

MLA In-Text Citations Guide

In-text citations should be included whenever referencing someone else's words or ideas. Parenthetical citation goes before the period ending your sentence.

1. Author not named in your text

If you have not mentioned the author in your sentence, then provide his or her last name and the page number(s) with no punctuation in parentheses at the end of your sentence:

One biologist reports that “women are genetically prone to crying more often than men” (Gilligan 112).

2. Author named in your text

If you already mention the author in your sentence, then simply put the page number in parentheses at the end of your sentence:

Biologist Joe Gilligan states that “women are genetically prone to crying more often than men” (112).

3. A work with no author

Some sources do not have an author listed. Either mention the full title of the work in your sentence or you can include the first significant word of the title and the page number in parentheses at the end of the sentence:

One article notes that at times death-row inmates actually demand they be put to death (“Right” 21).

4. An Internet site with no author or page numbers

Most websites have no page numbers and often no author. You can either mention the full title and/or sponsoring organization in your sentence or include a short version of the title in parentheses with no page number:

The Cancer Foundation reports findings on its website that smoking is the number one cause of lung cancer (“Smoking”).

5. No page or other kind of part number

If no page number is given or there are no other part numbers, do not put a number in your parenthetical citation. Do not count unnumbered paragraphs or parts:

Reading is “just half of literacy. The other half is writing” (Baron).

- 6. A publication using explicit paragraph or section numbers rather than pages numbers**
Some publications (especially web publications) do not give page numbers. In this instance, give the paragraph number or section number after the author's last name:

There is little evidence for the claim "Eagleton has belittled the gains of postmodernism" (Chan, par. 41).

7. Citing indirect sources

An indirect source is a source cited in another source. Use "qtd. in" to indicate the source you actually consulted.

Donald Ravitch argues that high schools are pressured to act as "social service centers, and they don't do that well" (qtd. in Weisman 259).

8. Citing authors with same last names

If two or more authors have the same last name, provide both authors' first initials (or even the authors' full name if different authors share initials) in your citation.

Although some medical ethicists claim that cloning will lead to designer children (R. Miller 12), others note that the advantages for medical research outweigh this consideration (A. Miller 46).

9. Citing multiple works by the same author

If you cite more than one work by a particular author, include a shortened title for the particular work from which you are quoting to distinguish it from the others. Put short titles of books in italics and short titles of articles in quotation marks.

Some argue that computers are not useful tools for small children (Lightenor, "Too Soon" 38), though it is acknowledged elsewhere that early exposure to computer games does lead to better small motor skill development in a child's second and third year (Lightenor, "Hand-Eye Development" 17).

10. Citing the Bible

If you will be using multiple parenthetical citations from the Bible, your first parenthetical citation needs to make clear which version of the Bible you're using. Underline or italicize the title, followed by book (do not italicize or underline), chapter and verse. Subsequent parenthetical citations indicate the book of the Bible, chapter and verse.

Ezekiel saw "what seemed to be four living creatures," each with faces of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle (*New Jerusalem Bible*, Ezek. 1.5-10).