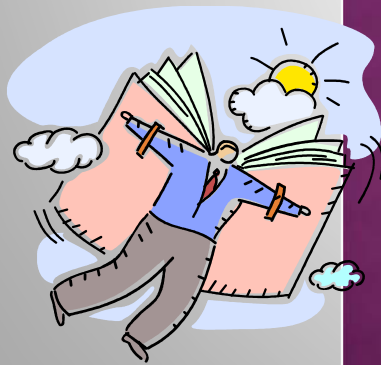# A Guide to MLA Format (7TH Edition)

Presented by:

The Writing Center

The College of Saint Rose

WHAT IS MLA FORMAT?

- Modern Language Association

- Guidelines for how research papers should be put together and how sources should be acknowledged

THE PURPOSES OF MLA FORMAT:

- Guides the proper use of sources and gives sources the appropriate credit

- Enables readers to cross-reference your sources easily, through the use of consistent formatting

- Gives you credibility as a writer.
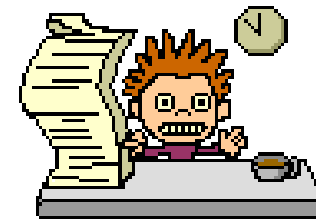
GENERAL FORMAT FOR MLA PAPERS

- Typed, double-spaced

- Standard-sized paper (8.5 x 11)

- 1 inch margins on all sides

- Times New Roman, 12 pt. font is preferred

- Titles of longer works are in *italics*

- Titles of shorter works are in "quotation marks"

- Header on all pages is in upper right-hand corner, ½ inch from the top (last name & page number)

A SAMPLE FIRST PAGE

Double-spaced heading in upper left corner of the first page includes:

- ➤ your name
- ➤ your professor's name
- ➤ the course number
- ➤ the <u>due</u> date

Center the title

Everything is double spaced! Nothing more, nothing less!

Doe 1

Jane Doe

Professor Smith

ENG 101

15 March 2006

Tragedy in Shakespeare's Comedies

Much can be said of the humor in Shakespeare's comedies, but what of the dark undertones? It is necessary to view the Bard's work with an ever-doubting eye, as he often intends the opposite of what is on the surface. Could it be that his comedies really only display a mechanism for dealing with hardship in life? Is it possible that there really is no such thing as isolated comedy for Shakespeare—that it exists only in the presence of tragedy, difficulties, and other problems? When reading his plays, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and …

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

- Students at The College of Saint Rose are expected to be honest in every aspect of their academic work. All work presented as a student's own must be the product of her or his own efforts. Plagiarism, cheating, academic misconduct, or any other submission of another's work as one's own are unacceptable. Students working in groups are each individually responsible for the academic integrity of the entire group project. The College's *Policy on Plagiarism and Other Infringements of Academic Honesty*, which includes the definition, detailed explication of plagiarism and academic misconduct, and procedures, is found on the College's website:

www.strose.edu/academics/academic_integrity/article2575

USING MLA TO DOCUMENT SOURCES

Why do we have to cite sources?

We need to credit the work others have done.

What is Plagiarism?

From The College of Saint Rose website, Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- Purchasing, copying, down-loading, printing, or paraphrasing another's book, article, paper, speech, exam, portfolio, creative work, argument, or any other work and presenting it as one's own, either in whole or in part.

- Incorporating portions of another's work without proper acknowledgement and documentation.

A safe guideline to use is: ANY time you use ANY idea, from ANYONE or ANYWHERE else, you have to document it.

CONSEQUENCES OF PLAGIARISM

Possible consequences include:

➢ A grade of "F" for the assignment
➢ A grade of "F" for the course
➢ Documentation in your school records
➢ Being dismissed from the College
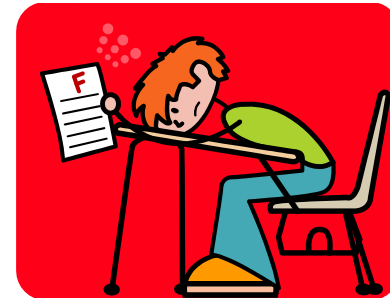
CITE YOUR SOURCES, WHEN YOU…

- Quote
- Paraphrase
- Summarize
- Use facts, statistics, or data
- Refer to an idea
- Use a source's visual (photograph, painting, chart, table, or graph)

PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

➢ These appear in your text and give general information about your source.

