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<b>Useful Information about Literary Writing</b>
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<sup>1</sup> When you notice typos and other errors, please let me know. Work in progress!

<sup>2</sup> *MLA Handbook*, 8th Edition, 2016

## Introduction

**Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Guidelines**

MLA style refers primarily to three issues of professional formatting, all of which work together to create a coherent system for citing sources and creating a bibliographic list of works cited:

- (1.) the *formatting for submission* of your paper
- (2.) the *in-text citation format* within your paper
- (3.) the format for the list of *Works Cited* at the end of your paper

MLA In-Text Citation Format

As he creates the body for his “human being,” Frankenstein says that he “pursued nature to her hiding places,” as he “dabbled among the unhallowed damps of the grave, or tortured the living animal to animate lifeless clay” (33). In her 1988 article “Possessing Nature: The Female in *Frankenstein*,” Anne K. Mellor interprets this pursuit as a violent one when she explains, “at every level Victor Frankenstein is engaged upon a rape of nature, a violent penetration and usurpation of the female’s ‘hiding places,’ of the womb” (363).

*Note: I have introduced each bit of quoted text and included the name of the speaker or author in that signal phrase. In this case, it is the first time I am citing the critic Anne K. Mellor in my paper; therefore, I have included the full information regarding the source. In subsequent citations I can simply refer to Mellor by using her last name. Look carefully at how I have included the page number at the end of each quotation. Be precise: place the page number reference after the end quotation mark and before the period. Do not use the author’s last name in the parenthetical page reference unless absolutely necessary (only if, for some reason, authorship is not clear from context).*

Corresponding MLA Entries on a List of Works Cited

[republished version of a book with an editor]

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. 1818. Edited by J. Paul Hunter, Norton Critical Edition, 2nd ed., W. W. Norton, 2012.

[work in a book – don’t forget to add the page numbers at the end of the entry!]

Mellor, Anne K. “Possessing Nature: The Female in *Frankenstein*.” *Frankenstein*, by Mary Shelley, edited by J. Paul Hunter, Norton Critical Edition, 2nd ed., W. W. Norton, 2012, pp. 355-368.

[introduction, preface, foreword, or afterword – bonus information! Hunter is not specifically cited above.]

Hunter, J. Paul. Introduction. *Frankenstein*, by Mary Shelley, edited by J. Paul Hunter, Norton Critical Edition, 2nd ed., W. W. Norton, 2012, pp. ix-xviii.

***Introducing and Integrating Quotations***
 Direct Citations and Indirect Citations  
 from Journals, Magazines, and Other Informational Sources

For the original article that I am quoting from in the following samples, see Roger Ebert's review of *Apocalypse Now*, posted at his website:

Ebert, Roger. Review of *Apocalypse Now*, directed by Francis Ford Coppola. *RogerEbert.com*, 28 Nov. 1999, [www.rogerebert.com/reviews/great-movie-apocalypse-now-1979](http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/great-movie-apocalypse-now-1979).

***There are at least four ways to quote from this article.***

In the first three examples, I've quoted from Roger Ebert (the author of the article, in this case, a movie review) and, in the fourth, from Francois Trouffaut (another critic that Ebert quotes within his review). Note that there are no page numbers cited because the article does not have reliable pagination; however, I have added a fake page number in a couple of examples to indicate what they should look like. I chose the number 23.

(1.) COMMA: Use a comma and a capital letter because you are quoting a complete sentence.

Ebert says, "The film has one of the most haunting endings in cinema, a poetic evocation of what Kurtz has discovered, and what we hope not to discover for ourselves."

Ebert says, "The film has one of the most haunting endings in cinema, a poetic evocation of what Kurtz has discovered, and what we hope not to discover for ourselves" (23).

(2.) THAT: Use the word *that* but no comma or capitalization because you have cut off the beginning of the original sentence.

Ebert asserts that *Apocalypse Now* "has one of the most haunting endings in cinema, a poetic evocation of what Kurtz has discovered, and what we hope not to discover for ourselves."

(3.) COLON: Introduce the quote with a complete sentence and use a *colon* because, in this case, the colon means *what follows directly supports what I just wrote*. In the next example, I have included Ebert's name in a parenthetical citation because I have not included the writer's name in my signal phrase (aka attributive tag).

According to a review of *Apocalypse Now*, Coppola's combination of music and images in the final scenes creates a particularly moving conclusion for the viewer: "The film has one of the most haunting endings in cinema, a poetic evocation of what Kurtz has discovered, and what we hope not to discover for ourselves" (Ebert).

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one of the most haunting endings in cinema, a poetic evocation of what Kurtz has discovered, and what we hope not to discover for ourselves” (Ebert 23).

- (4.) QUOTED IN: Use the expression *qtd. in* to indicate that you are quoting a source indirectly—that is, a source cited within another source.

French filmmaker Francois Truffaut says, “I demand that a film express either the joy of making cinema or the agony of making cinema. I am not at all interested in anything in between” (qtd. in Ebert).

French filmmaker Francois Truffaut says, “I demand that a film express either the joy of making cinema or the agony of making cinema. I am not at all interested in anything in between” (qtd. in Ebert 23).

- (5.) ELLIPSIS: Use an ellipsis (three dots) to indicate that you have deleted something from the original quotation. In the following examples, (a.) I cut out a phrase from the middle of a sentence, and (b.) I cut off the end of a sentence (note that an ellipsis + a period = four dots).

- (5a.) When the ellipsis coincides with the end of a sentence, use three periods followed up by a sentence period—that is, four periods (....).

