



WRITING CENTER

Modern Language Association (MLA) Documentation

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The information in this handout is meant to be helpful, but it is not a substitute for the *MLA Handbook 9th Ed.* A copy of the *Handbook* is available for student use in the Writing Center. Additional help may be found at style.mla.org/

Note: Different instructors may have different requirements. Students should check with their instructors about their preferred documentation style for the specific course.

WHAT IS MLA?

The Modern Language Association is an organization that supports educators and researchers. Part of MLA’s work includes creating and maintaining a standardized method in which writers can cite their sources.



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Citing sources in a written work is one of the most important components of completing a written assignment. In citing sources, you:

1. Give proper credit to the author(s) whose original ideas you are using in your paper
2. Point the reader back to the original source, if they wish to conduct their own research on the topic
3. Engage in scholarly and academic debate, using the work of others to support your argument
4. Avoid plagiarism

GENERAL FORMATTING GUIDELINES

- All pages have a one-inch margin
- Double-space the entire document, including quotations and the Works Cited
- Use a readable typeface such as Times New Roman between 11 and 13-point font, unless otherwise indicated by your instructor
 - Keep a consistent typeface and font size throughout the paper
- Indent each paragraph .5 inch—the **Tab** key is usually defaulted to this
- Include one space after each sentence
- Use a hanging indent for each entry on the Works Cited page

ELEMENTS OF A PAPER IN MLA STYLE

- A header
- Body of the work, including in-text or parenthetical citations
- The Works Cited page

FIRST PAGE REQUIREMENTS

The first page of your paper must contain the following information:

- A header, justified right, containing your last name and sequential page numbers
- Your name, your professor's name, the class, and the date, at the top of the page, left justified
- Your title, centered and in normal font (not underlined, bolded, italicized, in quotations, etc.)



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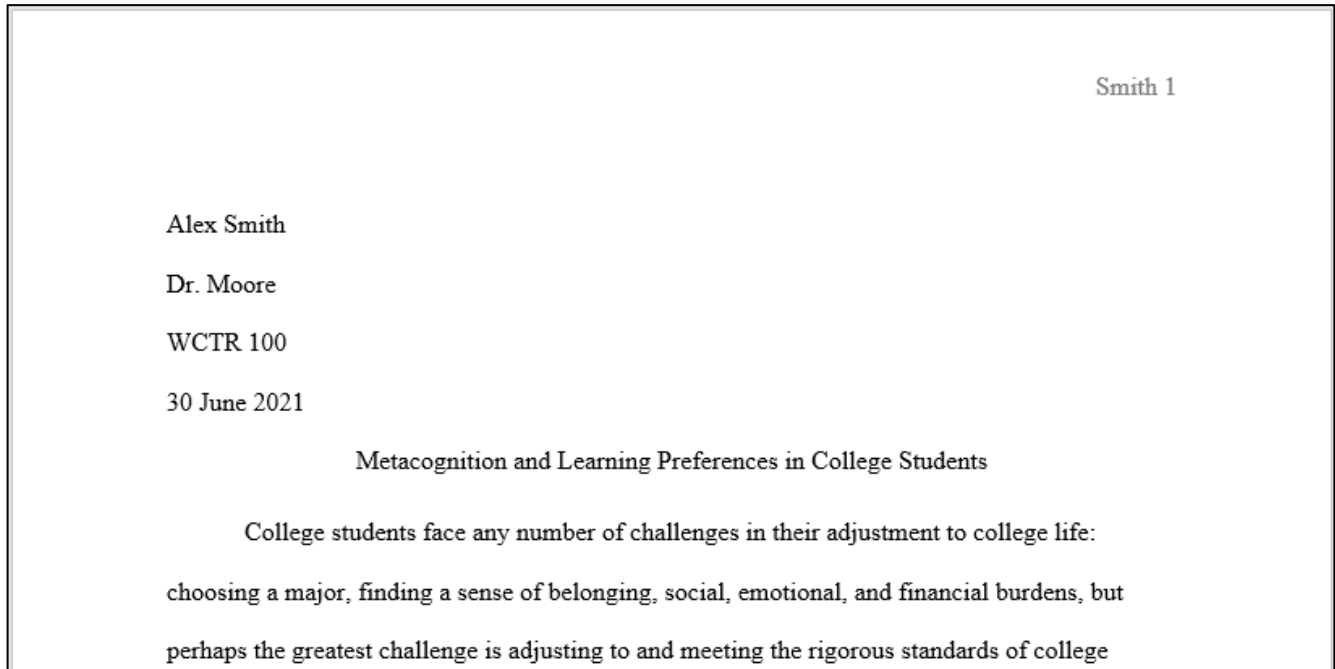


Figure 1: Example of the first page of a paper in MLA format.

BEFORE WRITING YOUR PAPER

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas without giving credit to the original source. Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity and is against JCCC's [Student Code of Conduct](#). To avoid plagiarism, cite your sources; use in-text citations, quotations, paraphrasing, or summarizing to **support your own original ideas**.

