

MLA FORMAT

Updated February 2014

What is MLA?

MLA stands for **Modern Language Association**, and it is the standard format for research and term papers. MLA format includes specific rules for quoting authors, called *citations*. It also allows for documenting source authors within the text of your research paper, called *parenthetical citations*. There is also a specific format for creating a *Works Cited* page, which is sometimes called a *bibliography*.

What are Bibliography Cards?

Bibliography cards contain all of the *publication information from your sources*. It is important to recognize all MLA format regulations when creating your bibliography cards, which will eventually become your **Works Cited page**.

When you find a source that you would like to use for your research, you should immediately create a **Bib(liography) card**. That way, you have all the necessary information needed for your Works Cited page. You will write everything on the bibliography card exactly the way it will appear on your Works Cited Page

A **Works Cited** page is what we commonly think of as a bibliography. You will put all of your bibliography cards in alphabetical order and type the information exactly as it appears on the cards.

The Works Cited page belongs at the end of the paper, and lists only those authors that you have cited in your paper. If you have read other authors for information but did not cite them, they will appear on an **Additional Resources** page.

Some rules for your Works Cited page are listed below. These are a guideline only, however, and your instructor may give you special instructions.

- **Double space the entire page**
- **Do not number entries**
- **Begin the first line of an entry flush left, and indent all other lines five spaces (this equals one tab)**
- **List entries in alphabetical order according to the author's last name**
- **If you are listing more than one work by the same author, alphabetize the individual books according to title. Do not re-type the author's name; use three dashes instead**
- **Use quotation marks for the titles of short works that appear in larger publications (newspaper and magazine articles). You will underline the publication in which these works appear (the name of the magazine or newspaper)**
- **It is important to use the correct punctuation in between all pieces of information**
- **Shorten the publication information as much as possible.**

Make sure you gather this information as soon as you locate a source. If you do not, you may have a hard time finding the source at a later date. Without this information, you cannot use the source in your paper. You must also list the medium of your information, i.e, print, web, database, etc.

Sample Entries for Works Cited Page/ Bibliography Cards

All "Works Cited" must be alphabetized, double spaced, and contain hanging indentation. Ask your teacher if your citation is not shown below.

Books: When citing books, provide the following information in this order. Pay particular attention to punctuation.

Author's Last Name, First Name. Title of Book. City of Publication: Publishing Company, publication date. Medium.

A Book by One Author

Boorstin, Daniel J. *A History of the Heroes of the Second World War*. New York: Random House, 1983. Print.

Two or More Books by the Same Author

Garre, Thomas. *American Literature is Dead*. Boston: Morrow, 1907. Print.

---. *The New Language of America*. Boston: Morrow, 1911. Print.

A Book by Two or Three Authors

Smith, Jane, and Joshua Landis. *The Truth About Baby Jane and the System That Failed Her*. Los Angeles: Broughten, 1999. Print.

Albers, James, Kelly King, and Jon Jones. *The Beautiful Country of Scotland*. London: Lofthouse, 2002. Print.

A Book With Four or More Authors

Black, Jonathan, et al. *The Way of the World and Other Short Stories in American Literature*. New York: Bridgton, 1977. Print.

A Book With An Editor

Smith, Don, ed. *The New Look of Life*. California: Telecast, 1902. Print.

A Book With An Author and An Editor

Toomer, Jean. *Cane and Other Stories*. Ed. Darwin T. Turner. New York: Norton, 1988. Print.

A Book in Several Volumes

Blottan, Jon. *Mark Twain: A History*. Vol. 3. New York: Random House, 1982. Print.

Magazine or Journal Article Reprinted in Another Source:

Author of Article (if given). "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine or Journal* Vol. #. Issue # date of issue: page(s) (if given). Rpt. in *Title of Work Containing the Reprint*. Editor. Place of Publication: Publisher, Copyright Date. page(s). Print.

CaPece, Elokin. "Commentary on the Review of Comprehensive Sex Education Curricula (2007)" 3.3 Sept. 2008: 295-312. Rpt. in *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Human Sexuality*. Ed. William J. Taverner. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010. 105-117. Print.

Newspaper Articles:

Bennigan, Jan. "When It Rains, It Pours." *Chicago Tribune* 8 Apr 1994: A14. Print.

"Children Fail at Learning." *Peoria Journal Star* 30 Mar 1998: B14. Print.

Magazine Articles:

Willis, Drummond. "What My Years Have Taught Me." *New Yorker* 17 May 1998: 49-55. Print.

Potter, Sherman T. "How to Run A Hospital." *Time* Oct 1992: 74-75. Print.

Magazine Articles With No Author

"My Story: The Jack Tripper Saga." *TV Guide* Dec 1982: 46-53. Print.