ORIGINAL

The film **has one of the most haunting endings in cinema, a poetic evocation of what Kurtz has discovered, and what we hope not to discover for ourselves. The river journey creates enormous anticipation about Kurtz, and Brando fulfills it.**

QUOTATION WITH AN ELLIPSIS AT THE END OF A SENTENCE

Ebert explains that *Apocalypse now* “has one of the most haunting endings in cinema, a poetic evocation of what Kurtz has discovered.... The river journey creates enormous anticipation about Kurtz, and Brando fulfills it.”

- (5b.) For an ellipsis within a sentence, use three periods with a space before the first and a space after the last ( ... ).

ORIGINAL

When the film was released in 1979, his casting **was criticized** and his enormous paycheck of \$1 million was much discussed, **but it's clear he was the correct choice, not only because of his stature as an icon, but because of his voice, which enters the film from darkness or half-light, repeating the words of T.S. Eliot's despairing “The Hollow Men.” That voice sets the final tone of the film.**

QUOTATION WITH AN ELLIPSIS IN THE MIDDLE OF A SENTENCE

Ebert explains that selecting Marlon Brando to play Kurtz “was criticized ... but it’s clear he was the correct choice, not only because of his stature as an icon, but because of his voice, which enters the film from darkness or half-light, repeating the words of T.S. Eliot’s despairing ‘The Hollow Men.’ That voice sets the final tone of the film.”

***Introducing and Integrating Quotations – Literary Works***

## Citing Various Literary Works (written in verse and in prose)

-----  
***Standard Quotation Integration:*** *If a quotation runs for one to four typed lines, incorporate it into the main body of your paragraph. Do not set it off from the margin. Use a slash [ / ] to indicate a line break. Retain all of the original's capitalization.*

**Example #1: Quoting Verse**

After his encounter with the Ghost, Hamlet exclaims: “The time is out of joint--O cursed spite, / That ever I was born to set it right!” (1.5.197-98). In this moment, Hamlet expresses the equivocalness which haunts him throughout the play. He recognizes that it is his responsibility to revenge his father’s “foul and most unnatural murder” (1.5.25), and yet he wishes that this duty “to set it right” were not his.

**Example #2: Quoting Prose (online source, no pagination)**

As Gilman’s narrator degenerates, she begins to see “dim shapes” in the wallpaper. Eventually she explains what she thinks she sees: “Sometimes I think there are a great many women behind [the front pattern of the wallpaper], and sometimes only one, and she crawls around fast, and her crawling shakes it all over.” At this point, although the narrator sees herself in her singular situation, she simultaneously sees herself as one among many women.

-----  
***Integrating Long Quotations:*** *If a quotation runs to more than four typed lines, set it off from your text by beginning a new line, indenting one-half inch from the left margin, and typing it double-spaced (without adding quotation marks). Make sure that you discuss the significance of the long quotation thoroughly. Otherwise it will look like you are padding your paper's length with unnecessarily lengthy quotations.*

**Example #3: Quoting Four or More Lines of Verse**

After he catches Claudius in his “Mousetrap” (3.2.235), Hamlet passionately calls himself to action. He exclaims:

'Tis now the very witching time of night,  
 When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out

Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood,  
 And do such bitter business as the day  
 Would quake to look on. (3.2.387-91)

Hamlet, in this dark hour, rallies himself to do his vengeful duty; however, his excited state of mind inspires him to speak brutal language rather than to act out his brutal revenge.

*This paragraph could go on to discuss the idea that Hamlet talks and thinks, but refuses to act. He makes another excuse and does not kill Claudius when he finds him alone immediately after this statement. Instead, he goes to Gertrude's chamber and abuses her with harsh-language....*

#### **Example #4: Quoting Four or More Lines of Prose**

The creature actually gains his creator's sympathy as he relates the story of his happy, if vicarious, stay with the DeLacey family and of his later disillusionment and despair.

Frankenstein explains:

I thought of the promise of virtues which he had displayed on the opening of his existence, and the subsequent blight of all kindly feeling by the loathing and scorn which his protectors had manifested towards him.... After a long pause of reflection, I concluded that the justice due both to him and my fellow creatures demanded of me that I should comply with his request. (100)

At this point in the narrative, Frankenstein realizes that he owes his creation some form of recompense for all of his suffering, and he acknowledges the creature's right to happiness and to "justice." Frankenstein begins to take on some responsibility for his creature's well-being and attempts to live up to the God-like role that he has disregarded since the moment when he "so negligently bestowed" the "spark" of life upon his creation (66).

-----  
**Quoting in General:** As you consider the next example (see p. 7)—and as you integrate quotations as you write—think about the following aspects of quotation integration:

- the difference between quoting verse and quoting prose
- spacing of indentations
- spacing before and after page number citations
- placement of periods (and punctuation in general)
- placement of and when to use quotation marks
- how to use and to space an ellipsis
- the different meanings of an ellipsis

**Example #5: Well-Developed Body Paragraph (with good quotation integration)**

Rowlandson becomes more self-aware as a result of her experience. Before her capture, she describes herself as living “in health and wealth, wanting nothing” (300). After her exposure to the terrible consequences of the battle between the English colonists and the Native American Indians—including witnessing severe beatings, suffering extreme hunger, and watching her own child die—Rowlandson realizes that, at any given moment, she could once again be “in sickness, and wounds, and death, having nothing but sorrow and affliction.” The small problems that once seemed so major she now dismisses as “but a shadow, a blast, a bubble, and things of no continuance.” At the end, as she has throughout the narrative, Rowlandson stresses that she and the other Puritans “must rely on God himself, and our whole dependence must be upon Him” (300), but she places even more emphasis on this belief after she realizes that she has gained something through her afflictions. Overall, Rowlandson states her new perspective best: “If trouble from smaller matters begin to arise in me, I have something at hand to check myself with.... I have learned to look beyond present and smaller troubles, and to be quieted under them. As Moses said, ‘Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord’ (Exodus 14.13)” (300-301).

