



Using MLA Format

Essays using the MLA (Modern Language Association) format can include both a *Works Cited* page and a *Works Consulted* page. The *Works Cited* page is reserved for books, websites, and other resources directly cited in your essay. The *Works Consulted* page refers to resources used for background information or general ideas, but not directly quoted or cited in your actual essay. The *Works Cited* page is placed after the essay and the *Works Consulted* page is last.

When citing resources in your text, effectively embed or “sandwich” your quotations. Notice how the examples below are effectively embedded:

...Despite his poor behavior, *New York Times* writer David Carr’s clever comments endear him to skeptical readers. Upon being granted custody of his children, he admits he “had won a tallest-midget contest” against his drug-addicted girlfriend (Carr 12). Through these bitterly humorous remarks, Carr humanizes himself. He is no longer a drug-fueled monster, but a human being—a father—struggling with his own addiction...

...Even skilled surgeons have difficulty with this operation. Dr. John Morris, head of pediatric research at Vanderbilt University, asserts, “The decision to separate a conjoined twin should not be taken lightly” (Hermann 33). Morris believes families should carefully consider the risks before approving such a procedure...

A QUOTATION SANDWICH (a.k.a. “The Quoteburger”)

Upper bun- Context/Background
What is your claim? Who is speaking?
To whom? Credentials? Situation?

“Meat”- The actual quotation should be properly cited. Select a quotation for maximum impact—something powerful or especially interesting.

Lower bun- Connection/Support
This is the “so what” element. Explain how this quotation supports your argument/thesis.



Creating In-Text Citation:

In many cases, your in-text citation entries will look like the example below:

Lydia Smith, an advocate for the poor in New York City, asserts, “Few understand the plight of the homeless” (Jones 33).

Author’s last name (Note: It may be different from the source you are quoting.)

Page number

If no page number is listed, simply include the author’s last name:

Lydia Smith, an advocate for the poor in New York City, asserts, “Few understand the plight of the homeless” (Jones).

If no author name is listed, simply include a key word from the title of the article/source:

Lydia Smith, an advocate for the poor in New York City, asserts, “Few understand the plight of the homeless” (“Helping” 33).

If you cite a source and include the author/source in your sentence, you do not need to list the author in your parenthetical citation. You do need to cite the page number, if available.

According to researcher Paul Gidley, “Several species of ants can inhabit a single tree in the rainforests of Brazil” (21).

The Environmental Protection Agency, in its 2011 annual report, asserted that pollution levels have actually increased in the last three years (34).

If more than one work by the same author is listed in the Works Cited, a shortened version of the title is given:

Students recognize that “giving credit to outside resources is a vital part of the research process” (Parker, *Survey* 197).

If your quotation has a question mark or exclamation point, include it in the quotation marks:

One protester wrote simply, “Shall we give in to this injustice?” (Smith 23).

Some Ways to Embed Quotations

Quote only the passages that address your subject in memorable language. When taking notes, place quotation marks around the passage. To move a quotation from your notes to your paper, consider some of the following methods:

(1) Work the quoted passage into the syntax of your sentence.

Morrison points out that social context prevented the authors of slave narratives “from dwelling too long or too carefully on the more sordid details of their experience” (109).

(2) Introduce the quoted passage with a sentence and a colon.

Commentators have tried to account for the decorum of most slave narratives by discussing social context: “popular taste discouraged the writers from dwelling too long or too carefully on the more sordid details of their experience” (Morrison 109).

(3) Set off the quoted passage with an introductory sentence followed by a colon.

*This method is reserved for long quotations (four or more lines of prose; three or more lines of poetry). Double-space the quotation, and indent it one inch (ten spaces) from the left margin. Do not enclose it within quotation marks. Note that the final period goes **before** rather than after the parenthetical reference.*

Her own personal history richly shapes the works she has created. Toni Morrison, in “The Site of Memory,” explains how social context shaped these narratives:

No slave society in the history of the world wrote more—or more thoughtfully—about its own enslavement. The narratives are instructive, moral, and obviously representative. Some of them are patterned after the sentimental novel that was in vogue at the time. But whatever the level of eloquence or the form, popular taste discouraged the writers from dwelling too long or too carefully on the more sordid details of their experience. (109)

A similar approach is used for a block quotation of poetry (three or more lines):

Some of Walt Whitman’s poems explore inquisitive, playful themes. An excerpt from Whitman’s “Song of Myself” highlights the curiosity of childhood:

A child said What is the grass?

