

# MLA Documentation Style

by Amy Herman, Library Faculty

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Academic writing standards require you to credit all sources that you use to write a paper, report, or study. The Modern Language Association (MLA) documentation style provides a guideline for properly crediting your sources by requiring notes in the text of your work that point the reader to an alphabetical list of your sources, called a "Works Cited" list. Properly citing your sources of information allows a reader to locate the original sources of information you used in your writing and will also help you avoid the serious offense of plagiarism.

**New! ►** For more detailed information about the 2009 update for MLA documentation style, consult the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed., located in the Reference section (Ref 808.027 ML699m), Diana Hacker's MLA document: [http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/RES5e\\_ch08\\_s1-0011.html](http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/RES5e_ch08_s1-0011.html), or the Purdue University online writing lab website: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>.

## IN-TEXT CITATIONS

Parenthetical documentation directs the reader to the specific sources of information that you are referencing in the body of your paper. These listings must direct the reader to a particular work listed on your "Works Cited" page. In most cases the author's last name and a specific page number, in parentheses, are enough to identify the source you used and its location within that source. If the item has a corporate author, treat the corporate entity as the author.

Example: During the 1980s global inflation remained steady at around 15 percent (Rogoff 49).

If you are already referring to the author's name in the text of your paper, then you need only cite the specific page number in parentheses.

Example: According to Rogoff, "global inflation averaged 15 percent in the 1980s" (49).

## LIST OF WORKS CITED

The basic components of an MLA citation are:

### Book

Author's Last name, First name. "Title of Chapter or Essay if Applicable." *Title of Book*. Publication Location: Publisher, Year. Print.

### Article, print version

Author's Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Periodical* Vol#.Iss# (Year or date of publication): page number(s). Print.

### Article, electronic version

Author's Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Periodical* Vol#.Iss# (Year or date of publication): page number(s). *Database Name*. Web. Date of access.

### Internet citation

Author's Last name, First name. "Title of Web Page." *Web Site Title* (if distinct from title of web page). Publisher or sponsor of the site. Date of posting. Web. Date of access.

**New! ►** Each citation must declare the format, such as Print, Web, DVD, Videocassette, Television, etc.

**New! ►** Titles of books and journals are now *italicized* instead of underlined.

## PRINT / VIDEO RESOURCE EXAMPLES

### Book with one author

Smith, Noel W. *An Analysis of Ice Age Art: Its Psychology and Belief System*. New York: Peter Lang Pub., 1992. Print.

### Book with two or three authors

Donohoe, Tom, and Neil Johnson. *Foul Play: Drug Abuse in Sports*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1987. Print.

\*\*\* Note: if there are four or more authors, list the first author that appears on the title page/citation, followed by “et al.” or you may give all names in full, in the order in which they appear on the title page.

### Essay in an anthology

Weissman, James. “World Health Has Worsened.” *The Health Crisis: Opposing Viewpoints*. Ed. Barbara Szumski. San Diego: Greenhaven, 1989. 17-26. Print.

### Encyclopedia article

Sobieszek, Robert. “Photography.” *The World Book Encyclopedia*. 1998 ed. Print.

### Magazine article

Murphy, Astin. “Make Way for the Ducks.” *Sports Illustrated* 29 Sept. 2003: 54-59. Print.

### Newspaper article

Callimachi, Rukmini. “Bi-Mart Offers Employee Buyout.” *The Seattle Times* 19 Feb. 2004: E3. Print.

### Journal article.

Rogoff, Kenneth. “Globalization and Global Disinflation.” *Economic Review* 88.4 (2003): 45-79. Print.

### Government publication

United States. Congressional Budget Office. *The Economic and Budget Outlook: Fiscal Years 1999-2008*. Washington: GPO, 1998. Print.

### Television or radio program

“The Great Inca Rebellion.” *NOVA*. Narr. Jay O. Sanders. PBS. KCTS, Seattle, 17 Mar. 2009. Television.

### Motion picture (Video cassette)

*Wiping the Tears of Seven Generations*. Dir. Gary Rhine and Fidel Moreno. Kifaru Productions, 1992. Videocassette.

### Motion picture (DVD)

*Smoke Signals*. Dir. Chris Eyre. Perf. Adam Beach, Evan Adams, Irene Bedard, Gary Farmer and Tantoo Cardinal. Miramax, 2005. DVD.