What is particularly interesting, however, is the fact that Rowlandson’s narrative does not consistently support this conclusive philosophical stance. She does not, in fact, stand still.

[Paragraph continues.]

***At this point—and after all of the examples—do you understand how to integrate quotations into your own paragraphs? If you want additional help, see me for more information. I will lend you one of my style manuals. Accurate page number documentation is critical. Without it, you are committing plagiarism. By the way, here is the MLA works cited entry for Rowlandson’s narrative:***

Rowlandson, Mary. *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*.

1682. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, edited by Robert S. Levine, 9th ed., vol. A, W. W. Norton, 2017, pp. 267-301.

### Example #6: Quoting Characters in a Play

We cite plays written in prose just as we do novels; therefore, when quoting a character in a play, integrate the quotation as with any character in a book. In a prose drama, we typically just mention the character, offer the quotation, and then cite the page number.

For example, I would cite a print copy of *The Crucible* as follows:

At the end of Act 2, when Proctor recognizes that he cannot hide his affair with Abigail, he says, “we are only what we always were, but naked now” (81).

If you have act, scene, and line numbers, as with some plays (especially plays written in verse), then you include that information instead of a page number—e.g., a quote from Act 1, Scene 2, Line 33 is cited in parentheses with periods between each element, like this: “whatever quotation” (1.2.33). We typically only use act, scene, and line numbers when the numbers are standardized, as in classic dramas. See above, Example #3 (pp. 5-6), which quotes the Shakespearean play *Hamlet* using that system.

If you are quoting a chunk of text, then you put in the characters’ names in CAPS within a block quotation, indented by 0.5 inch (with 0.25 hanging indentation). Include punctuation and stage directions as they appear in the original. Stage directions generally appear in parentheses or italics. Depending on the original, your paragraph might look like this, more or less:

Early in the play, Jane and Judy have a terrible fight that they never fully resolve. Judy makes her position clear:

JUDY, *shaking with anger*: Blah, blah, blah yada blah. Blah, blah, blah yada blah. Blah, blah, blah yada blah! Blah, blah, blah yada blah? Blah, blah, blah yada blah. Blah, blah, blah yada blah. Blah, blah, blah yada blah!

JANE: Blah? Yada?

JUDY, *slamming her hand on the table with her voice beginning to take on a shouting quality*: Blah, blah, blah yada blah. Blah, blah, blah yada blah. Blah, blah, blah yada blah. Blah, blah, blah yada blah! (23)

JANE, *defensive but attempting contrition*: Blah, blah, blah yada blah? Blah, blah, blah yada blah? Blah, blah, blah yada blah. Blah, blah, blah yada blah. Blah, blah, blah yada blah. Blah, blah, blah yada blah. Blah, blah, blah yada blah.

This scene established their rapport, etc. Note that you bring your writing back to the left margin to continue your discussion of the quoted excerpt. Do not indent or begin a new paragraph after a long quotation. The quotation and the discussion are all parts of the same paragraph.



### *College Writing: Superficial Advice*

- (1.) While writing, save frequently on your own device. Back up your documents by saving them elsewhere as well (in Google drive or wherever). (Duh!)
- (2.) Make sure you know where and when you are supposed to submit your paper. You don't want to be panicking at the end of the process.
- (3.) Use professional formatting guidelines. English departments follow Modern Language Association (MLA) style. If you are an English major, you should own and know how to use the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. The newest version is the 8th edition (2016): [www.mla.org/Publications/Bookstore/Nonseries/MLA-Handbook-Eighth-Edition](http://www.mla.org/Publications/Bookstore/Nonseries/MLA-Handbook-Eighth-Edition).
- (4.) Purdue's OWL (Online Writing Lab) is another useful resource for questions about mechanics and professional style: [owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/).
- (5.) As I said in #2, use the professional style guidelines appropriate to your discipline (usually MLA, APA, or Chicago Style). To find out which style is appropriate, check in the major journal for your field. You should be able to tell from their information on submissions—or, bring in an article from a major journal in your field, and we can figure out the style preference. If your professor does not care, use the one you prefer. Modern Language Association style (MLA style) is required by English departments and generally considered the default style. Here are the general document specifications:
  - PROGRAM – Microsoft Word
  - FONT – use a professional font
  - SIZE – 12 point, depending on font
  - DOUBLE-SPACE – for the body of your paper, set the computer on double-space with *first line* paragraph indentation at 0.5 inch (*never insert spaces manually*)
  - 1-INCH MARGINS – top, bottom, left, right
  - PAGE NUMBERS – top right corner with your last name
  - IDENTIFICATION – label your paper with your name, professor, course information, and date (left margin, first page only)
  - TITLE – give your paper a descriptive title
  - BIBLIOGRAPHY – list of Works Cited – for the bibliographic list, set the computer on double-space with *hanging* paragraph indentation at 0.5 inch (*never insert spaces manually*). Begin your list on a new page at the end of your paper.
- (6.) Epigraphs are fine (epigraph = an offset quotation at the beginning of a paper), but do not begin your introduction or end your conclusion with a quotation. Do not take meaningful quotes from quotation websites. Unless you have read the original—or, at least, understand the original and its context—do not borrow a quotation. Such borrowing is inordinately lame... seriously, *totally* lame.

- (7.) Whether in text or in your list of works cited, when mentioning titles of works, know when to use quotation marks and when to *italicize*. Always capitalize the major words in a title.