➢ Give the first and last name of the author the first time s/he is mentioned, and then use only the last name thereafter.

PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

One form:

Author's name and page number in parentheses:

It can be argued that "*Romeo and Juliet* is not only the tale of two young, doomed lovers; it is the story of how youth can be destroyed when the banality of adulthood is imminent" **(Smith 76).**

Quotation marks are placed before and after the quotation.

End punctuation is placed after the final parenthesis.
Note: No comma between author and page number

PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

A second form:

➢ Author's name appears in the sentence, with the page number in the parentheses:

➢ Smith declares that "it is the uninspired lifestyle of being an adult, and the destruction of one's childhood innocence that results from its onset, that truly characterizes *Romeo and Juliet*—not simply the story of tragic unrequited love" (76).
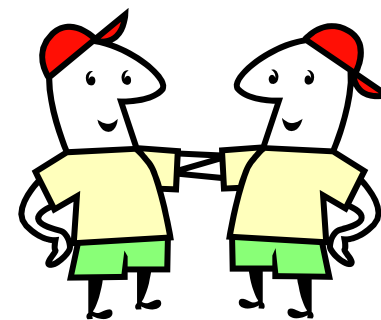
PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

➤ *Authors with the same last name*

Add the first initial of each author's name

- According to J. Smith......(89).
- One item that....(M. Smith 154).

➤ *2-3 authors*

- Smith and Jones state.........(78).
- It was believed that...(Smith, Harris, and Jones 78).

PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

- ## *4 or more authors*
  - According to Smith, Johnson, Peters, and Harris, in their pivotal work…..(88).
  - This is discussed…….(Smith et al. 88).

- ## *No author listed*
  - The essay "Youth and Age in *Romeo and Juliet*" addresses Juliet's indifference… (47).
  - Ex. Juliet's indifference is seen…("Youth" 47).

PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

- *More than one work by the same author: add the title*
  - Jones addresses this issue in *Feminist Ideals: 21st Century Perspectives*, stating…. (45).
  - This inconsistency is addressed….(Jones, *Feminist Ideals* 45).

- *Two or more works in the same parentheses*
  - May occur when multiple sources address the same idea; list alphabetically.
  - (Harris 158; Jones 43; Smith 75).

PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

- *Website*
  Follow the general rules regarding authorship. Page numbers are not needed, but include paragraph numbers, if provided in the source.

  - Ex. In "A Look at Romeo the Man," the character's masculinity is explored.

  - Ex. Despite his actions, Romeo actually… (Smith, par. 4).

PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS, CONT'D

➤ *Indirect Source*

  ➤ When you use a quote from another person that appears in the text you are using (called an "indirect quote"), be sure to mention it in your text in the following way:

Ex.

■ According to Henderson, Shakespeare is said to have written some of his comedies "while in an euphoric state stimulated by the warmth of the sunshine in April" (qtd. in Johnson 55).

(**Johnson is the author of the text** you have in front of you, and on page 55, he is quoting from Henderson. **Johnson** is the source you list on your Works Cited page)

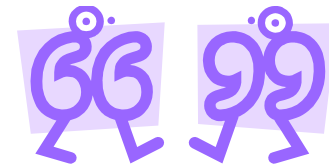Consult the original source, when possible.

QUOTING

➤ Used when you repeat an idea word-for-word; it <u>must</u> be exact.

➤ A parenthetical citation is needed for every quote

➤ A quote must be either **introduced** or **followed up** with your own words, <u>in the same sentence</u>. It must also be **explained** in relation to your ideas.
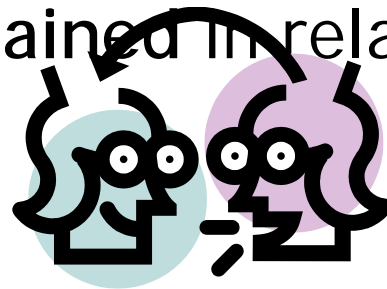
QUOTING

When quoting, it is necessary to either introduce the quote with your own words or follow it with your own words, <u>in the same sentence</u>.