Fetching it to me with full hands;
 How could I answer the child? I do not
 know what that is any more than he.
 I guess it might be the flag of my
 disposition, out of hopeful green stuff woven.
 Or guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord. (78)

Not only does Whitman question how . . .

Quoting a brief poetry excerpt:

Fewer than four lines quoted: Use quotation marks and indicate line ends with a slash (/).

Dickinson's poem, "Those--Dying then," explores her lack of belief in the traditional God of her ancestors.

"Those--dying then,/ Knew where they went--/ They went to God's Right Hand" clearly refers to past attitudes about . . .

Punctuation Rules for Quoted Passages

(1) Ellipsis: When a portion of the quoted passage is omitted, indicate this omission by putting three spaced

periods (...) in place of the material which is missing. If the last part of a sentence or a whole sentence is omitted, use four periods (...).

(2) Brackets: Brackets indicate the writer's words inserted into or substituted for part of the quotation.

They are also used to indicate a change in tense to match the tense of the text in which the quotation is used.

(3) End Marks: In American usage, periods and commas always go inside quotation marks, regardless of sense. Semi-colons and colons go outside. Exclamation points and question marks are placed either inside or outside according to demands of the quoted material.

"Read me 'The Lottery'" he said.

She asked, "Have you read 'The Lottery'?"

Titles: *Italics* or “Quotation Marks”?

Here’s an easy reference: If it’s short and/or a part of a larger work, give it quotation marks. If it’s long and/or contains smaller components, italicize it.

| Italic | Quotation Marks | No Marks |
|--|--|---|
| Novels, books, anthologies | Short stories, essays, and chapter titles. | Religious texts |
| Magazines, newspapers, and journals | Individual articles | |
| Films, TV shows, radio programs | Individual episodes of shows or programs | |
| Web sites | Individual web pages | |
| Epic poems | Regular poems | |
| Pamphlets or sermons | | |
| Albums, named symphonies, ballets | Individual songs | Numbered musical compositions |
| Painting, sculptures | | |
| Names of specific ships, spacecraft, or aircraft | | Type of ship, spacecraft, or aircraft |
| | Lectures | |
| Supreme Court Cases | | Legal documents, treaties, acts, and declarations |

Creative Ways to Embed Your Arguments

Consider these suggestions from *They Say, I Say* to smoothly embed arguments:

Templates for introducing what “they say”:

- Several scientists have recently suggested that X’s work has a few key problems.
- Contemporary critics commonly dismiss X’s contributions to feminist theory.
- In their recent study, Y and Z have offered harsh critiques of X for . . .

Templates for introducing something implied or assumed:

- Although few of them have ever said so directly, most teachers . . .
- One implication of X’s argument is that . . .
- Although X does not say so directly, she apparently assumes . . .

Templates for disagreeing, with reasons:

- X mistakenly overlooks _____.
- X’s claim that ____ rests upon the questionable assumption that _____.
- Although X’s views sound impressive, she neglects to consider _____.
- Recent research has shown that X’s view . . .
- X contradicts himself. He initially claims . . . But on the other hand, he also believes . . .
- By focusing on _____, X ignores . . .

Templates for agreeing:

- X convincingly asserts that _____.
- X also defends the prevailing view that_____.
- X effectively questions why _____.
- X’s second claim,_____, recognizes the importance of..

