MLA Citation 7th Edition
Information Set

Compiled by
Moorpark College Writing Center

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Spring 2013
Citing Sources within the Text of Your Papers and Presentations

Why do I cite within text? Within text citations are also known as parenthetical references—a name derived from the fact that they are shown inside parentheses. These citations signal to readers that the information they have just read contained ideas, concepts, images, or exact words that originated from an external source. These references show that you did your research and that you can support your ideas with the verifiable data or ideas, adding credibility to your work without plagiarizing. A Works Cited page alone is not enough.

What types of information within my paper do I need to cite?
✅ Always cite direct quotes and ideas or information you have summarized or paraphrased.

Additionally, cite borrowed statistics, data, charts, diagrams, graphs, illustrations/graphics, photographs, and art.

✅ Do not cite “common knowledge”—information that most people know (even if they would have to look up the specifics) such as the fact that Barack Obama is the president of the U.S., or that the speed limit in a school zone in CA is 25 mph.

How do I cite in text?
Always use some form of introductory (“signal”) phrase or sentence before your summary, paraphrase, or quote. If you use a borrowed chart, graph, table, schematic or other image, use a label and a caption for the item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introductory phrase contains…</th>
<th>Parenthetical citation should show</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no mention of the author’s name</td>
<td>Author’s last name and the page number</td>
<td>The research confirmed that radiation increased cancer risks (Jones 114).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Page number</td>
<td>Jones’ research confirmed that radiation increased cancer risks (114)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An indirect source, i.e. the author/speaker has been cited from within a different source</td>
<td>The abbreviation “qtd. in” plus the last name of source, and page #</td>
<td>Jones’ said of her work, “risks of cancer certain” (qtd. in Smith 45).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source has no author. Title is not in signal phrase.</td>
<td>Title and page number</td>
<td>Research has linked radiation to cancer (“History of Cancer” 114).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source has no author and no page number. (often the case with websites)</td>
<td>Title alone. If original document shows designated paragraph numbers or line numbers, also use paragraph #</td>
<td>Research has linked radiation to cancer (“History of Cancer”). OR Research has linked radiation to cancer (“History of Cancer” n. pag.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source with 3 or more authors and names are not in signal phrase</td>
<td>Last name of the first author plus abbreviation “et al.”, and page numbers</td>
<td>Research has linked radiation to cancer (Jones et al. 114).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more separate sources contributing to a summary or paraphrase</td>
<td>At the end of summary/paraphrase, parenthetical citation of all sources</td>
<td>Research has linked radiation to cancer (Jones 23; Smith 112).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that punctuation follows the parenthesis if the use is within your paragraph. If using an indented (blocked) quote, the punctuation follows the quote and you do not use quotation marks.

Titles of Works—When do I use italics? When do I use quotes?

Formats that require italics
Books
Plays
Magazines
Newspapers
Academic/Peer Review Journals
Website (the whole website)
Music albums
Films & TV series (entire series name)

Formats that require “quotations”
“Chapter titles” (not Ch. Numbers)
“Essays”
“Short Stories”
“Poems”
“Articles”
“Web-Page Header/Title”
“Songs”
“Single Episode of a TV Series”
Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing

The following incorrect and then correct versions of quotes, paraphrases, and summaries derive from a quote by Martin Luther King Jr. in his “Letter from Birmingham Jail”:

Moreover, I am cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. (King 85 - 86)

MLA Works Cited Citation:

Don’t do this: “Dropped” quotation. It doesn’t introduce or acknowledge source.
People must feel a responsibility toward fellow human beings. “We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny” (King 85).

Do This: Quotation with a signal phrase.
An example of social responsibility may be taken from the words of Martin Luther King when he wrote, “We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny” (85).

Don’t do this: Inappropriate paraphrase. It copies the exact structure, switching out words for synonyms, and borrowing words (also, the citation should have his name because it is not in the sentence where the citation appears)
King wrote that he was aware of the tight connection of all societies and regions. He could not sit back in Atlanta, Georgia without worrying about what happened in Birmingham, Alabama. Denial of justice in one place threatens justice in all places. All of us are trapped as if in a networking group linked to the same future. The things that affect one member affect all members (85).

Do This: Acceptable paraphrase. It shows the main idea and the key points.
In his “Letter from Birmingham Jail”, Martin Luther King Jr. not only defends his own involvement with the Birmingham Boycotts of 1963, but also illuminates the importance of defending the common-good. King points out the “interrelatedness” (85) of U.S. citizens, regardless of where they might live, and then he shares his own sense of personal responsibility. He connects back to the public obligation toward human rights, and the shared consequences of both action and inaction (85 - 86).