## ELECTRONIC RESOURCE EXAMPLES

**New!** ► If a date is not available for an electronic format, write n.d. for no date; if a publisher is not named on a Web site, write n.p. for no publisher; if a page number is not given for online journal or database articles, write n.pag. for no pagination.

**New!** ► URLs are not required. However, you are welcome to provide the URL if the citation information may not help the reader easily find the source on their own. Your instructor may also require you to provide URLs.

### **Online periodical article from an electronic database (i.e. ProQuest) with page numbers listed**

Weyandt, Lisa, et al. "The Internal Restlessness Scale: Performance of College Students With and Without ADHD." *Journal of Learning Disabilities* 36.3 (2003): 382-89. *ProQuest*. Web. 20 Jan. 2004.

### **Online periodical article from an electronic database (i.e. ProQuest) without page numbers**

Khan, Adnan. "Imprisoned in the Past." *Maclean's* 121.47 (2008): n.pag. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 21 Apr. 2009.

### **Online periodical article from a Web site**

Dickey, Christopher. "Garbage In, Garbage Out." *Newsweek.com*. Newsweek, 20 Feb. 2004. Web. 23 Feb. 2004.

### **Document from a Web site, with author(s) and date of publication**

Head, Alison and Michael Eisenberg. "Finding Context: What Today's College Students Say about Conducting Research in the Digital Age." *ProjectInfoLit*. Project Information Literacy, Feb. 2009. Web. 21 Apr. 2009.

### **Document from a Web site, unknown author, no date.**

"What Parents Should Know About Information Literacy." *LibraryInstruction.com*. LibraryInstruction.com. n.d. Web. 21 Apr. 2009.

### **Entire Web site, unknown author.**

*Information Literacy*. Information Literacy Portal, University of Idaho, 2009. Web. 21 Apr. 2009.

### **Online government publication**

United States. Dept. of Justice. Bureau of Justice Statistics. *Capital Punishment, 2005*. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Dec. 2006. Web. 20 Feb. 2007.

### **Email**

Doe, John J. "Re: Photography." Message to the author. 23 Jan. 2004. E-mail.

### **Online posting (discussion group, listserv, etc.)**

Abbess, Jo. "What Ahmadinejad actually said, well translated." *Media Lens Message Board*. Media Lens, 21 Apr. 2009. Web. 21 April 2009.

### **Weblog ("blog") entry**

Jerz, Dennis G. "Citing a Weblog in MLA Style." *Jerz's Literacy Weblog*. Seton Hill University, 11 Dec 2003. Web. 01 Mar. 2004.

### **Wiki entry**

"Cashew." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 21 Apr. 2009. Web. 21 Apr. 2009.

## SAMPLE WORKS CITED PAGE

Your "Works Cited" page(s) should include your last name and page number in the upper right hand corner and the title "Works Cited" centered on the page. Entries should be in alphabetical order by author, double-spaced throughout, and subsequent lines of individual entries are indented ½".

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### Works Cited

- Callimachi, Rukmini. "Bi-Mart Offers Employee Buyout." *The Seattle Times* 19 Feb. 2004: E3. Print.
- Dickey, Christopher. "Garbage In, Garbage Out." *Newsweek.com*. Newsweek, 20 Feb. 2004. Web. 23 Feb. 2004.
- Donohoe, Tom, and Neil Johnson. *Foul Play: Drug Abuse in Sports*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1987. Print.
- Information Literacy*, Information Literacy Portal, University of Idaho, 2009. Web. 21 Apr. 2009.
- Khan, Adnan. "Imprisoned in the Past." *Maclean's* 121.47 (2008): n.pag. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 21 Apr. 2009.
- Smith, Noel W. *An Analysis of Ice Age Art: Its Psychology and Belief System*. New York: Peter Lang Pub., 1992. Print.
- United States. Dept. of Justice. Bureau of Justice Statistics. *Capital Punishment, 2005*. Bureau of Justice Statistics. Dec. 2006. Web. 20 Feb. 2007.
- Weissman, James. "World Health Has Worsened." *The Health Crisis: Opposing Viewpoints*. Ed. Barbara Szumski. San Diego: Greenhaven, 1989. 17-26. Print.
- Weyandt, Lisa, et al. "The Internal Restlessness Scale: Performance of College Students With and Without ADHD." *Journal of Learning Disabilities* 36.3 (2003): 382-89. *Proquest*. Web. 20 Jan. 2004.
- "What Parents Should Know About Information Literacy." *LibraryInstruction.com*. LibraryInstruction.com. n.d. Web. 21 Apr. 2009.