Verbs for Introducing Summaries and Quotations:

Verbs for making a claim

| | | | | | |
|------------|-------------|-----------|---------|---------|-----------|
| argue | claim | observe | suggest | insist | maintains |
| assert | emphasize | remind us | report | believe | relays |
| highlights | accentuates | defends | | | |

Verbs for expressing agreement

| | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|--------|---------|---------|--------|
| acknowledge | corroborate | extol | support | agree | affirm |
| admire | do not deny | praise | verify | endorse | |

Verbs for questioning or disagreeing

| | | | | | |
|------------|----------|--------|-----------|------------|---------|
| complain | disavow | refute | renounce | contradict | contend |
| complicate | question | reject | repudiate | deny | |

Verbs for making recommendations

| | | | | |
|----------|-----------|---------|-----------|--------|
| advocate | encourage | implore | recommend | warn |
| call for | exhort | plead | urge | demand |

Verbs for describing

| | | | | | |
|------------|---------------|------------|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Compares | deepens | contrasts | defines | depicts | describes |
| Develops | distinguishes | elaborates | exemplifies | explains | focuses |
| Identifies | illustrates | narrates | recalls | reveals | traces |

Verbs for persuading

| | | | | |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| Acknowledges | Commands | Elevates | Insists | Justifies |
| Argues | Confronts | Distorts | Emphasizes | Minimizes |
| Challenges | Defends | Downplays | Inspires | Instructs |

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------|-----------|------------|----------|
| Opposes | Persuades | Values | Posits | suggests |
| Orders | Pleads | Supports | Speculates | |
| Overstates | Understates | Reassures | Predicts | |

Sample Templates for *Introducing* Quotations

X maintains, “ _____ ” (_____).

As noted writer X asserted, “ _____ ” (_____).

According to X, “ _____ ” (_____).

In her book, _____, X maintains “ _____ ” (_____).

Writing in the journal _____, X complains “ _____ ” (_____).

In X’s view, “ _____ ” (_____).

X dis/agrees when he writes, “ _____ ” (_____).

X complicates matters further when she asserts, “ _____ ” (_____).

“ _____,” X believes, “ _____ ” (_____).

X raises another prominent concern: “ _____ ” (_____).

X admits “ _____ ” (_____).

Some quotations work beautifully if they are split at a dramatic point:

Ex: “Believe,” she advised, “in the power of your dreams” (Buckey 34).

Sample Templates for *Explaining* Quotations

Basically, X claims _____.

In other words, X believes _____.

This argument reveals _____.

This claim asserts _____.

In making this comment, X contends _____.

X insists that _____.

X’s point exposes _____.

Ultimately, X believes _____.