*Italicize*

titles of long texts, i.e., works published independently—books (novels, anthologies, non-fiction, etc.), magazines, newspapers, long poems, plays, films, television programs, album titles, pamphlets

“Quotation Marks”

titles of short texts, i.e., works within other texts—newspaper and magazine articles, articles or works in an anthology, essays, poems, short stories, individual songs, episodes of television programs, chapter titles

- (8.) Give the full name of the author, the full name of the text, and the date of publication when you mention a source for the first time.
- (9.) When writing about the author, use his or her last name and spell it correctly. For that matter, make sure you spell all of the titles of the texts and the names of the characters correctly. And don't forget that, to form the possessive of singular proper nouns (as in an author's name), add an apostrophe and an *S*—even when the proper noun ends in *S*.
- Mary Rowlandson = Rowlandson, as in Rowlandson's captivity narrative
  - Harriet Jacobs = Jacobs, as in Jacobs's slave narrative
  - Jeffrey Eugenides = Eugenides, as in Eugenides's novel
  - Ralph Waldo Emerson = Emerson, as in Emerson's essay
- (10.) While you are writing, continuously ask yourself the following questions:
- Why is this particular idea or quotation important? relevant? significant?
  - What is interesting or original about what I am saying?
  - What is my point? Am I supporting my claims with evidence?
- (11.) Always use the present tense when discussing literature or writing. For example:
- In “Self-Reliance” Emerson *discusses* his ideas about personal independence. (discusses; *not* discussed)
  - In the climactic moment when Frankenstein *destroys* the female, he *infuriates* the creature to the point of criminal insanity. (destroys & infuriates; *not* destroyed & infuriated)
- (12.) Remember the basic characteristics of an expository paragraph:
- topic sentence
  - fluency: ideas flow out of topic (stays on track)
  - clarity: clear and non-repetitive (no major redundancies)
  - focused: one major subject per paragraph
  - substantial: topic is fully explored
  - well-developed: decent length (at least five sentences per paragraph? / 100 words?)
- (13.) Remember the three basic rules of comma use: (1.) to separate clauses in a compound sentence—in this case, placed before a conjunction; (2.) to set off introductory elements; (3.) to separate words, phrases, and clauses in a series; (4.) to set off nonrestrictive elements.

- (14.) Use the MSWord grammar check feature, but be very, very, very careful. Grammar check suggests too many semi-colons, for example, so be cautious about taking computer-generated suggestions.
- (15.) Run the spell-check—and make sure you personally check the spellings of the proper nouns in your paper. The spelling tool cannot recognize everything (esp. authors' names, characters' names, and geographical locations).
- (16.) Watch your vocabulary and word choice. Do not use your thesaurus indiscriminately—that is, do not use words that you cannot define. Inflated vocabulary creates a weird tone. Accurate word choice is a crucial element in the creation of effective prose. The thesaurus tool is great, but the synonyms it offers you can really throw off your meaning. Have a dictionary on hand to supplement the thesaurus.
- (17.) Though it is appropriate to use quotation marks to draw attention to a particular word or phrase that is misused or used in a special sense, avoid the overuse of quotation marks to imply sarcasm. Don't use quotation marks for increased emphasis. The punctuation doesn't work well when attempting to add force to your words. You could use italics for such emphasis if you think you need the gimmick.
- (18.) Avoid using contractions in formal academic writing.
- (19.) Do not use *you* in a formal paper. Except in the case of instructions or directions, *you* is a very awkward word because it is vague as well as bossy and preachy.
- (20.) Do not use the terms *it* or *this* without reinforcing their referents—e.g., what is it? this what? Think about clear pronoun reference in general. Avoid using the following awkward and vague expressions: There is.... There are.... This is because.... It is important because....
- (21.) Do not use the (completely ineffective) expression ***I feel that...*** or any other equivocations (e.g., ***maybe; I'm not sure, but...***). Such statements weaken your writing and convey to your reader that you don't know what you are talking about. Along these lines, do not say ***of course*** or ***obviously***. Such expressions create an obnoxious tone. Plus, if the idea is obvious, why are you stating the thought?
- (22.) When in doubt, don't guess! Ask questions, check the *MLA Handbook*, or use [Purdue's OWL \(Online Writing Lab\)](#). Here are a couple of purchase links to the *MLA Handbook*, 8th edition (2016).  
**MLA:** [www.mla.org/Publications/Bookstore/Nonseries/MLA-Handbook-Eighth-Edition](http://www.mla.org/Publications/Bookstore/Nonseries/MLA-Handbook-Eighth-Edition)  
**Amazon:** [www.amazon.com/Handbook-Modern-Language-Association-America/dp/1603292624](http://www.amazon.com/Handbook-Modern-Language-Association-America/dp/1603292624)

***General Review: Sentence Writing*****BASIC SENTENCE**

i.e., one independent clause = the subject (noun) + the predicate (expresses what the subject does)

The boy lost his duck.

The narrator in Smith's story describes her complete desperation.

The narrator in Smith's story describes her complete desperation and her lonely hopelessness.

**SENTENCE THAT COMBINES TWO INDEPENDENT CLAUSES**

i.e., two independent clauses connected with a comma and a coordinating conjunction

The boy searched the neighborhood for a long while, and he eventually found his duck in the local swimming pool.

The narrator in Smith's story describes her complete desperation, but she also explains how she escapes from her terrible situation.

**SENTENCE WITH A MODIFIER**

i.e., one independent clause connected to one dependent phrase or clause

The boy felt horribly guilty about the irresponsible loss of his duck, even though he had searched diligently for hours and hours.

Though he had searched diligently for hours and hours, the boy felt very guilty about the irresponsible loss of his duck.

The narrator describes her complete desperation, which gives Smith's story an air of overwhelming sadness.