Example: **Original text** from Michael Agar's book, *Language Shock*:

Everyone uses the word *language* and everybody these days talks about *culture*. . . . "Languaculture" is a reminder, I hope, of the *necessary* connection between its two parts. . . .

The following sentence **is plagiarism**, because it uses Agar's term "languaculture" without crediting him:

At the intersection of language and culture lies a concept that might be called "languaculture."

The following sentence is **not plagiarism**, because it credits Agar:



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At the intersection of language and culture lies a concept that Michael Agar has called “languaculture” (60).

There are other ways to plagiarize, including:

- Self-plagiarizing, which is using your own ideas in something else you have produced, without citing that previous work
- Paraphrasing too closely to the original source without proper citation
- Summarizing the original source without proper citation

PARAPHRASING

Paraphrasing means putting a source’s ideas into your own words *and* creating new sentence structures. It is not shifting words around; it is stating ideas in an original way.

It is extremely important to cite anything you have paraphrased.

Example: Original text:

“Grief, when it comes, is nothing we expect it to be.” (Didion 26).

Plagiarized paraphrase:

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

Correctly paraphrased version—**not** plagiarized:

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

SUMMARIZING

Summarizing is not paraphrasing. Paraphrasing restates a smaller passage of the reading in the author’s own words. Summarizing gives a broader view, providing the main points of a larger portion of the work. If you are summarizing from a source, you still need to cite the original source.

For additional information on avoiding plagiarism, visit JCCC’s [guide](#) on academic integrity.

WRITING YOUR PAPER

IN-TEXT CITATIONS

In-text citations are short markers in your paper that refer the reader to the full citation on the Works Cited page. Citations can be incorporated into your paper in two different formats: within the prose or within parenthetical citations. Typically, both forms of citations are found in collegiate-level writing.



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- **Citation in prose** incorporates the **author's name within the sentence**. The page number—or any other applicable location marker—goes in parentheses at the end of the sentence. Do not repeat the author's name in the parentheses.
- **Parenthetical citations** capture the author's name and the page number—or time stamp, chapter, verse, or any other applicable and necessary location marker—in parentheses at the end of the sentence in which the quote, paraphrase or summary occurs.

Examples: CITATION IN PROSE: Naomi Baron broke new ground on the subject (197).

PARENTHETICAL CITATION: At least one researcher has broken new ground on the subject (Baron 197).

FULL CITATION ON THE WORKS CITED PAGE:

Baron, Naomi S. "Redefining Reading: The Impact of Digital Communication Media." *PMLA*, vol. 128, no. 1, Jan. 2013, pp. 193-200.

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, known as the first video generation, have become increasingly sedentary over the past twenty years ("Growing" 24).

DIRECT QUOTATIONS

Incorporating direct quotes into your paper conveys important points exactly as the author of the source intended and can strengthen the argument you are making in your paper.

When using source material that you want to quote exactly:

- Introduce and incorporate the quote as a grammatically correct sentence
- Quotes cannot stand alone in a paper—do not insert a direct quote without explaining how it pertains to your paper
- If you use more than one quote in a sentence, place the parenthetical citation as close to the relevant quote as possible
- Place all the words from the original source inside quotation marks
- Follow the quotation with a parenthetical citation
- The full citation, including the author's name and all necessary publication information, goes on the Works Cited page at the end of the paper



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- Examples:** QUOTATION AT THE END OF THE SENTENCE:
Joseph Conrad writes of the company manager in *Heart of Darkness*, "He was obeyed, yet he inspired neither love nor fear, nor even respect" (87).
- QUOTATION DIVIDED BY YOUR OWN WORDS:
"He was obeyed," writes Joseph Conrad of the company manager in *Heart of Darkness*, "yet he inspired neither love nor fear, nor even respect" (87).
- MULTIPLE QUOTATIONS IN A SENTENCE:
Canada's literacy history has been described as "a fractured discourse" (Howells and Kröller 2), an idea echoed by a Jewish Canadian novelist who writes in French and feels she occupies a position "neither fully within nor fully without" (Robin 182).

BLOCK QUOTES

Quotations that run longer than four lines within your paper become block quotes. Block quotes should be used sparingly—the point of writing a paper is for your voice and ideas to be articulated, rather than that of other authors. The quote should support your thesis; introduce it, add it, then comment on why it was important.

- Do not use quotation marks
- Introduce the block quote on a new line
- Indent the entire quote 1 inch or 12-16 spaces
- Include the page number at the end of your block quote, outside of the ending punctuation
- Specify the source in the introduction phrase or sentence, which ends in a colon
- If the block quote appears in the middle of a paragraph, do not indent the next line of your writing

- Example:** At the conclusion of *Lord of the Flies*, Ralph, realizing the horror of his actions, is overcome by emotion, 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. (186)
While horror captures the boy's emotions, the imagery connotes naturalism and phenomenalism. In that . . .



