

Documentation and Plagiarism

An Introduction to Modern Language Association (MLA) Style

MLA

- Unless otherwise noted, all ENG 1113 and 1213 classes, as well as all literature classes, will use MLA style to document resources and format papers.
- Most freshman and sophomore students will use either MLA or the American Psychological Association (APA) styles in their general courses. Both have many similarities, but they also have notable differences.

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Documentation

- The term “documentation” in this context refers to the way we acknowledge our use of sources in our works.
- These sources could be books, magazines, newspapers, DVDs, CDs, art, cartoons, live speeches, internet pages, interviews, photographs, and even content on the back of a cereal box. If someone else has created it, then it needs documentation.

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Exceptions

- In some cases, we do not have to document the use of outside information. These exceptions include:
 - **Common knowledge** – facts, statistics, and images that do not reflect any person’s creative endeavor or original thoughts. For example, biographical information about people or demographic information about a country are not created by anyone. They are facts. If you look them up in an encyclopedia, you do not have to document them in your work unless you take the information word for word from the source. Simply lifting a date or location is one thing, but taking a sentence or paragraph that someone else wrote expressing those facts is plagiarizing that person’s expression.
 - **Personal information** – your own experiences and unpublished works do not have to be specially cited. However, if you have written a previous paper or published something and wish to use specific content from another work, then you do have to document that previous source. This only applies to using specific passages already written in those works.

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Citing

- The verb “cite” refers to the act of quoting, summarizing, or paraphrasing from another source (again, this includes any use of another work – text, graphic, audio, etc.).
- A “citation” is the actual way you incorporate that information and is formatted according to the particular style you are using (e.g. MLA).

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Ways to Cite

- Standard ways to incorporate information in a paper include quoting, summarizing and paraphrasing.
- Though each present the information in different ways, all three **MUST** be cited thoroughly according to the style you are using.
- In MLA, documenting the quotes, summaries, and paraphrases used in a paper is a two-step process involving a works cited (WC) page and in-text citations.

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Works Cited Page

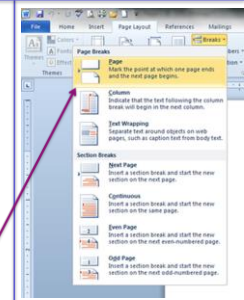
- At the end of an essay that incorporates outside material, the writer must include a Works Cited page that lists all sources used.
- MLA provides guidelines on how to format information and the order it should appear in these work cited entries. Books, periodicals, audio/visual materials, and digital/internet sources all have specific rules.
- The *LB Brief* handbook provides explanations and examples of these rules and types in Chapter 56, pp. 445-81. Rather than trying to memorize each type or to use “common sense” to slap something together, writers should use this chapter to correctly present their works cited page.
- Another helpful resource is <http://easybib.com>, which provides fill-in-the-blank forms for each source type and then correctly formats the information for the writer, including indents, italics, punctuations, and spacing.

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Works Cited Page

- The WC page should always be the very last page in an essay and begin at the top of that page.
- To ensure it is always the very last page, writers can insert a PAGE BREAK at the end of the first page and then insert the WC page. The PAGE BREAK function means that no matter how much the user types before that break, the page immediately after it will always appear as a separate page.
- The graphic to the right shows where the page break option is in Word 2010.



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Works Cited Page

- The WC page is double spaced, like ALL pages in an MLA style paper. No extra spacing appears between entries.
- All entries on the list should be alphabetized by the first piece of information in the entry (usually the author's last name).

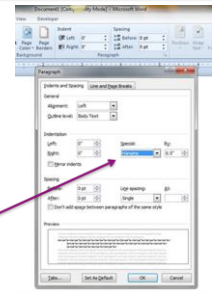
| Works Cited | |
|---|---|
| Aristotle. <i>On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse</i> . | Trans. George A. Kennedy. New York: Oxford UP, 1991. Print. |
| Foley, Jennifer, and Megan Corse. "Being in the Noh: An Introduction to Japanese Noh Plays." <i>Convention of Noh Plays</i> . Edsitement.neh.gov. Edsitement, n.d. Web. 12 Aug. 2011. | |
| Gaskell, Anne. "Student Satisfaction and Retention: Are They Connected?" <i>Open Learning</i> 24.3 (2009): 193-196. | |

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Works Cited Page

- Each entry uses hanging indent, the opposite of paragraph indent. Hanging indent keeps the first line flush with the margin and indents every other line .5 inches until the writer hits the ENTER key.
- To apply this indenting, highlight all WC entries and then choose HANGING from the PARAGRAPH options menu in WORD (use the HELP function if you cannot find this menu).