**CONSIDER THE DASH AS AN OPTION**

i.e., too many commas, though accurately punctuated, can begin to look awkward.

The boy felt enormously guilty about the irresponsible loss of his duck, and, even though he had searched diligently for hours and hours, he would never get over his utter failure as a pet owner.

Try using a dash to replace the first comma.

The boy felt enormously guilty about the irresponsible loss of his duck—and, even though he had searched diligently for hours and hours, he would never get over his utter failure as a pet owner.

Try using dashes to replace the second and third commas.

The boy felt enormously guilty about the irresponsible loss of his duck, and—even though he had searched diligently for hours and hours—he would never get over his utter failure as a pet owner.

Warning: the dash is a useful form of punctuation, but must be used sparingly.

### *Some Additional Sentence Examples*

- #1 **AND, BUT, OR, NOR, SO, YET** are coordinating conjunctions. When you connect two independent clauses (sentences that could stand alone), use a coordinating conjunction and a comma.

The pool players in Gwendolyn Brooks's poem think that they are fine, **but** she shows us that they will die young as a result of their bad habits.

Nicolette Toussaint explains that American mass culture has a stereotypical image of deafness, **and** she hopes that open communication will begin to solve that problem.

- #2 **BECAUSE** and **ALTHOUGH** are subordinating conjunctions. When you use **BECAUSE** or **ALTHOUGH** at the beginning of a sentence, use a comma at the end of the clause. If you use **BECAUSE** in the middle of your sentence, do not use a comma or a semi-colon to separate the clauses. (Why not? Well, it's just a special rule for **BECAUSE**—so, in this case, don't worry about the why....)

The narrator's story is inspiring **because** she manages to overcome her desperate loneliness and alienation.

**Because** the narrator manages to overcome her desperate loneliness and alienation, her story is inspiring.

Malcolm X decides to straighten his hair with harsh chemicals **because** he cannot withstand the demands of an entire social system. Like most of us, he succumbs to peer pressure.

**Because** he cannot withstand the oppressive nature of an entire social system, Malcolm X succumbs to the pressure and decides to conk his hair.

**Although** Malcolm X conks his hair as a young man, later in life he recognizes the adverse effect of his unthinking conformity to a social norm.

- #3 **HOWEVER** and **THEREFORE** are conjunctive adverbs—i.e., a conjunctive adverb operates like a transitional phrase and modifies an independent clause following another independent clause (comparison, contrast, sequencing, cause/effect, etc.). Use a semi-colon and a comma with conjunctive adverbs to connect the two independent clauses of the compound sentence.

I think about and admire reading and writing in all of its various forms; **therefore**, I am well-versed in a broad range of genres. My taste for text is democratic.

Marcus Mabry left his impoverished home and its problems to go to college in California; **however**, he remains proud of his family in New Jersey and admires their perseverance in the face of daily struggles.

#4 Consider using **ALTHOUGH** and **HOWEVER** to create interesting contrasts. As in #3 above, note the use of the semi-colon with **HOWEVER**.

**Although** Douglass writes about the barbarous and demoralizing effects of slavery in his *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, his final message is hopeful.

Douglass writes about the barbarous and demoralizing effects of slavery in his *Narrative*; **however**, his final message expresses a certain hope for future generations.

Douglass writes about the barbarous and demoralizing effects of slavery in his *Narrative*; his final message, **however**, expresses a hopeful outlook.

#5 Always try to use the **ACTIVE VOICE** and to simplify sentence structures.

**BAD... PASSIVE VOICE**

Another point that **is explained by** Douglass **is about** the hypocrisy of the Christian slave-holders. The institution of slavery **is justified by** their misinterpretation of the Bible. [27 words?]

**GOOD! ACTIVE VOICE!**

Douglass **points out** that the Christian slave-holders are hypocritical. They **misinterpret** the Bible to justify the institution of slavery. [19 words!]

**BAD... PASSIVE VOICE**

**It is because of** this problem of hypocrisy, which **is explained by** Douglass, that his *Narrative* **is complained about** as anti-Christian by some of its readers. [26 words?]

**GOOD! ACTIVE VOICE!**

Because Douglass **emphasizes** the hypocritical nature of Southern Christianity, some readers **complain** that his *Narrative* is anti-Christian. [17 words!]

#6 Remember to use **TRANSITIONS** to help your reader move with you from one idea in your writing to another idea. You can use these words as introductory elements with a comma; between sentence parts when set off with two commas; or as conjunctions with semi-colons.

to compare ideas:

similarly  
comparatively  
correspondingly  
in comparison  
in the same way  
in a similar manner

to contrast ideas:

on the one hand / on the other hand  
conversely  
on the contrary  
in contrast  
in opposition  
in a different manner  
however

to add ideas:

in addition  
furthermore  
moreover  
as well as  
additionally  
also

See OWL (Purdue's Online Writing Lab), for a handy list of sentence samples and transitional devices: [owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/574/02/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/574/02/).