A quotation cannot stand on its own, as a separate sentence.

The quotation must also be explained in relation to your ideas.

<u>I.C.E. your quotations</u>:
Introduce
Cite
Explain

SHORT QUOTATIONS

- Four or fewer typed lines
- Marked by "quotation marks"
- Author's last name and page # included in citation but not within the quotation marks

  - Ex. This failure to act is addressed by Davis, who asserts that change will happen only when "the motivation behind the decision concerns those in charge" (55). Unfortunately, Davis is right because of the numerous examples of this situation that exist in our society today.

Short quotes are generally preferable to long quotes, since they show greater understanding of the source material.

LONG QUOTATIONS

- ➢ More than four typed lines
- ➢ Introduced by a colon
- ➢ A block, indented 10 spaces from the left margin
- ➢ Double-spaced
- ➢ No "quotation marks "
- ➢ Parenthetical citation goes **after** the period

Johnson explores how the characters of Romeo and Juliet reject their families' prejudices**:**

> The two young lovers are symbolic of the dangers inherent in prejudiced behavior. Both teens have parents who reject the possibility of young love because they have forgotten how to love one another as friends and neighbors. The parents are firmly resolved to live only within the confines of their own families, refusing to understand, forgive, and accept those who have wronged them. Romeo and Juliet refuse to give in to this way of life, not wanting to believe that this is the fate that will befall them. (45)
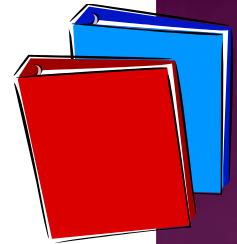
SUMMARIZING

➤ Taking information from a long passage and condensing it into your own words

(similar to a book report)

➤ The author should be mentioned within the text

Example **Summary** of *Romeo and Juliet*

In William Shakespeare's play, *Romeo and Juliet*, two young teens of disputing families fall in love. They face the repercussions of such a relationship through the deaths of Romeo's friend Mercutio and Juliet's cousin, Tybalt. Despite these tragedies, Romeo and Juliet are united in a clandestine marriage ceremony. The two lovers fake their deaths in order to be together, away from their families. However, because of miscommunication, Romeo believes that Juliet has truly died. Upon observing her seemingly dead, but really only unconscious body, Romeo drinks poison so they will be together in death. Juliet wakes up and observes Romeo's tragic act. When she realizes what he has done, she stabs herself to reunite with him in the afterlife.
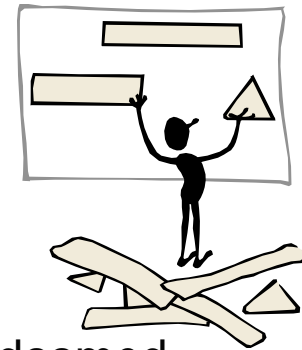
PARAPHRASING

The preferred method for writing about source material

➢ Ideas from the source are used but put in the writer's own words

➢ It is important to use not only alternate wording but also different sentence structure.

SAMPLE PARAPHRASES

- ## Original Text
  - *"Romeo and Juliet* is not only the tale of two young, doomed lovers, it is the story of how youth can be destroyed when the banality of adulthood is imminent" (Smith 76).

- ## Incorrect Paraphrase
  - *Romeo and Juliet* is not only a story of a young pair of tragic lovers, it is a story of the destruction of youth in the face of the monotony of adulthood (Smith 76).

- ## Correct Paraphrase
  - It is the uninspired lifestyle of being an adult, and the destruction of one's childhood innocence that results from its onset, that truly characterizes *Romeo and Juliet*, not simply the story of tragic unrequited love (Smith 76).

The correct paraphrase shows that the writer has changed the words and structure of the sentence.

