



## Argumentation and MLA Citation

Essays using the MLA (Modern Language Association) format can include both a *Works Cited* page and a *Works Consulted* page. The *Works Cited* page is reserved for books, websites, and other resources that you used to include specific facts or direct quotations in your essay. The *Works Consulted* page refers to resources you used for background information or general ideas, but did not refer to or quote in your actual essay. The *Works Cited* page is placed after the essay and the *Works Consulted* page is last.

When citing resources in your text, be certain you “sandwich” your quotations. Quotations that are simply spliced into an essay with no additional background are awkward and ineffective. Rather, a well-selected, well-framed quotation helps your reader recognize the source of important information and understand how it supports your thesis. Examples are below:

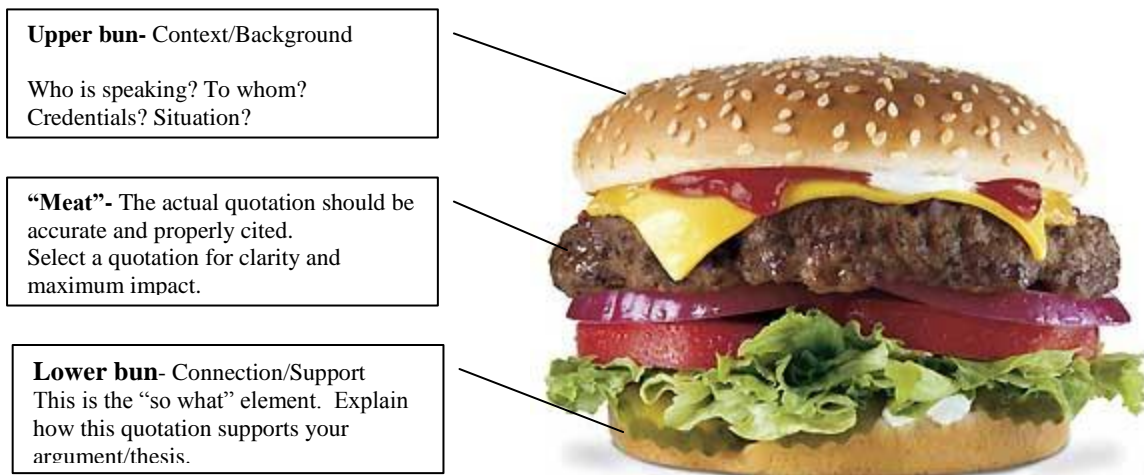
**INCORRECT:** Even skilled surgeons have difficulty with this operation. “The decision to separate a conjoined twin is not taken lightly” (Hermann 33).

*The reader wonders who made this statement and how it links to the essay.*

**CORRECT:** Even skilled surgeons have difficulty with this operation. “The decision to separate a conjoined twin,” explains Dr. Kevin Morris, “is not taken lightly” (Hermann 33). Morris, head of pediatric research at Vanderbilt University, believes families should carefully consider the risks before approving such a procedure.

*The reader understands **who** is speaking, **what** they are saying, and **how** it connects to a larger argument.*

### A QUOTATION SANDWICH (a.k.a. “The Quoteburger”)



**EX: UPPER BUN:** While grading essays, Mr. Cox becomes upset when he finds that some pupils attempt to turn in lists of web addresses instead of creating actual Works Cited pages.

**MEAT:** “Students,” he explains as he returns the essays, “I certainly don’t expect you to memorize M.L.A. citation, but I do expect you to use it” (Smith 33).

**LOWER BUN:** Clearly, Mr. Cox wants his students to familiarize themselves with a common system to properly cite their sources.

## Creating In-Text Citation:

In many cases, your in-text citation entries will look like the example below. Within the parentheses, the first entry is the author and the second entry is the page number. *Note: Even though the quotation is from Lydia Smith, the in-text citation credits the source, author John Jones.*

Lydia Smith, an advocate for the poor in New York City, also asserts, “Few understand the plight of the homeless” (Jones 33).



