Indirect Citation

A 2010 Auditor General's report found improvements in “educational success” among urban Indigenous youth; however, educational success in the non-Indigenous population is significantly outpacing gains made by the Indigenous population (qtd. in Richmond and Smith 1).

Citing Sources with No Page Numbers

[MLA 56-57, 123]

- Location indicators other than page numbers may be used by your sources, particularly in electronic sources.
- When using the author's name in a parenthetical citation, place a comma after the name, followed by the location indicator.
Example: (Beer and Penfold-Mounce, par. 2.5)
- These are some common location indicators and abbreviations other than pages [MLA 96-97]
Example: chapter (ch., chs.), paragraph (par., pars.), section (sec., secs.) or volume (vol., vols.)
- To indicate location for time-based sources, use a specific time or time range by separating the hours, minutes and seconds with colons.
Example: (Grassy Narrows First Nation Youth, 00:01:32)
- Do not create your own location indicators if none are present. Use only what is visible in the source.
Example: (Huang)

Citing Poetry**Short Quotations** (see example on page 3)

[MLA 77-79]

- **Up to three lines** of poetry that do not require special emphasis can be incorporated within your text.
- Individual lines should be separated with a slash and a space on each side (/).
- Use the original poem's numbering system such as lines, divisions or page numbers.

Long Quotations (see example below)

[MLA 55, 77-79]

- Poetry quotations of **more than three lines** should begin on a new line.
- Indent lines a half inch from the left margin unless lines are indented inconsistently in the original poem, in which case, the quotation should reflect the original layout.
- Use the original poem's numbering system such as lines, divisions or page numbers.
- Include a **parenthetical citation** after the closing punctuation (usually a period).
- Individual lines should be double-spaced.

Sample In-text Citations from Poetry**Short Quotation from Poetry**

In "The Death of the Loch Ness Monster," Gwendolyn MacEwan writes, "Consider him tired of pondering the possible existence of man / whom he thinks he has sighted sometimes on the shore" (14–15).

Long Quotation from Poetry

Al Purdy's "The Country North of Belleville" portrays this region as a place bereft of youth:

And this is a country where the young
 leave quickly
 unwilling to know what their fathers know
 or think the words their mothers do not say. (58-61)

Citing from a Play

[MLA 80]

- A short quotation of **fewer than four lines** from a play, spoken by a single character, can be incorporated into your text.
- A long quotation of **four or more lines or dialogue between two or more speakers** should be set off from your text.
- The parenthetical citation following the quotation should indicate the act, scene, and line numbers (see second example). If they are not available, the citation should indicate the page number on which the quotation appears.
- When quoting **stage directions**, treat them as any other quoted prose. Reproduce them as they appear in the original, using ellipses (. . .) to indicate any deleted text.

Sample In-text Citations from a Play**Short Quotation from a Play**

Tomson Highway's *Aria* begins with the lyrical reminiscences of the Kokum, who recalls that she "[t]aught these seven daughters to tell the many moods of wind, rain of tomorrow, my five sons to hold conversation with fire and the northern lights" (81).

Dialogue Between Speakers in a Play

Shakespeare's use of rhyming couplets emphasizes the irony in the following exchange from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

HERMIA I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.
 HELENA O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!
 HERMIA I give him curses, yet he gives me love.
 HELENA O that my prayers could such affection move! (I.i.194–97)

More Tips for In-Text Citations

Tips Related to Authors

- If the author is unknown or the author is an organization that also published the source, use an abbreviated title including the appropriate capitalization and quotation marks/italics format. [MLA 55-56, 117]
This **example**, (*MLA Style* 4), is a parenthetical citation for this handout, *MLA Style for Academic Work*.
- For **two authors**, use “**and**” before the last author’s name.
- For **three or more authors**, give only the first author’s last name followed by “**et al.**” [MLA 116]
Examples: (Richmond and Smith 3) (Hacker et al. 14)
- When stating an author’s name for the first time, use his/her first and last names in your sentence. For subsequent citations, use only the last name in your sentence or in a parenthetical citation. [MLA 61-62]

First Time Citing an Author in Your Work

In “Where the World Began,” Margaret Laurence describes her small prairie hometown as “a place of jubilation and of mourning, horrible and beautiful” (164).

Subsequent Times Citing an Author in Your Work

Laurence reflects on her home as “a strange place it was, that place where the world began” (164).

