Documenting Your Sources

Creating a Works Cited Page

&

In-text Citation

MLA Style Guide

J.P. Case Middle School
Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to help guide you through documenting resources as you write papers and essays for your classes. Throughout the following pages, you’ll find information about basic citation style and how to properly give credit to your sources. We will focus on MLA style formatting as we look at in-text citation and how to create a Works Cited page.
What is MLA Style?

MLA stands for “Modern Language Association” and it’s a style guide that was developed for academic writing. When you go to high school, and if you decide to go to college, MLA is most likely the style guide that you’ll use during your school career.

MLA provides guidelines for creating:

- **In-text Citation** (also called “Parenthetical Citation”)
- **Works Cited** page (also called a “Bibliography”)

Why must I use the MLA Style Guide?

When writing essays and papers where you include information from sources you’re reading, you are required to give credit and cite the sources. You must show where your information has come from. As a writer, it is your responsibility to give credit to the sources that you refer to in your writing. If you do not, you have committed plagiarism, which can result in consequences such as failure, or in some cases, expulsion.
What is a Works Cited page?

Works Cited is another name for a bibliography. It is a page that lists all of the sources that you cited in your paper. Works Cited is the title that the MLA Style Guide uses instead of bibliography.

How Do I Create a Works Cited page?

- Works Cited is always the last page of your paper or essay. Type “Works Cited” at the top of the page and make sure it is centered. Only the word “Works Cited” should be centered. Your sources should be aligned to the left-hand side of the page like the rest of your paper.

- Each source should be cited based on the type of resource you used (Book, e-Book, Website, Encyclopedia, Image, etc.). (Refer to your MLA Citation Booklet!)

- Each source you list reads like one long sentence. Consult your MLA Citation Booklet and don’t forget the hanging indent as you type out your sources!

- Make sure your sources are alphabetized either by the first word or name of the entry.

An example of a Works Cited can be found on the following page.
Works Cited


In-Text Citation

In-text citation is also known as parenthetical citation. Use in-text citation when you refer to information that you took from another source, whether it is a direct quote or if you are paraphrasing someone else’s work.

In-text citation comes at the end of the sentence you are referring to. You place parenthesis around the last name of the author, or if there is no author then the first word in the title of the work you are referencing, as well as the page number.

Here’s an example of a direct quote from Lois Lowry’s *The Giver*:

"After Twelve, age isn't important. Most of us even lose track of how old we are as time passes, though information is in the Hall of Open Records" (Lowry 10).

This citation allows the reader to know where you got your information.
This paragraph is from page 14 of Tamara L. Roleff’s book, *Black Magic and Witches: Fact or Fiction?*

“Because of the danger witches presented to Christianity, church officials believed it was necessary to find and execute all witches. Toward that end, witch-hunters continually devised new methods for determining if the accused was indeed a witch. One practice was known as “witch swimming.” The accused witch was bound – right hand to left foot and left hand to right foot – and thrown into a lake or river. If the accused floated (which often happened because of the trapped air in the victim’s layers of clothing), she was a witch, because, as King James I of England rationalized, the water would not accept those who had “shaken off them the sacred waters of baptism.” If the accused sank, then, she was innocent and was entitled to a Christian burial. Occasionally, the accused witch’s family would be permitted to tie a rope around her waist so that, if she sank, they could drag her out, preferably before she drowned.”

**Here are some different ways that you can refer back to the paragraph above:**

#1

In her book, *Black Magic and Witches: Fact or Fiction?*, Tamara L. Roleff writes, “because of the danger witches presented to Christianity, church officials believed it was necessary to find and execute all witches” (14).

(*If the author and title of the book is mentioned in your sentence, you must only cite the page number in parenthesis at the end.*)

#2

“Occasionally,” writes Roleff, “the accused witch’s family would be permitted to tie a rope around her waist so that, if she sank, they could drag her out, preferably before she drowned” (14).

(*If the author’s name is mentioned in your sentence, you must only cite the page number in parenthesis at the end.*)

#3

Roleff mentions that witch-hunters were always trying to think of new ways to figure out if the people accused of being witches were in fact worthy of being tried (14).

(*If the author’s name is mentioned in your sentence, you must only cite the page number in parenthesis at the end.*)

#4

One method that church officials would use to help them determine who was a witch was a practice called “witch swimming,” which involved binding the accused person’s hands and feet, and toss them into a body of water to see if they would sink or swim (Roleff 14).

(*If you do not mention the book title or author in your sentence, you must the author’s last name and the page number in parenthesis at the end.*)
Source Citation Information

How you cite the different types of sources you use will vary. Citing a print book is done differently than if you cite an e-Book. Citing a Website is different than citing an article in a database. Pay close attention to these differences.

Go to J.P. Case’s Library website and click on “Citation Information / Bib Sheets” to find the proper MLA style citations for your sources.

***Please Note***

The little details in these citations are very important. The order of information, punctuation, italics, quotation marks, and so on must all match exactly to MLA’s format.
• Be smart, ethical writers. Do not pass off someone else’s idea or work as your own.

• Any fact or idea that you received from a source needs to be cited.

• Always cite sources in your writing (In-text Citation) AND at the very end of your work (Works Cited page).

• Whether or not you have intentionally “forgot” to cite a source, it is still considered plagiarism. So don’t forget to cite!