



Using Citations Properly: MLA Format

Citing sources within your essay:

MLA Style uses **parenthetical notes** as **in-text references**, which immediately follow a **quote, paraphrase, or summary** and **identify the author and location of the source**. Components of **proper documentation** include:

- an **introduction** to the source
- the use of **quotation marks**
- a **parenthetical note**
- the **interpretation** that follows the reference

This style of citation is typically used for English Composition and Literary essays. Usually, the author's last name and page number or website and paragraph are noted within the parenthetical citation (Author page). In Example 1, the author's name is mentioned in the sentence, so all that is needed in the note are the page numbers where the writer found this information.

Example 1:

Should we act understanding to those who misunderstand us? In his essay "Just Walk on By," Brent Staples describes how people misperceived him because of his appearance, which in turn prompted him to "react" and "act" in conscious attempts to make those around him feel more at ease. Staples is a black man who noticed that people would alter their own behavior (by crossing the street or speeding up their pace) when they noticed that he was walking behind them. So to seem "less threatening" to these people who thought themselves "victims," Staples whistled Vivaldi to ease their fears (429-432).

In Example 2, the work and author's name are not mentioned in the note because this passage is part of a literary analysis of a single work, so the author and title of the novel would have been introduced in the first paragraph.

Example 2:

When the girls make fun of her grandmother, Maya cries, thinks about getting her uncle's rifle, and wants to scream that they were "dirty, scummy peckerwoods" (24-25).

Citing sources at the end of your essay:

When you have provided citations in the body, you should also include a **Works Cited** page at the end of your essay that lists all of the referenced sources. Sources should be listed **alphabetically by the author's last name**.

Templates:

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of the Article or Chapter." *Title of the Book*. Edition. City of Publication: Publisher, Year. Pages or Paragraph Numbers. Medium of Publication.

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of the Article or Chapter." *Name of Website*. Version number. Publisher or <Website address>. Date of access.

Example 3:

Hughes, Langston. "Salvation." *The Longman Reader Brief Edition*. 8th ed. Eds. John Langan, Eliza, A. Comodromos. NY: Pearson, 2008. 127-29. Print.