**If you cite a source and include the author/source in your sentence, you do not need to list the author in your parenthetical citation.** You do need to cite the page number, though. Referring the examples below, the reader will know to look for the author/researcher Paul Gidley and the E.P.A. annual report in your *Works Cited* page.

According to researcher Paul Gidley, “Over 30 species of ants can inhabit a single tree in the rainforests of Brazil” (21).

The Environmental Protection Agency, in its 2006 annual report, asserted that pollution levels have actually increased by 15% in the last three years (34).

In rare cases, **if there is no listed author for a website or an article, simply use a distinguishing key word/phrase from the title of the article.** If your website does not have numbered lines or page listings, you may omit the page number/line number information from your citation.

“More than 17 whales have died of mercury poisoning since 2006” (“Whales” 44).

Some whales have been relocated to safe waters, but over 30% simply swim back to the unsafe areas they know best (“Helping”).

If more than one work by the same author is listed in the works cited, a shortened version of the title is given:

Students recognize that “giving credit to outside resources is a vital part of the research process” (Parker, *Survey* 197).

## Different Ways to Embed Quotations

Quote only the passages that address your subject in memorable language. When taking notes, place quotation marks around the passage. To move a quotation from your notes to your paper, consider some of the following methods:

**(1) Work the quoted passage into the syntax of your sentence.**

Morrison points out that social context prevented the authors of slave narratives “from dwelling too long or too carefully on the more sordid details of their experience” (109).

**(2) Introduce the quoted passage with a sentence and a colon.**

Commentators have tried to account for the decorum of most slave narratives by discussing social context: “popular taste discouraged the writers from dwelling too long or too carefully on the more sordid details of their experience” (Morrison 109).

**(3) Set off the quoted passage with an introductory sentence followed by a colon.**

*This method is reserved for long quotations (four or more lines of prose; three or more lines of poetry). Double-space the quotation, and indent it one inch (ten spaces) from the left margin. Do not enclose it within quotations marks. Note that the final period goes **before** rather than after the parenthetical reference.*

Her own personal history richly shapes the works she has created. Toni Morrison, in “The Site of Memory,” explains how social context shaped these narratives:

No slave society in the history of the world wrote more—or more thoughtfully—about its own enslavement. The narratives are instructive, moral, and obviously representative. Some of them are patterned after the sentimental novel that was in vogue at the time. But whatever the level of eloquence or the form, popular taste discouraged the writers from dwelling too long or too carefully on the more sordid details of their experience. (109)

*A similar approach is used for a block quotation of poetry (three or more lines):*

Some of Walt Whitman’s poems explore inquisitive, playful themes. An excerpt from Whitman’s “Song of Myself” highlights the curiosity of childhood:

A child said What is the grass?  
Fetching it to me with full hands;

How could I answer the child? I do not  
 know what that is any more than he.  
 I guess it might be the flag of my  
 disposition, out of hopeful green stuff woven.  
 Or guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord. (78)

Not only does Whitman question how . . .

**Quoting a brief poetry excerpt:**

*Fewer than four lines quoted: Use quotation marks and indicate line ends with a slash (/).*

Dickinson's poem, "Those--Dying then," explores her lack of belief in the traditional God of her ancestors. "Those--dying then,/ Knew where they went--/ They went to God's Right Hand" clearly refers to past attitudes about . . .

## Punctuation Rules for Quoted Passages

**(1) Ellipsis:** When a portion of the quoted passage is omitted, indicate this omission by putting three spaced

periods (...) in place of the material which is missing. If the last part of a sentence or a whole sentence is omitted, use four periods (...).

**(2) Brackets:** Brackets indicate the writer's words inserted into or substituted for part of the quotation.

They are also used to indicate a change in tense to match the tense of the text in which the quotation is used.

**(3) End Marks:** In American usage, periods and commas always go inside quotation marks, regardless of sense. Semi-colons and colons go outside. Exclamation points and question marks are placed either inside or outside according to demands of the quoted material.

"Read me 'The Lottery'" he said.