Web Pages: Try to find all available information. If information is missing, skip to the next item. Place available information in the following order:

Author's last name, first name. "Article Title." Publication /Last Updated Dates. Medium. Date you accessed the page.

Smith, Joe. "My Time in the Nam." 18 Nov 2000. Web. 9 May 2002.

"Training Mom and Dad for Baby." Web. 18 June 2009.

Houlihan, Margaret. "I Was a War Time Nurse." Web. 5 Dec 2008 .

Databases: List according to the type of article (newspaper, magazine, or other format). You will cite the article as if you have the original publication, but must add the name of the database.

Author. Title of Article. Magazine or Newspaper name date of publication: page numbers. Database name. Medium. Date you accessed the information.

Snider, Michael. "Wired for Sound." *Rolling Stone* 15 Mar 2007: 45-49. EBSCO Host. Web. 9 Feb 2009.

Personal Interviews:

Dickinson, Carol. *Telephone interview*. 30 Sept 2013.

There are literally hundreds of additional resources that can be included in your Works Cited. If your particular resource is not mentioned above, see your teacher for help.

What Are Notecards?

Once you find a source, you will begin reading that source for information that will eventually help you write your research paper. The best way to store this information is on **notecards**.

Notecards will contain information from your sources. On your notecards, you may paraphrase the information (in your own words, that is), citing the author and page number. You may also copy the information from the book directly, *word for word*. If you do this, use quotation marks, so you are aware that it is a direct quote. If you copy **all** of your notecards word for word, there is no need for quotation marks.

Notecards will also contain the author's last name and the page number on which you found the information. This goes in the lower right hand corner. There should not be a comma in between the last name and the page number. (Smith 479)

Your notecards can contain one or two pieces of information or may contain longer sections from your source.

Pubs in early England were “known for four things: their food, fires, friendliness, and, of course, the beer.”

Herriott 359

What Do I Do With My Notecards?

After gathering all of the needed information on notecards, you will be ready to begin writing your paper. Your next step is to design a **Working Outline**. This will be a basic roadmap for your paper. It will also keep you organized.

Organize your notecards according to major divisions on your Working Outline (I's, II's, III's, etc). Next, put all of your notecards in the proper order within the divisions. These smaller divisions will be the minor points (A's, B's, and C's) on your Outline.

Once all of your notecards are in order, you are ready to begin writing. It is recommended that you handwrite your rough draft, rather than simply sit at a computer and begin typing. You will begin writing in your own words, and will use the information on the notecards to **support** your statements. When you use a notecard in your paper, it is called a *citation*, and must be followed by a *parenthetical citation*.

What are citations?

When you use information from a notecard in your paper, it is called a **citation**. It must be followed by a **parenthetical citation**. You can quote the author directly (word for word) or indirectly, where you put things into your own words, but each citation (quote) must be followed by a parenthetical citation. This gives the reader the author and the page number where the original quote can be found. All of this information should be on your notecard. For example,

Many people enjoy reading short stories more than novels. “Most short stories are works of substance and subtlety,” (Sohn 14).

This quote can be found on page 14 of the book written by Sohn. **All parenthetical citations must include the author's name (if known) and a page number.** If the author is not known, use a key word from the title.

This rule only changes when you are using information from the internet. Pages on the internet are often not numbered; if page numbers are present, use those numbers. With other information used from World Wide Web pages, Gale sources, EBSCO sources, or other database sources, simply omit page numbers. **DO NOT NUMBER THE PARAGRAPHS** unless they are numbered by the author. If paragraphs are numbered by the author, your parenthetical citation should include the author's last name (or key word) and the paragraph number. For example,

“It is often the case that high school students who were average in their classes are those who become exceptional adults,” (jobhunting para. 4).

This quote can be found on the jobhunting website in paragraph four, as numbered by the creator of the site.

Types of Citations

Direct Citations

These are **word for word** quotes from the author, taken directly from your notecards. These must be included in quotation marks, and must be followed by a parenthetical citation. The order for punctuation must be followed **exactly** as follows:

“Longfellow’s last decades were uneventful, save for the fatal burning of his wife, which eventually led to her death,” (Baym 578).

It is important that you do not “close” the sentence with its ending punctuation until you have given the parenthetical citation. This way the reader knows who said this about Longfellow before the end of the sentence.

Indirect Citations

Indirect citations also come from your notecards, but you do not incorporate them into your paper word for word. With indirect citations, you keep the author’s basic *idea*, but you put it in your own words. You do not put indirect citations in quotation marks, because you are not “quoting” the author word for word. It is still important, however, to give the author credit for his idea, **so each indirect citation must be followed by a parenthetical citation.**

One of my notecards contains the following information:

In order to be clourophobic, one must, as a child, have experienced a traumatic clown encounter. Herring 39

To **indirectly cite** this author, you must take the main idea and put it in your own words:

There are many different causes listed for clourophobia. One major cause insists that the victim must have had a traumatic clown experience as a young child (Herring 39).