- If your Works Cited list includes **more than one work by the same author**, provide a title or abbreviated title following the author’s name in your parenthetical citation. [MLA 55]
Example: (Harris, “The Unrepentant” 674)
- When an idea can be attributed to more than one source in your Works Cited list, separate the sources with a semicolon.
Example: (Laurence 165; Richmond and Smith 5) [MLA 58]

Tips for Incorporating Citations into Your Work

- Keep the citation as short as possible while still directing readers to the source in your Works Cited list. [MLA 54-58]
- Place citations where there is a “natural pause” in your writing (generally at the end of a sentence) to not interrupt the flow.
- Fit partial quotations grammatically within your sentences rather than inserting full-sentence quotations. [MLA 75-91]

In “Where the World Began,” Margaret Laurence describes her small prairie hometown as “a place of jubilation and of mourning, horrible and beautiful” (164).

- **To leave out part of a quotation**, insert **ellipses** (three periods with a space before and after each one) where the omission occurs. This may be necessary for grammar or removal of unnecessary information. In the example below the first period is a full stop while the others are ellipses. [MLA 80]

Laurence reflects on her home as “a strange place it was, that place where the world began. . . . It was, in fact, a small prairie town” (164).

- **To add or slightly change words within a quotation** for grammar or clarity, put **square brackets** around the change. [MLA 86]

Participatory research methods were used; the researchers found that “embracing [capacity-building and knowledge formation] principles ensured that the research was conducted with Wabano in a culturally appropriate way” (Richmond and Smith 4).

- When **citing material already enclosed in quotation marks**, such as dialogue or a title within a title, replace the double quotation marks in the original with single quotation marks. Then surround the entire quotation with double quotation marks. [MLA 71, 87]

Laurence recalls strange things in her town as being “‘funny ha ha’; others were ‘funny peculiar,’” while some were “not so very funny at all” (166).

Creating the Works Cited List

[MLA 20-50]

- Accuracy in your Works Cited list is important to help readers find the particular sources you have used.
- Fill in the MLA Template (shown below) with as much information as relevant/available from each source.
- Assemble the information into a citation using the punctuation given in the Template. Format the first line to the left margin, and for all subsequent lines use a hanging indent. The entire citation should be double spaced.

MLA Core Elements Template (see detailed explanation starting on page 6)

1	Author.
2	“Title of source.” / <i>Title of source.</i>

Container 1

3	<i>Title of container,</i>
4	Other contributors,
5	Version,
6	Number,
7	Publisher,
8	Publication date,
9	Location.

Formatting the Works Cited List

[MLA 111-116]

- Start the Works Cited list on a new page at the end of your assignment, including only sources cited within your writing.
- The title Works Cited, or Work Cited if there is only one source, should be centred and at the top of the page.
- Double-space the entire Works Cited list, including the title line. Do not add an extra blank line after the title.
- Put the first line of each new citation to the left margin (left justified).
- Use a hanging indent (standard half-inch tab) for all but the first line of a citation.
 - Tip: In MS Word, press Ctrl - Tab to create a hanging indent on all but the first line of a citation.
- Organize the list alphabetically according to the first letter of each entry. Ignore “A,” “An,” and “The” when alphabetizing.
- If you have more than one entry by the same author, use the author’s name in the first entry and use three hyphens (---) in place of the author’s name in subsequent entries.

[MLA 113]

Sample Works Cited List

Works Cited

Grassy Narrows First Nation Youth, performers. “Home to Me.” *N’we Jinan*, 2 Apr. 2016, nwejinan.com/home-grassy-narrows-first-nation-song-released/.

Laurence, Margaret. “Where the World Began.” *The Broadview Anthology of Expository Prose*, edited by Laura Buzzard et al., 2nd ed., Broadview Press, 2011, pp. 164-69.

Richmond, Chantelle A. M., and Dawn Smith. “Sense of Belonging in the Urban School Environments of Aboriginal Youth.” *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2012, pp. 1-17. *ProQuest*, search.proquest.com/docview/1400223519?pq-origsite=summon&accountid=1343.

Explanation of Core Elements

1 Author.

[MLA 21-25]

- Enter author's name as Last, First. Write initials and middle names as they appear in the source. Do not reduce a spelled-out middle name to its initial.
- Include multiple authors in the same order as in the source material.
 - **Two authors:** Follow the first author's name with “, and”, giving the second author's first name followed by the last name.
Example: Richmond, Chantelle A. M., and Dawn Smith.
 - **Three or more authors:** Follow the first author's name with “, et al.”
Example: Doe, Jane, et al.
- The author is the creator of the work's main content, and can be a person or **corporate author** (government agency, organization, company, etc.). [MLA 104]
- If there is **no author**, leave this field blank and begin the entry with the title.
- If someone other than an author is responsible for producing the work, enter their name followed by a label (editor, translator, performer, creator).
Example: Grassy Narrows First Nation Youth, performers.

