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All English Courses

22 August 2005

MLA Style

This handout provides a snapshot of Modern Language Association formatting and citation style requirements for formal papers as defined in the sixth edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. If you are taking 310 or 491 with me, you should use this handout in conjunction with the *MLA Handbook*. If you are taking English 101 or 102 with me, you should use this handout in conjunction with our course rhetoric. If you are taking 311, 312, 319, 322, or 382 with me, you may use this handout exclusively. All courses should note that I penalize formal papers and take-home exams for not following MLA guidelines; refer to your course syllabus for your particular course's penalties.

The first page of this handout describes general formatting guidelines. Pages two through five demonstrate how to quote while pages five through eleven illustrate how to reference quoted sources in a Works Cited page. A checklist appears on the final page.

1. General Formatting

Your formal paper should be typed in 12pt, Times New Roman font, double-spaced, and maintain 1" margins, except for the header (described below). Do not commence your paper with a title page; instead, provide a double-spaced heading that includes your full name (Jane Doe) your professor's name (Professor Blazer), the course number (English 101), and the date (22 August 2005) on the top left-hand corner. Then, while maintaining double-spacing, provide a centered paper title. Do not add extra lines around the title or between paragraphs. Note that each page must have a running header, which includes your last name and page number, set ½" from the top of page and justified to the right margin. Do not manually type the header on each page; instead, use your word processing program to automatically insert a running header in the correct position on each page, or download an MLA styled paper template from our course site. Here is what your margins, running header, heading, title, and first three lines of text should look

like:

> Doe 1
>
> Jane Doe
>
> Professor Blazer
>
> English 101
>
> 22 August 2005
>
> ### MLA Style Is Keen
>
> Comic Book Guy calls the *Chicago Manual of Style* the worst guidelines ever, and Bart
> Simpson tells the American Psychological Association to eat his shorts. However, I submit that
> the Modern Language Association provides the best style guidelines ever. From header to works

2. Quoting

Next, let us discuss quoting. Do use in-text parenthetical citations, but do not use footnotes. Only use endnotes if they are absolutely warranted and you discuss their use with me first. Note that quotes absolutely cannot stand alone as sentences. Quotes must be introduced; they must be attached to your own sentence. Do not let the quote do all the work. Introduce the passage, quote the passage, and then explain and/or interpret the passage thoroughly. The author, source, and page number of the quote must be made clear to the reader, through context and/or parenthetical citation. If the source and author have already been provided or are provided in context of the introductory sentence or surrounding paragraph(s), simply cite the page number in parentheses after the closing quotation mark. This is called the parenthethical citation. To quote less than four lines of prose, enclose the lines within quotation marks and conclude it with a parenthetical citation followed by a period. The following pages provide examples of how to quote prose, drama (including film and television), and poetry. Because the goal of these pages is to demonstrate correct quotation style, I will not be explaining the quotes and each type of quote will be set off in a new paragraph. In your own papers, you should never let the quote simply speak for itself, and you should never allow a quote to constitute an entire paragraph.

2.1. Prose: four lines or less of text

A typical citation includes 1) an introduction to the quote punctuated by a comma or semicolon, 2) the quote itself distinguished by double quotation marks, 3) a parenthetical citation that includes the author's last name and page number, 4) followed by a period. For example, Roquentin, the protagonist of *Nausea*, realizes that he exists in a void: "Now I knew: things are entirely what they appear to be––and behind them . . . there is nothing" (Sartre 96). Generally speaking, you should make sure through surrounding context and/or parenthetical citation that your reader knows who the author and title of the work being quoted are. If you have already introduced the author and title of the work, either in the introduction to the quote or in surrounding context, then you can safely provide simply the page number in the parenthetical citation. For example, in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*, Edna Pontellier, who has been struggling to overcome her sense of being caught and possessed by her husband, concludes, "I'm not going to be forced into doing things. I don't want to go abroad. I want to be alone" (109).