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COMMON KNOWLEDGE

Information is considered common knowledge if it can be found in many different places, is a noncontroversial fact, and the average person knows the information without having to look it up. Common knowledge is dependent upon context and can vary between cultures and disciplines.

Examples: INFORMATION KNOWN BY MOST PEOPLE: The sky is blue, grass is green.

INFORMATION KNOWN BY A SPECIFIC CULTURAL GROUP: Someone born in America would know that there are 50 states in the U.S.

INFORMATION KNOWN BY SOMEONE IN A SPECIFIC DISCIPLINE: An English major would know Jane Austen wrote *Pride and Prejudice*. A Chemistry major would know an atom is made up of protons, electrons, and neutrons

Check with your instructor when working on an assignment to know what they consider to be common knowledge and whether or not it needs to be cited. When in doubt, it is always best practice to cite the information!

ELLIPSES

Ellipses are three spaced periods (. . .) which signify that you have shortened the original text in a quotation. If you chose to shorten the original text, make sure you are not altering the meaning of the original author's intent.

Examples: ORIGINAL TEXT:

Americans trained by Balanchine, for example, raised their hip in *arabesque* and engaged in all manner of distortions to achieve speed and a long, aerodynamic line.

QUOTATION WITH AN ELLIPSIS IN THE MIDDLE:

According to Jennifer Homans's ballet history, *Apollo's Angels*, "Americans trained by Balanchine . . . engaged in all manner of distortions to achieve speed and a long, aerodynamic line." (xviii).

QUOTATION WITH AN ELLIPSIS AT THE END OF THE SENTENCE:

In *Apollo's Angels*, Jennifer Homans writes, "Americans trained by Balanchine, for example, raised their hips in *arabesque* and engaged in all manner of distortions . . ." The purpose of these movements, as Homans notes, was to create a "long, aerodynamic line" (xviii).

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QUOTATION WITH AN ELLIPSIS AT THE END OF THE SENTENCE
FOLLOWED BY A PARENTHETICAL CITATION:

Commenting on the techniques of different national schools of ballet, Homans remarks, "Americans trained by Balanchine, for example, raised their hip in *arabesque* and engaged in all manner of distortions . . ." (xviii).

Note: Some instructors require that brackets be placed around the ellipsis to show that it is the writer's ellipsis and not part of the original material. If so, follow the same rules as outlined above, but add brackets around the ellipses, i.e., [. . .].

WORKS CITED PAGE

The Works Cited page is a list of all the sources you cited in your paper.

FORMAT

- The Works Cited page is a new page after the last page of your essay
- Capitalize words in titles and proper nouns
 - **Note:** MLA uses traditional punctuation, so ignore stylistic capitalization
- The words "Works Cited" are centered at the top of the page, not bolded
- Entries are double-spaced
- Entries have hanging indentation
- Titles of articles, chapters, episodes, etc., are in quotes
- Titles of books, magazines, journals, movies, etc., are italicized
- Alphabetize the citations according to the first important word. This could be an author's last name, a director, an organization, a title of a work, etc. Disregard the articles ("a," "an," and "the") when alphabetizing

GENERAL ORDER OF CITATION ELEMENTS

List all available information in the following order.

Note: Not all sources will have all this information:

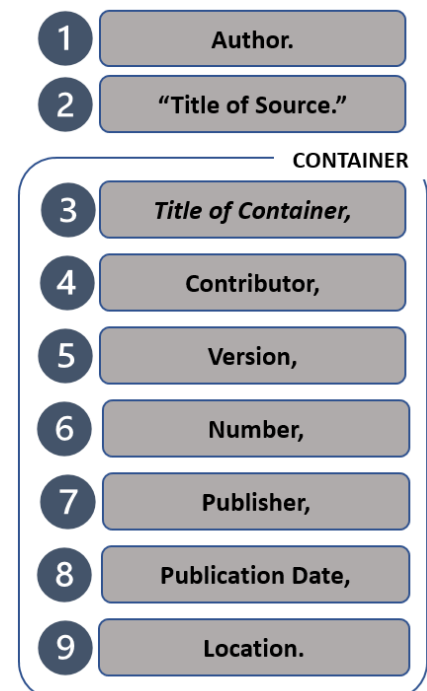


Figure 2: This is the template for citing a chapter in a printed book in MLA. There are many kinds of media, however, which may require different elements. Refer to the examples in this handout for citing other sources.



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Core Elements. Facts that are most common to all sources.

1. Author(s)
2. Title of the article, chapter, episode, etc., in quotes

Containers. Information about the larger work in which the source is contained, i.e., the anthology in which the short story is included or the journal in which the article is printed.

3. Title of container that the article, chapter, episode, etc., is in; this is italicized
4. Other contributors
5. Version
6. Number
7. Publisher name
8. Date of publication
9. Location within the larger source: page number, paragraph, URL, DOI, date, etc.

