

MLA Overview

Modern Language Association, 8th Edition

Some information in this presentation is used from www.mla.org for instructional purposes. Please visit www.mla.org for more information.

Page Formatting

- Title pages are not required for MLA essays and papers.
- Essays and papers should include the header in the left-hand corner of the first page and the running head (the writer's last name and page number) in the upper right-hand corner of all pages.
- Everything should be double-spaced.
- The font should be 12 pt. Times New Roman.
- Only one space should be included after all punctuation, including periods.
- All margins should be set to one-inch.
- All paragraphs should be indented one half-inch.
- Works cited entries should be formatted with the hanging indent.

Documenting Sources

- For each source used, two types of citations are needed:
 - In-text Citation (or Parenthetical Notation)
 - In-text citations are used to distinguish the ideas of the writer from the ideas of the sources he or she uses for support.
 - In-text citations give the reader information about where the supporting ideas are found in the original source by including the page number when possible.
 - Works Cited Entry
 - The works cited entries are included on the works cited page, which begins on a separate page, following the text of the essay.
 - The works cited entries offer the reader detailed bibliographic information about all sources used.

In-text Citations

- Each in-text citation should include:
 - 1 The author's last name (or the title of the work if no author is present).
 - 2 The page number where the source material was found.
- The information may be presented in a parenthetical notation:

One scholar asserts that “communism is the basis for all the evil in the civilized world” (Curtis 298).

1 2

- Or, the author's name may be presented in a signal phrase:

According to Curtis, “Communism is the basis for all the evil in the

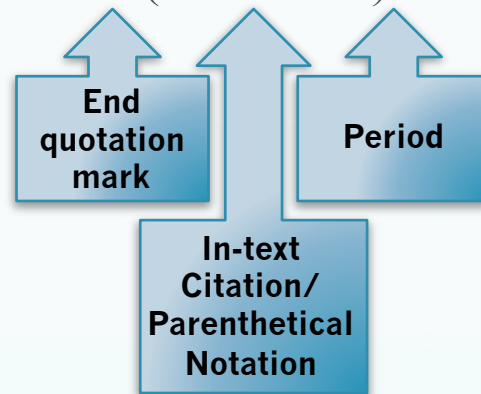
1

civilized world” (298).

2

- Notice with in-text citations that the parenthetical citation follows the quotation marks and the period follows the parenthetical notation:

Many people believe that “communism is the basis for all the evil in the civilized world” (Curtis 298).



- Do **NOT** include “p.” or “pp.” for the page number.
- If no page number is available, omit it. Do **NOT** include “no page” or any similar notation.

- For the in-text citation, when no author is available, include the the title in the signal phrase or the parenthetical notation.

According to “Understanding the Epidemic,” deaths from opioid drug abuse have increased fourfold in less than 20 years.

or

Deaths from opioid drug abuse have increased fourfold in less than 20 years
(“Understanding the Epidemic”).

- Be sure to include the necessary formatting—italics or quotation marks—for the title.
- Shortening the title is also acceptable. Use the first three or four words of the title if the title is long.

- In-text citations should be included for ALL source material used in the paper, including:
 - Paraphrases
 - Summaries
 - Quotes (including Block Quotes).
- The in-text citation links the usage of the source in the paper with its appropriate works cited entry.

- Direct quotes must be introduced with the essay or paper writer's own words:

One scholar asserts that “communism is the basis for all the evil in the civilized world” (Curtis 298).

- If the sentence is unbroken—as in the example above—a comma and capital first letter are not necessary.
- If the signal phrase serves only to introduce the quote, a comma is necessary, and the first word of the quote should be capitalized. See below:

According to Curtis, “Communism is the basis for all the evil in the civilized world” (298).

- If source has two authors, include both last names in the in-text citation, connected by *and*:

(Dorris and Erdrich 23)

- If the source has more than two authors, the entry should include the last name of the first author listed followed by *et al.*:

(Burdick et al. 42)