2.1.1. Prose: more than four lines of text

If a quote occupies more than four lines of text of your paper, you should turn it into a block quote. Start a new line, do not use quotation marks, indent the quote 1" from the left-margin only (*not* the right-margin), and place your period *before* the parenthetical citation. For example, the unnamed narrator of Angela Carter's "Flesh and the Mirror" meditates upon the psychological effect of mirrors:

> Mirrors are ambiguous things. The bureaucracy of the mirror issues me with a passport to the world; it shows me my appearance. But what use is a passport to an armchair traveler? Women and mirrors are in complicity with one another to evade the action I/she performs that shell cannot watch, the action with which I break out of the mirror, with which I assume my appearance. But *this* mirror refused to conspire with me; it was like the first mirror I'd ever seen. It reflected the embrace beneath it without the least guile. All it showed was inevitable. But I myself could never have dreamed it. (70)

2.2. Poetry

MLA format requires poetry be cited by line rather than page number. However, if a poem is more than a page long and the edition does not provide line numbers, feel free to cite the page number rather than the lines.

2.2.1. Poetry: one or two lines

When quoting one or two lines of poetry, separate each line by a slash (/). In "In the Waiting Room," Elizabeth Bishop attempts to convince herself of her individuality: "But I felt: you are an *I*, / you are an *Elizabeth*" (lines 60-61).

2.2.2. Poetry, three or more lines

Technically, MLA requires block quoted poetry to be double-spaced. However, I believe this to be a misguided rule for it destroys poetic intent and meaning which are directly related to line and page layout. Indent the quote 1" from the margin, but do not double-space it unless the poem itself is double-spaced. If a line runs over, indent it an additional 1/4" or 3 spaces. Wary of writing, the speaker in "The Instruction Manual" daydreams of touring Mexico:

> Not one of them has to worry about getting out this manual on schedule.
> And, as my way is, I begin to dream, resting my elbows on the desk and leaning
>   out of the window a little,
> Of dim Guadalajara! City of rose-colored flowers!
> City I wanted most to see, and most did not see, in Mexico!
> But I fancy I see, under the press of having to write the instruction manual,
> Your public square, city, with its elaborate little bandstand! (Ashbery 8)

2.3. Drama, Film, and Television

When quoting plays, screenplays, or teleplays that you have read in print, provide the page number. When quoting plays, films, or television programs that you have only watched (and thus do not have a page number), simply provide the title in the parenthetical citation. For example, Jack Lipnik asserts, "The writer is king here at Capitol Pictures" (*Barton Fink*).

2.3.1. Monologue

When quoting just one character, treat the quote as you would regular prose. Consequently, four or less lines of monologue are quoted as in-text citation while more than four lines of text are block quoted. For example, Estragon sets the tone and thema of *Waiting for Godot* with his

opening line: "Nothing to be done" (Beckett 7). When quoting verse plays that provide line numbers in the margin, such as those by Shakespeare, your citation should include act, scene, and line numbers rather than page numbers. For example, Hamlet realizes, "the play's the thing / Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King" (2.2.584-585).

2.3.2. Dialogue

To quote more than four lines of dialogue in a play, film, or television program, capitalize and indent each character's name 1" and follow it with a period. If a line runs over, indent the next line an additional 1/4" or 3 spaces:

> CARDIN. What's the matter, Martha?
>
> MARTHA. Nothing.
>
> CARDIN. (*His face is grave, his voice gentle.*) Yes, there is. For a long time you
>   and I have had something to talk about. (Hellman, *The Children's Hour* 23)

3. The Works Cited Page

A Works Cited page for the quoted sources appears on the final page of this paper. The remaining pages of this handout detail the proper MLA citation format for annotated bibliographies and works cited pages; however, it only gives general rules, which I have categorized here as 1) print sources (books and periodicals), 2) film and television, and 3) electronic sources. When you come across a source that does not quite fit within these guidelines, check with the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* or me.

At the end of your paper, start a new page and title it Works Cited in the center of the page. Alphabetize your works cited page by authors' last names. Maintain double-spacing and normal fonts throughout.

