

# MLA In-Text Citations

Based on the *MLA Handbook*. 9th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2021.

**DISCLAIMER: Many of the examples on this handout use made-up sources.**

## Section 1: In-Text Citations

### Options for In-Text Citations

The first time you use a source, give the author's full name in your prose and place a page number in parentheses after the borrowed material.

#### One Author

**Anna Kinn** writes, "The fury of our past, like sand, gets everywhere" (19).

In later citations, use the author's last name only, either in the prose or in parentheses with the page number.

**Kinn** goes on to say, "After a time, we can find even our own lack of faith disturbing" (22).

Eventually, "we can find even our own lack of faith disturbing" (**Kinn 22**).

Note: Make sure the in-text citation matches a corresponding entry on your works-cited page, where you give the full publication information for each source you use.

### Special In-Text-Citation Situations

#### No Page Number or Other Location Marker (Common for Webpages)

If your source does not have page numbers or other location markers, omit that element.

Food blogger Karly Cliffgate admits, "There's nothing as oddly satisfying as gutting fresh squid."

Apparently, eviscerating raw squid is not entirely unpleasant (Cliffgate).

#### No Author

Use the source's title if there is no author. If the title is long and appears in a parenthetical citation, shorten it to the first noun phrase.

In the anonymous fanfic *Hermione Granger and the House-Elf Manifesto*, Hermione admits the fast fashion industry is "both a challenge and boon to the cause of freedom."

In one viral fanfic, Hermione admits that fast fashion is "both a challenge and boon to the cause of freedom" (*Hermione*).

#### Two Authors

Use "and" to connect the names of the authors.

**Sanchez and Smith** write, "As the fields of cybernetics and genetic medicine advance, our definition of 'humanity' will necessarily expand" (2).

Genetics and cybernetics are going to change the meaning of *humanity* (**Sanchez and Smith 2**).

### Three or More Authors

In the prose, use the first author's name followed by a collective reference to the others (like "colleagues" or "associates"). If the citation occurs in parentheses, use the first author's name plus "et al."

**Wayne and associates** adamantly state, "Justice must be enforced at the supranational level" (1).

The organization holds that "[j]ustice must be enforced at the supranational level" (**Wayne et al.** 1).

### Organization as Author

Use the full name of the organization in your prose, but shorten long names to the first noun phrase in the parenthetical citation.

The **Coalition for Foundlings** states that it has launched a new one-to-one mentorship program (2).

A new one-to-one mentorship program for foundlings is now available (**Coalition** 2).

### Indirect Quotation (Author Quoted by Your Source's Author)

Name the author of the borrowed quote in the text. The parenthetical citation should begin with the abbreviation "qtd. in" followed by the author of your source, who will appear on the works-cited list.

**Handa Miki** says cherry blossoms display "beauty made sublime by transience" (**qtd. in Valdez 23**).

### Video Recording (with Time Stamp)

One juicy example of parody in the *Growing Pains-The Mandalorian* pastiche "Grog Pains" is the introduction of "Grogury St. John" as the actor playing "The Child" (**00:00:27-31**).

### Encyclopedia or Dictionary Online

Boudicca, British queen of the Iceni during the first century C.E., revolted against the oppressive, violent Roman rule over her people by gathering a fierce army that "cut to pieces the Roman 9th Legion" ("**Boudicca**").

## Section 2: Integrating Sources in MLA

### Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when you intentionally or unintentionally give the impression that words or ideas from another person are your own. The best way to avoid plagiarism—a **serious academic offense**—is to make sure *you* have something to say about your topic first. Then follow citation and source integration conventions to *give credit* to the people whose information you're *sharing* with readers.

**When you first use a source**, introduce the borrowed material with a signal phrase that includes the *full* name of the author. Place the page number in parentheses at the end of the sentence. **In later citations of the same source**, you may provide only the author's last name, either in the text or along with the page number in parentheses.

### Three Ways to Integrate Sources

#### Quotation

Record another person's **exact** words to preserve their accuracy or to relay especially vivid, well-phrased, or dramatic statements.

**Salazar claims**, "Limiting the viability of queer identities and communities to urban spaces, however, ignores contrasting rural environments which still provide opportunities for queerness (marginalization without specific classifications) to prosper" (**1**).

## Paraphrase

Restate another person's ideas in your own words. A paraphrase is usually a sentence or two, rephrases portions of a work, and does not necessarily condense the original version the way a summary does.

If we only think of queer culture as possible and sustainable in cities, we miss how and when it flourishes in rural areas (Salazar 1).

