



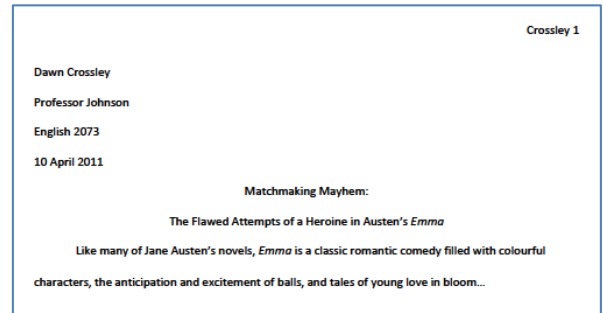
## Overview of MLA style

**Where is it used?** – MLA style is typically used in English and some humanities courses.

**What is unique about this citation style?** – MLA uses an author-page system for parenthetical references (Smith 298) along with a Works Cited page (a complete list of sources) at the end of a document.

**Can I use headings in MLA?** – Headings are generally discouraged in shorter MLA style papers. Longer projects may use headings where appropriate.

**Should I include a title page?** – Title pages are discouraged in MLA. If your professor requests a title page, they will provide you with their formatting expectations.



## General formatting tips

- In place of a title page, begin an inch from the top and flush with the left margin on the first page. Type your name, your instructor's name, the course name and code, and the due date, all double-spaced on separate lines.
- Double-space and centre your title. Use italics only to emphasize words that you would also italicize in your paper, such as book titles and foreign terms.
- Number pages in the upper right hand corner preceded by your last name.
- Indent the first line of each paragraph by one-half inch and double-space your text.

## In-text citations for paraphrases or summaries of ideas

Even when you paraphrase or summarize (use your own words to express an author's ideas), you must credit the author for his research and ideas. Whenever possible, use a signal phrase in the present tense to introduce the author and integrate his ideas into your paper. For example:

Rigoberta Menchu charges the Church with failing to understand the plight of Guatemala's indigenous people (234).

## In-text citations for direct quotations

When you borrow a source's exact words, enclose them in quotation marks (for up to 3 lines of poetry or 4 lines of prose), indicate the author's surname, and add the page reference (for prose), line numbers (for poetry), or act, scene and line numbers (for a play). Note that the punctuation comes *after* the in-text citation. Observe these prose examples:

"[S]piritual mentoring does not belong only in the hands of the specialists. . . [S]piritual mentoring is the work of the community of faith just as friendship belongs to all people" (Anderson and Reese 56).

"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen," explains Lewis, "not only because I see it, but because by it, I see everything else" (3).

Mark line breaks for 2-3 lines of poetry OR 2-3 lines of dialogue by one character in a play by using forward slashes (/).

Tennyson employs the techniques of alliteration and onomatopoeia to produce a chilling effect in *The Lady of Shalott*: "Willows whiten, aspens quiver, / Little breezes dusk and shiver" (10-11).

Longer quotations require block quote formatting. This applies to more than 4 lines of prose, more than 3 lines of poetry, more than 3 lines of dialogue by one character in a play, or lines of dialogue between characters. Introduce the quotation with a signal phrase and a colon. Forgo quotation marks (except to note quotations within the quotation), and set off the quoted material with an indentation of 1 inch from the left margin. Note that for block quotations, punctuation comes *before* the in-text citation.

In a tribute to Helen Keller, Alden Whitman reflects on her steadfast character and faith amidst a life of challenge:

Despite the celebrity that accrued to her and the air of awesomeness with which she was surrounded in her later years, Miss Keller retained an unaffected personality and a certainty that her optimistic attitude toward life was justified. "I believe that all through these dark and silent years, God has been using my life for a purpose I do not know," she said recently, adding, "But one day I shall understand and then I will be satisfied." (1)

## Works Cited

- Centre and title your list of sources Works Cited. Alphabetize entries by authors' surnames. Double-space the entire page, start entries at the left margin and use a hanging indent of one-half inch.
- To cite more than one work by the same author(s), include the name(s) in the first entry. In subsequent entries, replace the name(s) with three hyphens and a period (---.) Proceed with the standard format for that entry.