TIPS FOR PARAPHRASING
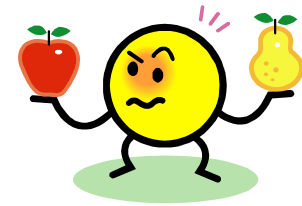
- Read the original passage several times

- Put the passage aside and write/type it in your own words.

- Check your version against the original, for:
  - Structure
  - Wording: if you can't think of a way to paraphrase, use a direct quote, with quotation marks.

REFERENCING POETRY

One line or part of a line: [from "That Dog of Art," by Denise Levertov]

- The image of having "daisies for eyes" (Levertov 1) conveys the creative and sometimes fanciful visions of life that poets convey through their poetry.

Two-three lines: [from "Birches," by Robert Frost]

- He is described as "Some boy too far from town to learn baseball,/Whose only play was what he found himself,/ Summer or winter, and could play alone" (Frost 25-27).

Separate each line with a **/** and include the line numbers and author's last name in a parenthetical citation at the end of the poetic lines. Retain the same punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

REFERENCING POETRY

<u>Four or more lines of poetry</u> [from "Burning the Christmas Greens," by William Carlos Williams]

Block the poetry off from the rest of the text, double-spacing and indenting 1 inch, with no quotation marks:

However, there is a sense of sadness that is evoked with the lines that

tell of retrieving branches

> to fill our need, and over
>
> doorways, about paper Christmas
>
> bells covered with tinfoil
>
> and fastened by red ribbons. (Williams 18-23)

REFERENCING DRAMA/FILM

Dialogue [from *A Doll's House*]

Nora and Helmer's disagreement about the role of men and women is clearly seen through their argument about Nora's decision to leave at the end of the play:

> NORA. To-morrow I shall go home—I mean, to my old
>
>   home. It will be easiest for me to find something to do there.
>
> HELMER. You blind, foolish woman!
>
> NORA. I must try and get some sense, Torvald!
>
> HELMER. To desert your home, your husband and your children!
>
>   And you don't consider what people will say! (Ibsen 3.763-77)
>
>   (Generally: Author Act.Scene.Lines)

To quote dramatic dialogue, set lines off from text, indenting ten spaces. Write character names in caps, followed by a period. Additional lines of dialogue are indented another ¼ inch.

WORKS CITED PAGE

- A complete list of every source that you reference in your paper

- Provides the information needed for a reader to locate any sources cited in your paper

- Each source in your paper must appear on the Works Cited page and vice versa.

SAMPLE WORKS CITED PAGE:

- Alphabetical order, by author's last name

- Hanging indent

- Double-spaced

- Header continues to appear on each page

Works Cited

Coonradt, Nicole M. "To Be Loved: Amy Denver and Human

Need—Bridges to Understanding in Toni Morrison's

*Beloved***."** *College Literature* 32.4 (Fall 2005): 168-187.

Print.

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved.* New York: Plume, 1988. Print.

- - -. *The Bluest Eye.* New York: Plume, 1994. Print.

Smith, John. *Interpreting Romeo and Juliet*. 4th ed. New York:

Oxford, 1995. Print.

Werrlein, Deborah T. "Not So Fast, Dick and Jane:

Reimagining Childhood and Nation in *The Bluest Eye*."

MELUS 30.4 (Winter 2005): 53-72. A*cademic Search*

Premier. Web. 22 May 2006.

Wills, Joy. "Genealogy of Rejection in Morrison's *The Bluest*

Eye." *Anniina's Toni Morrison Page*. 2000.

Luminarium. Web. 23 May 2006.

SAMPLE WORKS CITED PAGE:

Information to include:

- Author's name
- Title of work
- Publication information
- Medium

Capitalize all important words.

Italicize longer titles.

Use "quotation marks" around shorter titles.

Works Cited

Coonradt, Nicole M. "To Be Loved: Amy Denver and Human

Need—Bridges to Understanding in Toni Morrison's

Beloved." *College Literature* 32.4 (Fall 2005): 168-187.

Print.