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In-Text Citations

- The second part of correctly documenting sources happens in the paper itself. How does the writer show the reader where he has used these sources and which works cited entry that information comes from? We do this using in-text citations.
- In-text citations can require multiple steps depending on how the writer integrates the material. For specific rules that govern the different ways and methods of formatting these citations, go to Chapter 56, pp. 437-45, in the *LB Brief*.
- In this class, the terms “signal-in” and “signal-out” refer to the opening and closing methods of letting a reader know when a writer is citing from a source. The *LB Brief* uses the term “parenthetical notation” rather than “signal-out.” The book covers “signal-in” methods in Chapter 53 concerning how to integrate sources into a paper.

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Signal-In

- The “signal-in” refers to how the writer leads in to a quotation, summary or paraphrase. The most common type uses the author's name:
 - According to Leslie Bishop, the city “refuses to fix the water main on Smith Street because it is a low priority” (3).
 - Leslie Bishop reports that the city's lack of response to the water main crisis on Smith Street is more about who needs it fixed rather than a lack of resources to fix it (3).
- Both the quote and paraphrase from Bishop use a signal-in to not only identify the source being used (there should be an entry on the WC page with Bishop's name leading off), but also the signal-in provides a clear indication of when the writer is using someone else's words/ideas and not his own.
- If the work has no author, or if the writer needs to use more than just the author's name, the *LB Brief* provides guidelines.

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Signal-Out

- The signal-out, or parenthetical notation, is how the writer lets the reader know not only important information about the cited material, but it also clearly indicates when the writer has finished citing from a source.
- Signal-Outs are placed inside parentheses: ()
- End punctuation varies depending on the way the writer has incorporated the source. The *LB Brief* provides punctuation rules on pp. 444-45.
- The information that goes inside the parentheses also changes depending on the signal-in used and the type of source. The *LB Brief* pp. 438-44 provides rules.

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Signal-Out: Types

- The most common signal-out uses author's last name and the page number(s) where the information cited is found: "The city refuses to fix the water main on Smith Street" (Bishop 3).
- If the writer uses the author's name in a signal-in to the citation, then the signal-out only has to list the page number: Accord to Bishop, the city "refuses to fix the water main on Smith Street" (3).

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Quoting


- Quoting incorporates outside information into your paper exactly as it appears in the original source.
- To indicate quotations, we put these words inside quotation marks.
- In MLA style, quotations over 4 typed lines long in prose and 3 typed lines in poetry must be set off from the rest of the text.
- Writers can manipulate the original material in some limited ways and still not violate the original intent of the work.

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Long Quotations

Quotes over 4 typed lines in prose or 3 lines in poetry require special formatting from short quotes:

- Hit return before and after the long quote to separate it from the rest of your text.
- Use block indent to move the margin 1 inch from the left for the whole quote (the  icon in word processing programs will move the margin in by .5 inches for each click).
- Block indenting replaces quotation marks in MLA style, so drop quotation marks when using block indent.
- Place end punctuation for quotation and THEN add your parenthetical citation for the quote (short quotation citations go after the end quotation mark but before end punctuation).

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Long Quotation Example

LONG QUOTATION:

Princen, Maniates and Conca warn about the balance of power in determining eco-friendly policies:

In global environmental policymaking arenas, it is becoming more and more difficult to ignore the fact that overdeveloped countries must restrain their consumption if they expect underdeveloped countries to embrace a more sustainable trajectory. (4)

Countries in the G7 accord, therefore, must do more to avoid such an imbalance and still protect the environment.

SHORT QUOTATION (less than 4 typed lines long):

According to Princen, Maniates and Conca, "overdeveloped countries must restrain their consumption if they expect underdeveloped countries to embrace a more sustainable trajectory" (4).

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Manipulating quotes

- A quotation does not have to include an entire sentence. A writer can use just what he needs from the original, as long as what he leaves out does not change the reader's understanding of the original intent of the outside source.

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Examples of Inaccurate Quoting

- By leaving out some information when I quote, I may change the original meaning.
- **Original material from source:** “Though only 5% of all users experience side-effects, the side-effects are so severe, often deadly, that the resulting harm is greater than similar drugs with larger percentages of patients experiencing side-effects. Therefore, the FDA should pull this medication from the shelves.
- **Inaccurate and misleading quoting:** “Only 5% of all users experience side-effects.”
- By leaving out the rest of the information that puts that statistic in context, I have misled my reader about the medicine.

