

MLA FORMAT

(7th edition)

NOTE: If your instructor has specific requirements, his or her preferences take precedence over the information in this guide

I. Formatting the text: General instructions

Font and typeface (p. 116)

Select an easily readable typeface (e.g., Times New Roman), that contrasts clearly with the italic. Choose 12 points as your standard type size (see fig.1).

Margins and indentation (p. 116)

Use a margin of at least 1 inch on all four sides of each page. The top margin limit does not apply to the page header. Indent the first word of a paragraph five-to-seven-space (or ½ inch) from the left margin. The remaining lines should be flush with the left margin (see fig.1).

Justification (p. 116)

Do not justify lines, except in page headers; that is, do not use the word-processing feature that adjusts spacing between words to make all lines the same length. Do not use hyphens to break up words at the end of lines.

Line Spacing (p. 116)

Double-spacing is required for all parts of the paper, including the works cited list (see fig.1).

Page headers and page numbers (p. 116-118)

Number all pages consecutively throughout . . . in the upper right hand corner. Place a header (your family name) in the upper right corner of each page. The header should be ½ inch from the top of the page and should consist of the first two or three words of your paper's title either above or five spaces to the left of the page number (see fig.1).

Title Page (p. 116):

A research paper does not need a title page. Instead, beginning one inch from the top of the first page include your name, your instructor's name, the course number and the date on separate lines. Then, the title of your paper justified to the centre of the page (see fig.1).

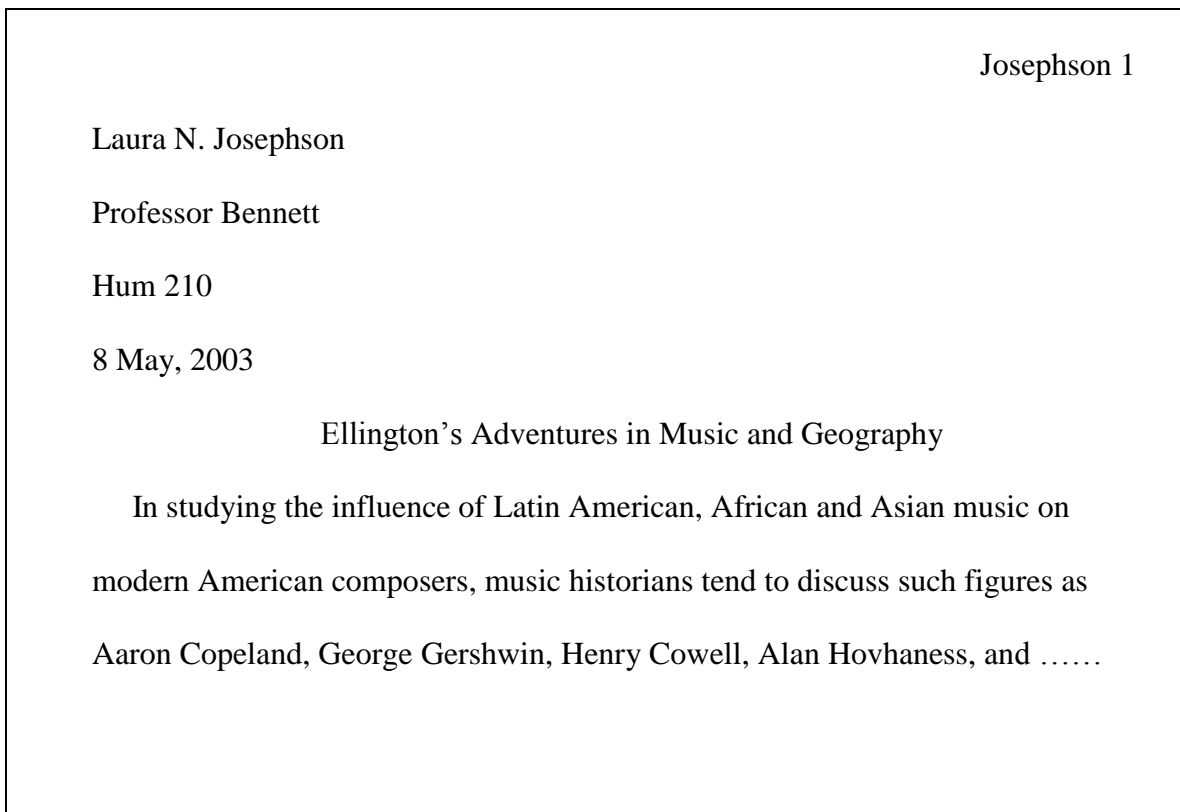


Fig. 1. Top portion of the first page of a research paper

II. Citing References in Text: General Instructions

NOTE: ALWAYS cite the work of individuals whose ideas, theories, or research have directly influenced your work. Whether it is word for word (see quotation rules below), paraphrasing, or even referring to someone else's ideas, it MUST be cited so as to indicate that the preceding information is not your original thought.

