



THE UNIVERSITY
WRITING CENTER
3211 HHRA BUILDING

USING MLA (6TH edition) FORMAT

Writers have an obligation to give credit to the source of any opinions, interpretations, or specific facts that were the result of another person's research when they "borrow" that information and incorporate it into their writing—*whether they quote the exact words of the source or restate it in their own words, and whether the source is in print or online.* (The only exception to this rule would be using basic information that appears without citation in many sources because it is understood and accepted as "common knowledge" within the field.)

There are three reasons for student writers to cite their sources properly: 1) to maintain academic integrity by acknowledging the intellectual property of other writers; 2) to lend credibility to the information they are using; 3) to enable their readers to find and learn more from the source material.

The system for citing sources that is used in many Humanities courses is the **MLA** (Modern Language Association) system. It consists of two steps: 1) parenthetical citations within the text, which give an abbreviated reference to the author and page number of the borrowed material; and 2) an alphabetical listing of all Works Cited, which appears at the end of the paper and gives full bibliographical information.

IN-TEXT (PARENTHETICAL) REFERENCES IN MLA

Printed Publications

Short Quotations

EX 1: According to Smitherman, "the ebonics spoken in the US is rooted in the Black American Oral Tradition, reflecting the combination of African languages (Niger-Congo) and Euro American English" (19).

EX 2: "The ebonics spoken in the US is rooted in the Black American Oral Tradition, reflecting the combination of African languages (Niger-Congo) and Euro American English" (Smitherman 19).

- If no author is given for a particular work, use a shortened version of the title in the in-text citation.

EX: These issues bring up the following question: "What kind of 'smart' do test administrators expect freshman students to be?" ("Teaching" 76).

- The full name of is this article is "Teaching to the test: What do the standards Mean?"

Long Quotations (4 lines or longer)

For long quotations, indent 1 inch from the left margin. No quotation marks are needed around the quotation.

EX: Smitherman explains:

The ebonics spoken in the US is rooted in the Black American Oral Tradition, reflecting the combination of African languages (Niger-Congo) and Euro American English. It is a language forged in the crucible of enslavement, US-style apartheid, and the struggle to survive and thrive in the face of domination. It is no wonder, then, that ebonics has political and social implications. (19)

If no author is given for a particular text, use the title of the work when introducing a long quotation. Again, if no author is given, use a shortened version of the title.

Paraphrasing

The same rules used with short quotations apply to paraphrasing.

EX: Ebonics is a form of the English language that combines African languages with European American English and is grounded in the Black American Oral Tradition (Smitherman 19).

Citing Indirect Sources

When you read a source that uses material (which you want to use) originally published in some other source (which you have not read), you should identify the original author in your text, but use the abbreviation “qtd. in” with the author’s name and page number of the secondary source—the one that you actually read—in your parenthetical citation. Here’s an example:

EX: Donald Larsson writes of Kate Chopin’s “consistently . . . strong-willed, independent heroines...[who] cast a skeptical eye on the institution of marriage” (qtd. in Hicks 1).

Altering a Quotation

In the example just given, note the use of *ellipses* . . . to indicate that you left out some words of the original quotation, and the use of *brackets* [] to indicate that the form of a word has been changed to make it fit into the sentence, or to add an explanatory word or phrase that was not in the original.

Internet Publications

- If the source has specific page numbers, you should cite the author and the page number at the end of the sentence.

EX: “The study of comparative literature discusses the idea of humanity” (Readings 6).

- If there is no author, you can use an abbreviated version of the title at the end of your sentence.

EX: These issues bring up the following question: “Are scientists engaging in ethical overkill when they stop a clinical trial early so all women can benefit quickly from the findings?” (“Halting”).

- If an Internet document is sectioned by paragraphs, you can cite the paragraph numbers.

EX: “The debut of *Julius Caesar*,” according to Sohmer, “proclaimed Shakespeare’s Globe a theater of courage and ideas, a places where an audience must observe with the inner eye, listen with the inner ear” (par. 44).

- If there is more than one paragraph you are citing, use **pars.** as the abbreviation.
- If your source is divided into screens, you can cite the screen numbers.

EX: Beethoven has been called the “first politically motivated composer,” for he was “caught up in the whole ferment of ideas that came out of the French Revolution” (Gardiner, screens 2-3).

WORKS CITED PAGE

- Your Works Cited list should appear at the end of your paper.
- Every source cited in the paper must appear on the Works Cited list, and every source on the Works Cited list should appear in the text of your paper.
- Center the heading Works Cited (with no quotations or underlining) at the top of the page.
- Double-space the entries just like the rest of your paper.
- Alphabetize list using authors’ last names. Authors’ names are inverted (last name first). Give the last name, first name, and initials as they appear on the source.
- If you have cited more than one work by the same author, order them alphabetically by title. You do not have to put the author’s name more than once; rather you just use three dashes.

