



MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers

**Proyecto Avalúo Competencias de
Educación General (PACEG 2015-2016)**

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Modern Language Association (MLA) Handbook for Writers of Research Papers

- ◆ This presentation's objectives are to:
 - discuss general aspects of the MLA handbook,
 - show appropriate ways to cite,
 - explain basic rules and provide examples from a works cited list.

Style Manuals

- ◆ Style manuals are a set of guidelines for the composition and presentation of written works.
- ◆ They help:
 - avoid plagiarism
 - document the work (citation and works cited list)
 - standardize the paper (font, spacing, abbreviations, footnotes, among others)
- ◆ MLA is the handbook most frequently used to format written works, citations and works cited lists in the humanities (art, literature, among others).

Plagiarism

According to the American Heritage Dictionary of English Language (2006) plagiarism in the context of a written work is defined as “to use and pass off (the ideas or writing of another) as one’s own.”

- ◆ One plagiarizes when he/she:
 - ❖ copies another person’s words or ideas on purpose without giving credit to the authors and passes it as if it is theirs.
 - ❖ buys, steals, or borrows someone’s written work and passes it as if it is theirs.
 - ❖ pays someone to write the work and passes it as if it is theirs.

MLA Handbook

- ◆ It is a guide that standardizes written works in terms of:
 - format,
 - abbreviations, notes, and footnotes,
 - citations and works cited lists,
 - preparing papers for publication.

General Text Format

- ◆ Print on 8.5x11 paper with one-inch margins at the top, bottom, left and right. Your last name and the paper's page number are placed in the upper-right corner at half an inch of each page of the document.
- ◆ Do not justify the text: align left.
- ◆ Indent the first line of each paragraph half an inch.
- ◆ Leave one space after each period.
- ◆ Use legible fonts, such as Times New Roman size 12.

General Text Format

- ◆ The title is centralized: do not underline or use italics, bold or quotation marks. Do not place a period at the end of the title.
- ◆ Double-space the whole document including citations, notes, and the works cited list.

MLA: Basic Format

First Page

- ◆ Do NOT use a cover page unless the professor specifically requests it.
- ◆ Begin writing on the top left corner of the first page: your name, followed by the professor's name, the course number or title, and the date (see the example to the right). Double-space this information.
- ◆ Next, write and centralize the title of your paper immediately after.
- ◆ Begin writing your paper in the next line. Indent the first line of the text in this and all subsequent paragraphs. Double-space the entire document.
- ◆ Note that on the upper-right corner of the page, separated a half inch from the margin, the header includes your last name, a space, and the page number of the paper.

Catlin 1

Beth Catlin
Professor Elaine Bassett
English 106
3 August 2009

Andrew Carnegie: The Father of Middle-Class America

For decades Americans couldn't help but love the red-headed, fun-loving Little Orphan Annie. The image of the little girl moving so quickly from poverty to wealth provided hope for the poor in the 1930s, and her story continues to be a dream of what the future just might hold. The rags-to-riches phenomenon is the heart of the American Dream. And few other people have embodied this phenomenon as much as Andrew Carnegie did in the late 1800s and early 1900s. His example and industry caused him to become the father of middle-class America.

Andrew Carnegie can be looked to as an ideal example of a poor immigrant making his way up to become leader of the capitalist world. Carnegie was born into a poor working-class family in Scotland. According to the PBS documentary "The Richest Man in the World: Andrew Carnegie," the Industrial Revolution was difficult on Carnegie's father, causing him to lose his weaving business. The Carnegie family was much opposed to the idea of a privileged class, who gained their wealth simply by inheritance ("Richest"). This type of upbringing played a large factor in Andrew Carnegie's destiny. In order to appease his mother's desire for material benefits, and perhaps in an effort to heal his father's wounds, Carnegie rejected poverty and cleaved to prosperity.