MISSING INFORMATION

If your source is missing information, use the following guidelines:

- Missing author: Begin the citation with the title.
- Missing publisher: n.p.
- Missing date: n.d.

DOI and URL

The digital object identifier (DOI) is a set of characters that is assigned to a specific online document to make it easier to find. The DOI is similar to a URL, but more reliable, because the DOI is assigned only to that particular original source. Unlike URLs, it never changes.

- If a publisher specifies a DOI, include it in the citation entry instead of the URL
- If the DOI is not preceded by <http://> or <https://>, precede it with <https://doi.org>

Example: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0269881118806297>

Note: DOIs and URLs can be complex. Shortened versions of either is acceptable.

- To create unique, short DOIs, go to: <http://shortdoi.org/>
- If using a shortened-URL service, make sure the link goes to the proper location

DATES

Dates are formatted as Day Month Year. Months other than June and July should be abbreviated to three letters.

Example: 25 Sep. 2014



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WORKS CITED: EXAMPLES

Each example below contains an in-text citation and a corresponding Works Cited entry.

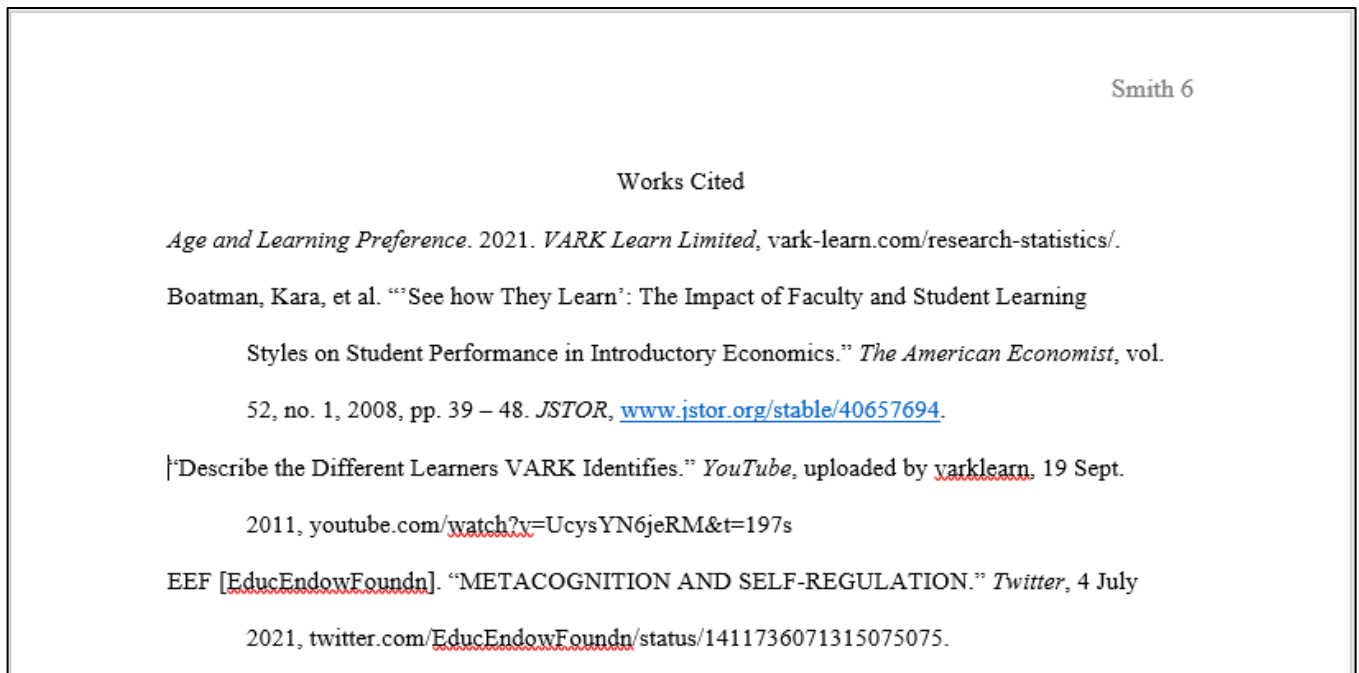


Figure 3. Example of a Works Cited page.

Notes:

- It's a good idea to check with your instructor to determine if they have preferences for citing sources that may differ from the examples below.
- These examples are not exhaustive—for additional citation information, including examples of extraordinary citation situations, visit www.style.mla.org/.



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ONLINE SOURCES

GENERAL FORMAT FOR ONLINE SOURCES

Last name, First name. "Title of Webpage." *Website*. Version or edition. Publisher, date published, url or doi. Accessed Day Mon. Year.

Note: Include an "Accessed" date for an online source only if:

- It does not have a publication date
- It appears to have been altered or removed since you first accessed it
- It is regularly updated (Breaking news, weather forecasts, stock market reports, etc.)

Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Parenthetical Citation
Online Article with an Author	
Author's Last Name, First name. <i>Website</i> . Version or edition. Publisher, Date, url.	(Author's Last Name)
Bauch, Nicholas. <i>Enchanting the Desert: A Pattern Language for the Production of Space</i> . Stanford UP, 2016, www.enchantingthedesert.com/home/ .	(Bauch)
Online Article without an Author	
"Article Title." <i>Website</i> , Publication Date, url.	("Shortened Article Title")
"Athlete's Foot - Topic Overview." <i>WebMD</i> , 25 Sep. 2014, www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/tc/athletes-foot-topic-overview .	("Athlete's")
Video with Creator's Name	
Creator's Last Name, First Name. "Video Title." <i>Website</i> , uploaded by Company Name, Upload Date, url.	(Creator's Last Name)
McGonigal, Jane. "Gaming and Productivity." <i>YouTube</i> , uploaded by Big Think, 3 July 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkdzy9bWW3E .	(McGonigal)



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Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Paraphrased Citation
Video without Creator's Name	
"Video Title." <i>Website</i> , uploaded by Company Name, Upload Date, url.	("Shortened Title")
"What Is the MLA International Bibliography?" <i>Vimeo</i> , uploaded by MLA International Bibliography, 14 Oct. 2016, vimeo.com/187399565.	("What Is")
Social Media	
GENERAL FORMAT FOR SOCIAL MEDIA	
Last Name, First Name or Organization Name [@handle]. Description of cited item. <i>Social Media Platform</i> , Publication Date, URL	
Note: If a source has an online handle that differs significantly from the author's name, include the handle in brackets after the author's name. If they are similar, omit the handle.	
Author's Last Name, First Name or Organization Name [@handle]. Description of cited item. <i>Social Media Platform</i> , Publication Date, url.	(Author's Last Name or Handle)
Chaucer Doth Tweet [@LeVostreGC]. "A daye wythout anachronism ys lyke Emily Dickinson wythout her lightsaber." <i>Twitter</i> , 7 Apr. 2018 twitter.com/LeVostreGC/status/98829987286827009.	(Chaucer Doth Tweet)
Online Picture, Photograph, or Other Image	
Artist's Last Name, First Name. Photograph Title. date. Webpage, url.	(Artist's Last Name)
Sheldon, Natasha. Photograph of The Muleteer. "Human Remains in Pompeii: The Body Casts," 23 Mar. 2014. Decoded Past, decodedpast.com/human-remains.	(Sheldon)



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Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Parenthetical Citation
Article from a Blog	
Last name, First name. "Article Title." <i>Website</i> . Publisher, Publication Date, url. Blog Title.	(Author's Last Name)
Hayes, Terrence. "The Wicked Candor of Wanda Coleman." <i>The Paris Review</i> , 12 June 2020, www.theparisreview.org/blog/2020/06/12/the-wicked-candor-of-wanda-coleman/. The Daily.	(Hayes)
E-Mail	
Sender's Last Name, First Name. "Subject Line." Received by Receiver's First Name Last Name. Date E-mail sent.	(Sender's Last Name)
King, Bruce. "Re: Spanish Currency." Received by Naomi Killkender, 15 Nov. 2021.	(King)

SCHOLARLY JOURNALS, PERIODICALS, AND NEWSPAPERS

GENERAL FORMAT FOR JOURNALS:

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." *Journal Title*, vol. #, no. #, year published, page numbers.

Note: If a publisher specifies a DOI or stable URL, include it in the citation, not the URL.

Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Parenthetical Citation
Database Scholarly Journal Article	
Author's Last Name, First Name. "Article Title," <i>Journal Title</i> , vol. #, no. #, Date, page number(s). Database Title, doi or permalink.	(Author's Last Name page number)



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Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Parenthetical Citation
Bockelman, Brian. "Buenos Aires <i>Bohème</i> : Argentina and the Transatlantic Bohemian Renaissance, 1890-1910," <i>Modernism/modernity</i> , vol. 23, no. 1, Jan. 2016, pp. 37-63. <i>Project Muse</i> , https://doi.org/10.1353/mod.2016.0011 .	(Bockelman 44)
Online Scholarly Journal Article	
Last Name, First Name. "Article Title". <i>Journal Title</i> , vol. #, no. #, Publication Date, url or doi.	(Author's Last Name)
Alpert-Abrams, Hannah. "Machine Reading the <i>Primeros Libros</i> ." <i>Digital Humanities Quarterly</i> , vol. 10, no. 4, 2016, www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/10/4.html .	(Alpert-Abrams)
Printed Scholarly Journal Article	
Author's Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." <i>Journal Title</i> , vol. #, no. #, Date, page number(s).	(Author's Last Name page number)
Boggs, Colleen Glenney. "Public Reading and the Civil War Draft Lottery." <i>American Periodicals</i> , vol. 26, no. 2, 2016, pp. 149-66.	(Boggs 150)
Unsigned or Anonymous Article	
"Article Title." <i>Journal Title</i> , vol. #, no. #, Date, page number(s).	("Shortened Article Title" page number)
"New Discoveries at Herculaneum." <i>Ancient History</i> , Sept. 2006, pp. 53-67.	("New Discoveries" 59)