Parenthetical references (p. 214-115)

In the text prior to, or immediately following the quote, you must make reference to whom the quote is from, followed by the page number in brackets.

Example: Medieval Europe was a place both of “raids, pillages, slavery, and extortion” and of “traveling merchants, monetary exchange, towns if not cities, and active markets in grain” (Townsend 10).

The parenthetical reference (Townsend 10) indicates that the quotations are from page 10 of a work by Townsend. By providing the author's last name, your readers can now find complete publication information for the source in the alphabetically arranged list of works cited that follows the text of your paper.

Quotations -- Short (4 lines or less) (p. 93)

If a prose quotation runs no more than four lines and requires no special emphasis, put it in quotation marks and incorporate it and the author's name into the text.

Example: For Charles Dickens the eighteenth century was both “the best of times” and “the worst of times” (35).

If the quotation requires a parenthetical reference, immediately following the quote, you must make reference to the author of the quote, followed by the page number in brackets. Place the sentence period after the reference.

Example: A famous author once wrote that the eighteenth century “was the best of times” and “the worst of times” (Dickens 35).

Quotations -- Long (More than 4 lines) (p. 94)

If a prose quotation runs more than four lines, set it off from the text by beginning a new line and indenting one inch from the text (which is already indented 1 inch from the edge of the page – see below, fig.2).

At the conclusion of Lord of the Flies, Ralph and the other boys realize the horror of their actions:

The tears began to flow 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)

Fig.2 Long Quotation Sample

Ellipses (p.97-101)

Ellipses are used to indicate that you have omitted material from a quotation; Use three spaced ellipsis points (. . .) within a sentence to indicate that you have omitted material from a quotation.

Example: In surveying various responses to plagues in the Middle Ages, Barbara W. Tuchman writes, “Medical thinking . . . stressed air as the communicator of disease, ignoring sanitation or visible carriers” (101-02).

If the ellipsis comes at the end of your quote, do not forget the period.

Example: In surveying various responses to plagues in the Middle Ages, Barbara W. Tuchman writes, “Medical thinking trapped in the theory of astral influences, stressed air as the communicator of disease . . .” (101-02).

Square brackets (p.101)

Square brackets are used to indicate material that has been inserted into a quotation by someone other than the original author, such as comments or explanations.

Example: He claimed he could provide “hundreds of examples [of court decisions] to illustrate the historical tension between church and state.

One author (p.216)

Identify the author (last name only) and page(s) that the information comes from. You can do this in two ways:

1- As much as you can, try and incorporate the author’s name(s) into your text at the appropriate point and cite the page number(s) in parentheses.

Example: Tannen has argued this point (178-85).

2- When it is not possible to incorporate the author’s name, identify the author(s) and the page(s) in parentheses, no comma.

Example: The point has already been argued (Tannen 178-85).

Two or three authors (p. 216)

Identify all authors (last name only) each time you cite the work in your text.

Example: Others, like Jones and Wing (21-25), hold the opposite point of view.

Example: Others hold the opposite point of view (Jones and Wing 21-25).

Four or more authors (p. 215)

Again, as much as you can, try and incorporate the author’s name(s) into your text. If this cannot be done, either give the last name of the first author followed by *et al.*, or list all authors - last name only.

Example: Jones, Smith, Adams and Trembley (339-40) found...

Example: The data that was presented (Jones et al. 339-40) show that ...

Example: The data that was presented (Jones, Smith, Adams and Trembley 339-40) show that ...

Groups (corporations, associations, etc.) as authors (p. 224)

Incorporate the complete names of corporate authors into your text.

Example: According to a study sponsored by the National Research Council, the population of China around 1990 was increasing by more than fifteen million annually (15).

When it is not possible to incorporate the corporate author's name, identify the author(s) and the page(s) in parentheses, no comma. You may shorten terms that are commonly abbreviated (eg.: natl., or govt.).

Example: According to an important study, the population of China around 1990 was increasing by more than fifteen million annually (Natl. Research Council 15)

Two or more books by same author (p.225)

If you have used two or more books by the same author, include the title of the work in question, either by incorporating it into your text or adding a shortened version of the title into your parentheses.

Example: Shakespeare's *King Lear* has been called a "comedy of the grotesque" (Frye, *Anatomy* 237).

Example: Northrup Frye called Shakespeare's *King Lear* a "comedy of the Grotesque" (*Anatomy* 237)

Example: In his book *Anatomy*, Northrup Frye called Shakespeare's *King Lear* a "comedy of the grotesque" (237)

Anonymous author(s) or no author(s) mentioned (p. 223)

If a work's author is not mentioned or identified as "anonymous", provide the full title (if it is brief) or a shortened version, preceding the page information and put it in quotation marks. If you refer to the title in the text, make sure it is italicized.

