Using quotes (p. 92)

- Enclose an author’s exact words in quotation marks and provide proper credit by including the author and page number in a parenthetical citation.
- Quote only when something vital would be lost otherwise, and use only quotes that support your points and provide a unique perspective vital to the arguments in the paper.
- Don’t overuse quotations. Using too many quotes may indicate you lack original thoughts or writing skills.

In-text and parenthetical citations (p. 126, 214-16)

MLA has two formats for documentation: in-text and parenthetical citations.

In-text citations introduce the material being cited with a signal phrase that includes the author’s name; then, the page number of the source is inserted in parentheses at the end of the sentence.

Example: Rachel Lime asserts that within Belinda, “there is specific discourse in several chapters that alludes to feminism” (28).

If the author’s name is not used in a signal phrase, use a parenthetical citation which includes the author’s last name and the source’s page number(s).

Example: Research indicates that “the character of Harriet Freke represents a radical feminist in Maria Edgeworth’s Belinda” (Ferguson 16).

Length of sources (p. 93)

Short Quotations: A short quotation is four lines or less.

Example: Harold Bloom states, “A literary work also arouses expectations that it needs to fulfill or it will cease to be read” (18).

Long or Block Quotations: Quotations of five or more lines are introduced by an informative sentence followed by a colon. On the next line, indent one inch (two tabs or ten spaces); then, write the quote. Subsequent lines will be in a freestanding block.

Double space, but **do not use** quotation marks. Place any end punctuation before the parenthetical citation. (See the example on the right.)

In *German Ideology*, Karl Marx states the following:

The social structure and the State are continually evolving out of the life-process of definite individuals, but of individuals, not as they may appear in their own or other people’s imagination, but as they really are; i.e. as they operate, produce materially, and hence as they work under definite material limits, presuppositions and conditions independent of their will. (47)
**Quotations without an author (p. 214, 223)**

If the source lacks an author, use the complete title in a signal phrase or a short form of the title in the parenthetical citation. Remember that titles of long works (books, plays, journals, etc.) are italicized, and titles of short works (article titles, poems, songs, etc.) belong in quotations marks.

*Example:* Since Mary Wollstonecraft’s feminist views were first published, “books like Maria Edgeworth’s *Belinda*, Jane Austen’s *Mansfield Park*, and Charlotte Dacre’s *Zofloya* have been criticized from a feminist perspective” (“Feminism” 35).

**Quotations with multiple authors (p. 214)**

For works with two authors, name both in a signal phrase or place their last names separated by “and” in the parenthetical citation. Separate three authors’ names with commas. For four or more authors, you can write the first author’s last name followed by “et al.” Here are a few examples:

*Two authors:* Other critics conclude that “Zofloya is not an effective Devil or Satan because he is pursuing the soul of a woman that is already damned” (Garcia and Johnson 43).

*Three authors:* Fashion is the “driving force behind the economy and the social norms of America” (Humphrey, Johnson, and Cooper 25).

*Four or more authors:* As stated in the article, “the fear of the Orient is evident in that Juba is afraid of Harriet Freke because he associates her with an Obeah-woman” (Granger et al. 35).

**Indirect sources (p. 226)**

An indirect quote occurs when a source you found quotes another source. Whenever possible, locate the original source of the quote to ensure accuracy. If the original source is unavailable, name the author of the original source in a signal phrase, and begin the parenthetical citation with the abbreviation “qtd. in” followed by the author of your source and the page number.

*Example:* According to author William Zinsser, “Writing improves in direct ratio to the number of things we can keep out of it that shouldn’t be there” (qtd. in Cantu 1).

**Literary Works and Common Literature (p. 220, 226-27)**

**Poems (p. 226):** If there are numbers for a part (like an act, scene or section), cite the part and line numbers separated by a period. If the poem is not divided into parts, use line numbers. For a first reference, use the word “lines,” and use only numbers thereafter.

*Examples:*

Poem with parts: When Homer’s Odysseus comes to the hall of Cerce, he finds his men “mild/in her soft spell, fed on her frug of evil” (10.209-10).

Poems without parts: Reflecting on the “incident” in Baltimore, Cullen concluded, “Of all the things that happened there/ That’s all that I remember” (lines 11-12).

**Verse plays (p. 226):** Include act, scene, and line numbers that can be located in any edition of the work in a parenthetical citation. Use Arabic numerals separated with periods unless your instructor prefers Roman numerals.
**Example:** In his famous advice to players, Shakespeare’s Hamlet defines the purpose of the theater: “whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold as ‘twere, the mirror up to nature” (3.2.21-23).

**Bible passages (p. 227-28)** Ensure you have an entry in the Works Cited page for any Bible used. Within the essay, provide the Bible edition upon first reference, the name of the book, the chapter, and verse numbers. Subsequent references only need to refer to book, chapter, and verses. Citing a Bible is done both in-text and parenthetically:

*Examples:*  
Parenthetically: God commanded Jonah to preach to the people of Ninevah and lead them from sin (*King James* Bible, Jon.1.1-2)  

In-text: In the *King James Bible*, Jonah is commanded by God to preach to the people of Ninevah and lead them from sin (Jon. 1.1-2). However, he resists God’s command and is subsequently devoured by a “great fish” (Jon. 1.17)

**Dialogue (p. 96):** When quoting dialogue between two or more characters in a play, set the quotation off from the text (similar to a long or block quotation) by indenting one inch (ten spaces or two tabs). Then, begin each speaker’s part with the character’s name, written in all caps followed by a period. Indent all subsequent lines in that character’s part another quarter of an inch (or three spaces). When the speaker changes, repeat the steps above.

*Example:* Here’s an example from Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*:

  LADY CAPULET. Nurse, where’s my daughter? call her forth to me.  
  NURSE. Now, by my maidenhead at twelve year old,  
      I bade her come.—What, lamb! what ladybird!—  
      God forbid!—where’s this girl?—what, Juliet!  
  JULIET. How now! who calls?  
  NURSE. Your mother.  
  (1.3.1-7)