

A Really Dull Title for a Snappy Lesson

This “paper” is just a sample that I will use in order to show you how to integrate quotations and citations into your text. When you are quoting someone, you are copying their exact words, so you must use quotation marks. When you are paraphrasing, you don’t have to use quotation marks. After all, a paraphrase is information that you’ve borrowed from someone, but it isn’t the exact words. When you are summarizing, you are condensing someone else’s information into a sentence or two. Any way you slice it, it is important that you give credit where credit is due, and a good way to do that is by using what English teachers call the parenthetical citation. What’s that you ask? Locate the end of your quotation, paraphrase or summary and put the author’s last name the page number where you obtained the information in parenthesis (you know, those smiley or frowny tools). Do you need a comma between the author’s name and the page number? NO. The only punctuation you’ll need is after the parenthesis--you know, the parenthetical citation (Yarrow 234).

Well that’s easy enough, but let’s review a bit because this is SUPER important. If you are directly borrowing material from someone and not just rewording it, use quotations! As you know, you almost always introduce a quotation with a comma or colon. You introduce a quote with a comma when your tag (introduction) *is not* an independent clause; you introduce your quote with a colon when your tag *is* an independent clause. Then, once you conclude your quotation with the end quotation mark, you create the parenthetical citation of the last name of the author with the page number of the text. Then end your parenthesis and put in the period. Here, I’ll show you. The first lines of the book *Alice in Wonderland* are, “Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do” (Carroll 1). Let me try one more time because “trying more than once is always important” (Powers 5).

But what if you’re citing from a web page? You don’t want to put the entire web address in a parenthetical citation. It would just take up too much space. So, you put in the last name of the author of the web page. If you can’t find the author of a web page (which is not uncommon), you have a few options. First, check the information because sometimes websites with no authors are sketchy. Second, use the first word of the title. Let’s give it a try, shall we? Probably the most notable of contemporary authors to hit the New York scene is Elvin Shems, “A virtual genius when it comes to colon and semicolon manipulation” (Wouk). Or here’s another one. It’s been proven by notable scientists that dog hair is very attractive when humans wear it (Dog).

Finally, what do you do when you have a lot to quote? If you have more than four lines of text (or three lines of poetry), you get to set this information off in its own place. First, you hit return so your quotation starts on a new line. Indent the ENTIRE quotation ½ inch from the left margin. If your paper is double-spaced, keep the quote double-spaced. If it’s single-spaced, keep it single-spaced. Do NOT use quotation marks (the formatting is telling the reader it’s a quote, so to both indent and use quotation marks is to be repetitively redundant). After you conclude the quote with the end punctuation, then you should place the parenthetical citation. There are different rules for poetry, so check with your teacher on that.

Let's give it a try, shall we? I'm really enjoying the book *1984*. The opening is quite poignant:

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him. (Orwell 5)

Now let's talk about the works cited and works consulted pages. A works cited page is going to do the following:

- Present all the resources **you have cited** in your paper.
- Be attached to your paper on a separate piece of paper (even if you only have one source and want to save paper, you still **MUST** put the works cited on a separate sheet).
- Be presented in alphabetical order.
- Use the required format prescribed by MLA (the Modern Language Association).

For this paper, you will find a properly formatted works cited page attached. There is one super important detail that frequently gets overlooked and causes students to have to return again and again to rewriting their research papers. Let's say you do everything right. You research, you include information from your research in your paper, and you include those resources on your works cited page. What you don't do is actually identify where in your paper you used those resources. As a reader, I turn to your works cited page and see five sources, but no where in the actual paper does an in text citation appear. How am I supposed to know what information you got from which source? If the writer does not identify when and where he/she used specific resources, that is considered plagiarism. Yikes! In this class, it will require a rewrite, so do it correctly the first time and cite as you go.

The works consulted page will list those sources you visited but did not cite directly in your text. The purpose behind this is to CYB so your reader can know what sources you've visited. It should also include sources where you read common knowledge. A good works consulted page can also be impressive if you've done a lot of legwork for a paper but you've not needed to cite any sources.

Why do we go through all this trouble to identify sources and authors? Is it just so English teachers can make sure that students use their own writing and don't buy essays off the Internet? Of course not. We both know that as students, you need to do your own work and think your own thoughts. I'm not interested in grading the writing of a poor college student selling essay, your mom or dad, or a published author in that field. If I was, then perhaps I would invite them to submit a paper to be graded (but you know that). There's another reason, the real reason. Let's say I'm reading your paper on ancient Greece, and you've quoted a noted expert on Greek hairstyles. I just happen to be very interested in Greek hairstyles and I want to read more about it. Instead of asking

you where you got your information, I can just flip to your works cited page (always situated as a separate sheet at the end of your paper), scroll down until I find either the last name of the author or the word from the web site that you so painstakingly cited, and then I can go to that source myself (Rortharg).

Another reason why you want to include that information is that when you are advancing in your academic career (moving to the next grade and on for the Ph.D), your peers and professors will not only expect you to be honest and proper in citing sources, but if you get busted being otherwise, you could lose your grade, your position in college, and even your job. Because to not give credit where credit is due is called stealing, and it's unethical.

Works Cited

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Note:

1. The Purdue OWL is **THE** source to go to for all your MLA needs. Bookmark it and use it!
2. You will have the title Works Cited and it should be centered, 12 point.
3. All entries are left flush and in alphabetical order. If you need additional lines for an entry, indent ½ inch to form a hanging indent.
4. Double space all citations.
5. Don't skip lines between your entries.
6. Your Works Consulted page will be just like this, but it will have the title Works Consulted.
7. You will be using electronic sources for the most part. Here's what the OWL has to say for your works cited page regarding such sources. I've taken this information word-for-word, but I haven't used quotation marks as it will confuse what you need to include:

Here are some common features you should try to find before citing electronic sources in MLA style. Not every Web page will provide all of the following information. However, collect as much of the following information as possible both for your citations and for your research notes:

- Author and/or editor names (if available); last names first.
- "Article name in quotation marks."
- *Title of the website, project, or book in italics.*
- Any version numbers available, including editions (ed.), revisions, posting dates, volumes (vol.), or issue numbers (no.).
- Publisher information, including the publisher name and publishing date.
- Take note of any page numbers (p. or pp.) or paragraph numbers (par. or pars.).
- URL (without the https://) DOI or permalink.
- Date you accessed the material (Date Accessed)—While not required, it is highly recommended, especially when dealing with pages that change frequently or do not have a visible copyright date.
- Remember to cite containers after your regular citation. Examples of containers are collections of short stories or poems, a television series, or even a website. A container is anything that is a part of a larger body of works.

The Purdue Owl: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>