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Allowable Manipulations

- Writers can change some things in a quote to better integrate it into their text.
- Page 420 of the *LB Brief* handbook lists the four specific ways writers can change original quotes using brackets [] to show the changes.

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Changing Quotes

- **Adding words:** if the original quote does not provide information previous explained in the text and that missing info could cause your reader confusion, you can add, in brackets, the missing info. If the info is longer than a word or phrase, you should set up the quote with this information.
- **Example:** “The tabloids [of England] are a journalistic case study in bad reporting,” claims Lyman (52).

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Changing Quotes

- **Changing verb forms:** If the quotation ends a sentence that you begin but the verb does not agree with your lead-in, you can change the verb form to match.
- **Example:** A bad reporter, Lyman implies, is one who “[fails] to separate opinions from facts” (52). *The original quote used the form “fail.”*

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Changing Quotes

- **Changing capitalization:** If the start of your sentence is part of a quote that originally did not begin a sentence, and so is not capitalized, then you can capitalize that letter, putting it in brackets.
- **Example:** “[T]o separate opinions from facts” is the work of a good reporter (Lyman 52).

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Changing Quotes

- **Replacing pronoun with a noun:** If the original quote uses a pronoun that refers to a noun in a previous sentence that you do not quote, then you can replace that pronoun with the correct noun, placing it in brackets.
- **Example:** The reliability of a news organization “depends on [reporters’] trustworthiness,” says Lyman (52). *The original quote used “their” instead of “reporters.”*

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When to use quotes

Writers should use quotations ideally for specific reasons, not as a default way to incorporate outside sources. Those reasons are:

- The original language is unique or dynamic, creating an impact.
- Paraphrasing or summarizing could mislead the reader or original content is too short or too specific to reword.
- You are making a statement about what someone has said or how they have said it, so you need your reader to see the original words to understand the problem.
- The quotation reflects the “body of an opinion or the view of an important expert” (Aaron 417).
- You are quoting to emphasize and support your own previously expressed idea. The quote then becomes part of how you persuade your reader of the strength of your own ideas.
- You are incorporating a visual element, such as a chart.

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Quotation Length

- When incorporating quotations, you should keep them as short as possible. You do not want an information dump – where you paste a large section of someone else’s text into your paper.
- Your quote should only include material relevant to your point. This can include examples that are unnecessary for your needs. You can use ellipses to omit irrelevant material (see pp. 345-47 in the *LB Brief* for the different places to use ellipses).

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Summarizing

- The most useful method of integrating outside materials into our writing is usually summary.
- Summary allows us to take an original quote and rewrite it using our own voice and style, better matching the tone we are using in our paper.
- Summary reduces the original quotation to a few sentences and includes only the essential idea the author is expressing.
- Summary does not include examples, evidence, or background information.
- Summaries include the thesis and conclusion an author reaches in an entire piece. A summary can also cover just sections of a long work, such as a paragraph.
- Summaries require full documentation, just like quotations.

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Summary Example

- **Original:** Such intuition is even making its way, albeit slowly, into scholarly circles, where recognition is mounting that ever-increasing pressures on ecosystems, life-supporting environmental services, and critical natural cycles are driven not only by the sheer number of resource users and the inefficiencies of their resource use, but also by the patterns of resource use themselves. In global environmental policymaking arenas, it is becoming more and more difficult to ignore the fact that overdeveloped countries must restrain their consumption if they expect underdeveloped countries to embrace a more sustainable trajectory. – Thomas Princen, Michael Maniates, and Ken Conca, *Confronting Consumption*, p. 4
- **Summary:** Overconsumption may be a more significant cause of environmental problems than increasing population is (Princen, Maniates and Conca 4).

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Paraphrasing

- Like summary, paraphrasing takes a quotation and rewrites it in our own voice, tone, and style.
- Unlike summary, paraphrasing includes specific details like examples and evidence.
- Paraphrases are usually close to the same length as the original.
- Paraphrases require full documentation, just as quotations and summaries do.
- Paraphrasing is useful when dealing with an original work that might be written at a more basic or advanced level than our reader can handle. We can rewrite the original in a way that best meets our reader’s needs.

