

MLA Style Guide for Middle School



Guidelines for Making a Works Cited Page
and Citing Sources

Glen Crest Middle School
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Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with some guidance on how to write your essays in MLA style. In the following pages you will find information about the basics of the style and how to correctly cite your sources.

It is important to remember that only the basic, most important elements are covered here; therefore, your teacher may need to share other material with you in order for you to complete your assignments in MLA format.

It is expected that all middle school students and teachers will use the MLA style when documenting sources used in written assignments.

1. MLA Style Guide Basics

What is MLA Style?

The **Modern Language Association (MLA)** developed a style guide for academic writing. Specifically it deals with ways to document your sources and format your paper.

MLA provides guidelines for the creation of a “Works Cited” page and the corresponding In-Text citations.

How do I use this MLA Style Guide?

Students and teachers in our middle school are expected to use this MLA Style guide as a reference when writing papers that require information to be cited from other sources.

Why is it Important that I Cite Sources?

As a writer, it is your responsibility to give proper credit to your sources. It is also important that you give this credit according to the MLA style. **If you fail to give proper credit to a source, you have committed plagiarism.**

2. Plagiarism - What is it? How can I avoid it?

What is plagiarism?

If you have not given proper credit to your sources, you have committed plagiarism. Essentially, it is like you are lying to your reader. You have used someone else's ideas without telling your reader. This is dishonest.

Whether you have intentionally tried to pass off someone else's ideas as your own, or, through careless research, you "forgot" to cite a source, the charge is **plagiarism**.

What needs to be cited?

Simply put: **any idea or fact that is not common knowledge needs to be cited.**

Common knowledge is a fact or idea that most educated people just happen to know. They likely don't remember where or when they learned it.

Although they were not born with this knowledge, it's just something that "most people know." For example, most people know that the first President of the United States was George Washington. This is common knowledge. However, most people do not know when or where he was born: 1732 in Popes Creek, Virginia. The source where you found this information must be cited in your paper. Give this source credit.

There is some "gray area" here, but if you are learning about something for the first time from a source, you need to cite it. **If you're unsure if it is common knowledge, cite it!**

3. Works Cited Page

What is a “Works Cited” Page?

A Works Cited page is the name that MLA uses for the page where you list all of the sources you cited in the body of your paper. The Works Cited page is always going to be the **last page** of your essay or report.

NoodleTools is a great tool for helping you make a Works Cited page. Log in with your school ID and password.

When creating citations in NoodleTools, always remember to enter all of the information required for the source type you are citing:

Books: Author’s name, Title, Publisher, Year published.

Website: Url, Date accessed, Name of website

Database: Most databases have a citation button which automatically creates a citation. Use the “Quick cite: Copy & Paste Citation” feature in NoodleTools to paste it in.

Example of a Works Cited Page

Works Cited

Allen, Thomas B. *George Washington, Spymaster : How the Americans Outspied the British and Won the Revolutionary War*. National Geographic, 2004.

"George Washington." *Britannica School*, Encyclopædia Britannica, 13 Aug. 2017.
school.eb.com/levels/middle/article/George-Washington/277657. Accessed 29 Aug.
2017.

NPS.gov. www.nps.gov/nr/travel/presidents/george_washington_birthplace.html. Accessed
30 Aug. 2017.

4. In-Text (or Parenthetical) Citation

What is an In-Text Citation?

An In-Text citation is when a writer puts a note directly in the text of their paper indicating where he or she got the information. In-Text (or Parenthetical) citations allow your reader to know from what source each idea or fact came. In addition to noting the sources within your paper, you must also include the In-Text sources in a Works Cited page.

Basic In-Text citation rules:

1. Citation varies slightly depending on what *type* of source you used (book, database, or website).
2. Generally, include the author's last name and page number in parentheses.
3. **If you are paraphrasing** (also known as an "indirect quote") you are still **required to cite the source** of the idea or fact you are paraphrasing.

EXAMPLES: Citing information from a BOOK:

1. Include the author's last name and the page number where you got the information in parenthesis; follow punctuation *exactly*.

Instead of going to a doctor right away, a recent study found that 37 percent of Americans are now turning to the internet for medical information (Smith 38).

2. If you have used **only one book source** for your paper, do not include the author's last name, **only include the page number** where you found the information:

Instead of going to a doctor right away, a recent study found that 37 percent of Americans are now turning to the internet for medical information (38).

EXAMPLES: Citing information from a BOOK:

3. If you are copying the information directly from the source, put it inside quotation marks:

“In 2007, 37 percent of American adults sought medical information from the internet regarding a health problem they were experiencing before consulting a doctor” (Smith 38).

EXAMPLES: Citing information from a WEBSITE:

1. Include the name of the website (CNN.com or Nytimes.com) but **not the url**. Page numbers are not needed.

As online health information becomes more common, the Internet is changing everyone's role in medicine (NPR.org).

EXAMPLES: Citing information from a DATABASE:

1. Use the citation tool in the database to create the citation; the article title is generally the first element in the citation. Use a shortened version of the article title, in quotes. Page numbers are not needed.

Health care costs in the United States are on average significantly higher than in most other industrialized countries (“Medical Testing Guidelines”).

Citation Information

Select Format: MLA Chicago Manual of Style

"Medical Testing Guidelines: Should doctors and patients make an effort to cut down on the number of medical tests, screenings, and treatments performed in the United States?" *Issues & Controversies*, Infobase Learning, 6 Aug. 2012, <http://cof.infobaselearning.com/recordurl.aspx?ID=2345>. Accessed 31 Aug. 2017.

[How to Cite](#)

[Export to EasyBib](#)

For additional help, check out the Purdue O.W.L. (Online Writing Lab), linked to the library website, or <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>