Works Cited

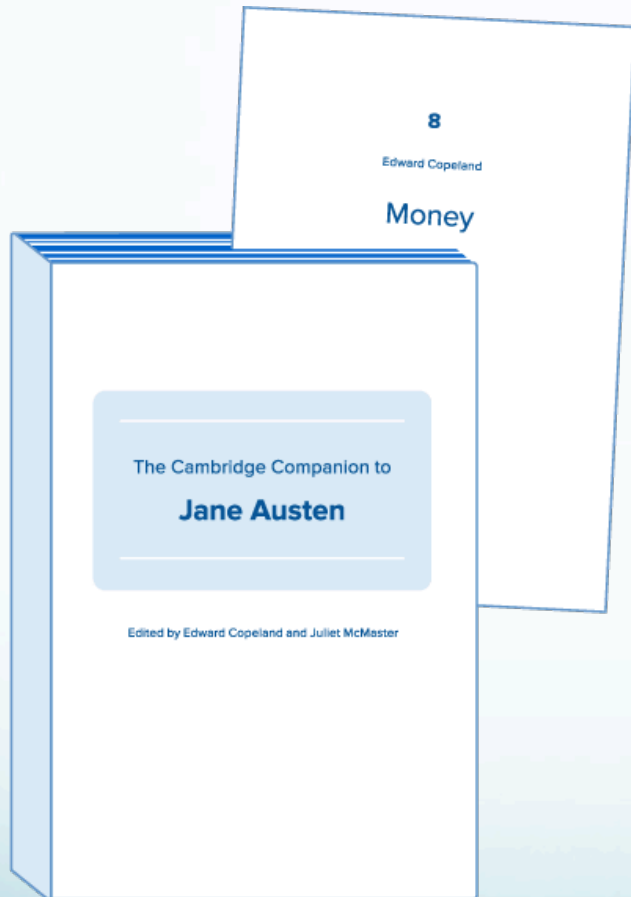
- 1 Author.
- 2 Title of source.
- 3 Title of container,
- 4 Other contributors,
- 5 Version,
- 6 Number,
- 7 Publisher,
- 8 Publication date,
- 9 Location.

Core Elements

Each entry in the list of works cited is composed of facts common to most works—the MLA core elements. They are assembled in a specific order.

Pay close attention to the use of punctuation as these punctuation marks will be used in the citation.

If any core element is unavailable, simply omit that element and its punctuation mark and move to the next available element.



Containers

The concept of containers is crucial to MLA style. When the source being documented forms part of a larger whole, the larger whole can be thought of as a container that holds the source.

For example, a short story may be contained in an anthology. The short story is the source, and the anthology is the container. Also, an online journal is stored in a database, which forms a container; furthermore, the journal is a container because it holds journal article.

1	Author.	Copeland, Edward.
2	Title of source.	"Money."
CONTAINER 1		
3	Title of container,	<i>The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen,</i>
4	Other contributors,	edited by Copeland and Juliet McMaster,
5	Version,	
6	Number,	
7	Publisher,	Cambridge UP,
8	Publication date,	1997,
9	Location.	pp. 131–48.

The Practice Template

The practice template, which is linked for you in Canvas, is helpful to use while constructing MLA works cited entries.

Complete the template and build the citation by including the elements (with the appropriate punctuation marks) in the order that they appear on the template.

Punctuation and Format

Notice that only the *author*, *title of source*, and *location* are followed by a period. All other elements are followed by a comma.

ALL works cited entries, however, must end with a period, regardless of the last element listed in the citation.

Italicize the titles of works that are whole (such as books, journals, musical albums, websites, etc.), and place in quotation marks the titles of works that are used to make up another whole work (such as poems, book chapters, journal articles, songs on an album, videos on a website, webpages on website, etc.)

1	Author.	
	Copeland, Edward.	
2	Title of source.	
	"Money."	
CONTAINER 1		
3	Title of container,	
	<i>The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen,</i>	
4	Other contributors,	
	edited by Copeland and Juliet McMaster,	
5	Version,	
6	Number,	
7	Publisher,	
	Cambridge UP,	
8	Publication date,	
	1997,	
9	Location.	
	pp. 131–48.	

VIDEO ON A WEBSITE

The screenshot shows the NASA website page for "Journey to Mars - Videos". The page features a video player with a play button and a title "Curiosity Rover Report (August 2015): Three Years on Mars!". Below the video is a "MORE VIDEOS" button. At the bottom, the publisher information is listed: "National Aeronautics and Space Administration", "Page Last Updated: July 30, 2015", "Page Editor: Sarah Loff", and "NASA Official: Brian Dunbar".

Numbered callouts on the screenshot:

- 1. Location: www.nasa.gov/topics/journeytomars/videos/index.html
- 2. Title of source: "Curiosity Rover Report (August 2015): Three Years on Mars!"
- 3. Title of container: NASA's Journey to Mars - Videos
- 4. Other contributors: (Not explicitly labeled in the callout, but the page lists "Page Editor: Sarah Loff" and "NASA Official: Brian Dunbar")
- 5. Version: (Not explicitly labeled in the callout)
- 6. Number: (Not explicitly labeled in the callout)
- 7. Publisher: National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- 8. Publication date: 30 July 2015
- 9. Location: www.nasa.gov/topics/journeytomars/videos/index.html

1 Author.

2 Title of source.

"Curiosity Rover Report (August 2015): Three Years on Mars!"

