

# MLA Referencing / Documentation in Research Papers

## The Purpose of Referencing / Documentation

- 1) to identify (**cite**) other people's ideas and information used **within your essay or research paper**, and
- 2) to indicate the authors or sources of these in a **Works Cited list** at the end of your paper.

## MLA Format

The MLA format is only one of many methods of documentation. Details on the format are found in

- the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (7th ed.) available in the MR Bookstore and in the MR Library
- the *MLA Style Manual* (3rd ed.) available in the MR Bookstore and in the MR Library
- the MLA website at [www.mla.org/style\\_faq1](http://www.mla.org/style_faq1)

## Avoiding Plagiarism – Citation Principles for Essays and Research Papers

Within essays, research papers, and any other written assignments (as in all academic work), you must identify (i.e., reference, document, cite) all quotations, paraphrases, ideas, and images from someone else's work. You must name the original author or source and surround quoted material with quotation marks or set it in a block format as described below. Copying any material and submitting it as your own (**plagiarism**) is an academic offence. Plagiarism may result in failure on the assignment and, in some cases, expulsion from a course. (See the *Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism* and the section on "Plagiarism & Cheating" in the MR Office of Student Conduct *User Guide* at [www.mtroyal.ca/codeofstudentconduct](http://www.mtroyal.ca/codeofstudentconduct).)

**NOTE: Page numbers in square brackets refer to the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (7th ed.) (MLA).**

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## Referencing / Citing Sources Within Your Paper

Whenever you use a quotation from an author or summarize or paraphrase someone else's ideas or research, you must identify (reference/cite) the source. This **in-text citation** is formatted with **parentheses** and shows

- the last name of the **author(s)** of the work, unless already stated [MLA 214-19]
- **or** the first few words of the entry in the Works Cited list (usually the title) if the author is not known [MLA 223-24]
- **page number(s)**, if available [MLA 214-19]

## Citing Short Quotations (4 typed lines or fewer)

[MLA 92-94]

When you incorporate a direct quotation into a sentence, you must surround it with quotation marks and cite its source.

The examples which follow include a quotation taken from page 82 in a journal article by Kathryn Lee:

Lee states, "The ability to think critically is needed in this revolutionary age of technological change" (82).

**OR**

One researcher states, "The ability to think critically is needed in this revolutionary age of technological change" (Lee 82). [MLA 216-17]

## Citing Long Quotations (more than 4 typed lines)

[MLA 217-19]

If the quotation will run to more than 4 lines of type in your paper, you must use

- a **block format** in which all lines of the quotation are **indented 1 inch** from the left margin
- **no** quotation marks

(See the final block quotation in the sample paragraph on page 3.)

## Citing Summaries or Paraphrases

[MLA 93, 214-17, 220-21]

Even if you put information into your own words by summarizing or paraphrasing, you must cite the original author or researcher.

For example, a paraphrase of Lee's earlier quotation could be cited as follows:

One researcher believes that flexibly applied thinking is vital to cope with rapidly changing technology (Lee 82). **OR**  
Lee believes that flexibly applied thinking is vital to cope with rapidly changing technology (82).

## Citing Information When You Have Not Seen the Original Source

[MLA 226]

Sometimes an author writes about research that someone else has done, but you are unable to track down the original research report. For example, in your paper you might include research described in your course textbook.

In the sample paraphrase below, Pither and Soden's research review is discussed in a journal article written by Lee.

**Note:** Because you did not read Pither and Soden's review, you will include only Lee's article in your Works Cited list.

Pither and Soden's 2000 review found little empirical research on university students' critical thinking (qtd. in Lee 83).

## Citing Information If No Page Numbers Are Available

[MLA 179, 184-87, 221]

Many electronic sources such as Web sites contain no page numbers, so you cannot include a page number for the in-text citation.

The exception is for PDFs, which normally show original page numbers. However, when your source explicitly numbers the paragraphs, you can include paragraph number(s), preceded by the abbreviation "par." or "pars." in the citation parentheses.

Members of the Web 2.0 public no longer are "limited to the interpretation of texts" (Beer and Penfold-Mounce, par. 2.5).

