MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION (MLA) FORMAT

Updates to this MLA format handout can be found in MLA Handbook For Writers Of Research Papers. 5th Ed.

Proper documentation of sources (parenthetical/textual citations) and the Works Cited page (bibliography) are essential parts of any research paper. Their fundamental purpose is to credit authors whose material is used in the paper and to include all the information a reader would need to find the sources cited. The Modern Language Association developed the format outlined below for documentation and bibliographies; it can be used for most research papers in language, literature, and other disciplines in the humanities. Other subject areas, however, employ other style formats, so you need to check with the instructor before selecting a format.

WORKS CITED

Print Sources

The Works Cited page (bibliography) is placed at the end of the research paper and lists all the articles, books, and other sources explicitly cited in the paper with either a parenthetical (textual) citation, or a footnote (or endnote). These items are entered in alphabetical order according to the author’s last names; if a source does not have an author, alphabetize according to the first word of the title, disregarding the articles “a”, “an”, and “the” if they are the first word in the title.

Examples

BOOK BY ONE AUTHOR (MOST COMMON):


BOOK BY TWO AUTHORS:


BOOK BY THREE AUTHORS:


BOOK BY FOUR OR MORE AUTHORS:


BOOK WITH NO GIVEN AUTHOR:

TWO OR MORE BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR:


BOOK BY A CORPORATE AUTHOR:

BOOK WITH AN EDITOR:

A TRANSLATION:

AN ESSAY, POEM, SHORT STORY, OR ARTICLE IN A COLLECTION OF PIECES BY SEVERAL AUTHORS (ANTHOLOGY):

INTRODUCTION, FOREWORD, OR AFTERWORD:

EDITION OF A BOOK:

A WORK IN SEVERAL VOLUMES:


ARTICLES IN REFERENCE WORKS:


ARTICLE FROM A WEEKLY MAGAZINE:

**ARTICLE FROM A MONTHLY MAGAZINE:**


**ARTICLE FROM A NEWSPAPER:**


**EXCERPT FROM CONTEMPORARY LITERARY CRITICISM, TWENTIETH CENTURY LITERARY CRITICISM, AND OTHER GALE LITERARY CRITICISM SOURCES:**


**ARTICLE FROM A SCHOLARLY JOURNAL:**


**GOVERNMENT PUBLICATION:**


**PAMPHLET:**

TELEVISION PROGRAM, FILM, OR RADIO PROGRAM:

PERSONAL AND TELEPHONE INTERVIEW:

A REPRINTED ARTICLE IN A LOOSELEAF COLLECTION:

A SOURCE FROM AN INFORMATION SERVICE SUCH AS ERIC:

ELECTRONIC SOURCES
Citations for electronic sources look nearly identical to other citations, except that you need to add the name of the database used, what library provided the database, and the date you accessed it.

Examples

MAGAZINE ARTICLE IN AN ELECTRONIC DATABASE:

Pima Community College Libraries, Tucson, AZ. 29 April 2002

SCHOLARLY JOURNAL ARTICLE IN AN ELECTRONIC DATABASE:
NEWSPAPER ARTICLE IN AN ELECTRONIC DATABASE:

ELECTRONIC REFERENCE SOURCE (e.g. ONLINE ENCYCLOPEDIA or DICTIONARY):

ELECTRONIC BOOK OR PAMPHLET:

LITERARY CRITICISM OR BIOGRAPHY SOURCE ONLINE:
Since the Discovering Collection, Contemporary Authors and Wilson Biographies collect essays from a wide variety of sources, your citation will need to include information about the original essay as well as the database. Luckily, this information is usually available at the top or bottom of the essay.


WWW SITE:
Oglesby, Robert W. “Equine Protozoal Myeloencephalitis (EPM).” The Horseman’s Advisor.
PARENTHEtical DOCUMENTATION

Print Sources

You must document all direct quotations, paraphrases, specific facts, and ideas that you borrow from your sources. You need not, however, provide the source for well-known proverbs, familiar quotations, or common knowledge. In addition to the Works Cited list appended at the end of the research paper, you must state precisely what you have taken from each source and specifically where in the work you found the material. The easiest way to provide this information is to incorporate parenthetical (textual) citations into the text of the paper wherever you use another person’s words, facts, or ideas. Most of the time, the author’s surname and the specific page reference enclosed within parentheses suffice to identify the source and the location of the borrowed information. In the revised MLA format, as in most other documentation styles, parenthetical citations replace footnotes or endnotes.

Examples

WORK BY ONE AUTHOR:

(Kerouac 40)

WORK BY TWO AUTHORS:

(Specht and Courtney 10)

WORK BY THREE AUTHORS:

(Hefferman, Shuttlesworth, and Ambrosino 70)

WORK BY FOUR OR MORE AUTHORS:

(Phipps et al. 45)

WORK WITH NO GIVEN AUTHOR:

(Handbook of Korea 241-247)

TWO OR MORE WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR:

(Oates, Foxfire 30)

ONE-PAGE ARTICLES IN ENCYCLOPEDIAS WITH NO GIVEN AUTHOR:

(*Marquand*)

Electronic Sources

The author’s surname and the specific page reference enclosed in parentheses will usually suffice. Where there is no author, use the title. Where there is no page number, use the paragraph number.

Examples

(Fineman 44)

("Tupac Shakur" 5)