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Paraphrase Example: Donne’s “Meditation 17”

Original:

“Perchance he for whom this bell tolls may be so ill as that he knows not it tolls for him. And perchance I may think myself so much better than I am, as that they who are about me, and see my state, may have caused it to toll for me, and I know not that” (Donne 5).

Paraphrase:

The bell that is announcing someone’s approaching death might be for someone who is so sick that he does not realize the bell is for him. Maybe this bell I hear is for me, but I don’t know it because I think I am healthier than I really am. My friends, though, perhaps know the truth and have asked the bells ring for me (Donne 5).

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Double Check Sources

- No matter how you incorporate outside materials, double check to make sure you have provided an accurate, fair, and honest quote, summary, or paraphrase.
- Make sure you have documented all uses of outside materials appropriately for the documentation style you are required to use in the class. *LB Brief* discusses most of pertinent issues regarding this on pp. 420-424 and in chapter 54 (avoiding plagiarism).

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Plagiarism

- Plagiarism involves using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit. Without documentation, these words/ideas appear as your own.
- Plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional. Because the end result is the same, some professors respond to both types the same – failing the student for the assignment or even the course.
- Some information, deemed common knowledge, does not require documentation unless you quote from the source itself. *LB Brief* defines common knowledge as “the standard information on a subject as well as folk literature and commonsense observations” (Aaron 426).
- Plagiarism is considered academic dishonesty and a form of cheating. Your student handbook goes into more details about the consequences of academic dishonesty.

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Common Knowledge: Types

- Standard Information: historical facts and statistics. This does not include “interpretations of facts” (426).
- Folk Literature: Stories with no known author, like *Snow White*. However, a particular author's version of the story is not common knowledge. For example, I could write my own story, but I would have to cite references to versions such as *Mirror, Mirror*, or *Snow White and the Huntsman* – 2 recent retellings of the folk tale.
- Commonsense Observations: Ideas and beliefs commonly known by people. This does not include specific theories or interpretations by people of these common ideas.

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Common Knowledge: Types

- Common knowledge is often a gray area, and teachers can interpret it differently. Always check with an instructor before determining something is common knowledge unless it is a very clear case (e.g. Washington lived at Mt. Vernon).
- If you turn to a source to fill out your knowledge on a subject, you may not know enough to determine if the info you want to use is common knowledge. If you do not have time to ask your instructor, play it safe and cite the information anyway.
- Common knowledge deals in the basic facts or info. It does not refer to how someone else has written them down. So *Snow White* may be common knowledge, but Grimm's version of it is not. If I were to copy parts of Grimm's story without giving him credit, I would still be plagiarizing his work. Though I may get facts from a dictionary, such as a common definition, if I copy and paste Webster's exact words in my paper, I am plagiarizing because someone else chose those specific words and arrangement of ideas. Therefore, the info itself might be common knowledge, but the style, diction, arrangement, and design are not.

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Intentional Plagiarism: Types

- Inserting original material from another source without quotation marks or citations. This material can be as short as a phrase or as long as an entire paper.
- Using a paraphrase or summary of original material without citations and acknowledgment of the source.
- Buying, downloading, or retyping an entire paper from another source, such as the internet or a magazine, and submitting it as your assignment.

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Unintentional Plagiarism: Types

- Unintentional plagiarism is often called “technical plagiarism” because the writer has usually misapplied, misunderstood or didn't remember a documentation rule, or the writer simply made a mistake on some sources but not all. The overall intent in the paper, though, is clearly NOT to cheat or steal work from someone else.
- Leaving off quotation marks around a quote but still including citations.
- Quoting but leaving out citations.
- Failing to use citations for some summaries or paraphrases in a paper.
- Incorrectly categorizing something as common knowledge that instead needs full documentation.
- After reading a lot of research, accidentally incorporating information as you write that should be documented.

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Plagiarism Quiz

- For all ENG 1113 and 1213 classes, students must take the plagiarism quiz and earn a 100% on it before they can pass the class.
- Using information from this PowerPoint, as well as from the appropriate chapters in the *LB Brief* handbook, complete the plagiarism quiz and submit it for grading.
- Some teachers may give you a print copy of the quiz, and others may use Cruiser's assessment function and require you complete the quiz online.
- You will have multiple tries to earn 100% on the quiz by the given deadline.
- For more information on MLA documentation and plagiarism, check the resources available in your class. There may be more PowerPoint presentation, handouts, and links to Internet sources.