Carnegie's character was ideal for gaining wealth. His mother taught him to "look after the pennies, and the pounds will take care of themselves;" he later turned this proverb into "watch the costs, and the profits take care of themselves" ("Richest"). Such thrift was integral to his future success. He also believed that "all is well since all goes better" ("Richest"). His theory

A citation is

- ◆ The use of someone else's ideas or exact words to either strengthen our argument or to document our work.

When quoting:

- ◆ We need to indicate where we obtained this information from so as not to plagiarize.
- ◆ In-text citations should clearly lead the reader to a specific source in the works cited list.

MLA: Types of Quotations

- ◆ The MLA style handbook presents two ways of quoting: the direct quote and the paraphrase.
 - ❖ A **direct quote** is when you reproduce a text word by word. This type of quotation is enclosed within quotation marks.
 - ❖ **Paraphrasing** refers to writing an author's ideas in your own words. Even when you express them in your own words, the ideas still belong to the original author; therefore, you must give credit to the author. This type of quote is inserted in the text without quotation marks, but it still requires parenthetical citation to give credit to the original author.
 - ❖ The types of quotes that the MLA style handbook presents are discussed in the following slides. The most important elements in each citation are presented in red.

MLA: Types of Citations

◆ Example 1: Direct Quote

Wordsworth stated that Romantic poetry was marked by a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (263).

In a direct quote, the text is enclosed within quotation marks. Citation includes the last name of the author, and the page number where the text can be found.

In this example, the last name of the author is included in the sentence; therefore, only the page number goes inside the parenthesis at the end.

MLA: Types of Citations

◆ Example 2: Direct Quote

Romantic poetry is characterized by the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (Wordsworth 263).

In this example of a direct quote, the quotation marks enclose the quotation and the parenthetical citation includes the author's last name and the page number where the excerpt is found followed by a period.

If the sentence of the original source begins with a quote, the first letter of the sentence begins with a capital letter. If the sentence of the original source does not begin with a quote or it is a phrase, the first letter of the citation begins with a lower case letter.

MLA: Types of Citation

◆ Example 3: Direct Quote

According to an expert on the topic, “it is commonly assumed that violence is part of our frontier heritage. But the historical record shows that frontier violence was very different from violence today” (McGrath 17).

In this example, the author’s last name and the page number are placed within parenthesis at the end of the quote. MLA emphasizes that this type of citation should be introduced with a signal phrase that highlights the beginning of the quote. In this case the signal phrase is “according to an expert on the topic.”

MLA: Types of Citation

◆ Example 4: Direct Quote (Block quotation)

If a direct quote is longer than 4 lines of text, we place it as an independent block ½ inch from the main margin. Punctuation is different for this type of citation: the parenthesis with the bibliographic information is placed after the period. The example is in the next slide.

MLA: Types of Citation

- ◆ Example: Direct Quote (Block quotation: more than 4 lines in length)

As **Bocij** points out there are many ways in which criminals use the Internet to defraud or damage others:

At one level a seller might misrepresent an item in an online auction in order to cheat a buyer out of a few extra dollars. At another, a carefully managed stock fraud can damage an industry, resulting in losses that can be measured in billions of dollars. **(109)**

MLA: Paraphrase

- ◆ According to MLA, plagiarism sometimes occurs when we fail to give credit to the original author when: quoting directly or paraphrasing, using a word or phrase coined by another author and paraphrasing an argument or train of thought.
- ◆ Remember that paraphrase is to present the author's ideas in your own words; it is not enough to replace some of the author's words with synonyms and call it a paraphrase.

MLA: Types of Citations

◆ Example: Paraphrase

The combination of new technologies and the ever-changing field of information sciences offers a wide variety of possibilities when we set out to find the necessary information (Fidishun 328).

This example presents a citation in which we paraphrase or write the author's idea in our own words. However, because it is not our original idea, we must give credit to the author by including his or her last name and the page number where the excerpt can be found within a parenthesis.

MLA: Authorship in Citations

- ◆ In many cases, the author of the source is not a person, but a corporation, an association, a university, or other. In these cases, the information related to the authorship is provided where an author's name would usually appear.
 - ❖ If the author is a corporation, a university or another type of institution, the name of the entity is used in the citation. The name can be placed within parenthesis at the end of the citation or it can be mentioned in the signal phrase that introduces it.