2 “Title of source.” / *Title of source.*

[MLA 25-29]

- Enter the title as given in the source, capitalizing each major word, and ending with a period. If there is a subtitle, enter it after the title and separate them with a colon.
Example of a subtitle: *Title: Subtitle.*
- **Italicize the title** if the source is self-contained, such as a book, a web site, a journal, or an album.
Example: *The Broadview Anthology of Expository Prose*
- Place the **title in quotation marks if the source is part of a larger work**, such as an essay or chapter in a book, content on a web site, an article in a journal, or a song on an album. The period is placed within the quotation marks.
Example: “Where the World Began.”

3 *Title of container,*

[MLA 30-36]

- Italicize the title of the container and follow with a comma.
- Containers are the larger whole that a smaller source is a part of.
Examples of containers include books containing collected works or individually authored chapters, periodicals or journals, newspapers, web sites, or series (TV, podcast, Netflix, etc.).
- Sources can have more than one container if the source is nested within other sources. Enter information for the second container after describing the first container.
Examples of sources with two containers:
 - A short story is contained within a book, and that book is contained within Google Books.
 - A journal article is contained within a Journal, and that journal is contained within the JSTOR database.
 - An episode is contained within its series, which is contained within Netflix.

4 Other contributors,

[MLA 37-38]

- Precede each name (or names) with “by” and a description of their role. Give the first name followed by the last name. If there are three or more contributors give only the first name, followed by “, et al.”
Example: edited by Laura Buzzard, et al.,
- Book editor(s) need to be credited in addition to the author of a chapter/story/play/poem.
- List as many other contributors as are relevant to your assignment, or if they help differentiate the source from others like it.
Examples of contributor roles: adapted by, directed by, illustrated by, translated by.

5 Version,

[MLA 38-39]

- If the source has a version or edition statement, identify it using the language given in the source.
Examples of versions: edition (ed.), revised (rev.), director's cut.
- Write ordinal numbers with arabic numerals
Example: 2nd ed.,

[MLA 107]

6 Number,

[MLA 39-40]

- If the source is part of a numbered sequence, indicate the type of number, followed by the number.
Examples of numbered sequences: volume (vol.), issue (no.), season, episode, year.
Examples: vol. 3, no. 1.; vol. 61, no. 3, Spring 2009,
- If a month or season is given, also include the year.

7 Publisher,

[MLA 40-42, 97]

- The publisher produces the work or makes it available to the public.
- Shorten University Press to UP.
Examples: Oxford UP.; U of Calgary P,
- Omit business words such as Company (Co.), Corporation (Corp.), Incorporated (Inc.), and Limited (Ltd.).
- Do not list a publisher if
 - the information is not given or there is no publisher listed in the source,
 - the publisher is the same as the container title,
Example: Do not list the publisher of a periodical because it is already listed as the title of the container.
 - your source is on a web site that was not involved in producing the source, such as Twitter or Blogger.

8 Publication date,

[MLA 42-46, 50-51, 94]

- Give the publication date (and time if available) using as much information as listed in the source.
- Enter the date as day-month-year to minimize use of commas. Abbreviate the month to three letters.
Examples: 12 Jan. 2016.; Spring 2016.; 25 Jul. 2016, 10:30 p.m.,
- For online sources without listed dates, give the date you accessed the source.
Example: Accessed 29 Jun. 2016,
- Sources may have multiple publication dates: give the date that corresponds with the specific source you have access to.
Examples: For a book, give the most recent date (that corresponds to the specific edition/version you have). For an online publication, give the date it appeared online, not in print (if there is a difference).

9 Location.

[MLA 46-50, 110]

- Location may be a location within a source (page numbers, disc number), a web address (URL), a digital object identifier (DOI), or a physical location (building, venue, city).
 - Omit http:// and https:// from a web address (URL).
- Note that location **does not** refer to the city of publication.
- Include the location (if available) for every container.
- For single page numbers, use "p.". For a range of pages, use "pp."
Example: p.165, (single page), pp. 164-69, (a range of pages)
- For online journal articles, cite a DOI if there is one (preceded by doi:). If there is no DOI, cite the web address (URL).
 - A DOI is a series of numbers preceded by 'doi:', and can also contain letters. DOIs can be searched in web browsers.
Example of a DOI: doi:10.1080/07377363.2013.836823

Sample Citations Using the MLA Core Elements Template

A Source in One Container: An Essay in a Book

1	Author. Laurence, Margaret.
2	“Title of source.” / Title of source. “Where the World Began.”

Title is in quotation marks because the essay is part of a larger work (the book).

