



MLA In-Text Citations for Print, Online, and Audiovisual Sources

Handout courtesy of Angela Gulick

Citing and Citation: To “cite” a source is to tell where you found the information you are borrowing. An in-text citation for a print, online, or audiovisual source includes three details: **1) a signal phrase, 2) an action verb, and 3) a parenthetical citation.**

- 1. Signal Phrase:** A signal phrase is a formal way you alert your reader to the source of your borrowed information. The signal phrase is also an opportunity to give credibility to your source, by providing details such as the source’s name, professional or academic credentials, the title of the publication the source appeared in, or any other details that would show your source’s expertise. A signal phrase at a minimum should include the author’s name and source title.
 - **Cite source by the full name of the author** the first time the source is mentioned. After the first time, just cite the source by the author’s last name. Note that sometimes, an author is a government agency, school, business, or association. If there is no author listed, cite the source by the complete title instead. After the first time, you can use a shortened version (two or three words) of the title in place of the missing author’s name.
 - **Provide the full title of the source** the first time the source is mentioned. After the first time, omit the title.
- 2. An action verb** such as writes, states, comments, questions, argues, claims, mentions. Another option is to begin your signal phrase with According to...
- 3. A parenthetical citation:** A parenthetical citation gives information that is not included in the signal phrase. There are three main ways to provide parenthetical information depending upon your source: 1) page number, 2) paragraph number, and 3) time stamp.
 - **Page Number:** Include a page number at the end of the borrowed information **only** if a page number is clearly printed on your original source. If such a number appears, write the number alone in parentheses like this: (16). If the cited information starts on page 16 and continues to page 17, provide both pages: (16-17). If no page number is printed on your source, omit this step.
 - **Paragraph Number:** Include a paragraph number at the end of the borrowed information **only** if there is a paragraph number clearly printed on your source. If such a number appears, write the abbreviation “par.” and the paragraph number in parentheses like this: (par. 24). If cited information starts in paragraph 24 and continues to paragraph 25, write “pars.” and provide both paragraph numbers: (pars. 24-25). If no paragraph number is printed on your source, omit this step.
 - **Time stamp:** Include a time stamp at the end of borrowed information from an audiovisual source **only** if a time stamp is available. A time stamp should be written in parentheses in this format: hours:minutes:seconds. This time stamp should show the starting point and ending point of your information. Here is an example: (00:32:14-28). If no time stamp is available for your source, omit this step.

Let's look at some examples.

Remember: If the source doesn't provide a page number, paragraph number, or time stamp, omit the parenthetical citation entirely unless your instructor requires you to have a parenthetical citation.

Example One – Source with One Author

First time you cite source: Elizabeth Somer, Director of the Wellness Center at Wilcox University and author of "Women's Health in the New Millennium," writes, "The body requires a constant supply of all essential nutrients and has developed a complex system for storing nutrients for later use" (1). or (par. 4). or (00:15:32-48).

Each additional time you cite source: Somer also comments there are six factors in a woman's life that affect her physical stamina: sleep, exercise, water intake, calcium intake, vitamin K intake, and oxygen (5). or (par. 14). or (00:15:32-48).

Example Two – Source with Two Authors

First time you cite source: Clint C. Wilson and Felix Gutierrez, advertisement executives at Tate Advertising Consultants and authors of "Advertising and People of Color," claim that while more flattering representations of Blacks and Latinos have recently found their way into the marketplace, the same cannot be said for Asians and Native Americans (5). or (par. 19). or (00:15:32-48).

Each additional time you cite source: Wilson and Gutierrez also write, "The history of advertising in the U.S. is replete with characterizations that reinforced the pre-conceived image that many White Americans had of Blacks, Latinos, Asians, and Native Americans" (6). or (par. 23). or (00:15:32-48).

Example Three – Source with Three or More Authors

For a source written by three or more authors, provide the first listed author's name and the words "et al." which stand for "and others." Then provide source title and end with the (parenthetical citation).

First time you cite source: Margaret Opper et al., authors of "Practical Gardening Tips for the Summer," write that hostas require evenly moist soil that is rich in minerals. The plants also need filtered sunshine and protection from heat (3). or (par. 9). or (00:15:32-48).

Each additional time you cite source: Opper et al. also state, "When bulb seedlings appear, containers need to be moved to sunny places and watered regularly" (5). or (par. 18). or (00:15:32-48).

Example Four – Source with Association, Business, Educational, or Government Author

For a source with an association, business, educational, or government author, use the group's name as the author. Then provide source title and end with the (parenthetical citation).

First time you cite source: The United States Department of Labor, author of "Nursing," asserts, "If patients are to be protected from unethical practitioners, health care professionals, including nurses, need to speak out about their concerns" (6). or (par. 12). or (00:15:32-48).