3.1. Books

Here is the information that is required in a book reference on the Works Cited page:

> the author's name
> the title of the chapter (if citing only one article or chapter)
> the title of the book
> the edition (if applicable)
> the editor's name (if applicable)
> the translator's name (if applicable)

the place of publication
the publisher
the date
the page numbers (if citing only one article or chapter)

3.1.1. A Book by a Single Author

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. *Book Title*. City of Publication: Publisher, Year of

Publication.

Abzurg, Bella. *Gender Gap: Bella Abzurg's Guide to Political Power for American Women*.

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.

3.1.2. A Book by Two or More Authors

First Author's Last Name, First Author's First Name and Second Author's Name. *Book Title*.

City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.

Richards, J. M. and Nikolaus Pevsner. *The Anti-Rationalists*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1973.

3.1.3. Two or More Books by the Same Author

In the second of two citations by the same author, use two em-dashes in place of the author's

name.

Rapping, Elayne. *The Looking Glass World of Nonfiction TV*. Boston: South End, 1987.

---. *Media-tions: Forays into the Culture and Gender Wars*. Boston: South End, 1994.

3.1.4. Multiple Publishers

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. *Book Title*. First City of Publication: First Publisher;

Second City of Publication: Second Publisher, Year of Publication.

Wallis, Roy. *The Elementary Forms of New Religious Life*. London: Routledge; Boston: Kegan,

1984.

3.1.5. An Anthology or a Compilation

Editor's Name(s), ed(s). *Book Title*. Edition (if applicable). City of Publication: Publisher, Year

of Publication.

Petracca, Michael and Madeline Sorapure, eds. *Common Culture: Reading and Writing about*

American Popular Culture. 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall-Pearson,

2004.

3.1.6. A Translation

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. *Book Title*. Trans. Translator's Name. City of
      Publication, Year of Publication.

Cixous, Hélène. *The Book of Promethea*. Trans. Betsy Wing. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1991.

3.1.7. An Essay, Chapter, or Story from an Anthology or Compilation

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. "Chapter/Story Title." Original Year of Publication
      (if known). *Book Title*. Ed. Editor's Name. Trans. Translator's Name (if applicable).
      City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication of Book. First Page of Story-Last
      Page of Story.

Kafka, Franz. "The Metamorphosis." 1916. *The Complete S*tories. Ed. Nahum N. Glatzer.
      Trans. Willa and Edwin Muir. New York: Shocken, 1971. 89-139.

3.1.8. An Essay from an Anthology or Compilation

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. "Essay Title." *Book Title*. Edition (if applicable).
      Ed. Editor's Name(s). City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. First Page of
      Essay-Last Page of Essay.

Friedman, Thomas L. "Revolution Is U.S." *Signs of Life in the USA: Reading on Popular*
      Culture for Writers. 4th ed. Eds. Sonia Maasik and Jack Solomon. Boston: Bedford-St.
      Martin's, 2003. 132-7.

3.1.9. Articles or Essays Reprinted in an Anthology or a Compilation

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. "Article/Essay Title." Original Publication
      Information. Rpt. in *Book Title*. Edition (if applicable). Ed. Editor's Name. City of
      Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. First Page of Article-Last Page of Article.

Holland, Norman N. "Unity, Identity, Text, Self." *PMLA* 90 (1975): 813-22. Rpt. in
      Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism. Ed. Jane P.
      Tompkins. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1980. 118-33.

3.2. Periodicals

Here is the required information for a periodical reference on the Works Cited page:

the author's name
the title of the article
the title of the journal
the volume number
the issue number
the year of publication
the page numbers

3.2.1. Scholarly Journal Article: Each Issue Paginated Separately

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. "Article Title." *Journal Title* Volume.Issue (Year): First Page of Article-Last Page of Article.

Hallin, Daniel C. "Sound Bite News: Television Coverage of Elections, 1968-1998." *Journal of Communication* 42.2 (1992): 5-24.

3.2.2. Scholarly Journal Article: Continuous Pagination

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. "Article Title." *Journal Title* Volume (Year): First Page of Article-Last Page of Article.

Bauman, Sandra and Susan Herbst. "Managing Perceptions of Public Opinion: Candidates' and Journalists' Reactions to the 1992 Polls." *Political Communication* 11 (1994): 133-44.