## Sample In-Text Citations (Parenthetical References)

One author	Bullock explains that writing functions as a vehicle "to explore our thoughts and emotions" (3). <i>OR</i> Writing functions as a vehicle "to explore our thoughts and emotions" (Bullock 3).
Two authors	"We each write for different reasons and for different audiences" (Rampton and Lynch 325).
3+ authors	For three or more authors, name the first author and replace the others with "et al." E.g., (Mason et al. 57)
The Bible	Jeremiah saw "a boiling pot, tilting away from the north" ( <i>New International Version</i> , Jer. 1.13). You may omit the version in subsequent parenthetical references to the same edition.
Play	Shakespeare's protagonists express mutual contempt in a witty exchange: <p style="text-align: center;">BENEDICK. What, my dear Lady Disdain! are you yet living?          BEATRICE. Is it possible disdain should die while she hath          such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick?          Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come          in her presence. (<i>Ado</i> 1.1.106-110)</p> <div style="border: 1px dashed black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;">             Indent each character's name 1 inch from the left margin. Indent subsequent lines in the same speech an additional quarter-inch.         </div> <p>Consult the MLA Handbook for title abbreviations. You do not need to include names if quoting only one speaker.</p>
Unknown Author	Next to Belfast, the site of the ship's construction, Halifax may in fact be "the second most important Titanic city in the world" ("Titanic"). Use a short form of the title and the page or paragraph number if available.
Indirect source	William Zinsser reveals that "[t]he secret of good writing is to strip every sentence to its cleanest components" (qtd. in Levin, Rampton, and Lynch 325). Works Cited will not cite Zinsser, but, rather, the book's authors. But please note: The use of indirect sources is discouraged. If you can find the original article, it is better to use that.

## Sample Works Cited Entries

One author	Bullock, Richard. <i>The Norton Field Guide to Writing</i> . Norton, 2006. (Include City of Publication with a colon (Toronto: ) before publisher for books published before 1900, if publisher has offices in more than one country, or is unknown outside North America.)
Two authors	Adler, Mortimer J. and Van Doren, Chales. <i>How to Read a Book: A Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading</i> . Rev. ed., Simon and Schuster, 1972.
3+ authors	Levin, Gerald, et al. <i>Prose Models</i> . 3 <sup>rd</sup> Cdn ed. Harcourt, 1997.
eBook	Orwell, George. <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i> . Oberon Books Ltd., 2012. <i>eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)</i> . ezproxy.mytyndale.ca:2443/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1025997&site=ehost-live&scope=site&ebv=EK&ppid=Page-__-1. Accessed 01 Feb. 2019. *Since URL's from the address bar can change, use "Permalinks" when available to provide a stable URL. Do not include http:// in your URL.
The Bible	<i>The Holy Bible: New International Version</i> . Zondervan, 1984. (List each edition.)
Play	Shakespeare, William. <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> . Edited by Tucker Brooke. Yale UP, 1917. (UP replaces "University Press.")
Work in an anthology	Weller, Archie. "Going Home." <i>Australian Literature: An Anthology of Writing From the Land Down Under</i> , edited by Phyllis Fahrie Edelson, Ballantine Books, 1993, pp. 68-82.
Short work from a website	Witmer, Stephen. "When Shame Keeps You Away." <i>Desiring God</i> , 13 Jan. 2019, www.desiringgod.org/articles/when-shame-keeps-you-away. Accessed 14 Jan. 2019. (Do not include http:// in your URL. Use DOI in place of URL when available)
Article in an online journal	Wheelis, Mark. "Investigating Disease Outbreaks Under a Protocol to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention." <i>Emerging Infectious Diseases</i> , vol. 6, no. 6, 2000, pp. 595-600, wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/6/6/00-0607_article. Accessed 8 Feb. 2009. (Do not include http:// in your URL. Use DOI in place of URL when available)
Lecture or public address	Farrell, Margaret. "Revising the Essay." Queen's University, 16 Oct. 2009. Lecture. (or Address.)

For info on these and other sources, visit owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/ or drop by Writing and Tutoring Services.

Tyndale's Writing and Tutoring Citation Tip Sheets are meant to be used as a guideline. For more information, consult the *MLA Handbook, 8<sup>th</sup> edition* and your professors to determine what is expected for a particular assignment.