Don’t do: Inappropriate summary. It borrows words and it doesn’t add a within text citation.
Communities are interrelated. Not even Martin Luther King could sit back without feeling concern for Birmingham’s people because injustice anywhere affects all people.

Do This: Acceptable summary. It shows the main idea.
Version #1 includes quoted material.
Martin Luther King uses his 1963 “Letter from Birmingham Jail” to bring attention to humanity’s “interrelatedness” (85) and to the social obligation of securing “justice” (86) for all people. Additionally, King defends his participation in acts of civil disobedience in Birmingham (85 – 86).

Version #2 without quoted material and summarizing the whole article.
The “Letter from Birmingham Jail”, not only defends Martin Luther King’s participation in acts of civil disobedience in Birmingham, but also brings awareness to the responsibility individuals have for securing the rights of all humanity (King 83 – 90).
HOW DO I CITE A WEB-PAGE IN MLA FORMAT?
The key items to look for are
- Author, if known
- Heading for the information from which you cited. This serves as a title.
- Name of the website
- Last updated or copyright date
Other information to look for and use if available/existing
- An original source from which the on-line version came.
- Name of an organization or group who produced the Website or holds the copyright.
- Set page numbers (usually only present in a pdf file), or fixed paragraph numbers.

The formula for citing a website in text:
Known author and set page numbers, as in the case of a pdf document accessed on-line
(author + page number)

For citing text documents with no author and no page numbers
(“Title from Heading” n. pag.) or (“Title from Heading”)

The formula for Works Cited with known author:
Author. “Title/header from the page you viewed”. Name of Website. In a multilayered website, add publishing group or holder of copyright, if known (if not known use the abbreviation N.p., which means “no publisher”), comma then last updated or copyright (if not shown use N.D.). Write the word, Web. Date accessed.

The formula for Works Cited without a known author:
“Title/Header from the Page You Viewed”. Name of Website. Publishing group or holder of copyright if known and if a multilayered website, comma then last updated or copyright date. The word Web. Date accessed.

Example if at this webpage: http://www.thekingcenter.org/mlk/bio.html

Biographical Outline of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a vital figure of the modern era. His lectures and dialogues stirred the concern and sparked the conscience of a generation. The movements and marches he led brought significant changes in the fabric of American life through his courage and selfless devotion. This devotion gave direction to thirteen years of civil rights activities.
Dr. King's concept of “somebodiness,” which symbolized the celebration of human worth and the conquest of subjugation, gave black and poor people hope and a sense of dignity. His philosophy of nonviolent direct action, and his strategies for rational and non-destructive social change, galvanized the conscience of this nation and reordered its priorities. His wisdom, his words, his actions, his commitment, and his dream for a new way of life are intertwined with the American experience.

© 2004 – The King Estate, Atlanta Georgia

To cite in text: First time you cite it (“Biographical Outline of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.”)
Subsequent times (“Biographical Outline”)

Citation for the Works Cited Page:
Imagine what shows below as a page from a research paper.

Martin Luther King Jr., as a leader of the Civil Rights movement, existed not as an anomaly of leadership, but rather as a person whose actions evolved from a history of Civil Rights leadership throughout the world. In his biography of King, historian Stephen Oates suggests that King’s actions in the Civil Rights movement were influenced by his early study of Mahatma Gandhi (132-134). Oats’ biography explains, “While earning his doctorate in theology, King had studied Gandhi’s efforts” (132). In particular, King was impressed by Gandhi’s understanding of purposeful suffering, and King took strength in Gandhi’s words, ”Through our pain we will make them see their injustice” (qtd. in “Martin Luther King”). This influence was confirmed by Coretta Scott King when she reflected back on her husband’s life (Legacy of a Dream). Martin Luther King Jr. also studied the actions of early leaders such as Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Dubois (Oates 150). The voices of those leaders resonate in King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail”:

I am cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. (King 85 – 86)

King’s words in that section reach back to a demand for an inherent right to justice, and a plea for shared accountability that evolved from justice movements of the early 1900s in the U.S. and later in India (Dubois 95; Gandhi 133; Washington 20). Nonetheless, King’s own voice in phrases such as “tied in a single garment of destiny” (86) shows the unique and theological tone that would become the hallmark of his public persona.
# MLA Format: Works Cited

Here is a sample of a Works Cited page. Each entry is explained in the box beside the sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Works Cited</th>
<th>Adams 11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Williams, Joan. E-mail interview. 25 June 2010.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---. Interview. 1 Aug. 2010.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

† Above, the final entry shows how to cite when using the *same author 2 times or more*. For 2nd plus entries, use 3 hyphens instead of the name. Use new entry for differing dates.