Example: **University of Puerto Rico (57)**
 - ❖ If the source does not have an author, the parenthetical citation should include the title of the source. For example:

We see so many global warming hotspots in North America likely because this region has "more readily accessible climatic data and more comprehensive programs to monitor and study environmental change . . ." (**"Impact of Global Warming" 6**).

MLA: Authorship in Citations

- ◆ When the extract to be cited is part of an anthology, the authorship belongs to the author of the section of the anthology, not to the editor.

MLA: Authorship in Citations

- ◆ If the source has two authors, place both authors' last names in the signal phrase to introduce the quote or at the end of the quote in parenthesis, following the format of the previous examples:

Chomsky and Herman argue that “a propaganda model focuses on this inequality of wealth and power and its multilevel effects on mass-media interests and choices” (2).

- ◆ If the source has 3 authors or more, introduce only the first author's last name followed by the phrase et al. The phrase that introduces the quote should be plural.

Example: According to Stinson, et al,...

MLA: Citations for Non-Print or Online Sources

- ◆ Include the information on the works cited list in the following order: author, title, name of website or title of movie.
- ◆ Page numbers are not required.
- ◆ Write only the title of the web page, not the complete online address on the document.
- ◆ Whenever the title is the same as the online address, write only part of it. Example:
 - cnn.com **NOT** <http://www.cnn.com>

MLA: General Information

- ◆ According to MLA general information does not have to be cited. However, you should assess the presentation or paper's audience and consider if that information would be general to them. Therefore, it is essential that you know the audience or reader you are addressing.
- ◆ Examples of general information are:
 - ❖ Dates of important historical events (Christopher Columbus arrived in America in 1492)
 - ❖ Biographic facts about famous historical figures (George Washington was the first president of the United States)
 - ❖ Geographic facts (The United States is part of the American continent)

Strategies to Avoid Plagiarism

- ◆ According to MLA, you can avoid plagiarism by:
 - ❖ Making a list of all the authors and points of view referenced so you can check them off as you write your paper and cite them.
 - ❖ Keeping a clear track of your ideas, separate from a summary of other authors' ideas, and the direct quotations you plan to include.
 - ❖ Identifying all the necessary elements to cite all the sources you use as direct quotations, paraphrase, arguments and facts.
 - ❖ Speaking with your professor or librarian when you are not sure about the proper use of a source.

MLA: Works Cited

- ◆ Begin the works cited list on a separate page at the end of the paper.
- ◆ Write **Works Cited** as the title of the page, centralized at the very top. Do not write the title in bold, italics or underline the words. Do not use quotation marks.
- ◆ All entries should be double-spaced, as well as the rest of the document.
- ◆ Do not indent the first line of each entry. Instead, indent the second line and the ones that follow.
- ◆ For online sources, you should include the URL address.
- ◆ When the document is written in English, the first letter of each word in the title of a source is capitalized, except for prepositions and articles.

MLA: Works Cited

- ◆ Contrary to previous editions, the 2016 MLA revision does not require that we indicate the format of the source (print, web) in the bibliographic entry.
- ◆ In the case of journals, use the abbreviation vol. for volume, no. for number, p. for page and pp. for several pages.
- ◆ Periods are placed only after the author's name and the title. Use a comma after all other elements in the entry.
- ◆ The city of publication, year of original publication and the access date to the website are included in the entry only if it is necessary or relevant to the reader.

MLA: Works Cited

- ◆ Example of a book with one author:

Hersey, John. *Hiroshima*. Vintage Books, 1989.

- ◆ The author's last name appears first, according to the information that the source provides, followed by the author's first name. After the period, add the title of the source in italics, then a period, followed by the publisher and the date of publication. Pay special attention to all punctuation marks.

MLA: Works Cited

- ◆ If the source has two or more authors, they must be presented in the same order in which they appear in the source. Place the last name before the first name only for the first author mentioned (last name, first name); the names of the authors that follow go in their traditional form (first name last name). For example:

Baron, Robert, and John Smith.

