This Modern Language Association Style handout created for the Johnson County Community College Writing Center is intended to simplify the documentation process by providing an easy reference for students and faculty. We have attempted to make MLA citation as simple as possible; however, we know other sources may be used. Refer to the guidelines in the most recent MLA manual: the MLA Handbook 8th Edition. Handbooks and other websites may have their own version of MLA 8th Edition documentation.

Please know that MLA 8th edition has changed radically from previous versions, especially for the works cited page. In those previous versions, the format of the citations took precedence. Now, the focus is on providing essential information which can vary depending on the focus of the writer:

A writer whose primary purpose is to give credit for borrowed material may need to provide less information than a writer who is examining the distinguishing features of particular editions of sources text. Similarly, scholars working in specialized fields may need to cite details about their sources that other scholars making more use of the same resource do not. (4)

Ultimately, the goal is for writers to demonstrate “thoroughness” of scholarship while giving credit where credit is due, while also sharing the contributing sources, which helped to build, in a “consistent” and logical format, the writer’s knowledge (MLA 8th 4). If you need further assistance, please visit the Writing Center.

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GUIDELINES

FORMATTING THE PAPER

- Type all pages with one inch margins
- Double space your entire document with a clear, 12-pt font (Times New Roman)
- Indent each paragraph five spaces (or one "Tab")
- Include a header with your last name and page number
- On the first page, write a heading that includes
  - Your name, your professor’s name, the class, and the date created left justified at the top of the page
  - A title, centered and in regular font

Example First Page

AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s words or ideas without giving credit to the original writer or speaker. Plagiarizing can be a serious detriment to your collegiate career, so it is very important to avoid it. To avoid plagiarism, correctly cite, using quotations, paraphrasing, or summarization to develop and support your own original ideas. You can obtain further information about paraphrasing and how to avoid plagiarizing from the Writing Center.

IN-TEXT AND PARENTHEtical CItATIONS

Regardless of whether you are quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing a source, or using a secondary source (explanations follow), you must acknowledge the source in your essay. This source should be acknowledged using either a parenthetical or in-text citation.
**In-text** citations are when the **author's name is in a sentence** of the paper with the page numbers contained in parenthesis at the end of the sentence. Do not repeat the author's name in the parentheses. Cite the page number(s) only.

Example:

Robert Maynard Hutchens once said, "My idea of education is to unsettle the minds of the young and inflame their intellect" (161).

**Parenthetical citations** capture the author’s name and the page number in parenthesis at the end of the sentence in which the quote, paraphrase or summary occurs.

Example:

In fact, the best teachers seek “to unsettle the minds of the young and inflame their intellect” (Hutchens 161).

If the **author’s name is not available**, use the first significant word of the title of the book (italicized) or article (in quotations).

Example:

Baby boomers, acknowledged as the first video generation, have become increasingly sedentary over the past twenty years (“Growing” 24).

**DIRECT QUOTATIONS**

Either of these examples is considered a direct quotation. MLA prefers direct quotations to paraphrasing. When using source material that you want to quote exactly, follow either of these examples. Be sure to put the author’s name and all necessary publication information on the Works Cited page at the end of the paper.

Example:

“Intentional plagiarizers cheat themselves” (Harris 17).


**PARAPHRASING**

Paraphrasing means putting a source’s ideas into your own words and creating new sentence structures. Do not simply rearrange the words in the sentence; instead, use the ideas in the text in your own language to strengthen your paper. When you use someone else’s ideas, it is extremely important to cite anything you have paraphrased.

Original text:

“Grief, when it comes, is nothing we expect it to be” (Didion 26).
Plagiarized paraphrase (do not do this!):

When grief comes, it’s not what we expect it to be (Didion 26).

Correctly paraphrased version:

Most, if not all, individuals are surprised by the emotions of grief; they have trouble anticipating what grief will feel like (Didion 26).