She asked, "Have you read 'The Lottery'?"

## Creative Ways to Embed Your Arguments

Consider these suggestions from *They Say, I Say* to smoothly embed arguments:

### Templates for introducing what “they say”:

- Several scientists have recently suggested that X’s work has a few key problems.
- Contemporary critics commonly dismiss X’s contributions to feminist theory.
- In their recent study, Y and Z have offered harsh critiques of X for . . .

### Templates for introducing something implied or assumed:

- Although few of them have ever said so directly, most teachers . . .
- One implication of X’s argument is that . . .
- Although X does not say so directly, she apparently assumes . . .

### Templates for disagreeing, with reasons:

- X mistakenly overlooks \_\_\_\_.
- X’s claim that \_\_\_\_ rests upon the questionable assumption that \_\_\_\_.
- Although X’s views sound impressive, she neglects to consider \_\_\_\_.
- Recent research has shown that X’s view . . .
- X contradicts himself. He initially claims . . . But on the other hand, he also believes . . .
- By focusing on \_\_\_\_, X ignores . . .

### Templates for agreeing:

- X convincingly asserts that \_\_\_\_.
- X also defends the prevailing view that \_\_\_\_.
- X effectively questions why \_\_\_\_.
- X’s second claim, \_\_\_\_, recognizes the importance of..

### Verbs for Introducing Summaries and Quotations:

#### *Verbs for making a claim*

argue	claim	observe	suggest	insist	maintains
assert	emphasize	remind us	report	believe	relays
highlights	accentuates	defends			

#### *Verbs for expressing agreement*

acknowledge	corroborate	extol	support	agree	affirm
admire	do not deny	praise	verify	endorse	

#### *Verbs for questioning or disagreeing*

complain	disavow	refute	renounce	contradict	contend
complicate	question	reject	repudiate	deny	

#### *Verbs for making recommendations*

advocate	encourage	implore	recommend	warn
call for	exhort	plead	urge	demand

#### *Verbs for describing*

Compares	deepens	contrasts	defines	depicts	describes
Develops	distinguishes	elaborates	exemplifies	explains	focuses
Identifies	illustrates	narrates	recalls	reveals	traces

*Verbs for persuading*

Acknowledges	Elevates	Justifies	Persuades	Posits
Argues	Distorts	Minimizes	Pleads	Speculates
Challenges	Downplays	Instructs	Understates	Predicts
Commands	Insists	Opposes	Values	suggests
Confronts	Emphasizes	Orders	Supports	
Defends	Inspires	Overstates	Reassures	

**Sample Templates for *Introducing* Quotations (The “Upper Bun”)**

X maintains, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (\_\_\_\_\_).

As noted writer X asserted, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (\_\_\_\_\_).

According to X, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (\_\_\_\_\_).

In her book, \_\_\_\_\_, X maintains “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (\_\_\_\_\_).

Writing in the journal \_\_\_\_\_, X complains “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (\_\_\_\_\_).

In X’s view, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (\_\_\_\_\_).

X dis/agrees when he writes, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (\_\_\_\_\_).

X complicates matters further when she asserts, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (\_\_\_\_\_).

“ \_\_\_\_\_,” X believes, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (\_\_\_\_\_).

X raises another prominent concern: “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (\_\_\_\_\_).

X admits “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (\_\_\_\_\_).

**Sample Templates for *Explaining* Quotations (The “Lower Bun” of a Quoteburger)**

Basically, X claims \_\_\_\_\_.

In other words, X believes \_\_\_\_\_.

This argument reveals \_\_\_\_\_.

This claim asserts \_\_\_\_\_.

In making this comment, X contends \_\_\_\_\_.

X insists that \_\_\_\_\_.

X’s point exposes \_\_\_\_\_.

Ultimately, X believes \_\_\_\_\_.