Example: The government has been attempting to remove the lilies, but so far they have been unsuccessful ("Gilded Lilies" 5).

Example: According to the article *Gilded Lilies* (5), government attempts to remove the lilies have been unsuccessful.

In your works cited list, using the example of the article *Gilded Lilies*, you would list it alphabetically under "g".

III. List of Works Cited

Works Cited page (ch. 5, p.123-212)

Rules to follow:

- No matter what you do, **BE CONSISTENT**.
- The information provided in a works cited list must help answer the following questions:
 - Who wrote **it**? (Author, corporate author)
 - When did they write **it**? (Date)
 - What is **it** called? (Title)
 - Where can I go to find **it**? (Publisher, journal, volume #, URL, etc.)
- Start the list of works cited on a new page.
- Type the words **Works Cited** centered at the top of the page.
- Double-space **all** lines.
- Set the first line of each entry flush with the left margin and subsequent lines indented 5 or 7 spaces (½ an inch).
- Arrange entries in alphabetical order by author. One-author entries precede multiple-author entries that begin with the same last name. Author or editor's surname first i.e.; Jones, Thomas
- In a citation for a work with no author or editor, the title becomes the first thing mentioned
- Alphabetize works with no author by the title ignoring any initial *A*, *An*, or *The* or the equivalent in another language.
- If no date is available, write "n.d." where the date would normally go.
- When writing out titles, capitalize the first word, the last word and all significant words, including those that follow hyphens in compound terms.
- Italicise books and journal titles. Do not italicise journal article titles.

Works Cited List Samples

Periodical Articles:

General structure of a citation to a periodical article (p.137):

Author's name. "Title of the Article." *Periodical Title* volume#.issue#

(date): page(s). Medium.

Journal article, one author (p.137)

Piper, Andrew. "Rethinking the Print Object: Goethe and the Book of Everything."

PMLA 121.1 (2006): 124-38. Print.

Journal article, two or three authors (p.140, 154-155)

- Reverse only the name of the first author, give the other name(s) in normal form.

Brueggeman, Brenda Jo, and Debra A. Modellmog. "Coming-Out Pedagogy: Risking

Identity in Language and Literature Classrooms." *Pedagogy* 2.3 (2002): 311-35. Print.

More than three authors (p.140, 155-156)

- In this case, you have two options: Either list all authors or only the first author and add "et al".

Wolchick, Sharlene A., et al. "An Experimental Evaluation of Theory-Based Mother and

Mother-Child Programs for Children of Divorce." *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 68.5 (2000): 843-856. Print.

Magazine or newsletter articles (p. 142-143)

- Instead of volume and issue#, give the date shown on the publication in the following order: Day Month (abbreviated) year e.g.; 20 Feb. 2009.

Gulli, Cathy. "It's All in Your Head." *Maclean's* 30 Oct. 2006: 26-28. Print.

Newspaper articles (p. 141-142)

- Omit introductory articles: use *Gazette*, not *The Gazette*.
- For city newspapers, if the city name is not included in the title add it in brackets afterward: *Gazette* [Montreal].
- If an article appears on broken pages, give the first page # and a plus symbol “+” to indicate that there are more pages to follow.

Alaton, Salem. “So, Did They Live Happily Ever After?” *Globe and Mail* [Toronto] 27

Dec. 1997: D1+. Print.

Anonymous or no author (p. 145)

- For a citation to a work with no author, the title becomes the first thing mentioned.

“Where Angels No Longer Fear to Tread.” *Economist* 22 Mar. 2008: 89+. Print.

Books:

General structure of a book citation (p.148):

Author’s name. *Title of the Book*. City of publication: Publisher, date. Medium.

One author (p. 148-152)

Johnson, Roberta. *Gender and Nation in the Spanish Modernist Novel*. Nashville:

Vanderbilt UP, 2003. Print.

Two or three authors (p.154-155)

- Reverse only the name of the first author, give the other name(s) in normal form.

Eggin, Suzanne, and Diana Slade. *Analysing Casual Conversation*. London: Cassell,

1997. Print.

More than three authors (p. 155-156)

- In this case, you have two options: Either list all authors or only the first author and add “et al”.

Plag, Ingo, et al. *Introduction to English Linguistics*. Berlin: Mouton, 2007. Print.

or ...

Plag, Ingo, Maria Braun, Sabine Lappe, and Mareile Schramm. *Introduction to English Linguistics*. Berlin: Mouton, 2007. Print.

Edited book (p. 162-164)

Austen, Jane. *Sense and Sensibility*. Ed. Claudia Johnson. New York: Norton, 2001. Print.

A Translation (p. 164-165)

Murasaki, Shikibu. *The Tale of Genji*. Trans. Edward G. Seidensticker. New York: Knopf, 1976. Print.