## Tips for MLA In-Text Citation

- If the author's name is unavailable, use the shortened title of the article or book or Web page, including the appropriate capitalization and quotation marks/underlining format. ("Ancient Tool") (*Wind It Up*) [MLA 132, 145, 162, 184-87]
- Use 'and' between multiple authors, but for more than 3 authors, name only the first followed by 'et al.'.  
(Smith and Jones 77) (Simpson, Stahl, and Francis 3) (Hacker et al. 14) [MLA 215-16]
- Fit partial quotations grammatically within your sentences rather than inserting full-sentence quotations. [MLA 92-105]
- To leave out part of a quotation to make it fit grammatically or because it contains irrelevant or unnecessary information, insert ellipses where the deletion occurs. [MLA 97-101]  
(See the last sentence in the sample paragraph on page 3.)

- To add or slightly change words within a quotation for grammar or clarity, surround the change with square brackets.

Lee states, "All participants [in the study] completed pretests to assess their critical thinking level" (86). [MLA 101]

## Sample Paragraph with Citations

In their examination of students' acquisition of learning strategies, Simpson, Stahl, and Francis stress that students will use a strategy if they understand how, why, and when to use it (3). They add that this knowledge is important "if students are expected to abandon their usual approaches such as rereading and/or highlighting" (3). Information on study strategies is readily available on the internet (for example, the web page "How to Study"). Lee argues that, once students have acquired a repertoire of study strategies, they should be taught critical thinking skills to evaluate and modify their use of specific strategies (82-83). Peter Foley, a professor at North London University, has observed that motivation is strongly linked to students' use of learning strategies. Motivation, in turn, can be influenced by students' beliefs about learning. Simpson, Stahl, and Francis comment on such beliefs:

[I]t is not atypical for college freshmen to believe that learning should be easy, completed quickly (i.e. the night before in a cramming session) and should happen to them because of what others do for them (i.e. the professor did not teach me to solve that problem . . . [, and they] have formed their personal theories about reading and learning by the time they graduate from high school. (4)

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### Creating the Works Cited List

(See the sample Works Cited on page 5 of this handout.)

- Start the Works Cited on a separate page at the end of your paper. [MLA 130]
- Include only those sources you have cited within your paper. [MLA 129-33]
- Double-space the entire Works Cited list, including the title line. Do not add an extra blank line after the title. [MLA 131]
- Position the first line of each entry flush-left, with subsequent lines wrapping with a ½-inch (hanging) indent. [MLA 131]
- Organize the list alphabetically according to the beginning letter of each entry, ignoring "a," "an," and "the."  
Normally, the author's last name, unless unknown, is the first piece of information in each entry. [MLA 131-33]
- Use correct formatting such as punctuation and sequence of information for each entry in your Works Cited list.  
(See the section below, Using This Handout to Format Your Works Cited List, and examples from pages 6-8.)

### Using This Handout to Format Your Works Cited List

(See the Explanation of Works Cited Listings on page 4 and the sample Works Cited on page 5 of this handout.)

1. Look through the **examples of sources** on pages 6-8 categorized as books, book chapters, periodical and journal articles, Web sites, government and conference reports, and various media.
2. For each of your information sources, find the **combination of formatting** from one or more examples on pages 6-8 that is the best fit. For example, you might need to combine the "book with one author, edition stated" example with "book with three authors." **Work left to right through the sample** reference(s) to reproduce formatting details.
3. Your **goal** is to provide the **information** in each Works Cited listing that would allow someone reading your essay or research paper **to find or get to that particular source** of information or document, so accuracy is important.
4. Include information on **how the source was accessed** (e.g., **Print or Web**), as shown in the examples on pages 6-8.
5. For Web sources with no electronic publication date given, write n.d. (for 'no date') but always include the date on which you accessed the information. Write N.p. if no information is given on place of publication or publisher.

## Explanation of Works Cited Listings

government department author  
 Alberta. Alberta Health. *Proposals for Day Care*. Edmonton: Alberta Health, 2006. Print.  
 government that issued the report      report title      government department also publisher  
 place published      year published

book author      book title      book edition      year published  
 Buzan, Tony. *Make the Most of Your Mind*. Rev. ed. London: Pan, 1988. Print.      hardcopy used  
 place published      publisher

article author      article title      name of journal      volume number      issue number  
 Lee, Kathryn. "Online Collaborative Case Study Learning." *Journal of College Reading and Learning* 37.2 (2007).  
 82-100. Print.      year published  
 total article pages

