

## Where do you start?

### **MLA Manuscript Format**

**First Page and title page:** The MLA does not require a separate title page. Type each of the following items on a separate line on the first page, beginning one inch from the top and flush with the left margin: Your name, the instructor's name, the course's name, and the date. Double-space between each item; then double-space again and center the title. Double-space between the title and the beginning of the text.

**Margins and spacing:** Leave one-inch margins at the top and bottom and on both sides of each page. Double-space the entire text, including set-off quotations, notes, and the list of works cited. Indent the first line of a paragraph one-half inch, or five spaces.

**Page Number:** Include your last name and the page number on each page, one-half inch below the top and flush with the right margin. (Use the Header function in MS Word)

**Long Quotations:** Set off a long quotation (more than four typed lines) in block format by starting it on a new line and indenting each line one inch, or ten spaces, from the left margin. Do not enclose the passage in quotation marks.



## Why do I need the MLA handbook?

When doing research, it is extremely important to have a method of acknowledging where your ideas originated. William Riley Parker created the "MLA Style Sheet" because he believed "...commonly agreed-on rules for documenting quotations, facts, opinions, and paraphrases would simplify the task of preparing a manuscript for publication..." (Gibaldi xvi). It also allows the reader an easy way to verify the information and ideas in your paper.

### **Information and citations in this brochure were taken from the following resources:**

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 6th ed. New York:MLA, 2003.

*The Purdue OWL*. Purdue U Writing Lab, 2008. Web. 19 Oct. 2009.

Lunsford, Andrea A. *Documenting Sources in MLA Style 2009 Update: A Lunsford Handbook Supplement*. Boston: Bedford/ St. Martin's, 2009. Web. 20 Oct. 2009.

*Documenting Sources in MLA Style: 2009 Update: A Hacker Handbook Supplement*. Boston: Bedford/ St. Martin's, 2009. Web. 20 Oct. 2009.



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Woodmont High School: 2009

## A Quick Guide to the

# MLA Handbook

## 2009 Update

## Modern Language

## Association of America

## (Founded in 1883)



# The most commonly used items in a MLA Research Paper:

## In-text Citation

MLA style requires proper citation in the text of an essay for every quotation, paraphrase, summary, or other material requiring documentation. An in-text citation gives the following information to the reader: (1) *which source* on the work-cited page the writer is referring to, and (2) *where in the source* the material quoted, paraphrased, or summarized can be found.

The basic MLA in-text citation includes the author's last name either in a signal phrase introducing the source material or in parentheses at the end of the sentence. It also includes the page number in parentheses at the end of the sentence.

### **EXAMPLES:**

#### NAME CITED IN SIGNAL PHRASE IN TEXT

In his discussion of Monty Python routines, Crystal notes that the group relished "breaking the normal rules" of language (107).

#### NAME IN PARENTHETICAL CITATION IN TEXT

A noted linguist explains that Monty Python humor often relied on "bizarre linguistic interactions" (Crystal 107).

## Works Cited

1. Start your list on a separate page after the text of your essay.
2. Continue the consecutive numbering of pages.
3. Center the heading Works Cited an inch from the top of the page; do not italicize it or enclose it in quotation marks. Double-space the entire list.
4. Start each entry flush with the left margin, and indent subsequent lines one-half inch or five spaces.
5. List your sources alphabetically by author's (or editor's) last name. If the author is unknown, alphabetize the source by the first word of the title, disregarding A, An, or The.

## Book Citations

1. Author's full name (Last name first; middle names or middle initials follow the first name)
2. *Full title of book—in italic* (including sub-titles)
3. Edition (if it is a 2nd edition or later or a revised edition)
4. Number of the volume if used alone or the total number of volumes if citing from more than one of the volumes.
5. City of publication (if outside of the US and not well-known add a comma then the abbreviated country name.)
6. Shortened form of the publisher's name
7. Year of publication
8. Medium of Publication: Print



### **Sample of Basic Format:**

Lastname, Firstname. *Title of Book*. (Edition or Volume information if needed). Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Medium of Publication.

### **EXAMPLES:**

#### **Book with One Author:**

Crystal, David. *Language Play*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1998. Print.

#### **Book with More Than One Author:**

Gillespie, Paula, and Neal Lerner. *The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring*. Boston: Allyn, 2000. Print.

#### **A Subsequent Edition:**

Crowley, Sharon, and Debra Hawhee. *Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New York: Pearson/Longman, 2004. Print.

#### **Anthology or Collection (Collection of Essays):**

Hill, Charles A. and Marguerite Helmers, eds. *Defining Visual Rhetorics*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004. Print.

## Citations for Electronic Sources

You should try to include the following in your citations for Web publications.

1. Author and/or editor names (if available)
2. Article name in quotation marks (if applicable)
3. Title of the Website, project, or book in italics.
4. Any version numbers available, including revisions, posting dates, volumes, or issue numbers.
5. Publisher information, including the publisher name and publishing date (use the abbreviations n.p. or n.d. if the above information is not provided.)
6. Page numbers if available
7. Medium—WEB
8. Date you accessed the material (Day Month Year)



### **Citing an Entire Web Site Basic Format:**

Ed., author, or compiler name. "Article Name". *Name of Site*. Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher), Date of resource creation. Medium of publication. Date of access. <URL>.

Peterson, Susan Lynn. *The Life of Martin Luther*. Susan Lynn Peterson, 2002. Web. 24 Jan. 2006. <[http://www.susanlynnpeterson.com/index\\_files/luther.htm](http://www.susanlynnpeterson.com/index_files/luther.htm)>.

### **Citing a Work from a Database**

When citing sources from a Library Database, such as DISCUS, first list the publication information for the source. Then give the name of the database, italicized; the medium; and your date of access. You no longer need to list the subscription information.

"Ronald Reagan." *American Decades*. Gale Research, 1998. *The Biography Resource Center*. Web. 19 Oct. 2009.

### **Citing an Entry in a Wiki**

"Hip Hop Music." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 2 Mar. 2006. Web 18 Mar. 2009. <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hip\\_hop\\_music](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hip_hop_music)>.