In the above example, Herring made a statement that all clourophobics had to have a certain experience as a child. Although you haven’t quoted him directly, this is still his idea. He must get credit. This is why you must have a parenthetical citation after the indirect quote.

Note that the parenthetical citation still must come before the ending punctuation, just as with direct citations. This format must be followed exactly.

Extended or Long Quotes

If the information on a notecard is more than four typed lines, it is called an extended or a long quote. Long quotes must be treated differently.

- Long quotes are typed so that each line is double tabbed
- Long quotes do not need quotation marks; indenting each line indicates a direct quote
- The ending punctuation goes directly after the quote, before the parenthetical citation
- Long quotes are always direct (word for word)

Below is an example of a long quote in a paper:

Plays in Shakespeare's time were performed at a much swifter pace than what we would be able to follow. While most plays all consisted of five acts, they didn't take as long as would be expected.

The pace of a performance was rapid; Shakespeare's plays were put on in two hours. There was no scenery, no lighting, few props, and no curtain on the main stage. As a result, the action moved quickly from one scene to the next. (Akley 132)

There were also very few costume changes in Shakespeare's plays. The actors usually wore their own clothing.

After you have written your paper, you must update your outline. Include and add any additional divisions. This will become your Final Outline.

A Word About Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as using another writer's words or ideas without crediting him or her. Plagiarism is a serious offense. At LCHS, the penalty for plagiarism is outlined in Limestone's Plagiarism Policy, which is available in its entirety on the Limestone home page and in the student handbook. Please be aware of the policy and the penalties for plagiarism.

What Needs To Be Cited?

- ✓ **Direct Quotations.** Any time you quote word for word, you must include a parenthetical citation.
- ✓ **Indirect Quotations.** When you paraphrase (restate in your words) another writer's ideas, you must give him credit with a parenthetical citation
- ✓ **Facts or Statistics that are not common knowledge.** Historical dates, general biographical information, general truths do not need to be cited. Specific information should be followed by a parenthetical citation.

Get help with plagiarism issues before you run into trouble. Talk to your teacher if you are worried about plagiarism before you turn in your paper.

When you turn in your final paper, it must contain the following items in this order:

- **Final Outline**
- **Body of Paper (with header)**
- **Works Cited**
- **Additional Resource Page (optional)**

Theories of the Sinking Titanic

I. Introduction--There are many theories as to why the Titanic sank; proving one of these theories is virtually impossible.

A. Dimensions of Titanic

B. Creating the Titanic

C. Titanic timeline

II. Theory I--Brittle Steel

A. The hull fractured; would not bend

B. Temperature and pressure

III. Theory II--Faulty Rivets

A. Unusually high slag content

B. Speedy sinking process

IV. Other Theories

A. Rudder too small

B. Fast boat speed for icy waters

1. Moonless night

2. No wind/waves

C. Faulty water-tight compartments

1. Only functioned horizontally

2. Open top design

V. Conclusion

A. Summarize theories

B. Inevitable finale

Because the Titanic has spent so many years on the bottom of the ocean, proving one theory about why it sank is virtually impossible. The Titanic was an amazing engineering and nautical phenomenon, mainly due to its size, speed, beauty, and the many luxuries she offered her passengers. This astounding ship is and was the greatest ship to ever sail the waters of the world, and the reason why she rests under two miles of water is still a mystery.

One reason the Titanic was so incredible was the dimensions of the boat. According to Ruth Blanchard, once a passenger on the Titanic, “the Titanic seemed so big, there at the pier. I’ll never forget how it took my breath away. What a grand sight for a twelve year old girl,” (Broad 9). Anyone who saw the ship was mesmerized by her length of approximately 882 feet, her gross tonnage ranging from 45,000 to 50,000 tons. The twenty-nine boilers aboard the Titanic lit the two reciprocating engines. These powerful engines forced three enormous propellers, each with a center blade diameter of sixteen feet and right and left wings spanning twenty-three feet (Gannon 35). Despite the tremendous weight that the Titanic carried, she could still reach speeds of 21-23 knots--the equivalent of 18 miles per hour. A ship weighing that much moving at that speed coming into contact with any object would be equivalent to an airplane flying into a stationary building. The damage would be enormous (Macintyre 28).

In 1909, construction began on the Titanic in Belfast, Ireland. The Harland and Wolff Shipyards were the primary location for the building, mainly because they were roomy enough to house the ship itself and the equipment (Macintyre 49). When the ship was built, “there was major debating about the size of the rudder, propellers, and the quality of steel being used. All debates were worked out, however, and the building continued,” (Broad 33). By April 10, 1912, the Titanic was ready for her maiden voyage from Southampton to New York.