Each additional time you cite source: The United States Department of Labor points out that the act of whistle-blowing, the reporting of unethical behavior in the workplace, can often have physical, emotional, and even legal consequences for the whistleblower (3). or (par. 5). or (00:15:32-48).

Example Five – Source with No Clearly Named Author (Person or Group)

For a source with no clearly named author, use the source's title. Then end by providing the (parenthetical citation).

First time you cite source: "In the Deep Midwinter: A Troubling Look at the Elderly" claims, "The high cost of oil and gasoline for heating bills is extremely dangerous for the elderly, who often have to choose between heating their homes or paying for prescription medications" (4). or (par. 11). or (00:15:32-48).

Each additional time you cite source: "In the Deep Midwinter"* also discusses the emergence of an increasing problem in this country: the elderly have become victims of con games and scams that often take away entire life savings (2). or (par. 7). or (00:15:32-48).

*Note: If the source's title is long, write it out in full the first time. Then, shorthand the source title by providing the first three or four words.

Example Six – Source with Two or More Sources by the Same Author

For two sources written by the same author, provide the author's full name and article title the first time each source is cited, just as you would for any print or electronic source. For each additional citation, put the first word of the source's title in with the parenthetical citation to distinguish which source you are citing.

For example, Katie Henderson has written two magazine articles titled, 1) "Charity in the Workplace" and 2) "Political Realities in a More Diverse America."

First time you cite source: Katie Henderson, author of "Charity in the Workplace," writes ... (1). or (par. 5). or (00:15:32-48).

Each additional time you cite source: Henderson states ... ("Charity" 2). or ("Charity" par. 8). or ("Charity" 00:15:32-48).

or

First time you cite source: Katie Henderson, author of "Political Realities in a More Diverse America," argues ... (5). or (par. 13). or (00:15:32-48).

Each additional time you cite source: Henderson also claims ... ("Political" 4). or ("Political" par. 9). or (00:15:32-48).

Example Seven – Source with a Person Quoted in Another Author's Source

If you have a source written by one person that contains a direct quote from someone else, put the name of the person being quoted in the sentence and put (author's last name page number/paragraph number/time stamp) at the end of the quote. In this example, the person being quoted is Luke Danes, and the source's author is Rory Gilmore:

In "The Dark Side of Texting," Luke Danes, owner of Luke's Diner, stated, "The number of thumb injuries related to text messaging is double what it was when I first opened my diner over 16 years ago" (Gilmore 5). or (Gilmore par. 11). or (Gilmore 00:15:32-48).

Example Eight – Online Video (YouTube, Yahoo, Tumblr, Reddit)

First time you cite online video: In “*Game of Thrones S6E09 Explained*,” creator Alt Shift X discusses the clues offered by the program that Jon Snow might actually come from royalty, stating, “ _____ ” (00:11:15-46).

Each additional time you cite online video: Alt Shift X further illustrates the uncertainty and treachery of life in Kings Landing, stating, “ _____ ” (00:24:54-00:25:15).

Example Nine – Podcast

First time you cite podcast: In *The Bugle* podcast 232 titled, “Mars, Merchandise, and Mad Men,” comedians John Oliver and Andy Zaltzman discuss the way advertising has been used to shape popular culture, commenting, “ _____ ” (00:3:16-46).

Each additional time you cite podcast: Oliver and Zaltzman also argue over the proper roles of advertising and consumerism in space exploration, mentioning, “ _____ ” (00:36:07-36).

Example Ten – Movie on a DVD or from a Movie Service (Hulu, Netflix, HBO, Showtime)

First time you cite movie: In *Mean Girls*, Cady Heron, a new student who has been home schooled her whole life, demonstrates the challenges faced by the stereotypical “new kid” when she states, “ _____ ” (00:32:14-38).

Each additional time you cite movie: Heron’s somewhat naïve cluelessness about high school power structures is again illustrated when Heron comments, “ _____ ” (00:46:17-36).

Example Eleven – TV Show on DVD or from Television Service (Hulu, Netflix, HBO, Showtime)

First time you cite television show: In *The Mindy Project*’s “We Need to Talk about Annette,” the relationship between a man’s mother and his new girlfriend can be extremely shaky as shown when Mindy Lahiri states, “ _____ ” (00:21:14-45).

Each additional time you cite television show: *The Mindy Project* also draws attention to the roles and responsibilities of the boyfriend in bringing home a new girlfriend when character Danny Castellano asserts, “ _____ ” (00:17:34-58).

Remember: If the source doesn’t provide a page number, paragraph number, or time stamp, omit the parenthetical citation entirely unless your instructor requires you to have a parenthetical citation.