3.2.3. Magazine Article

Note: Magazines and newspapers are not usually considered scholarly resources, therefore you should NOT use them unless your instructor and assignment prompt specifically allow them.

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. "Article Title." *Magazine Title* Day Month Year: First Page of Article-Last Page of Article.

Mehta, Pratap Bhanu. "Exploding Myths." *New Republic* 6 June 1998: 17-9.

3.2.4. Newspaper Article

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. "Article Title." *Newspaper Title* Day Month Year: First Page of Article-Last Page of Article.

Hirsch, Marianne. "The Day Time Stopped." *Chronicle of Higher Education* 25 Jan. 2002: B11-14.

3.3. Film and Television

Here is the required information for a film or television reference on the Works Cited page:

the title of the film or television program
the title of the episode of the television program (if citing a particular episode)
the director's name (for film)
the production company (for film) or the network (for television)
the episode airdate (for television) or the year of release (for film)

3.2.1. Film

Film Title. Dir. Director's Name. Production Company, Year of Release.

Donnie Darko. Dir. Richard Kelly. Flower Films, 2001.

3.2.2. Television Episode

"Episode Title." *Program Title*. Network. Day Month Year of Original Broadcast

"Strangers in the House." *My So-Called Life*. ABC. 20 Oct. 1994.

3.3. Electronic Sources

Note: Online publication is an evolving entity with some very good, scholarly, and authoritative sites; however, those sites are far outnumbered by non-scholarly, non-authoritative sites. You should learn to tell the difference and you should always check with your instructor and your specific assignment prompt to determine if you are allowed to use online sources for a research paper.

Here is the required information for an electronic source on the Works Cited page:

the author's name (if known)
the title of the particular document in quotation marks
the title of the complete work (if applicable) in italics
the editor's name (if applicable, if known)
the date of publication or last revision (if available)
name of institution or organization sponsoring or associated with site (if available)
the date of visit in parentheses
the full hypertext transfer protocol address (URL) enclosed within angle brackets

3.3.1. Scholarly Project

Project Title. Ed. Editor's Name (if known). Original Date of Publication. University. Day

Month Year of Viewing <URL>.

Victorian Women Writers Project. Ed. Perry Willett. Apr. 1997. Indiana U. 26 Apr. 1997

<http://www.indiana.edu/~letrs/vwwwp/>.

3.3.2. Professional Site

Site Title. University. Day Month Year of Viewing <URL>.

Portuguese Language Page. U of Chicago. 1 May 1997

> <http://humanities.uchicago.edu/romance/port/>.

3.3.3. Personal Site

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. Home page. Day Month Year of Viewing <URL.>

Lancashire, Ian. Home page. 1 May 1997 <http://www.chass.utoronto.ca:8080/~ian/index.html>.

3.3.4. Book

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. *Book Title*. Original Print Publication Information.

> *Scholarly Project Title*. Ed. Editor's Name (if applicable). Date of Last Update.
>
> University Affiliation. Day Month Year of Viewing <URL.>

Nesbit, Edith. *Ballads and Lyrics of Socialism*. London, 1908. *Victorian Women Writers*

> *Project*. Ed. Perry Willett. Apr. 1997. Indiana U. 26 Apr. 1997
>
> <http://www.indiana.edu/~letrs/wwwp/nesbit/ballsoc.html>.

3.3.5. Poem

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. "Poem Title." *Book Title*. Original Print Publication

> Information. *Scholarly Project Title*. Ed. Editor's Name (if applicable). Date of Last
>
> Update. University Affiliation. Day Month Year of Viewing <URL.>

Nesbit, Edith. "Marching Song." *Ballads and Lyrics of Socialism*. London, 1908. *Victorian*

> *Women Writers Project*. Ed. Perry Willett. Apr. 1997. Indiana U. 26 Apr. 1997
>
> <http://www.indiana.edu/~letrs/wwwp/nesbit/ballsoc.html#9>.