Corporate author (p.156)

National Research Council. *Beyond Six Billion: Forecasting the World's Population*. Washington: Natl. Acad., 2000. Print.

Government document (p.174-177)

Great Britain. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. *Our Countryside, the Future: A Fair Deal for Rural England*. London: HMSO, 2000. Print.

Article or chapter in an edited book or anthology (p.157-160)

Franco, Veronica. "To the Painter Jacopo Tintoretto." *Poems and Selected Letters*. Ed. and trans. Ann Rosalind Jones and Margaret Rosenthal. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1998. 35- 37. Print.

Encyclopedia or other reference work – with author (p.160, 168-170)

Potter, Karl. "Indian Philosophy." *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Ed. Donald M. Borcherdt. 2nd ed. Vol. 4. Detroit: Thompson Gale, 2005. Print. 10 Vols. 2006.

Encyclopedia or other reference work – no author mentioned (p.160)

"Mandarin." *The Encyclopedia Americana*. 1994 ed. Print.

Audiovisual media:

Video or DVD (p. 197-198)

It's a Wonderful Life. Dir. Frank Capra. Perf. James Stewart, Donna Reed, Lionel Barrymore and Thomas Mitchell. 1946. Republic, 2001. DVD.

Sound recording (p. 195)

Ellington, Duke, cond. *First Carnegie Hall Concert*. Duke Ellington Orch. Rec. 23 Jan. 1943. Prestige, 1977. LP.

Holiday, Billie. *The Essence of Billie Holiday*. Columbia, 1991. CD.

Electronic Resources:

- **This section deals with all material in electronic format. This usually means items that are retrieved from the Internet (mostly from the World Wide Web, or from an online database).**
- **For journal articles, citations are structured the same way print articles are (see above), with some extra information added to the end (identify the database used, indicate the appropriate medium and add the date the item was consulted).**

In some cases you can add a source's URL at the end, unless a website or online database is mentioned in the citation. "You should include the URL...only when the reader probably cannot locate the source without it, or when your instructor requires it" (Mod. Lang. Assn. 182).

Journal Article from an online database (p.192-193)

Piper, Andrew. "Rethinking the Print Object: Goethe and the Book of Everything."

PMLA 121.1 (2006): 124-38. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 12 Mar. 2009.

Tolston, Nancy. "Making Books Available: The Role of Early Libraries, Librarians, and

Booksellers in the Promotion of African American Children's Literature." *African*

American Review 32.1 (1998): 9-16. *JSTOR*. Web. 5 June 2008.

Web only article (p.181-190)

Quade, Alex. "Elite Team Rescues Troops Behind Enemy Lines." *CNN.com*. Cable

News Network, 19 Mar. 2007. Web. 15 May 2008.

Online magazine article (p.181-190)

Green, Joshua. "The Rove Presidency." *The Atlantic.com*. Atlantic Monthly Group,

Sept. 2007. Web. 15 May 2008.

Online newspaper article, no author (p.181-190)

- For a citation to a work with no author, the title becomes the first thing mentioned.

“The Scientists Speak.” Editorial. *New York Times*. New York Times, 20 Nov. 2007.

Web. 15 May 2008.

Online Encyclopedia entry (p.181-190)

- For a citation to a work with no author, the title becomes the first thing mentioned.

“Quebec.” *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. Encyclopedia Britannica, 2010. Web. 9

Mar. 2010. <<http://search.eb.com/eb/article-9110595>>.

Corporate author, online report (p.156, 181-190)

Modern Languages Association of America. *Significance of Primary Records: Statement*

on the Significance of Primary Records, n.d. Web. 3 Mar. 2010.<http://www.mla.org/resources/documents/rep_primaryrecords>.

Online Government Document (p.174-177, 181-189)

Canada. Environment Canada. *Assessing the Environmental Impacts of the 2010 Winter*

Games. 2010. *Envirozine* 99. Web. 12 Mar. 2010.

Example of an online document, no author, no date. (p.179, 181-187),

“Welcome to the Library.” Bishop’s University, n.d. Web. 1 Mar. 2010. < [http://www.](http://www.ubishops.ca/library_info/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20Welcome-web.pdf)

[ubishops.ca/library_info/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20Welcome-web.pdf](http://www.ubishops.ca/library_info/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20Welcome-web.pdf)>

Works Cited

Modern Languages Association. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th ed.

New York: Mod. Lang. Assn., 2009. Print.

This guide is based on a document created by Kansas State University Libraries' APA guide: <http://catnet.ksu.edu/help/citing2.html>. Thanks KSU!

Last update: 2012

If you have any questions/suggestions, please contact the Bishop's University Reference Department: 819-822-9600 ext. 2608, or email us at reference@ubishops.ca