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Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Parenthetical Citation
Online News Publication	
Last Name, First Name. "Article Title". <i>News Outlet</i> , Publication Date, url.	(Author's Last Name)
Parker-Pope, Tara. "How to Age Well." <i>The New York Times</i> , 2 Nov. 2017, www.nytimes.com/guides/well/how-to-age-well.	(Parker-Pope)
Online Magazine Article	
Author's Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." <i>Magazine Title</i> , vol. #, no. #, Date, url.	(Author's Last Name)
Riis, Jacob, "Huddled Masses." <i>Lapham's Quarterly</i> , vol. 10, no. 1, Winter 2017, www.laphamsquarterly.org/home/huddled-masses.	(Riis)

BOOKS

GENERAL FORMAT FOR BOOKS

Author's Last Name, First Name. *Book Title*. Publisher, Publication Date.

Note: Only cite the publisher's location if:

- The source was published before 1900
- The publisher has offices in more than one country

Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Parenthetical Citation
Book with One Author	
Author's Last Name, First Name. <i>Book Title</i> . Publisher, Publication Date.	(Author's Last Name page number)
Rowling, J.K. <i>Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone</i> . London, Bloomsbury, 1997.	(Rowling)



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Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Parenthetical Citation
Book with Two Authors	
First Author's Last Name, First Name, and Second Author's First Name Last Name. <i>Book Title</i> . Publisher, Publication Date. Note: List the authors in the same order as on the book. For alphabetizing, reverse the order of names of just the first author.	(First Author's Last Name and Second Author's Last Name page number)
Weidenborner, Stephen, and Domenick Caruso. <i>Writing Research Papers</i> . St. Martin's Press, 1986.	(Weidenborner and Caruso 23)
Book with More Than Two Authors	
First Author's Last Name, First Name, et al. <i>Book Title</i> . Publisher, Publication Date.	(First Author's Last Name et al. page number)
Wysocki, Anne Frances, et al. <i>Writing New Media: Theory and Applications for Expanding the Teaching of Composition</i> . Utah State UP, 2004.	(Wysocki et al. 53)
Book with an Unknown Author	
<i>Book Title</i> . Any other contributors, Publisher, Publication Date.	(<i>Shortened Book Title</i> page number)
<i>Beowulf</i> . Translated by Alan Sullivan and Timothy Murphy, edited by Sarah Anderson, Pearson, 2004.	(<i>Beowulf</i> 23)
Multiple Works by One Author	
List the full name for the first entry, in alphabetical order based on the title, per the format for books; for subsequent entries, omit the author's name and replace it with dashes.	(Shortened Title page number)



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Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Parenthetical Citation
Borroff, Marie. <i>Language and the Poet: Verbal Artistry in Frost, Stevens, and Moore</i> . U of Chicago P, 1979	(<i>Language</i> 13)
----- . "Sound Symbolism as Drama in the Poetry of Robert Frost." <i>PMLA</i> , vol. 107, no. 1, Jan. 1992, pp. 131-44. <i>JSTOR</i> , https://doi.org/10.2307/462806 .	("Sound" 9)
Book Published as an E-book	
Author's Last Name, First Name. <i>Book Title</i> . E-book ed., Publisher, Publication Date.	(Author's Last Name page number)
O'Connor, Patricia. <i>Woe is I: The Grammarphobe's Guide to Better English in Plain English</i> . E-Book ed., Riverhead Books, 2009.	(O'Connor 104)
Book Published on a Website	
Author's Last Name, First Name. <i>Book Title</i> . Publisher, Publication Date, doi or url.	(Author's Last Name)
Miller, Daniel, et al. <i>How the World Changed Social Media</i> . UCL Press, 2016, https://doi.org/10.07/j.ctt1g69z35 .	(Miller et al.)
Book Published as an Audiobook	
Author's Last Name, First Name. <i>Book Title</i> . Narrated by First Name Last Name, audiobook ed., Publisher, Publication Date.	(Author's Last Name)
Lee, Harper. <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> . Narrated by Sissy Spacek, audiobook ed., unabridged ed., HarperAudio, 2014.	(Lee)



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Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Parenthetical Citation
Edited Collection of Stories or Essays	
Editor's Last Name, First Name, editor. <i>Book Title</i> . Publisher, Publication Date.	(Editor's Last Name)
Baron, Sabrina Alcorn, et al., editors. <i>Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein</i> . U of Massachusetts P/Library of Congress, Center for the Book, 2007.	(Baron et al.)
Edited Edition of Another Author's Work	
Author's Last Name, First Name. <i>Book Title</i> . Edited by First Name Last Name, Publisher, Publication Date.	(Author's Last Name page number)
Milton, John. <i>The Riverside Milton</i> . Edited by Roy Flannagan, Houghton Mifflin, 1998.	(Milton 89)
Holy Book	
<i>Book Title</i> . Publisher, Publication Date.	(<i>Book Title</i> verse, sutra, or page number)
<i>The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version</i> . New York, Oxford University, 1996.	(<i>The Holy Bible Rev.</i> 1:1-4)
<i>The Qur'an. Translated by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem</i> , Oxford UP, 2015.	(<i>The Qur'an</i> sutra 43)