3.3.6. Article in a Journal

Note: If the online journal article is mirroring a print publication, provide the print information

(see above, 3.1.2 Periodicals*) rather than the electronic information. For example, an article*

located in JStor is a scanned copy of the original document, which provides volume, issue, and

date while preserving page numbering.

Author's Last Name, Author's First Name. "Article Title." *Journal Title* Volume.Issue (Year of

> Publication): Number of Paragraphs or First Page-Last Page. Day Month Year of
>
> Viewing <URL>.

Flannagan, Roy. "Reflections on Milton and Ariosto." *Early Modern Literary Studies* 2.3

(1996): 16 pars. 22 Feb. 1997 <http://unixg.ubc.ca:7001/0/e-sources/emis/02-3/

flanmilt.html>.

3.4. Course Lecture

3.4.1. In-Class Lecture

Instructor's Last Name, Instructor's First Name. "Lecture Title." Course Number Course Title.

College or University, City, State. Day Month Year.

Blazer, Alex E. "Poststructuralism and Deconstruction." English 491 Interpretive Theory: The

New Criticism to the Present. 30 Mar. 2005.

3.4.2. Online Lecture Notes

Instructor's Last Name, Instructor's First Name. "Lecture Title." Course Number Course Title.

College or University, City, State. Original Date of Publication (if known). Day Month

Year of Viewing <URL>.

Blazer, Alex E. "Poststructuralism and Deconstruction." English 491 Interpretive Theory: The

New Criticism to the Present. 30 Mar. 2005. 22 Aug. 2005

<http://www.louisville.edu/~a0blaz01/491/Lecture-05-SP-6-Poststructuralism.pdf>.

Works Cited

Ashbery, John. "The Instruction Manual." *Some Trees*. 1956. *The Mooring of Starting Out: The First Five Books of Poetry*. Hopewell, NJ: Ecco, 1997. 8-10.

Barton Fink. Dir. Joel and Ethan Coen. Circle Films and Working Title Films, 1991.

Beckett, Samuel. *Waiting for Godot*. New York: Grove, 1954.

Bishop, Elizabeth. "In the Waiting Room." *Geography III*. *1976*. *The Complete Poems, 1927-1979*. New York: Noonday, 1980. 159-61.

Carter, Angela. "Flesh and the Mirror." *Fireworks: Nine Profane Pieces*. London: Quartet, 1974. *Burning Your Boats: The Collected Short Stories*. New York: Penguin, 1995. 68-74.

Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening*. 1899. Ed. Margo Culley. 2nd ed. New York: Norton, 1994.

Hellman, Lillian. *The Children's Hour*. 1934. New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1981.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Nausea*. 1938. Trans. Lloyd Alexander. New York: New Directions, 1964.

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<div align="center">MLA Style Checklist</div>

1. Running Header: Does your running header include your last name and the current page number on each page, and is the header located on the top-righthand corner of each page, ½" from the top edge?

2. Margins: Does your paper have 1" margins, including the 1" top-margin beneath the running header?

3. Font: Does your paper use a 12pt, Times New Roman font?

4. Heading: Does your paper have a heading which includes your name, the course number, your professor's name, and the date?

5. Title: Does your paper have a centered titled, which directly follows the heading?

6. Line-Spacing: Does your paper double-space everything (except single-spaced block quotations of poetry if applicable)?

7. Quote Introduction: Does your paper introduce all quotes and not allow any quote to stand alone as a sentence?

8. Quotation Style: Does your paper properly quote four lines or less of prose and one or two lines of poetry? Does your paper properly block quote five lines or more of prose, three or more lines of poetry, and dialogue from drama, film, and television?

9. Parenthetical Citation: Are all of your paper's quotes, either in-text or block quotes, followed by a parenthetical citation that includes at base a page number for prose and a line or page number for poetry? Given the context of your quotes' introductions and parenthetical citations, can your reader determine the author, work, and page number of all of your quotes?

10. Quotation Explanation: Does your paper effectively explain or interpret its quoted material?

11. Works Cited: Does your paper include a Works Cited page that properly cites all applicable books, periodicals, film and television, and electronic sources?