## Summary

Concisely restate the main facts or ideas of a longer work: entire books, whole articles or essays, or portions of a work. When writing a summary, be brief, be accurate, and use your own words and style to express the idea. When summarizing an entire book, article, or essay, page numbers are unnecessary.

According to Anthony Salazar, Ibis Gómez-Vega's *Send My Roots Rain* shows how queer identities, communities, and families can form and find a future in a rural context, opposing the idea that the development and future continuance of queer culture is exclusively connected to cities.

## Integrating Long Quotations

When quoting more than four typed lines of prose or more than three lines of poetry, indent half an inch from the left margin. Long quotations are often introduced by an informative sentence, usually followed by a colon. Quotation marks are unnecessary (because of the indented form), and the period is placed at the end of the sentence instead of after the parenthetical reference.

## Example of a Long Quotation

Note: Make sure your academic writing is double-spaced; the example below is single-spaced to fit on this handout.

Anthony Salazar argues the following:

Limiting the viability of queer identities and communities to urban spaces, however, ignores contrasting rural environments which still provide opportunities for queerness (marginalization without specific classifications) to prosper. This reductive assumption dismisses queer cultures and communities that date prior to the early twentieth-century and the rise of the city, as well as renders invisible queerness emerging from small towns all across the U.S. (1)

This “reductive assumption” appeals to an urban/rural binary that ironically furthers the marginalization of queer identity in rural contexts.

Note: If you quote words and phrases that you have already quoted and **cited** in your paper (as in “reductive assumption” in the example above), you can generally cite the source in the **first instance only**.

Reminder: Make sure the in-text citation matches a corresponding entry on the works-cited page, where you give the full publication information for each source:

Salazar, Anthony. “The Impact on Queer Identity and Futurity in Ibis Gómez-Vega’s *Send My Roots Rain*.” *Label Me Latina/o*, vol. 11, spring 2021, [labelmelatin.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Anthony-Salazar-The-Impact-on-Queer-Identity-and-Futurity-in-Ibis-Gomez-Vegas-Send-My-Roots-Rain.pdf](https://labelmelatin.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Anthony-Salazar-The-Impact-on-Queer-Identity-and-Futurity-in-Ibis-Gomez-Vegas-Send-My-Roots-Rain.pdf). PDF download.

## The Quotation Burger

Using quotes in your paper helps support the points you are making, but if you don't set up a quote properly, it can confuse your audience. Your readers need to move from your words to the words of a source without feeling a disorienting jolt. One helpful metaphor is a hamburger.

## The Top Bun

Use a signal phrase. A signal phrase prepares your readers for what is coming. Here are some phrases for introducing quotations:

X states, “. . .” (11).  
X believes, “. . .” (11).  
X says, “. . .” (11).  
According to X, “. . .” (11).

In X’s view, “. . .” (11).  
X writes, “. . .” (11).  
X explains, “. . .” (11).  
X argues, “. . .” (11).

### The Meat

The meat is the quote itself. Choose words and phrases that help support your ideas. **Be sure to quote the words exactly!**

### The Bottom Bun

You need to tell your reader why and/or how this quote connects to the point you are making in your paragraph and in your paper overall. Here are some sample phrases for explaining quotations:

X is saying that . . .  
In other words, X believes . . .  
This passage reveals . . .  
These words suggest . . .  
X’s point is that . . .  
X’s words show why . . .

### Examples of the Quotation Burger

Aristotle believes, “It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it” (23). In other words, as educated people, we should be willing to listen to and respect other people’s thoughts and ideas, even if we do not agree with them.

Harry S. Truman insists, “The buck stops here” (126). Truman’s words suggest that you should take responsibility for a mistake if you make one.

Abraham Lincoln notes, “No man is good enough to govern another man without that other’s consent” (55). Lincoln’s words carry a clear implication: it is arrogant and tyrannical for anyone to claim control over another as a natural state.

### Examples of Signal Phrase Verbs

acknowledges	admits	argues	believes
comments	confirms	declares	disputes
endorses	illustrates	insists	notes
points out	rejects	responds	thinks
adds	agrees	asserts	claims
compares	contends	denies	emphasizes
grants	implies	maintains	observes
reasons	reports	suggests	<b>writes</b>

This handout was created by the Writing Centers at YVC.  
Yakima Campus, Glenn-Anthon 125 | Grandview Campus, Grandview Main 101  
Visit us at the [Writing Center’s homepage](#).

