Using MLA Style

Lone Star College – University Park
Student Learning Resource Center/Library
In this lesson...

- What makes a good source?
- Finding your sources
- Formatting your paper
- Citations
Evaluating Sources

Check for…

• **Evidence**
  • Does the information appear well-researched?

• **Credibility**
  • Is the author reliable?

• **Expertise**
  • Does the author have a valid background in the subject?

• **Relevance**
  • Is the information about your topic? Is it timely?

• **Bias**
  • Is the information opinionated? If so, acknowledge in your own paper.
Evaluating Sources

Or, The C.R.A.P. Test:

Currency
Reliability / Relevancy
Authority
Purpose / Point of View
Finding Your Source

http://www.lonestar.edu/library/article-databases

You’ll want papers which are:
✓ Peer-reviewed
✓ Full-text
Which source do you use?
Work Chronology

- Choose your topic
- Find your sources
- Create your works cited
- Write your paper, referring to the works cited for your in-text citations
FORMATTING: PAGE LAYOUT

• 10-12 point font
• 1” margins on all sides
• Times New Roman or other serifed font
  ➢ Sans-serif
  ➢ Serif
• Double-spaced
• New paragraphs are indented a ½”
  • (hit the tab key once)
• When you make your bibliography, everything after the first line per entry needs to be indented a ½” as well (a “hanging indent”)
Even if you have a title page, DO still include your **paper title** on the first page of your paper:
Choosing a Paper Title: Which are good titles?

- My Paper
- Writing in MLA: A Review of Formatting and Citations
- Symbolism in “A Catcher in the Rye”
- Assignment 1: MLA Style
PAGE NUMBERING

• Lastname [page number] in the header, on every page

• Use INSERT > Page Number for automatic numbering
Language

• Be concise and clear: don’t fluff your writing with unnecessary description or information nor complex language

• Use the active voice whenever possible
  – Passive: Participants were asked…
  – Active: We asked participants…
To have Word check for passive voice:

- File
  - Options
    - Proofing
      - Settings
CITATIONS...

• give the exact location of an information source

• give credit to this source for the ideas or information within your work

• are placed on the Works Cited page of your paper as well as throughout the body in parentheses
EXAMPLE CITATIONS FOR...

- Journal (online database)
- Book
- Book - Anthology
Elements of a Citation for a Journal Article

- Author(s)
- Title of article
- Title of journal
- Volume
- Issue
- Publication date
- Page numbers
Elements of a Citation for a Book

- Author(s)
- Title of article
- Title of journal
- Volume
- Issue
- Publication date
- Page numbers
Elements of a Citation for an Anthology

- Author(s) of individual work
- Title of individual piece
- Title of anthology
- Editor(s) of anthology
- Publication place
- Publisher
- Publication date
- Page numbers
- Medium of publication
What’s wrong with this citation?

What would the citation for this journal article look like?

20. **Doubt's Architecture.**
By: Sayer, Janet; Bathurst, Ralph; Symonds, Henry. *Creative Approaches to Research.*
Subjects: RESEARCH -- Methodology; SELF-representation; WORK-life balance; ARTISTS; AESTHETICS; IDENTITY (Psychology); ANTIQUITIES; EXHIBITIONS; PHOTOGRAPHS; Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers; Convention and Trade Show Organizers

Database: Academic Search Complete
WORKS CITED


Sample page from [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/02/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/02/)
## Alphabetize by author

### Works Cited

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publication Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Sample page from [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/02/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/02/)
When do you use in-text citations?

If you didn’t originally think it or say it, attribute it!

Exception: commonly-known facts don’t need citations.
In-Text Citations

• Paraphrase
  – Do not just swap out a few words with synonyms!

• Direct quote
  – Uses “quotation marks” around the source content
  – If it’s longer than 5 lines, no quotes: make it a block quote with ½” margins relative to the rest of your text
IN-TEXT CITATIONS

• Parenthetical Citations
  – (Author)
  – (Author and Author)
  – (Author 31)
  – Author says “…” (172).
Is this correct?

**Source text:** “These and related findings suggest the role of aesthetics in product design: attractive things make people feel good, which in turn makes them think more creatively.” – Donald Norman’s *Emotional Design* (2004)

**In your paper:** Aesthetics aren’t purely superficial in object design. Attractive objects make people feel good, which in turn makes them more creative in their thinking. When they’re being creative, people are better able to solve problems.
Source text: “These and related findings suggest the role of aesthetics in product design: attractive things make people feel good, which in turn makes them think more creatively.” – Donald Norman’s *Emotional Design* (2004)

In your paper: Citing a study by psychologist Alice Isen, Norman suggests that aesthetic design, by improving people’s moods and therefore making them more creative, can ultimately make them better problem-solvers.
Is this correct?

Source text: “These and related findings suggest the role of aesthetics in product design: attractive things make people feel good, which in turn makes them think more creatively.” – Donald Norman’s *Emotional Design* (2004)

In your paper: Citing a study by psychologist Alice Isen, Norman suggests that aesthetic design, by improving people’s moods and therefore making them more creative, can ultimately make them better problem-solvers (19).
Is this correct?

Here’s the latest picture I made! :