Expository Writing: Suggested Process	
<p><b><i>Writing Process</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think: let your mind wander.</li> <li>• Brainstorm on paper or on screen.</li> <li>• Write a tentative thesis statement (or a beginning topic statement) and develop a list of claims and ideas (i.e., outline, map, or plan).</li> <li>• Write a first draft.</li> <li>• Think about your thesis: has it evolved?</li> <li>• Try outlining your draft. Does the paper’s structure make sense? Are the ideas ordered logically?</li> <li>• Revise your complete draft. Make sure you develop a thesis statement.</li> <li>• Seek advice             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- friends and peers in the class?</li> <li>-- the Writing Center?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Continue to revise the draft.</li> <li>• Repeat the outlining process or any other useful steps of the drafting process.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Editing &amp; Proofing Process</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Print out your draft.</li> <li>2. Carefully read it aloud to yourself. Better yet, read it aloud with a friend.</li> <li>3. Thoroughly check over those passages that are difficult to read. Look up the answers to any questions you may have.</li> <li>4. Think about your structure. Are your sentences complete? Are your paragraphs logically divided? Do your ideas flow?</li> <li>5. Rewrite awkward sections on screen; or, make corrections on the print-out, and then plug them into the computer.</li> <li>6. Run the spell-check! Would grammar-check help you?</li> <li>7. Read over your paper again and again.</li> <li>8. Print out your polished draft. Read it one last time.</li> <li>9. Submit your polished copy.</li> </ol>

MLA List of Works Cited  
 New Container System (*MLA Handbook*, 8th Edition, 2016)<sup>3</sup>

**Basic Structure for All Types of Sources**

BEGINNING ELEMENTS

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. Author.                  | Last Name, First Name.   |
| 2. Title of Source.         | “Title of Article.” [or] <i>Title of Book</i> .  |
| *Original Publication Date. | Optional element, recommended for republished print texts (when there is only one container) |

CONTAINER 1

(initial publication information)

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 3. <i>Title of Container</i> , | <i>Collection Title</i> , [or] <i>Database or Website Title</i> , |
| 4. Other Contributors,         | edited by, translated by, illustrated by,                         |
| 5. Version,                    | edition, [e.g., 3rd ed.,]   |
| 6. Number,                     | volume, issue [e.g., vol. 2, no. 4,]                              |
| 7. Publisher,                  | Publisher,  |
| 8. Publication Date,           | Publication date,   |
| 9. Location.                   | Inclusive pagination. [or] URL. [eliminate http://]               |
| * Date of Access.              | Optional element, recommended for online sources.                 |

CONTAINER 2

(same as above, but with additional publication information, when necessary; e.g., when an original source comes from another source or container, as in a database or website)

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 3. <i>Title of Container</i> , | <i>Database or Website Title</i> ,                |
| 4. Other Contributors,         |   |
| 5. Version,                    |   |
| 6. Number,                     |   |
| 7. Publisher,                  |   |
| 8. Publication Date,           |   |
| 9. Location.                   | URL. [eliminate http://]                          |
| * Date of Access.              | Optional element, recommended for online sources. |

**Sample Works Cited Entry: Book**

(scholarly edition with optional date of original publication)

- |                                       |                               |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Author.                            | Austen, Jane.                 |
| 2. Title of Source.                   | <i>Mansfield Park</i> .       |
| [OPTIONAL] Original Publication Date. | 1814.                         |
| 3. <i>Title of Container</i> ,        |                               |
| 4. Other Contributors,                | Edited by Claudia L. Johnson, |
| 5. Version,                           |                               |
| 6. Number,                            |                               |
| 7. Publisher,                         | W. W. Norton,                 |
| 8. Publication Date,                  | 1998.                         |
| 9. Location.                          |                               |

---

<sup>3</sup> I have borrowed (copy/pasted) freely from the *MLA Handbook*, 8th Edition, and also developed my own examples. The 2016 *MLA Handbook* is available via Amazon or at the MLA website. See p. 10 for links.



**Sample Entries for Books**

Austen, Jane. *Mansfield Park*. 1814. Edited by Claudia L. Johnson, W. W. Norton, 1998.

Austen, Jane. *Mansfield Park*. 1814. Edited by Kathryn Sutherland, Penguin Books, 2014.

Burke, Jim. *The English Teacher's Companion: A Completely New Guide to Classroom, Curriculum, and the Profession*. 4th ed., Heinemann, 2013.

Tomalin, Claire. *Jane Austen: A Life*. Vintage, 1999.

**Sample Works Cited Entry: Essay in Book Collection** (in this case, a scholarly edition)

See: <https://style.mla.org/works-cited-a-quick-guide-book/>

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Author.                     | Johnson, Claudia L.   |
| 2. Title of Source.            | " <i>Mansfield Park: Confusions of Guilt and Revolutions of Mind</i> ." |
| 3. <i>Title of Container</i> , | <i>Mansfield Park</i> ,   |
| 4. Other Contributors,         | by Jane Austen, edited by Johnson,                                      |
| 5. Version,                    |   |
| 6. Number,                     |   |
| 7. Publisher,                  | W. W. Norton,   |
| 8. Publication Date,           | 1998,   |
| 9. Location.                   | pp. 458-76.   |

Copeland, Edward. "Money." *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*, edited by Copeland and Juliet McMaster, Cambridge UP, 1997, pp. 131-48.

Johnson, Claudia L. "*Mansfield Park: Confusions of Guilt and Revolutions of Mind*." *Mansfield Park*, by Jane Austen, edited by Johnson, W. W. Norton, 1998, pp. 458-76.

Rosenblatt, Louise. "Literature—S.O.S." 1991. *Making Meaning with Texts: Selected Readings*, Heinemann, 2005, pp. 72-88.

**Sample Works Cited Entry: Introduction, Preface, Foreword, or Afterword**

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Author.                     | Smith, Susan Belasco.                                   |
| 2. Title of Source.            | Introduction.   |
| 3. <i>Title of Container</i> , | <i>Ruth Hall: A Domestic Tale of the Present Time</i> , |
| 4. Other Contributors,         | by Fanny Fern, edited by Smith,                         |
| 5. Version,                    |   |
| 6. Number,                     |   |
| 7. Publisher,                  | Penguin Books,  |
| 8. Publication Date,           | 1997,   |
| 9. Location.                   | pp. xv-xlv.   |

Smith, Susan Belasco. Introduction. *Ruth Hall: A Domestic Tale of the Present Time*, by Fanny Fern, edited by Smith, Penguin Books, 1997, pp. xv-xlv.