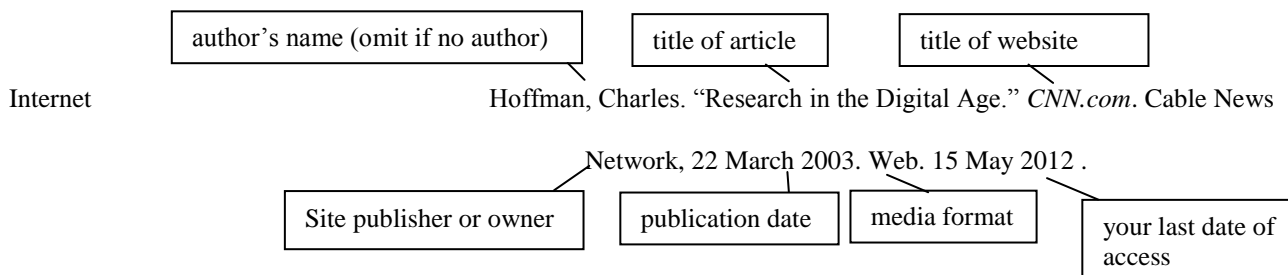
MLA Style for Listing Sources

| | |
|---|---|
| Book with one author | Pyles, Thomas. <i>The Origins and Development of the English Language</i> . 2nd ed. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1991. Print. |
| Book with two or three authors | McCrum, Robert, William Cran, and Robert MacNeil. <i>The Story of English</i> . New York: Penguin Books, 1997. Print. |
| Book with an editor | Truth, Sojourner. <i>Narrative of Sojourner Truth</i> . Ed. Margaret Washington. New York: Vintage Books, 2003. Print. |
| Book with more than three authors/editors | Donald, Robert B., et al. <i>Writing Clear Essays</i> . Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1996. Print. |
| A single work from an anthology [pages for the entire selection.] | Hawthorne, Nathaniel. "Young Goodman Brown." <i>Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing</i> . Ed. Edgar V. Roberts and Henry E. Jacobs. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1998. 376—385. Print. |
| Scholarly Publication (Journal) | Aldrich, Frederick A. and Margueritte L. Marks. "Wyman Green, American Biologist." <i>Bios</i> 23.1 (1952): 26-35. Print. |
| Introduction in a published edition | Washington, Margaret. Introduction. <i>Narrative of Sojourner Truth</i> . By Sojourner Truth. New York: Vintage Books, 1993. Print. |
| Signed article in a weekly magazine | Wallace, Charles. "A Vodacious Deal." <i>Time</i> 14 Feb. 2005: 63-64. Print. |
| Signed article in a monthly magazine | Gustaitis, Joseph. "The Sticky History of Chewing Gum." <i>American History</i> Oct. 1998: 30-38. Print. |
| Unsigned editorial or Story [If the editorial or story is signed, begin with the author's name.] | "Selective Silence." Editorial. <i>Wall Street Journal</i> 11 Feb. 2006: A14. Print. |
| Signed pamphlet | [Treat the pamphlet as though it were a book.] |
| Pamphlet with no author, publisher, or date | <i>Are You at Risk of Heart Attack?</i> np. n.d. [n.p. n.d. indicates that there is no known publisher or date] |
| Filmstrips, slide programs, and DVD | <i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i> . Dir. George Stevens. Perf. Millie Perkins, Shelley Winters, Joseph Schildkraut, Lou Jacobi, and Richard Beymer. Twentieth Century Fox, 1959. DVD. |

- Radio or television program transcript “The First Immortal Generation.” *Rockham’s Razor*. Host Robyn Williams.
 Guest Damien Broderick. National Public Radio. 23 May 1999.
 Transcript.
- Newspaper Thurow, Roger. “South Africans Who Fought for Sanctions Now
 Scrap for Investors.” *Wall Street Journal* 11 Feb. 2005: A1+. Print.
 [a multipage article, write only the first page number on which it appears, followed by a plus sign.]
- Personal interviews Smith, Jane. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2007.
- Article from an Encyclopedia Askeland, Donald R. (1991). “Welding.” *World Book Encyclopedia*. 1991
 ed. Print.

Many web source entries now require a publisher name, a date of publication, and/or page numbers. When no publisher name appears on the website, write n.p. for no publisher given. When sites omit a date of publication, write n.d. for no date. For online journals that appear only online (no print version) or on databases that do not provide pagination, write n.p. for no pagination.

- Online Periodical Lubell, Sam. “Of the Sea and Air and Sky.” *New York Times*. New York
 Times, 26 Nov. 2008. Web. 1 Dec. 2008.
- A YouTube entry: Norton, Robert. "How to Train a Cat to Operate a Light Switch."
YouTube.com. YouTube, 4 Jan. 2006. Web. 7 Jan. 2007.
- An image (painting, sculpture, etc.): Goya, Francisco. *The Family of Charles IV*. 1800. Museo Nacional del
 Prado, Madrid. *Museo National del Prado*. Web. 22 May 2006.
- An article from an online database
 (or other electronic subscription service): Langhamer, Claire. “Love and Courting England.” *Historical Journal* 50.1
 (2007): 173-96. *ProQuest*. Web. 27 May 2009.
- E-mail (including E-mail Interviews): Kunka, Andrew. “Re: Modernist Literature.” Message to Thomas Barbato.
 11 Dec. 2007. E-mail.



Evaluation Criteria for Websites

The Internet creates extraordinary options for researchers that would have been unimaginable just a few decades ago. At the same time, savvy students are always on guard. Ask yourself the following questions as you consider which online sources to use:

ACCURACY

- ✓ Is the information reliable and error-free?
- ✓ Is there an editor or someone who verifies/checks the information?
- ✓ Does the information correspond with what you already know or other reliable sources?

Rationale:

1. Anyone can publish anything on the Web.
2. Unlike traditional print resources, web resources rarely have editors or fact-checkers.
3. Currently, no web standards exist to ensure accuracy.

AUTHORITY

- ✓ Is there an author? Is the page signed?
- ✓ Is the author qualified? An expert?
- ✓ Who is the sponsor?
- ✓ Is the sponsor of the page reputable? How reputable?
- ✓ Is there a link to information about the author or the sponsor?
- ✓ If the page includes neither a signature nor indicates a sponsor, is there any other way to determine its origin?