article authors      article title      year published  
 Simpson, Michele L., Norman A. Stahl, and Michelle Anderson Francis. "Reading and Learning Strategies:  
 Recommendations for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." *Journal of Developmental Education* 28.2 (2004): 2-15.  
*ProQuest Education Journals*. Web. 20 July 2007.      issue number  
 database      date retrieved      name of journal      volume number

chapter authors      chapter title      book title      book editor  
 Smith, Fiona M., and Wendy Jones. "The College Student." *Cross-Cultural Education*. Ed. Charles Wood. London,  
 ON: MacMillan, 2004. 75-105. Print.      place published  
 publisher      year published      total chapter pages

descriptive label      periodical publication date  
 Splenda. Advertisement. *Canadian Living*. Sept. 2009: 13. Print.  
 product advertised      magazine/periodical title      page number

Web page title (author unknown)      no publication date given      date Web site was seen  
 "What Are Kidneys?" *kidney.ca*. Kidney Foundation of Canada. n.d. Web. 2 June 2009.  
 Web site title      Web site sponsor      found on the Web

## Sample Works Cited Page

### Works Cited

- Alberta. Alberta Health. *Proposals for Day Care*. Edmonton: Alberta Health, 2006. Print.
- “Ancient Tool Makers Discovered Fire Treatment.” *Globe and Mail*. CTVglobemedia, 13 Aug. 2009. Web. 14 Aug. 2009.
- Beer, David, and Ruth Penfold-Mounce. “Celebrity Gossip and the New Melodramatic Imagination.” *Sociological Research Online* 14.2-3 (2009): n.pag. Web. 12 June 2009.
- Being Caribou*. Writ. and Dir. Leanne Allison, and Diana Wilson. Natl. Film Board of Can., 2004. DVD.
- Buzan, Tony. *Make the Most of Your Mind*. Rev. ed. London: Pan, 1988. Print.
- . “Mind Maps.” *Buzanworld*. Buzan Org., 2009. Web. 15 May 2009.
- Canada. Statistics Canada. *Frequency of Language by Work, by Census Metropolitan Areas (2001 Census) (Calgary)*. Canada. 27 Jan. 2005. Web. 15 Sept. 2008.
- Downing, Lyn, James C. Carter, and Thomas McManus. *Students in Our Midst*. Toronto: Doubleday, 2007. Print.
- Family Counselling Centre. *Dealing with a Delinquent Student*. Calgary: Family Counselling Centre, 2003. Print.
- Foley, Peter. Personal interview. 24 July 2007.
- Fung, Margaret. “Asthma Rates Increasing.” *Winnipeg Free Press* 12 Dec. 2006: C4+. Print.
- Hacker, Maria E., et al. *The Two-Year College: A Social Synthesis*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice, 2005. Print.
- The Holy Bible: New International Version*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978. Print.
- “How to Study Effectively – 8 Concentration Strategies.” *Studenthacks.org*. N.p., 12 Oct. 2007. Web. 20 July 2009.
- Lee, Kathryn. “Online Collaborative Case Study Learning.” *Journal of College Reading and Learning* 37.2 (2007): 82-100. Print.
- “Raphael.” *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2009. Web. 15 May 2009.
- Simpson, Michele L., Norman A. Stahl, and Michelle Anderson Francis. “Reading and Learning Strategies: Recommendations for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.” *Journal of Developmental Education* 28.2 (2004): 2-15. *ProQuest Education Journals*. Web. 20 July 2007.
- Smith, Fiona M., and Wendy Jones. “The College Student.” *Cross-Cultural Education*. Ed. Charles Wood. London, ON: MacMillan, 2004. 75-105. Print.
- Splenda. Advertisement. *Canadian Living*. Sept. 2009: 13. Print.
- Sullivan, Rosemary, and Mark Levene. “The House of Fiction.” Introduction. *Short Fiction: An Anthology*. Ed. Sullivan and Levene. Don Mills: Oxford, 2003. 4-12. Print.
- Webber, Sheila. “Survey of Plagiarism Penalties.” Online posting. *Information Literacy Weblog*. N.p., 11 July 2007. Web. 19 July 2007.
- Wells, Paul. “Our Universities Can Be Smarter.” *Macleans.ca*. Rogers Digital Media, 28 July 2009. Web. 14 Aug. 2009.
- “What Are Kidneys?” *kidney.ca*. Kidney Foundation of Canada. n.d. Web. 2 June 2009.
- Wind It Up*. Perf. Gwen Stefani. Dir. Joseph Kahn. 2006. Music video. *YouTube*. Web. 29 Oct. 2008.