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ANTHOLOGIES AND REFERENCE BOOKS

Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Parenthetical Citation
Selection from an Anthology	
Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Selection." <i>Anthology Title</i> , edited by First Name Last Name, Publisher, Date, page number(s).	(Author's Last Name page number)
Sabau, Ana. "The Perils of Ownership: Property and Literature in Nineteenth-Century Mexico." <i>Mexican Literature in Theory</i> , edited by Ignacio M. Sánchez Prado, Bloomsbury, 2018, pp. 33-54.	(Sabau 43)
Selection without an Author from a Reference Book	
"Article Title." <i>Reference Book Title</i> . N th ed. Date.	("Shortened Article Title" page number)
"Cognition." Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary. 9th ed. 1984.	("Cognition" 257)

OTHER SOURCES

Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Parenthetical Citation
Film	
<i>Film Title</i> . Directed by First Name Last Name, Production Company, Release Date.	(<i>Shortened Title</i>)
<i>Opening Night</i> . Directed by John Cassavetes, Faces Distribution, 1977.	(<i>Opening</i>)



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Modern Language Association (MLA) Documentation

Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Parenthetical Citation
Television Episode	
"Episode Title." <i>Series Title</i> , season #, episode #, Production Company, Release Date. <i>Website Name</i> , URL.	("Episode Title")
"I, Borg." <i>Star Trek: The Next Generation</i> , season 5, episode 23, Paramount Pictures, 1992. <i>Netflix</i> , www.netflix.com.	("I, Borg.")
Podcast	
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GOVERNMENT SOURCES

GENERAL FORMAT FOR GOVERNMENT SOURCES

Last name, First name (if authored by a person) or Government Issuing Document. Agency or Department. *Title of Document*. Publication Office, Year of publication.

Note: There are many times of government documents, each with a slightly different citation format. For information on citing a variety of legal and governmental works, visit www.style.mla.org/.

Full Citation on the Works Cited Page	Parenthetical Citation
United States Supreme Court Decisions	
United States, Supreme Court. <i>Title of Court Case</i> . Date of publication, <i>Publication</i> , Publisher, url.	(Author's Last Name or Government Issuing Document)
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ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Your instructor may ask for an Annotated Bibliography as part of the writing process. While similar to a Works Cited page, an Annotated Bibliography serves as a tool for evaluating and/or describing sources.

To create an annotated bibliography:

1. Create a Works Cited page according to MLA guidelines



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2. Change the title of the document to "Annotated Bibliography" or "Annotated List of Works Cited"
3. Indent an inch from the start of each citation entry
4. Write a description of the source
5. Keep the description succinct—no longer than a paragraph

An annotated bibliography helps you remember what is contained within each source and gives your instructor an idea of the sources you intend to use in your paper.

Example: FULL CITATION ON THE "ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY" PAGE,
FOLLOWED BY A SHORT DESCRIPTION:

Moore, Nicole. *The Censor's Library: Uncovering the Lost History of Australia's Banned Books*. U of Queensland P, 2012.

The book provides a comprehensive history of Australian print censorship and discusses its implications in regard to questions of transnationalism.

Alex Smith

Dr. Moore

WCTR 100

30 June 2021

Metacognition and Learning Preferences in College Students

College students face any number of challenges in their adjustment to college life: choosing a major, finding a sense of belonging, social, emotional, and financial burdens, but perhaps the greatest challenge is adjusting to and meeting the rigorous standards of college academics. Many first-time college students believe the study habits they learned in high school or past educational experiences are good enough to get them through their college coursework; this is often not the case. According to an article about improving classroom performance:

Most entering students are not adequately prepared either academically or in terms of study skills for college level work. [They] arrive at college with highly overlearned study skills developed in high school that are now ineffective [...] One of the major challenges students face in the transition to college is changing their entrenched but counterproductive study skills [...] The transition to college is not just about learning new study strategies, but also about overcoming old ones. (Chew)

In order to overcome these “entrenched but counterproductive study skills” (Chew), students must first take ownership of their learning experiences through developing stronger metacognition skills. Once students acknowledge their active role in the learning process, they can then determine their learning preferences. When students have better metacognition and harness their learning preferences, they can begin to enter into the collegiate learning experience.