MLA: Works Cited

- ◆ If the source has more than three authors, the name of the first author is the only one included, followed by the phrase *et al* (Latin for “and others”), or you may list all the authors in the order in which they appear in the original work. For example:

Plag, Ingo, et al. *Introduction to English Linguistics*. Mouton, 2007.

or

Plag, Ingo, Maria Braun, Sabine Lape, and Mareile Schramm.
Introduction to English Linguistics. Mouton, 2007.

MLA: Examples of Works Cited

◆ Academic Journal in Print Format

Piper, Andrew. "Rethinking the Print Object: Goethe and the Book of Everything."

PMLA, vol. 121, no.1, 2006,124-38.

- ◆ In this example, the author's last name and first name go first, followed by the title of the article inside quotation marks. Then, we add the name of the journal in italics, the information related to the volume and issue, followed by the year of publication in parenthesis. Immediately after, write a colon, space, the page numbers where the article is located, and the medium of publication.
- ◆ An academic journal is a periodical in which articles have been peer reviewed. Like other periodicals, academic journals have volume and issue numbers. In the case presented above, 121 is the volume and the 1 is the issue number.

MLA: Examples of Works Cited

◆ Article from an Academic Journal Obtained from a Database

Jaramillo, Carlos y Andrés Cárdenas. "Global Warming and Neotropical Rainforests: A Historical Perspective." *Annual Review of Earth and Planetary Sciences*, vol. 41, 2013, pp. 9-16. *Annual Reviews*, doi: 10.1146/annurev-earth-042711-105403. Accessed October 5th, 2016.

- ◆ The entry on the works cited list for an article from an academic journal that was obtained from a database is presented in the same way an article from a printed academic journal is presented. However after the page number, specify the name of the data base in italics and the DOI number. In the cases that the DOI is not specified, write the URL. If needed, write the date the article was retrieved.

MLA: Examples of Works Cited

- ◆ Magazine Article: Magazines like *Times* and *National Geographic*, among others, are usually intended for the general public, yet many of them include information that can be used to document facts.
- ◆ This type of source would appear in the Works Cited page as follows:

McEvoy, Dermont. "Little Books, Big Success." *Publishers*

Weekly, 30 Oct. 2006, pp. 26-28.

- ◆ The last name and first name of the article's author appear first separated by a comma. Then write the title of the article inside quotation marks, followed by the title of the magazine in italics. After that, add the date of publication and the page numbers. Be sure to check all punctuation.

MLA: Examples of Works Cited

- ❖ If the magazine is published weekly or every two weeks, include the complete date: day, month abbreviation (except May, June and July) and the year. Then, write a comma and the page numbers of the article. For example:

5 Nov. 2014, pp. 70-71.

5 June 2014, pp. 15-18.

- ❖ If the magazine is published monthly or every two months, include the month or months and the year, followed by the page numbers. The volume and issue are not specified. For example:

Kates, Robert W. "Population and Consumption: What We Know, What We Need to Know." *Environment*, Apr. 2000, pp. 10-19.

MLA: Examples of Works Cited

- ◆ Movies: The entry usually begins with the title in italics. Other elements that follow are the director's name, the performers' names, the distributor, and the release year. For example:

It's a Wonderful Life. Directed by Frank Capra, performances by James Stewart, Donna Reed, Lionel Barrymore, and Thomas Mitchel, RKO, 1946.

MLA: Useful Links

<http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocMLA.html>

[http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?
keyword=k70847&pageid=icb.page363223](http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k70847&pageid=icb.page363223)

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Works Cited

The Modern Language Association of America. *MLA Handbook*, 8th ed., MLA, 2016.

“Plagiarism.” *The American Heritage Dictionary of English Language*. American Heritage Publishing Company, 2006.

The Purdue OWL Family of Sites. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2008, owl.english.purdue.edu/owl. Accessed 29 Sep. 2016.