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## Sample References: Books

- book with one author, edition stated** [MLA 148-52]  
 Buzan, Tony. *Make the Most of Your Mind*. Rev. ed. London: Pan, 1988. Print.
- book / manual with two authors, edition stated** [MLA 148-52, 154-56]  
 Robitaille, Julie, and Robert Connelly. *Writer's Resources: From Paragraph to Essay*. 2nd ed. Boston: Thomson, 2007. Print.
- book with three authors (named in order shown on book's title page)** [MLA 148-52, 154-56]  
 Downing, Lyn, James C. Carter, and Thomas McManus. *Students in Our Midst*. Toronto: Doubleday, 2007. Print.
- book with more than three authors (named with alternative et al. format)** [MLA 148-52, 155]  
 Hacker, Maria E., et al. *The Two-Year College: A Social Synthesis*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice, 2005. Print.
- the Bible and other sacred writings, editor not known** [MLA 162-64, 227-28]  
*The Holy Bible: New International Version*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978. Print.
- e-book, accessed from a library subscription, with print publication date provided** [MLA 187-89]  
 Bayers, Peter L. *Imperial Ascent: Mountaineering, Masculinity, and Empire*. Boulder: UP of Colorado, 2003. *ebrary*.  
 Web. 11 Aug. 2009.
- e-book, found through a web search** [MLA 187-89]  
 Williams, Paul. *Mahayana Buddhism*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: Routledge, 2008. *Freebookspot*. Web. 10 Sept. 2009.

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## Sample References: Articles or Chapters in Edited Books or Encyclopedias

- chapter with known author(s) in an edited book** [MLA 148-52, 157-59]  
 Smith, Fiona M., and Wendy Jones. "The College Student." *Cross-Cultural Education*. Ed. Charles Wood. London, ON: MacMillan, 2004. 75-105. Print.
- chapter as introduction to an edited anthology, authors same as the editors** [MLA 157-58, 161-62]  
 Sullivan, Rosemary, and Mark Levene. "The House of Fiction." Introduction. *Short Fiction: An Anthology*. Ed. Sullivan and Levene. Don Mills: Oxford, 2003. 4-12. Print.
- journal article reprinted in a course pack collection** [MLA 158-59]  
 Mayhew, Matthew J., and Sonia Deluca Fernandez. "Pedagogical Practices That Contribute to Social Justice Outcomes." *Review of Higher Education* 31.1 (2007): 55-80. Rpt. in *SLGY 2155: Supplementary Readings*. Calgary: Mount Royal U, 2009. 10-35. Print.
- article or definition in an online encyclopedia, author unknown** [MLA 162, 184-87]  
 "Raphael." *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2009. Web. 15 May 2009.

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## Sample References: Periodical and Journal Articles

- scholarly journal article with one author, paper-bound** [MLA 137-41]  
 Lee, Kathryn. "Online Collaborative Case Study Learning." *Journal of College Reading and Learning* 37.2 (2007): 82-100. Print.