Before students can effectively succeed in college coursework, they need to develop proper metacognition. Metacognition “is being aware of our thinking as we perform specific tasks and then using this awareness to control what we are doing” (“Packet #1”). In other words, students need to understand how they learn (Chew). When students practice metacognition, they can more effectively evaluate their methods for learning, adapt them as necessary, and perform better. Much of metacognition involves self-regulation, a quality which is often developed and strengthened during the time in which traditionally aged college students are working through their degrees. According to Education Endowment Foundation, “[m]etacognitive regulation is about planning how to undertake a task, working on it while monitoring the strategy to check progress, then evaluating the overall success” (EEF). Metacognition is like a bridge for students—if they can develop this skill, they are then primed to have a growth mindset, which is vital in succeeding in college courses. When students have conscious awareness of the study process, they can determine what tools and techniques work best for them, refine those skills, and harness them to their advantage (“Live with Ben Blood”).

Students can practice metacognition and more fully enter into the study process through identifying their primary learning preference. There are four generally agreed upon learning preferences: visual, auditory, read/write, and kinesthetic, or collectively referred to through the acronym VARK. This inventory which was originally developed by Neil Fleming in 1987 helps students determine their learning preference through taking the VARK questionnaire (VARK). Originally described as “a communication questionnaire” (“The Origins of VARK”), VARK is designed to identify the modality through which individuals prefer to learn.

The VARK questionnaire identifies four main ways through which students prefer to present and process information (Boatman et al.). Visual learners prefer intaking information

through maps, graphs, charts, and diagrams; focusing on infographics in textbooks would be beneficial for this type of learner. Auditory learners need to hear or talk through information; lectures, listening to the audio version of a textbook, talking through concepts with someone else are all tools for auditory learners. Those who learn best by reading information and then regurgitating it through written word fall within the read/write category. Finally, kinesthetic learners are considered hands on learners—they need to experience something or have it related through real-life circumstances in order to comprehend the information. Case studies, practical experiences, and demonstrations are all ways in which kinesthetic learners best retain material. While the VARK questionnaire may indicate a student has a stronger preference towards one learning style, it is likely that most students are multimodal, meaning that a combination of two preferences more accurately represents the ways in which students learn (*VARK*).

Once students identify their learning preferences, they can adapt both their study habits and even their potential degree track to best compliment the ways in which they most effectively learn. Take for instance four students in a biology class, learning about mitosis and meiosis. A visual learner would best learn these concepts through drawing out the different phases of each cycle, whereas an auditory learner would need to listen to lecture or perhaps a podcast and then explain the concepts to a friend. A student with a read/write preference would need to read the textbook and write out key phases and definitions. Finally, a kinesthetic learner would need real-life examples of mitosis and meiosis happening in nature. Employing learning preferences expands beyond learning a single concept. For example, auditory learners can choose classes with lecture and discussion components and kinesthetic learners can take classes with labs or practical experiences (“Describe the Different”). Similarly, students can choose majors and career paths that will allow them to harness their learning styles to their advantage. When

students “work to understand their individual learning preferences” they will “become more efficient learners” (Sills et al.) and can thereby transform their collegiate experience.

Research has been conducted in a variety of disciplines to determine the efficacy of learning preferences. During the 2005/2006 academic year at Saint Mary’s College of California, researchers focused on introductory economic courses and sought out to answer the question of “[d]oes learning style preference significantly impact student performance in introductory economics courses and, if so, how?” (Boatman et al.). The research showed that students with visual learning preferences tended to perform better in the economics course, which largely relies on graphs and tables to convey information. The study also suggested that teaching strategies can be adapted to better involve kinesthetic and auditory learners (Boatman et al.). Other studies have been conducted, many with nursing and medical students, to assess students’ learning preferences and suggesting adjustments in teaching strategies to accommodate different learners.

Though learning preferences are disputed by some researchers, evidence does show that individuals find the information useful. Between May and August 2020, 237,537 people took the VARK Questionnaire. Of that group, 34% of respondents had single preferences, with the majority showing a preference for kinesthetic, and 66% of respondents were multimodal learners (VARK). Of the 237,537 respondents, 29,082 filled out additional research questions. From this data, it was determined that there was a higher preference among individuals, despite gender or age, towards a kinesthetic learning preference (*Gender and Learning Preferences*) (*Age and Learning Preferences*). Additionally, 74% of respondents agreed that the learning preference they were assigned matched their perceptions of how they best learn (VARK). This data is a clear indication that individuals find the VARK model a useful tool for how they best learn.

If students develop metacognition and apply it to tasks like determining their learning preference, they are well on their way to becoming more effective learners. However, these two traits alone are not enough to provide true change:

Knowing one's VARK preference for learning is not enough to change study behaviors.

Each learner has to make their own changes and that requires effort, recognition and metacognition. If those are not present the learner will remain with his/her strategies unchanged and that may mean no change in academic success or the same levels of success as previously. (*VARK*)

Metacognition and learning preferences are only the beginning of the learning process. Students must take these tools and use them to establish a growth mindset, develop study techniques that are beneficial to them and their coursework, maintain motivation, create useful time and stress management techniques, and refine executive functioning skills. If students harness these tools of metacognition and learning preferences appropriately and actively participate in their learning journey, they are sure to find success in college coursework.

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