SUMMARIZING

Summarizing differs from paraphrasing in that a summary takes a very broad view of the text, providing the main points of the reading, whereas paraphrasing generally puts a smaller passage of the reading into a reader’s own words. However, an instructor may use paraphrasing and summarizing interchangeably.

INDIRECT OR SECONDARY SOURCES

Whenever possible, original sources of quotations should be used. However, if you find a reference quoting another source and you want to comment on the quoted material and that source cannot be retrieved, then you will need to use the secondary or indirect source. Add the phrase “qtd. in” (which stands for “quoted in”) to your parenthetical citation.

Example:

An old Chinese proverb advises, “Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember. Involve me and I understand” (qtd. in Hedengren 9).

BLOCK QUOTES

A block quote is used for quotations that are longer than four lines of your text (not four lines in the author/source you are quoting from). Do not use quotation marks. Introduce the block quote, then indent the entire quotation .5 inches, or one tab, or 5-7 spaces. At the end of your block quote, parenthetically provide the location information (page numbers, paragraph heading, URL/DOI) outside of any necessary punctuation. Be sure to specify the source in the introduction phrase/sentence.

Example

At the conclusion of *Lord of the Flies*, Ralph and the other boys realize the horror of their actions:

The tears began to flow and sobs shook him. He gave himself up to them now for the first time on the island; great, shuddering spasms of grief that seemed to wrench his whole body. His voice rose under the black smoke before the burning wreckage of the island; and infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake and sob too. And in the middle of them, with filthy body, matted hair, and unwiped nose, Ralph wept for the end of innocence, the darkness of man’s heart, and the fall through the air of the true, wise friend called Piggy. (186)

While horror captures the boy’s emotions, the imagery connotes naturalism and phenomenalism. In that…
Long quotations should be used rarely, however, because frequent use tends to break up your text and make the reader impatient. Also, be especially careful to integrate the quote into your paper. Introduce it, and comment afterwards on why it was important.

**ELLIPSES**

Sometimes you do not need to quote the whole passage or clause. Ellipses are three spaced periods ( . . . ) which signify that original phrasing has been shortened. The ellipsis should not be used to “misrepresent” or “mischaracterize” the meaning of the original text; rather it should simply be used to connect two physically separated pieces of information.

- If the ellipsis is at the **end** of a sentence with **no parenthetical citation**, add a period before the ellipsis ( . . . )

- If the ellipsis is in the **middle** of quoted material, place a space before and after the last ellipsis.

Example:

Sometimes movies promote stereotypical attitudes about mental disorders such as the obsessive-compulsive behavior in *As Good As It Gets* when “Jack Nicholson . . . avoids cracks in the pavement and locks and relocks his apartment door five times” (Mohr).

*Note for ellipses*: Some instructors may require the writer to place brackets around the ellipsis to show that it is the writer’s ellipsis and not part of the original material. If this is the case, follow the same rules as outlined about, and simply add brackets around the ellipses--[..].

**WORKS CITED PAGE**

The Works Cited page is a continuation of your paper and is a list of sources referred to in your paper. It occurs on a **new page after the last page of your essay**. The **works cited page does not fulfill the required number of pages in the writing assignment**; the words “Works Cited” should be centered at the top of the page, and your sources should be cited in the following order.

In general, identify source **information** in the following order:

1. Author(s),
2. Title of quoted source,
3. Title of container of source (A container is a larger work containing your cited source.)
4. Other contributors (if any),
5. Version,
6. Number,
7. Publisher name,
8. Date published,
9. Location (page numbers/paragraphs/URL/DOI).

Please note, URLs are optional but strongly advised. Ask your instructor what they prefer (MLA 8th 48). Underlining of the URL is optional as well.
The entries should be **double spaced** and use **hanging indentation** for two lines or more of information.

**Alphabetize** the entries on the Works Cited page according to the citation’s **first important word** (whether it is an author’s last name or a title of a work). However, you should disregard articles (“A,” “An,” and “The”) when alphabetizing.

