In-Text Citations Using MLA Style

Quoted, paraphrased, or summarized material taken from sources must be cited in the text of a paragraph, essay, research paper, or project. In-text citations must include the necessary information that a reader will need to identify the full citation in the Works Cited page at the end of the paper. Pay close attention to the placement of author, page number(s), and punctuation.

**Note\*** for long quotations of four lines or more, refer to [www.owl.english.purdue.edu](http://www.owl.english.purdue.edu) for the proper citation.

1. **Author named in a signal phrase—**the author is mentioned first and the page number is given at the end.

*Example:*

Introducing the main character, Lipsyte states, “Sonny Bear swaggered down the aisle, banging his big red gloves together, whipping his black ponytail from side to side against his bare shoulders” (2).

1. **Author named in parentheses—**when the author is not mentioned in the signal phrase, place the author’s name and page number(s) in parentheses without punctuation between the two at the end of the sentence.

*Example:*

Amazed at the beautiful Greek village of Oia, Lena “looked down at the whitewashed buildings, much like this one, clinging to the cliffs jutting down into the water” (Brashares 12).

1. **Placement of in-text citation when embedding quote** – always place the in-text citation immediately following a direct quote or paraphrase, even when embedding the quote into your own commentary.

*Example*:

Lightenor has argued that “computers are not useful tools for small children” ("Too Soon" 38) because they have not developed their motor skills fully.

1. **Unknown author—**if an author is unknown, use the title and page number(s) in the citation.

*Example:*

According to one reviewer, “today’s digital projectors are smaller, lighter and more powerful than even just a year ago” (“It’s Show Time” 36).

1. **Internet sources—**when citing from an Internet source, always look for an author.

If no author can be found, reference the source by title. Instead of using page numbers, Internet citations require paragraph numbers.

*Example:*

The article noted that, “The sweep was Philadelphia’s first over the Cardinals at Veterans Stadium since 1993” (“That’s Amaury” par. 7).

1. **Shakespeare –** when citing from Shakespeare’s plays, lines must be divided the way they are in the play and cited by act, scene, and line number.

*Example:*

Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* seems resolute when he asserts, “The play’s the thing / Wherein I’ll catch the conscience of the King” (2.2.633-34).

1. **Indirect sources** – an indirect source is a source cited in another source.

*Example:*

Ravitch argues that high schools are pressured to act as “social service centers, and they don’t do that well” (qtd. In Weisman 259).

1. **Poetry** – when citing fewer than three lines of verse, mark breaks in short quotations of verse with a slash, ( / ), at the end of each line of verse (a space should precede and follow the slash). Parenthetical citation includes the line #//#s of the quotation.

*Example:*

Cullen concludes, “of all the things that happened there / That’s all I remember” (11-12).