CONTAINER 1

3 Title of container,

NASA's Journey to Mars: Videos,

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.nasa.gov/topics/journeytomars/videos/index.html.

FINAL WORKS-CITED-LIST ENTRY

"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.nasa.gov/topics/journeytomars/videos/index.html.

ARTICLE IN AN ONLINE DATABASE

3 Title of container
CONTAINER 2

9 Location
CONTAINER 2

2 Title of source

Author 1

8 Publication date
CONTAINER 1

Location
CONTAINER 1 9

AFRICAN AMERICAN REVIEW 586

EBSCOhost

Permalink <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=mzh&AN=2007531883&site=ehost-live>

Between Image and Word, Color and Time: Jacob Lawrence's *The Migration Series*

Jutta Lorensen canvasses tell pictorial stories, angular violence and struggle and triumph. —Langston Hughes (qtd. in Sp...

2 Title of source

Author 1

Jutta Lorensen is Assistant Professor of German, English, and Comparative Literature at Penn State University, Altoona College. She is interested in second-generation remembrance and is currently completing a book project tentatively entitled "Epitaphic Remembrance: Representing a Catastrophic Past in Second Generation Texts."

"And the migrants kept coming." In 1941, Jacob Lawrence's *Migration Series*, a visual narrative about the Great Migration of African Americans from the agrarian South to the industrialized cities in the North of the US, opened to much acclaim in Edith Halpert's Downtown Gallery in New York City.¹ It consists of 60 panels and a script of 60 short "captions" delineating this other tremendously significant yet often neglected American exodus story, which occurred in the wake of a virtually failed effort to "reconstruct" the American South after the Civil War. In Nicholas Lemann's estimation, the Great Migration has to be counted among "the largest and most rapid mass internal movements of people in history": between 1910 and 1970 approximately six and a half million African Americans left the South for a "Promised Land" of mainly large urban centers—Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, New York, Pittsburgh, among others—where they could escape from the vicious cycles of the southern sharecropping economy and the legal and social strictures of Jim Crow (6).² Lawrence's *Migration Series* remains one of the most powerful representations of this other journey to a much-fabled "America of opportunity and freedom"; a journey, however, that did not traverse the world's oceans, but instead the very landscape, real and symbolic, of the US itself. Yet, although the majority of the migrants were bound for the most populous urban centers of the US, they were admitted neither to the promises of America nor to the very core of its narrative: in the "country of immigrants," with all the laden connotations this label implies, the exodus from the economically destitute regions of the South was not granted arrival in many ways.

Lawrence was acutely aware of the complexities of the Great Migration, its social and political, as well as cultural implications. Moreover, he was a painter who worked very consciously in the space of historical elision.³ His work not only deals with the Great Migration, but also with such seminal figures as Harriet Tubman, Toussaint L'Ouverture, Frederick Douglass, and John Brown.⁴ It is therefore tempting to cast him as a "history painter." At first glance, the *Migration Series*, for which Lawrence uses both images and words to tell his story, seems to confirm this assessment, in particular because it is known that Lawrence spent much time in the 135th Street Branch of the Public Library (now the Schomburg Center for Black Culture), where he studied for the *Migration Series* to escape from this con-

African American Review, Volume 40, Number 3
© 2006 Jutta Lorensen

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- 1 Author.
Lorensen, Jutta.
 - 2 Title of source.
"Between Image and Word, Color, and Time:
Jacob Lawrence's *The Migration Series*."
- CONTAINER 1
- 3 Title of container,
African American Review,
 - 4 Other contributors,
 - 5 Version,
 - 6 Number,
vol. 40, no. 3,
 - 7 Publisher,
 - 8 Publication date,
2006,
 - 9 Location,
pp. 571-86.
- CONTAINER 2
- 3 Title of container,
EBSCOHost,
 - 4 Other contributors,
 - 5 Version,
 - 6 Number,
 - 7 Publisher,
 - 8 Publication date,
 - 9 Location,
search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?
direct=true&db=f5h&AN=24093790&site=ehost-
live.

The
complete
citation
entry is
on the
next
slide.

FINAL WORKS-CITED-LIST ENTRY



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.

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- Munro, Brenda, and Gordon Munro. "F

**SAMPLE
WORKS
CITED
PAGE**

NOTE: The citation entries are listed in alphabetical order by the first item in each entry.



Visit style.mla.org for more information.