**Capitalize** important words in titles and proper nouns. Even if a source has creatively worded the title and used all lower case letters, the researcher should apply the rules when referring to that title. For more detailed information, refer to the *MLA 8th Edition Handbook* (25).

**Works Cited Page Example:**

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**TABLES FOR UNDERSTANDING AND CONSTRUCTING AN MLA WORKS CITED PAGE**

The following three tables are designed to help you understand the formatting for each entry of your works cited page. The first table provides the names of the core elements in order, provides examples of appropriate punctuation (notice only commas and periods are used), and supplies a description for each element. The second table provides examples of works cited format for commonly used sources and its parenthetical citation complement. The third table is a worksheet provided by MLA to help you easily identify and order the essential elements of your sources you will need to compile your works cited page. You will notice that the worksheet is longer and uses terms of second and third **container**. The term **container** captures the essence of how your referenced source was published. A container is a larger work containing your cited source. Some works stand alone, like a movie or a novel. But others are housed in larger sources, like an episode of a TV series or a short story in an anthology. Three containers are possible on the MLA worksheet, for example an episode of a TV show found and cited from a channel in
YouTube.com. But, don’t panic, you are asked to include only essential elements relevant to your research.

## TABLE WITH EXAMPLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Work Cited Example</th>
<th>In-text Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Book by Three or More Authors</strong></td>
<td>Kendall, Melissa, et al. <em>The Amber Wars and the Development of Europe</em>. Shirlington, 1984.</td>
<td>(Kendall et al. 53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Note: “et al.” is shortened Latin phrase that means “and others.” Thus, use the phrase in in-text citations of sources with more than one author and/or in the Works Cited page.</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Work Cited Example</td>
<td>In-text Example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Fatima, Surhan. “Re: Coming to America.” Received by Dr. Kathryn Byrne, 22 August 2016.</td>
<td>(Fatima) No parenthetical if interviewee is mentioned in the sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film/YouTube/TED Talk</td>
<td>Wesch, Michael. <em>The Machine is Us/ing Us</em> (final version). YouTube, 8 March 2007, <a href="https://youtu.be/NLGopyXT_g">https://youtu.be/NLGopyXT_g</a>.</td>
<td>(Wesch 00:0:11)* Note: time coding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In direct:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In person:</td>
<td>Mbanefo, Dubaku. Telephone interview. 9 Apr. 2009.</td>
<td>(Mbanefo) No parenthetical if interviewee is mentioned in the sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Work Cited Example</td>
<td>In-text Example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Websites</td>
<td><strong>Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art.</strong> Johnson County Community College, 2016,</td>
<td>(Nerman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.nermanmuseum.org/">www.nermanmuseum.org/</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Johnson County Community College, 2016, <a href="http://www.nermanmuseum.org/">www.nermanmuseum.org/</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Pool Rules.” <strong>Pool Complex, Leisure and Life Style, Parks and Recreation Dept.</strong></td>
<td>(“Pool Rules”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please remember, you have options for citing. URLs are optional. Date accessed is optional.
Below are four different citations for the same resource. The difference depends on where the resource is found and how you (and/or your instructor) want to cite.

Citing a whole book, hard copy:


Citing a chapter from a book, hard copy:


Citing a chapter from a book, electronic version using URL:


Citing a chapter from a book, electronic version using DOI:

MLA Practice Template


```plaintext
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Author.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Title of source.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Title of container,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Other contributors,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Version,</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Number,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Publisher,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Publication date,</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Location.</td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Title of container,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Other contributors,</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Version,</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Number,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Publisher,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Publication date,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Location.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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***See Example Student Paper--next page***
Consternation at the Southern Border: Trump’s Wall

It is not a surprise that Donald Trump wishes to build a border wall between the United States and Mexico. He made it a major part of his declared policy during 2016’s Presidential race: “Mexico will pay for the wall!” he tweeted as far back as September 1, 2016 (@realDonaldTrump). In an Executive Order released in January of 2017, Trump claims it is “the policy of the executive branch to secure the southern border of the United States through the immediate construction of a physical wall on the southern border” (United).

The plan has not met with universal approval, however. A hue and cry has risen against the cost and necessity for the project from many corners of the United States, Mexico, Canada, and other countries as well. In a New York Daily News editorial published 5 Mar. 2017, it is noted: “Building a border wall is a perverse priority. While Mexicans once poured into the United States, from 2009 to 2014, more left the U.S. than came here. The number of crossings in 2015 was one-tenth of the total in 2005 (“A Wall”). Furthermore, the “$20 billion project will, if anything, be a drag on [U.S.] economic growth” (“A Wall”).

Many, however, support the President’s resolve to cut down on illegal border crossings. An Investor’s Business Daily column from 25 Apr. 2017 stated that even as “Trump backpedaled on wall funding [as a result of Democrats’ threat to shut down the government], the U.S. Customs and Border Protection announced that March [2017] saw the fewest illegal crossings.
years” (“Democrats”). This is partly attributable, claims Business Daily, to Trump’s focus on the issue. “As the Customs’ release puts it, ‘since the administration’s implementation of Executive Orders to enforce immigration laws, the drop in apprehensions shows a marked change in trends’” (“Democrats”). The same source claims, “That’s not to say there’s no need to build the wall. Far from it. Even if they are occurring at a diminished rate, thousands of people crossing the border illegally each month is intolerable, and a wall would go far to reducing that close to where it should be: zero.” Doubts about the wall’s likelihood of succeeding are shared by some Republicans themselves. One convention delegate was asked in a BBC news video whether she thought it would be a “solid wall or a fence.” Her response was: “You know . . . I don’t know. I’m skeptical about that . . . because living in California, a border state, I do know they build tunnels” (“Republicans Explain”). More pointed criticism appeared in a 17 July 2017 Washington Post opinion piece: “The most recent symptoms of the administration’s misgivings about America’s open society involve proposals to reassess procedures for foreign students already studying at U.S. colleges and universities and for visa-seekers overseas who would visit, work, or seek refuge here” (“Another”). The article goes on to claim: “Both proposals are impelled by fear, nativism, and the use of national security as a pretext for indulging xenophobia.”

A Sierra Club member was quoted on a 2013 blogspot post as saying, “Right now Congress hammering out immigration legislation. If they do it right, it could benefit millions of people. But if Congress sticks to the “enforcement first” model with more border walls and for-profit detention centers, they will squander the promise of immigration reform” (“Bringing”). The same member concluded, “There should be a pathway to citizenship without hundreds of miles of new border walls or the waiving of environmental laws.”
Perhaps the most scathing criticism came from Mark Karlin, editor of BuzzFlash.com, a breaking news and commentary website: “The highly militarized fence erected on America’s southern border with Mexico demonstrates that racism continues to pervade American politics. . . . Unsubstantiated claims that immigrants from Mexico and Central America abuse public services and are prone to crime kindle racial anxiety and foster ineffective policies based on fear.” While many support Donald Trump’s desire to cordon off our southern border, many others feel just as strongly against it in our current polarized political climate.
Smith 4

Works Cited


@real Donald Trump. “Mexico Will Pay for the Wall,” Twitter, 1 Sept. 2016, 3:31 a.m., twitter.com/realdonald trump/status/2298106072.


Please visit the Writing Center for additional help or information

HOURS OF OPERATION

Fall and Spring Semester
Monday-Thursday: 8:00-8:00
Friday: 8:00-2:00
Saturday: 9:00-3:00
Sunday: 12:00-4:00

Summer Semester
Monday-Thursday: 8:00-8:00
Closed between semesters and during breaks.

Grammar Hotline: 913-469-4413
E-Mail Hotline: wcenter@jccc.edu

The JCCC Writing Center promotes the college’s mission of lifelong learning and service to the community by providing an environment for nurturing independent writing; valuing progress, not perfection; emphasizing process, not product.

This handout prepared by the Writing Center at Johnson County Community College.

To access all our handouts go to the Writing Center Webpage from the JCCC homepage

Other Helpful Links