Container 1

3	Title of container, <i>The Broadview Anthology of Expository Prose,</i>
4	Other contributors, edited by Laura Buzzard, et al.,
5	Version, 2nd ed.,
6	Number,
7	Publisher, Broadview Press,
8	Publication date, 2011,
9	Location. pp. 164-69.

The container is the book the essay is a part of. Container titles are italicized.

Use “, et al.” if there are three or more contributors.

If this was a university press, press would be shortened to P. [MLA 97]

If the original publication date of the essay is important to your context, put it immediately after the Title of Source. [MLA 50-51]

Work Cited Entry

Laurence, Margaret. “Where the World Began.” *The Broadview Anthology of Expository Prose*, edited by Laura Buzzard et al., 2nd ed., Broadview Press, 2011, pp. 164-69.

A Source in One Container: Music Video Embedded on a Web Page

1	Author. Grassy Narrows First Nation Youth, performers.
2	“Title of source.” / Title of source. “Home to Me.”

A descriptive label can be added when there’s a focus on specific creators of a source.

Title is in quotation marks because the video is part of a larger work (the web site).

Container 1

3	Title of container, <i>N’we Jinan,</i>
4	Other contributors,
5	Version,
6	Number,
7	Publisher,
8	Publication date, 2 Apr. 2016,

The container is the web site where the video is embedded. Container titles are italicized.

Publisher omitted because it is the same as the Title of Container (web site name).

Enter the date as day-month-year to minimize use of commas. Abbreviate the month to three letters.

9	Location. nwejinan.com/home-grassy-narrows-first-nation-song-released/.
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Use a URL if a DOI is not available, as in this case.
Omit http:// and https://.

Work Cited Entry

Grassy Narrows First Nation Youth, performers. "Home to Me." *N'we Jinan*, 2 Apr. 2016, nwejinan.com/home-grassy-narrows-first-nation-song-released/.

A Source in One Container: Journal Article Retrieved from a Database

1	Author. Richmond, Chantelle A. M., and Dawn Smith.
2	"Title of source." / Title of source. "Sense of Belonging in the Urban School Environments of Aboriginal Youth."

Author's name is given as stated in the source. Do not reduce a spelled-out name to its initial.

Title is in quotation marks because a journal article is part of a larger work (the journal).

Container 1

3	Title of container, <i>The International Indigenous Policy Journal,</i>
4	Other contributors,
5	Version,
6	Number, vol. 3, no. 1,
7	Publisher,
8	Publication date, 2012,
9	Location. pp. 1-17.

The container is the journal that the article is in. Container titles are italicized.

This periodical uses both a volume and issue number. If a month or season is given, also include the year.

Container 2

3	Title of container, <i>ProQuest,</i>
4	Other contributors,
5	Version,
6	Number,
7	Publisher,
8	Publication date,
9	Location. search.proquest.com/docview/1400223519?pq-origsite=summon&accountid=1343.

ProQuest is given as a second container rather than as a publisher because ProQuest does not produce the content, only houses it.

Use a URL if a DOI is not available, as in this case.
Omit http:// and https://.

Work Cited Entry

Richmond, Chantelle A. M., and Dawn Smith. "Sense of Belonging in the Urban School Environments of Aboriginal Youth." *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2012, pp. 1-17. *ProQuest*, search.proquest.com/docview/1400223519?pq-origsite=summon&accountid=1343.

Blank MLA Template

[MLA 129]

1. Fill in the MLA Template with as much information as relevant/available for the source.
2. Assemble the information into a citation using the punctuation given in the Template. Format the first line to the left margin, and for all subsequent lines use a hanging indent. The entire citation should be double spaced.

1	Author.
2	“Title of source.” / <i>Title of source.</i>

Container 1

3	<i>Title of container,</i>
4	Other contributors,
5	Version,
6	Number,
7	Publisher,
8	Publication date,
9	Location.

Container 2

3	<i>Title of container,</i>
4	Other contributors,
5	Version,
6	Number,
7	Publisher,
8	Publication date,
9	Location.

Based on the template available at the MLA Style Center at: style.mla.org/files/2016/04/practice-template.pdf