**Sample Works Cited Entry: Article from a Library Database**

See: <https://style.mla.org/works-cited-a-quick-guide-journal/>

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Author.          | Hinnant, Charles H.   |
| 2. Title of Source. | “Jane Austen’s ‘Wild Imagination’: Romance and the Courtship Plot in the Six Canonical Novels.” |

## CONTAINER 1

- |                                |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 3. <i>Title of Container</i> , | <i>Narrative</i> , |
| 4. Other Contributors,         |                    |
| 5. Version,                    |                    |
| 6. Number,                     | vol. 14, no. 3,    |
| 7. Publisher,                  |                    |
| 8. Publication Date,           | 2006,              |
| 9. Location.                   | pp. 294-310.       |

## CONTAINER 2

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 3. <i>Title of Container</i> , | <i>JSTOR</i> ,   |
| 4. Other Contributors,         |  |
| 5. Version,                    |  |
| 6. Number,                     |  |
| 7. Publisher,                  |  |
| 8. Publication Date,           |  |
| 9. Location.                   | <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/20107392">www.jstor.org/stable/20107392</a> . |

Hankins, L. V. “The Voice of Nature: *Hope Leslie* and Early American Romanticism.” *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*, vol. 31, no. 2, 2014, pp. 160-182. *Project MUSE*, [muse.jhu.edu/article/562498](http://muse.jhu.edu/article/562498).

Hinnant, Charles H. “Jane Austen’s ‘Wild Imagination’: Romance and the Courtship Plot in the Six Canonical Novels.” *Narrative*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2006, pp. 294-310. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/20107392](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20107392).

Lorensen, Jutta. “Between Image and Word, Color, and Time: Jacob Lawrence’s *The Migration Series*.” *African American Review*, vol. 40, no. 3, 2006, pp. 571-86. *EBSCOHost*, [search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=24093790&site=ehost-live](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=24093790&site=ehost-live).

## NOTES ABOUT JOURNAL ARTICLES

- Look for the “view citation” link or window. You’ll be able to find the elements you need when you view/export the citation in MLA style. The copied/exported citation will not be perfect, but you should be able to adjust it with little trouble.
- Download the PDF of the article. (Don’t just read the HTML version.) PDFs of journal articles are similar to photocopies. They have stable page numbers that you will need for your in-text citations.
- When/if you copy/paste a quotation from an article, be very careful. Make sure you place quotation marks around the copied material and add an in-text citation (author’s last name and page number). I usually put the quoted language in red when I am drafting because I don’t want to forget that the writing is, in fact, a quotation. Inadvertent plagiarism is difficult to distinguish from intentional cheating in such instances.

**Sample Works Cited Entry: Source Published at a Website**

1. Author.	Wheatley, Phillis.	O’Connor, Beth.
2. Title of Source.	“To the Right Honorable William, Earl of Dartmouth.”	“Censorship in the Classroom: Understanding Controversial Issues.”
3. <i>Title of Container,</i>	<i>Poetry Foundation,</i>	<i>ReadWriteThink,</i>
4. Other Contributors,		
5. Version,		
6. Number,		
7. Publisher,		International Literacy Association,
8. Publication Date,	2017,	2017,
9. Location.	www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/47706.	www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/censorship-classroom-understanding-controversial-203.html.
* Date of Access.	Accessed 10 Oct. 2017.	Accessed 10 Oct. 2017.

*Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts.* National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010, www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/. Accessed 10 Oct. 2017.

O’Connor, Beth. “Censorship in the Classroom: Understanding Controversial Issues.” *ReadWriteThink*, International Literacy Association, 2017, www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/censorship-classroom-understanding-controversial-203.html. Accessed 10 Oct. 2017.

Wheatley, Phillis. “To the Right Honorable William, Earl of Dartmouth.” *Poetry Foundation*, 2017, www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/47706. Accessed 10 Oct. 2017.

**Sample Works Cited Entry: Video Published at a Website**

See: <https://style.mla.org/works-cited-a-quick-guide-video/>

1. Author.	
2. Title of Source.	“Curiosity Rover Report (August 2015): Three Years on Mars!”
3. <i>Title of Container,</i>	<i>NASA’s Journey to Mars: Videos,</i>
4. Other Contributors,	edited by Sarah Loff,
5. Version,	
6. Number,	
7. Publisher,	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
8. Publication Date,	30 July 2015,
9. Location.	www.jpl.nasa.gov/video/details.php?id=1391.
* Date of Access.	Accessed 10 Oct. 2017.

“*Curiosity Rover Report (August 2015): Three Years on Mars!*” *NASA’s Journey to Mars: Videos*, edited by Sarah Loff, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 30 July 2015, [www.jpl.nasa.gov/video/details.php?id=1391](http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/video/details.php?id=1391). Accessed 10 Oct. 2017.

### Sample Works Cited Entry: Original Source Republished at a Website

- |                                |  |   |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| 1. Author.                     | Fern, Fanny.   |   |
| 2. Title of Source.            | <i>Ruth Hall: A Domestic Tale of the Present Time.</i> |   |
| CONTAINER 1                    |  |   |
| 3. <i>Title of Container</i> , |  |   |
| 4. Other Contributors,         |  |   |
| 5. Version,                    |  |   |
| 6. Number,                     |  |   |
| 7. Publisher,                  | New York, Mason Brothers,                              | [see note below about city]   |
| 8. Publication Date,           | 1855.  |   |
| 9. Location.                   |  |   |
| CONTAINER 2                    |  |   |
| 3. <i>Title of Container</i> , | <i>Hathi Trust Digital Library</i> ,                   |   |
| 4. Other Contributors,         |  |   |
| 5. Version,                    |  |   |
| 6. Number,                     |  |   |
| 7. Publisher,                  |  |   |
| 8. Publication Date,           |  |   |
| 9. Location.                   |  | <a href="http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000246852">catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000246852</a> . Accessed 10 Oct. 2017. |
| *Date of Access                |  | Accessed 10 Oct. 2017.  |

Fern, Fanny. *Ruth Hall: A Domestic Tale of the Present Time*. New York, Mason Brothers, 1855.  
*Hathi Trust Digital Library*, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=cool.ark:/13960/t2v418x5p;view=1up;seq=1>. Accessed 10 Oct. 2017.