Hints:

Look for a header or footer showing affiliation.

Look at the URL. *http://www.fbi.gov*

Look at the domain. *.edu, .com, .ac.uk, .org, .net*

Rationale:

1. See number 1 above.
2. It's often hard to determine a web page's authorship.
3. Even if a page is signed, qualifications aren't usually given.
4. Sponsorship isn't usually indicated.

OBJECTIVITY

- ✓ Does the information show a minimum of bias?
- ✓ Is the page designed to sway opinion?
- ✓ Is there any advertising on the page?

Rationale:

1. Frequently the goals of the sponsors/authors aren't clearly stated.
2. Often the Web serves as a virtual soapbox.

CURRENCY

- ✓ Is the page dated?
- ✓ If so, when was the last update?
- ✓ How current are the links? Have some expired or moved?

Rationale:

1. Publication or revision dates not always provided.
2. If a date is provided, it may have various meanings. For example,

It may indicate when the material was first written

It may indicate when the material was first placed on the Web

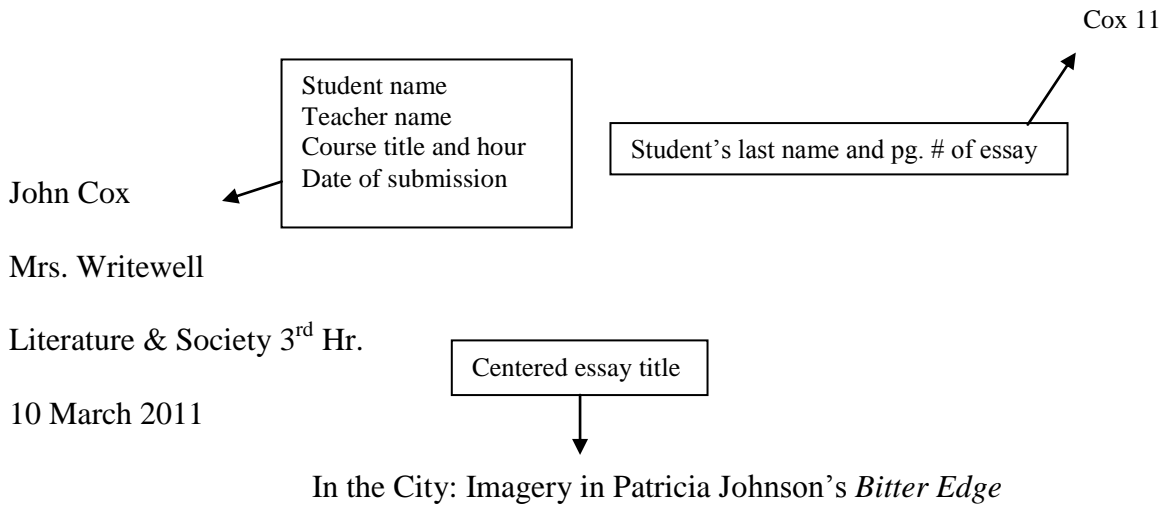
It may indicate when the material was last revised

COVERAGE

- ✓ What topics are covered?
- ✓ What does this page offer that is not found elsewhere?
- ✓ What is its intrinsic value?
- ✓ How in-depth is the material?

Rationale:

1. Web coverage often differs from print coverage.
2. Frequently, it's difficult to determine the extent of coverage.
3. Sometimes web information is just-for-fun or outright silliness.



An essay title should be engaging and clever. A carefully selected phrase or allusion helps the reader understand the focus of your essay and also . . .

Note the features of this sample opening page:

- Margins of document should be 1 inch on all sides.
- Your instructor may ask that you omit the number on your first page.
- Use italics throughout your essay for the titles of longer works and, only when absolutely needed, providing emphasis.
- Your essay should be double-spaced throughout. Do not “island” your paragraphs.