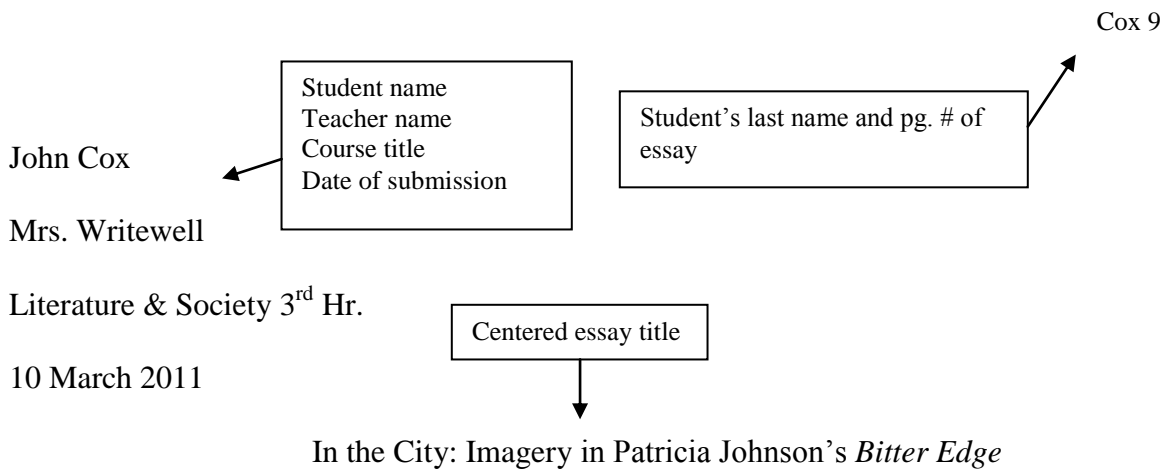
## MLA Style for Listing Sources

Book with one author	Pyles, Thomas. <i>The Origins and Development of the English Language</i> . 2nd ed. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1991. Print.
Book with two or three authors	McCrum, Robert, William Cran, and Robert MacNeil. <i>The Story of English</i> . New York: Penguin Books, 1997. Print.
Book with an editor	Truth, Sojourner. <i>Narrative of Sojourner Truth</i> . Ed. Margaret Washington. New York: Vintage Books, 2003. Print.
Book with more than three authors/editors	Donald, Robert B., et al. <i>Writing Clear Essays</i> . Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1996. Print.
A single work from an anthology [ pages for the entire selection.]	Hawthorne, Nathaniel. "Young Goodman Brown." <i>Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing</i> . Ed. Edgar V. Roberts and Henry E. Jacobs. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1998. 376—385. Print.
Scholarly Publication (Journal)	Aldrich, Frederick A. and Margueritte L. Marks. "Wyman Green, American Biologist." <i>Bios</i> 23.1 (1952): 26-35. Print.
Introduction in a published edition	Washington, Margaret. Introduction. <i>Narrative of Sojourner Truth</i> . By Sojourner Truth. New York: Vintage Books, 1993. Print.
Signed article in a weekly magazine	Wallace, Charles. "A Vodacious Deal." <i>Time</i> 14 Feb. 2005: 63-64. Print.
Signed article in a monthly magazine	Gustaitis, Joseph. "The Sticky History of Chewing Gum." <i>American History</i> Oct. 1998: 30-38. Print.
Unsigned editorial or Story [If the editorial or story is signed, begin with the author's name.]	"Selective Silence." Editorial. <i>Wall Street Journal</i> 11 Feb. 2006: A14. Print.
Signed pamphlet	[Treat the pamphlet as though it were a book.]
Pamphlet with no author, publisher, or date	<i>Are You at Risk of Heart Attack?</i> np. n.d. [ n.p. n.d. indicates that there is no known publisher or date]
Filmstrips, slide programs, and DVD	<i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i> . Dir. George Stevens. Perf. Millie Perkins, Shelley Winters, Joseph Schildkraut, Lou Jacobi, and Richard Beymer. Twentieth Century Fox, 1959. DVD.