Declaration of Sentiments. *Report of the Women’s Rights Convention, Held at Seneca Falls, N.Y., July 19th and 20th, 1848*. Rochester, North Star Office, 1848. *Women’s Rights National Historic Park*, [www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/report-of-the-womans-rights-convention.htm](http://www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/report-of-the-womans-rights-convention.htm). Accessed 10 Oct. 2017.

#### NOTE ABOUT REPUBLISHED SOURCES AND CITIES OF PUBLICATION

- The Seneca Falls Declaration and *Ruth Hall* are a little tricky because there is an additional optional element. When texts are published before 1900, MLA recommends adding in the city of publication.

#### NOTE ABOUT AUTHORSHIP

- When there isn’t a particular author (e.g., government documents like the Constitution or proclamations like the Declaration of Sentiments), begin with the title of the source.
- When the text is anonymously written (e.g., information posted at a website with no author attribution), begin with the title of the source.

#### NOTE ABOUT DATES OF ACCESS

- MLA considers the date of access to be an optional element to include with a URL; however, Purdue’s OWL recommends adding the access date, which makes sense to me.

MLA Style Worksheet (*MLA Handbook*, 8th Edition, 2016)

<p>Source #1: BEGINNING ELEMENTS</p> <p>Follow standard conventions of genre regarding italics and quotation marks for titles of sources. For example, article titles are contained within quotation marks, whereas book titles are italicized. Note that names of databases and websites are also italicized (i.e., titles of containers are italicized).</p>	
1. Author.	
2. Title of Source.	
* Original Publication Date.	
<p>CONTAINER 1</p> <p>Original publication information; begin the first element with capital letter; use commas between elements; end the container with period.</p>	
3. <i>Title of Container,</i>	
4. Other Contributors,	
5. Version,	
6. Number,	
7. Publisher,	
8. Publication Date,	
9. Location.	
**Date of Access.	
<p>CONTAINER 2</p> <p>Same contents as above, but for additional publication information, when necessary; for example, when a source with original publication information comes from a database or website. Begin first element of second container with capital letter; use commas between elements; end container with period.</p>	
3. <i>Title of Container,</i>	
4. Other Contributors,	
5. Version,	
6. Number,	
7. Publisher,	
8. Publication Date,	
9. Location.	
** Date of Access.	

\* MLA considers the date of original publication to be an optional element to include after the title. Adding the original publication date is particularly useful when working with republished texts.

\*\* MLA considers the date of access to be an optional element to include after a URL; however, Purdue’s OWL recommends adding the access date, and I agree that it’s a helpful addition.

**Useful Resources**

Works Cited: A Quick Guide – [style.mla.org/works-cited-a-quick-guide/](http://style.mla.org/works-cited-a-quick-guide/)

Sample Papers in MLA Style – [style.mla.org/sample-papers/](http://style.mla.org/sample-papers/)

Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) – [owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/)

### MLA Style Worksheet with Norton Anthology Example

A source in a single container—in this case, a work of literature contained within an anthology—follows the same format as an essay in an book collection (see above, p. 17).

Source #1: BEGINNING ELEMENTS	
Follow standard conventions of genre regarding italics and quotation marks for titles of sources. For example, article titles are contained within quotation marks, whereas book titles are italicized. Note that names of databases and websites are also italicized (i.e., titles of containers are italicized).	
1. Author.	Bradstreet, Anne.
2. Title of Source.	“The Author to Her Book.”
* Original Publication Date.	1678.
CONTAINER 1	
Original publication information; begin the first element with capital letter; use commas between elements; end the container with period.	
3. Title of Container,	<i>The Norton Anthology of American Literature,</i>
4. Other Contributors,	edited by Robert S. Levine,
5. Version,	9th ed.,
6. Number,	vol. A,
7. Publisher,	W. W. Norton,
8. Publication Date,	2017,
9. Location.	p. 236.

Bradstreet, Anne. “The Author to Her Book.” 1678. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, edited by Robert S. Levine, 9th ed., vol. A, W. W. Norton, 2017, p. 236.

Rowlandson, Mary. *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*. 1682. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, edited by Robert S. Levine, 9th ed., vol. A, W. W. Norton, 2017, pp. 267-301.

When mentioning titles, whether in the body of your paper or on your list of works cited, capitalize the major words and think about when to use “quotation marks” and when to *italicize*.

- “Quotation Marks” indicate titles of short texts, i.e., works within other texts: newspaper and magazine articles, essays, poems, short stories, individual songs, episodes of television programs, chapter titles. Therefore, the title of Bradstreet’s poem “**The Author to Her Book**” is contained within quotation marks.
- *Italics* indicate titles of long texts, i.e., works published independently—books (titles of novels, anthologies, non-fiction, etc.), magazines, newspapers, long poems, plays, films, television programs, album titles, pamphlets. Therefore, the title of Rowlandson’s captivity narrative is indicated by italics: *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*. In addition, the title of the anthology is also italicized: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*.