- scholarly journal article with three authors, from a library database** [MLA 192-93]  
Simpson, Michele L., Norman A. Stahl, and Michelle Anderson Francis. "Reading and Learning Strategies: Recommendations for the 21st Century." *Journal of Developmental Education* 28.2 (2004): 2-15. *ProQuest Education Journals*. Web. 20 July 2007.
- scholarly article with two authors, from a journal published only on the web** [MLA 190-91]  
Beer, David, and Ruth Penfold-Mounce. "Celebrity Gossip and the New Melodramatic Imagination." *Sociological Research Online* 14.2-3 (2009): n.pag. Web. 12 June 2009.
- review of a book, in a journal, from a library database** [MLA 190-93]  
Kloppolo, Grace. Rev. of *Hamlet in Purgatory*, by Stephen Greenblatt. *The Modern Language Review* 98.2 (2003): 432-33. *JSTOR*. Web. 20 July 2007.
- newspaper article, with author, on multiple, discontinuous pages, print publication** [MLA 141-42]  
Fung, Margaret. "Asthma Rates Increasing." *Winnipeg Free Press* 12 Dec. 2006: C4+. Print.
- newspaper article, online version, author unknown, not from a library database** [MLA 184-86]  
"Ancient Tool Makers Discovered Fire Treatment." *Globe and Mail*. CTVglobemedia, 13 Aug. 2009. Web. 14 Aug. 2009.
- magazine article, with author, online version** [MLA 136]  
Wells, Paul. "Our Universities Can Be Smarter." *Maclean's.ca*. Rogers Digital Media, 28 July 2009. Web. 14 Aug. 2009.
- magazine article, with author, from a library database** [MLA 136-37, 142-43]  
Wells, Paul. "Our Universities Can Be Smarter." *Maclean's* 28 July 2009: 32-34. *CBCA Business*. Web. 14 Aug. 2009.
- advertisement in a print magazine** [MLA 203]  
Splenda. Advertisement. *Canadian Living* Sept. 2009: 13. Print.
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- Sample References: Web Sites and Web Pages**
- web page with author, on a corporate web site** [MLA 184-87, 247-48]  
Buzan, Tony. "Mind Maps." *Buzanworld*. Buzan Org., 2009. Web. 15 May 2009.
- web site, author unknown, web site publisher/sponsor unknown** [MLA 184-87]  
"How to Study Effectively – 8 Concentration Strategies." *Studenthacks.org*. N.p., 12 Oct. 2007. Web. 20 July 2009.
- web page on an association's web site, author unknown, no publication date** [MLA 181-87]  
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Reynolds, Walter. "Key Points." *EDUC 1212 Pedagogy*. Course Blackboard page. Mount Royal U, Humanities Dept., Sept. - Dec. 2008. Web. 14 Sept. 2008.
- blog post, web site publisher/sponsor unknown** [MLA 184-87]  
Webber, Sheila. "Survey of Plagiarism Penalties." Online posting. *Information Literacy Weblog*. N.p., 11 July 2007. Web. 19 July 2007.

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## Sample References: Government and Conference Publications

**government report, paper-bound, publisher same as the author** [MLA 174-76]  
 Alberta. Alberta Health. *Proposals for Day Care*. Edmonton: Alberta Health, 2006. Print.

**government report with identified author, on a web site** [MLA 174-77, 184-86]  
 Sosiak, Albert. *Evaluation of Recent Trends in Water Quality in the Elbow River Upstream from Glenmore Reservoir*. Alberta Environment, Water Sciences Branch, 1999. Web. 23 Aug. 2007.

**Statistics Canada data report, on a web site** [MLA 174-76, 184-86]  
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**Canadian legislation (refer to *Can. Guide to Uniform Legal Citation*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed.)** [MLA 205-06]  
 Canada Elections Act. R.S.C. 1985, c. 9, s.2. Print.

**conference presentation in a published proceedings** [MLA 177]  
 Chou, Zhi. "Eastern Influences on Western Literature." *Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Globalization of Text, Paris, 7-10 August 2002*. Ed. Jan Koblenz. Berlin: Global Literature Soc., 2002. 77-81. Print.

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## Sample References: Various Media

**film on a DVD** [MLA 197-98]  
*Being Caribou*. Writ. and Dir. Leanne Allison, and Diana Wilson. Natl. Film Board of Can., 2004. DVD.

**film seen on YouTube, information on director found elsewhere** [MLA 179, 189, 197-98]  
*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. By Tennessee Williams. [Dir. Richard Brooks]. MGM, 1958. *YouTube*. Web. 5 Apr. 2009.

**music video performance on the web (discussion of the performance rather than the song)** [MLA 189, 197-99]  
*Wind It Up*. Perf. Gwen Stefani. Dir. Joseph Kahn. 2006. Music video. *YouTube*. Web. 29 Oct. 2008.

**radio interview on the web** [MLA 185-86, 201-02]  
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**graphic novel (discussion of the artwork rather than the text)** [MLA 165-66]  
 Templesmith, Ben, artist. *HatterM: The Looking Glass Wars*. By Frank Beddor and Liz Cavalier. Los Angeles: Automatic, 2008. Print.

**brochure, corporate author** [MLA 174]  
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**personal interview / communication** [MLA 201-02]  
 Foley, Peter. Personal interview. 24 July 2007.