EX: Greenblatt, Stephen. "Chinese English." *Threepenny Review* 12 (1983): 4-7.

---. "Erotische Provokation im elisabethanischen Theater." *Shakespeare Jahrbuch* 124
(1988): 56-61.

- If no author is given for a particular work, alphabetize by the title of the piece.
- Capitalize each word (except articles, prepositions, and conjunctions not appearing first) in the titles and subtitles of articles and books.
- Use quotation marks around poems, short stories, songs, essays, and around any articles in newspapers, journals, or anthologies.
- Lines following the first line of each entry should be indented ½ inch from left margin.
- Underline titles of books and journals.

Internet reminder

When documenting electronic sources from the Internet using MLA format, you may run into some problems finding all of the information that you can usually find when documenting print sources because not all of the publication information may be accessible. However, the important thing to remember is to provide as much of the publication information as possible so that someone can find your sources based on the information you provide on the Works Cited page. Sometimes, you may not find the author’s name or the specific date the information was written. If this is the case, simply write the information you *do* have. Also, you’ll notice that all Internet sources documented require two dates: the date the information was produced and the date that you access that information.

Printed Publications

Book

Smitherman, Geneva. *Talking That Talk: Language, Culture, and Education in African America*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Article in a Journal

Gerzelsky, Gwen. "Ghosts: Liberal Education and Negotiated Authority." *College English*. 64.3 (2002): 302-25.

Article in an Anthology

Berthoff, Anne E. "Killer Dichotomies: Reading in /Reading out." *Farther Along: Transforming Dichotomies in Rhetoric and Composition*. Eds. Hephzibah Roskelly and Kate Ronald. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1990.

Internet Publications

An Entire Internet Site

Bartleby.com: Great Books Online. Ed. Steven van Leeuwen. 2002. 5 May 2002
<<http://www.bartleby.com/>>.

A Personal Homepage

Lancashire, Ian. Home page. 28 Mar. 2002. 15 May 2002 <<http://www.chass.utoronto.ca:8080/~ian/>>.

An Online Book

Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Ed. Henry Churchyard. 1996. *Jane Austen Information Page*. 6 Sept. 2002 <<http://www.permberley.com/janeinfo/pridprej.html>>.

Part of an Online Book

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Self-Reliance." *Essays: First Series*. 1841. 12 Feb. 1997
<<ftp://ftp.book.com/ebooks/NonFiction/Philosophy/Emerson/history.txt>>.

An Article in a Scholarly Journal

Dane, Gabrielle. "Reading Ophelia's Madness." *Exemplaria* 10.2 (1998). 22 June 2002
<<http://Web.english.ufl.edu/English/exemplaria/danefram.htm>>.

An Article in a Magazine

Brooks, David. "The Culture of Martyrdom." *Atlantic Online* June 2002. 24 Sept. 2002
<<http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/2002/06.brooks.htm>>.

An Article in a Newspaper

Achenbach, Joel. "America's River." *Washington Post* 5 May 2002. 20 May 2002

<<http://www.Washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A13425-2002May1.html>>.

An Abstract

Nastali, Dan, and Phil Boardman. "Searching for Arthur: Literary Highways, Electronic Byways and Cultural Back Roads." *Arthuriana* 11.4 (2001): 108—22. Abstract. 1 Oct. 2002

<<http://www.smu.edu/arthuriana/>>. Path: Abstracts; K-O.

A Television or Radio Program

Keillor, Garrison. *A Prairie Home Companion*. With Ledwar Ka'apana and Owana Salazar. 12 Oct. 2002.

Minnesota Public Radio. 18 Oct. 2002 <<http://phc.mpr.org/ri/smil/021012.ram>>.

A Painting, Sculpture, or Photograph

Evans, Walker. *Penny Picture Display*. 1936 Museum of Mod. Art, New York. 30 May 2002

<<http://www.moma.org/collection/photography/pages/evans.penny.html>>.

An Interview

Ackroyd, Peter. Interview. *Bold Type*. Nov. 2001. 25 June 2002 <<http://www.randomhouse.Com/boldtype/1101/ackroyd/interview.html>>.

An Advertisement

Lee Mood Ring. Advertisement. 29 June 1998 <<http://www.leejeans.com/features/Moodrings.html>>.

A Manuscript or Working Paper

Whitman, Walt. Notebooks. Thomas Bigg Harned Walt Whitman collection. Ms. Div., Lib. Of Congress.

American Memory. Lib of Congress, Washington. 29 May 2002

<<http://Memory.loc.gov/ammem/wwhtml/wwcoll.html>>.

An E-mail Communication

Boyle, Anthony T. "Re: Utopia." E-mail to Daniel J. Cahill. 21 June 1997.