By 9:30 a.m., Titanic passengers started to arrive to board for the 12:00 p.m. departure. On April 12 and 13, Titanic sailed easily through calm, clear weather. “The night of April 14 was a moonless one, and deathly cold. Mother Nature was working against the doomed passengers,” (Winchester 44).

By 11:00 that night, the Titanic had received seven iceberg warnings. At 11:40 p.m., look out Frederic Fleet, squinting into the dark, noticed the horizon directly ahead becoming less clean, slightly hazy. . .And then he began to make out a black mountain. “Iceberg dead ahead!” he shouted, and quickly rang the wheelhouse bell. The officer in charge immediately signaled full speed astern. (Gannon 52)

At approximately 11:43 p.m., the Titanic, unable to turn to avoid the collision, struck the iceberg. By 11:50, water was pouring in the lower decks. The captain was informed that the Titanic could only stay afloat for a few hours and ordered a distress call. The grim news was that there weren't any ships within range to save them (Naumann 399). At that time, passengers were roused from sleep and ordered into the lifeboats. Unfortunately, there were only enough lifeboats for half of the 2,227 passengers on board. At 12:25 a.m., women and children were loaded into lifeboats and lowered into the icy water. Many of the subsequent lifeboats were lowered carrying only a fraction of the numbers they were tested to hold. "One of the boats was lowered carrying only 24 passengers, when it had been tested to safely hold 65 grown men," (Gannon 88). The last lifeboat was lowered into the water at 2:05 a.m., even though there were still 1500 people on deck waiting. Carpathia, a ship sailing to America, heard the distress call and began heading in the direction of Titanic. At 2:17 a.m., almost two and a half hours after the collision with the iceberg, the last radio call for help was sent out. The water in the front of the ship finally became too burdensome--the back end of Titanic suddenly started rising out of the water. The 1500 passengers still on board panicked (timeline 33). The boat bobbed in the water for some time before splitting in half. The back end of the ship went crashing back into the water and the front end, which had sustained the most damage, sank to the bottom of the ocean. As the remaining half of the ship filled with water, she again went up in the water. As the compartments filled with freezing water, the Titanic sank lower and lower into the ocean. When the water weight became too great, the Titanic sank quickly, disappearing from view. The Titanic would never again see air (Winchester 489). The unsinkable ship had sunk. Of the 1500 who were tossed into the freezing water when Titanic sank, only six lived to join the 699 passengers who had made it onto a lifeboat. "When Carpathia picked up the survivors, she expected to be filled to capacity. Instead, she only carried 705 survivors into New York Harbor," ("Sometimes Things Go Wrong," 3). In the days after the sinking, investigators began searching for reasons why she might have struggled so against the iceberg. Theories were formed, proven illogical, and re-formed. Scientists reenacted possibilities with miniatures, trying to discover what, exactly, was at fault. The question still exists today.

One theory that survived the initial battery was the idea that the ship was constructed of brittle steel, which led to the extensive damage. "It was full of sulfide occlusions called 'stringers', and it would never

get out of the shipyard by today's standards. It wouldn't even make good rebar, which is pretty lousy steel," (Winchester cause 2). Failure of brittle steel occurs under comparatively low stress conditions, the material cracking at the slag occlusions (Gannon 141).

The paper continues on for six more pages; it is not necessary to reprint it.
See next page for the Works Cited page.

Works Cited

- Alda, Alan. *Titanic: A Comedy of Errors*. Frank Pierce, ed. Maine: Crabapple, 1966. Print.
- Ballard, Robert D. "A Long Last Look at Titanic." *New York Times* 4 Apr 1984: A3. Print.
- Broad, William J., and Jane Smith. "Failure Analysis". *German Voice Monthly*. 10 Oct 2001: 46-48. Print.
- Gannon, Robert, ed. *What Really Sank the Titanic*. New York: Random House, 1987. Print.
- Macintyre, Donald, et al. *The Sinking of the Titanic*. Los Angeles: Smith Brothers, 1915. Print.
- Naumann, Friederich K. *New Titanic Expedition Settles Key Questions*. 19 Feb 2001. Web. 30 Oct 2007.
- "Sometimes Things Go Wrong." *Time* July 1988: 66-79. Print.
- "The Titanic Timeline." 05 May 2008 Web. 25 June 2007.
- Winchester, Charles, ed. *The Problem: Small Rudder!*. Boston: Major Publishing, 1955. Print.
- . *I Know The Cause*. Boston: Major Publishing, 1956. Print.

Revised February 2014