- Radio or television program transcript "The First Immortal Generation." *Rockham's Razor*. Host Robyn Williams. Guest Damien Broderick. National Public Radio. 23 May 1999. Transcript.
- Newspaper Thurow, Roger. "South Africans Who Fought for Sanctions Now Scrap for Investors." *Wall Street Journal* 11 Feb. 2005: A1+. Print. [ a multipage article, write only the first page number on which it appears, followed by a plus sign.]
- Personal interviews Smith, Jane. Personal interview. 10 Feb. 2007.
- Article from an Encyclopedia Askeland, Donald R. (1991). "Welding." *World Book Encyclopedia*. 1991 ed. Print.
- Many web source entries now require a publisher name, a date of publication, and/or page numbers. When no publisher name appears on the website, write n.p. for no publisher given. When sites omit a date of publication, write n.d. for no date. For online journals that appear only online (no print version) or on databases that do not provide pagination, write n.p. for no pagination.
- Online Periodical Lubell, Sam. "Of the Sea and Air and Sky." *New York Times*. New York Times, 26 Nov. 2008. Web. 1 Dec. 2008.
- Internet Hoffman, Charles. "Research in the Digital Age." *CNN.com*. Cable News Network, 22 March 2003. Web. 15 May 2006 .
- A YouTube entry: Norton, Robert. "How to Train a Cat to Operate a Light Switch." *YouTube.com*. YouTube, 4 Jan. 2006. Web. 7 Jan. 2007.
- An image (painting, sculpture, etc.): Goya, Francisco. *The Family of Charles IV*. 1800. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid. *Museo Nacional del Prado*. Web. 22 May 2006.
- An article from an online database (or other electronic subscription service): Langhamer, Claire. "Love and Courting England." *Historical Journal* 50.1 (2007): 173-96. *ProQuest*. Web. 27 May 2009.
- E-mail (including E-mail Interviews): Kunka, Andrew. "Re: Modernist Literature." Message to Thomas Barbato. 11 Dec. 2007. E-mail.

**You are welcome to use sites that "automatically" create MLA entries, but you still need to confirm the information and ordering are correct.**



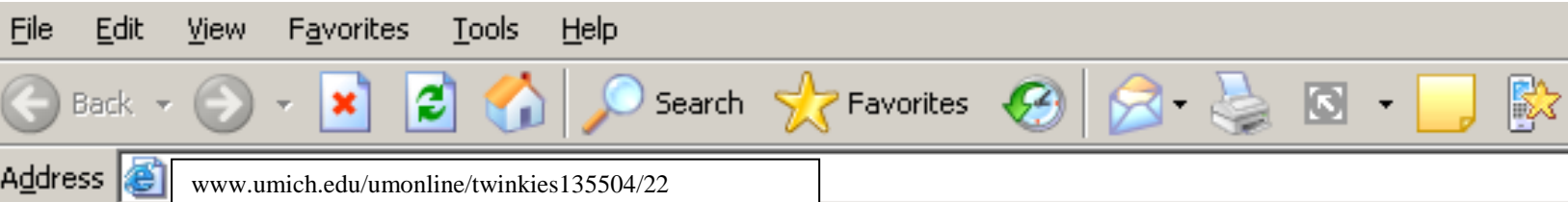


An essay title should be engaging and clever. A carefully selected phrase or allusion helps the reader understand the focus of your essay and also . . .

**Note the features of this sample opening page:**

- Margins of document should be 1 inch on all sides.
- Your instructor may ask that you omit the number on your first page.
- Use italics throughout your essay for the titles of longer works and, only when absolutely needed, providing emphasis.
- Your essay should be double-spaced throughout. Do not “island” your paragraphs.

**Sample Opening Page**



## University of Michigan Online

**Twinkies Are Really, Really Bad for You**  
By: Lauren Demaris

Oct. 15, 2006



Dr. David Langley, a researcher at the University of Michigan, has discovered something remarkable. Over the past five years, Langley has researched the physical effects of numerous snack foods. The culmination of his study is a 127 page report, to be published next month in the *Journal of American Snacking*, which finds that Twinkies are unhealthy and potentially dangerous. “Really,” remarks Langley, “There’s something not quite right about it. This snack product retained its eerie orange color and creamy filling through several tests, including severe heat and water exposure.” In experiments done at the University of Michigan’s \$200 million Snack Food Laboratory, Langley found that Twinkies can actually regenerate themselves. “If you take just one bite from a Twinkie and let it sit for a few hours, its cell structures will regroup and it will grow back to a complete snack cake.” Langley also found that . . .