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved.* New York: Plume, 1988. Print.

- - -. *The Bluest Eye.* New York: Plume, 1994. Print.

Smith, John. *Interpreting Romeo and Juliet*. 4th ed. New York:

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Wills, Joy. "Genealogy of Rejection in Morrison's *The Bluest*

Eye." *Anniina's Toni Morrison Page*. 2000.

Luminarium. Web. 23 May 2006.

BASIC FORMS FOR SOURCES

➢ **A Book:**

➢ Last name, First name. *Title of Work*. Location:

Publisher, Year. Medium.

Medium may be print, web, CD, DVD, etc.

➢ **Example:**

➢ Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*. New York: Plume, 1994. Print.

BASIC FORM FOR SOURCES

- **Online Book**
  - Last Name, First Name of Author. *Title of Book.* Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. *Title of Website or Database*. Medium. Day Month Year of access.

- **Example:**
  - Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein.* Hertfordshire, England: London Press,1997. *Google Book Search*. Web. 18 May 2009.

BASIC FORMS FOR SOURCES

- **Work in an Anthology or Collection**:
  - Last name, First name. "Title of Essay/Chapter." *Title of Larger Work.* Editors. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year. Pages. Medium.

- **Example:**
  - Covino, William A. "Rhetorical Pedagogy." *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies.* Eds. Gary Tate, Amy Rupiper, and Kurt Schick. New York: Oxford, University Press, 2001. 36-53. Print.

BASIC FORMS FOR SOURCES

➢ **An Article in a Scholarly Journal:**

> ➢ Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Periodical V*olume.Issue (Year of Publication): Pages. Medium.

➢ **Example:**

> ➢ Ritter, Kelly. "Buying In, Selling Short: A Pedagogy Against the Rhetoric of Online Paper Mills." *Pedagogy: Critical Approaches to Teaching Literature, Composition, and Culture* 6.1 (2006): 25-51. Print.

BASIC FORMS, ELECTRONIC SOURCES

- An Article Retrieved from a Library Subscription Service:
  - Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume.Issue (Publication Date): page number range. *Database Name*. Medium. Date of access.
- Example:
  - Brown, Carolyn. "Juliet's Taming of Romeo." *Studies in English Literature* 36.2 (1996): 333-355. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 21 Sept.   2006.

  Use the abbreviation n.pag for "no page numbers."
  URL is no longer needed.

BASIC FORMS, ELECTRONIC SOURCES

- ## An Article or Section from a Website

  - Last Name, First Name of author. "Title of Section." *Title of overall website*. Edition. Publisher or Sponsoring Organization, date of publication or posting. Medium. Day month year of access.

- ## Example:

  - Felluga, Dino. "General Introduction to Postmodernism." *Introductory Guide to Critical Theory*. Purdue University, 2003. Web. 21 Sept. 2006.

VARIATIONS ON WORKS CITED ENTRY INFORMATION

- **<u>Source with more than 2 Authors</u>**

Stubbs, Marcia, Sylvan Barnet, and William Cain. *The Little*

   Brown Reader. New York: Longman, 2006. Print.

- **<u>Source without an Author</u>**

"Understanding Postcolonial Theory." *Literary Theory Decoded.*

   University of England. 2007. Web. 17 May 2009.

- **<u>Two or more works by the same Author</u>**

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved.* New York: Plume, 1988. Print.

 - - -. *The Bluest Eye.* New York: Plume, 1994. Print.

FOR ADDITIONAL HELP WITH MLA:

The Writing Center, 518-454-5299

Saint Joseph Hall, second floor, in the Academic Support Center.

The Neil Hellman Library Reference Desk, 518-454-5181

Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL):

https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

Prentice Hall Reference Guide, 7th edition

Bedford St. Martin website:
http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/rewriting/rc2.html

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th ed. New York: MLA, 2009.

RESOURCES

The following resources were used in creating this presentation:

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th ed. New
York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009. Print.

"Using Modern Language Association Format" <u>The Online
Writing Lab at Purdue University</u>. 2003. Purdue
University. Web.
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>.