Sample Opening Page

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address www.umich.edu/umonline/twinkies135504/22

University of Michigan Online

Twinkies Are Really, Really Bad for You
By: Lauren Demaris

Oct. 15, 2006

Sample Citation from an Online Article

Dr. David Langley, a researcher at the University of Michigan, has discovered something remarkable. Over the past five years, Langley has researched the physical effects of numerous snack foods. The culmination of his study is a 127 page report, to be published next month in the *Journal of American Snacking*, which finds that Twinkies are unhealthy and potentially dangerous. "Really," remarks Langley, "There's something not quite right about it. This snack product retained its eerie orange color and creamy filling through several tests, including severe heat and water exposure." In experiments done at the University of Michigan's \$200 million Snack Food Laboratory, Langley found that Twinkies can actually regenerate themselves. "If you take just one bite from a Twinkie and let it sit for a few hours, its cell structures will regroup and it will grow back to a complete snack cake." Langley also found that . . .

Examples of MLA parenthetical citation:

These snack foods are also high in sugar and fat content. One snack item in particular, the Twinkie, may pose a special threat.

According to Dr. David Langley, a researcher at the University of Michigan, "There's something not quite right about it" (Demaris). Other researchers believe . . .

. . . "In experiments done at the University of Michigan. . . Langley found that Twinkies can actually regenerate themselves" (Demaris).

Others have noted . . .

. . . "If you take just one bite from a Twinkie and let it sit for a few hours," Langley claims, "its cell structures will regroup and it will grow back to a complete snack cake" (Demaris).

"In experiments done at the University of Michigan's \$200 million Snack Food Laboratory, Langley found that Twinkies can actually regenerate themselves. 'If you take just one bite from a Twinkie and let it sit for a few hours,'" Langley claims, "'its cell structures will regroup, and it will grow back to a complete snack cake'" (Demaris).

How your Works Cited entry would look:

Demaris, Lauren. "Twinkies are Really, Really Bad for You." *University of Michigan Online*. University of Michigan, 15 Oct. 2006. Web. 12 Jan. 2007.

If no author is listed: (Select a key word from the title of the article)

. . . "In tests done at the University of Michigan. . . Langley found that Twinkies can actually regenerate themselves" ("Twinkies"). Others have noted . . .

How your Works Cited entry would look if no author were listed:

"Twinkies are Really, Really Bad for You." *University of Michigan Online*. University of Michigan, 15 Oct. 2006. Web. 12 Jan. 2007.

Works Cited

Cawardine, Mark, Erich Hoyt, and Peter Gill. *The Nature Company Guides:*

Whales, Dolphins, and Porpoises. New York: Time-Life Books, 2005. Print.

Ellis, Richard. "Under the Deep Blue Sea." *Journal of Marine Life* 50.4

(2002): 79-84. Print.

Upton, Margaret. "Understanding Whales." *Whale Friends*. Whale

Friends Organization, 2002. Web. 15 Nov. 2006.

"Whales in Danger." *Discovering Whales*. Foundation for Whale Protection,

20 Dec. 2004. Web. 16 Dec. 2006.

Williams, Jill. *South Pacific Sea Life*. Chicago: Penguin, 1998. Print.

Note the features of this sample Works Cited page:

-The page should remain in 12-point font with 1 inch margins on all sides.

-Author's last name and page number are on the upper-right corner of each page, except the title page.

-Title is centered at top of page. It is not underlined or italicized.

-Alphabetical order is used, based on author and/or title. (Cawardine, Ellis, etc.)

-Quotations marks designate short story and article titles. ("Whales in Danger.")

-Italics designate books/websites/magazines. (*Discovering Whales*.)

**-If the inclusion of URLs is requested, use angle brackets to enclose the address.
(< >)**

-Although double-spaced throughout, additional lines beneath the first line of an entry are indented.

Sample Works Cited Page

Works Cited

“Hamburger image.” *Literallylaughingoutloud*. Blogspot, 17 Sep. 2009. Web.

25 Oct. 2009.

“Twinkies image.” *Media Environment*. Wordpress, 30 Jan. 2009. Web. 25 Oct. 2009.

Works Consulted

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (Seventh Edition)*.

New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009.

“MLA 2009.” *Purdue University Online Writing Lab*. Purdue University, 2009. Web.

25 Oct. 2009.

(Note: For the sake of space, both the Works Cited and Works Consulted were placed on the same page. In most situations, each would have a separate page.)