### Examples of MLA parenthetical citation:

These snack foods are also high in sugar and fat content. One snack item in particular, the Twinkie, may pose a special threat. According to Dr. David Langley, a researcher at the University of Michigan, “There’s something not quite right about it” (Demaris). Other researchers believe . . .

. . . “In tests done at the University of Michigan. . . Langley found that Twinkies can actually regenerate themselves” (Demaris). Others have noted . . .

. . . “If you take just one bite from a Twinkie and let it sit for a few hours,” Langley claims, “its cell structures will regroup and it will grow back to a complete snack cake” (Demaris).

“In experiments done at the University of Michigan’s \$200 million Snack Food Laboratory, Langley found that Twinkies can actually regenerate themselves. ‘If you take just one bite from a Twinkie and let it sit for a few hours,’” Langley claims, “‘its cell structures will regroup, and it will grow back to a complete snack cake’” (Demaris).

### How your Works Cited entry would look:

Demaris, Lauren. “Twinkies are Really, Really Bad for You.” *University of Michigan Online*. University of

Michigan, 15 Oct. 2006. Web. 12 Jan. 2007.

### If no author is listed:

(Select a key word from the title of the article)

. . . “In tests done at the University of Michigan. . . Langley found that Twinkies can actually regenerate themselves” (“Twinkies”). Others have noted . . .

### How your Works Cited entry would look if no author were listed:

“Twinkies are Really, Really Bad for You.” *University of Michigan Online*. University of Michigan, 15 Oct. 2006. Web.

12 Jan. 2007.

# Sample Citation from an Online Article

## Works Cited

Cawardine, Mark, Erich Hoyt, and Peter Gill. *The Nature Company Guides:*

*Whales, Dolphins, and Porpoises*. New York: Time-Life Books, 2005. Print.

Ellis, Richard. "Under the Deep Blue Sea." *Journal of Marine Life* 50.4

(2002): 79-84. Print.

Upton, Margaret. "Understanding Whales." *Whale Friends*. Whale

Friends Organization, 2002. Web. 15 Nov. 2006.

"Whales in Danger." *Discovering Whales*. Foundation for Whale Protection,

20 Dec. 2004. Web. 16 Dec. 2006.

Williams, Jill. *South Pacific Sea Life*. Chicago: Penguin, 1998. Print.

### Note the features of this sample Works Cited page:

-The page should remain in 12-point font with 1 inch margins on all sides.

-Author's last name and page number are on the upper-right corner of each page, except the title page.

-Title is centered at top of page. It is not underlined or italicized.

-Alphabetical order is used, based on author and/or title. (Cawardine, Ellis, etc.)

-Quotations marks designate short story and article titles. ("Whales in Danger.")

-Italics designate books/websites/magazines. (*Discovering Whales*.)

-If the inclusion of URLs is requested, use angle brackets to enclose the address. (< >)

-Although double-spaced throughout, additional lines beneath the first line of an entry are indented.

# Sample Works Cited Page

## Works Cited

“Hamburger image.” *Literallylaughingoutloud*. Blogspot, 17 Sep. 2009. Web.

25 Oct. 2009.

“Twinkies image.” *Media Environment*. Wordpress, 30 Jan. 2009. Web. 25 Oct. 2009.

## Works Consulted

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (Seventh Edition).

New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009.

“MLA 2009.” *Purdue University Online Writing Lab*. Purdue University, 2009. Web.

25 Oct. 2009.

(Note: For the sake of space, both the Works Cited and Works Consulted were placed on the same page. In most situations, each would have a separate page.)