Your Full Name

Course

Instructor’s Name

Date

Paper Title

We would like you to use standard MLA formatting for your papers in this class.[[1]](#footnote-1) As you can see, everything – the heading, the body of your paper, any indented long quotations, and your list of “Work(s) Cited” – is double-spaced. Introduce your quotation by providing your readers with a context for understanding your interpretation (for example, who is the speaker? What just happened or is about to happen? The following is an example of what we would like you to do with your longer quotations:

For quotations that are longer than four lines, please use this indented block form. Continue double-spacing, and indent only on the left side (1”). Also, when you block quote, you don’t need to enclose your passage with quotation marks; indenting already tells your reader that these are the words of your source and not your own. For block quotations, your parenthetical reference goes after your period. (Author’s last name and page #)

You should have a good reason for including a passage of this length from your source. Make sure that the entire passage helps further the claim that you’re making, and that you discuss in some detail the specific elements – ideas, language, imagery, or diction, for example – that make this passage worth looking at so closely. In fact, a rough rule of thumb is to make sure that your discussion of the quotation is about twice its length. If you can’t find very much to say about your quotation, you might want to take another look at it and determine whether you really need to quote it in its entirety. Be economical.

When including brief quotations of “someone else’s words” (Author’s last name and page#), make sure that your sentence is grammatically correct. For example, you might argue that the main character, by the end of the novel, asserts her independence and authority: “I am a writer” (Author’s last name and page #). Or you could say that, by the end of the novel, the main character, asserting her independence and authority, says that “[she is] a writer” (Author’s last name, page #). You’ll have to decide which sentence you like better. In any case, with shorter quotations, notice that the period goes after your quotation marks and your parenthetical reference; the period closes your own sentence. Furthermore, don’t forget to give credit when your paraphrase, that is, write in your own words, your source’s idea (Author’s last name and page #).

Finally, your paper should include a bibliography, which the MLA likes to call a list of “Works Cited.” Technically, it should begin on a new page. For your short, non-research papers, however, you may place your bibliography on the last page of the body of your paper, that is, if you have room. Otherwise, the title of your “Works Cited” page should be placed centered, beneath, a one-inch margin from the top of the page (all your pages should have a one-inch margin all around). Your sources should be arranged alphabetically by last name. Below is the basic format for the types of sources that you’re likely to use, books and articles from journals. There are different formats for other sources, which can include films, videos, newspapers, magazines, anthologies, and websites. Consult your handbook (Rosen and Behrens 637-48). If you’re still not sure, ask.

**Works Cited**

Last name of Author, First name of Author. *Title of Book.* Place of publication: Name of publisher, year of publication.

Last name of Author, First name of Author. “Title of Article.” *Title of Journal* Volume number (year of publication): beginning page#-ending page #.

1. In case you’re wondering, MLA stands for Modern Language Association, which is an organization for academics in the humanities. Every year, the MLA holds a convention where professors and graduate students can present their research, find out about the work that others are doing, interview for jobs, and socialize. As you can see, I’m using this footnote to explain something that is related but tangential to the subject of the paper. Don’t worry – you don’t need to use footnotes for your papers in this class (unless you think it’s necessary for your research paper). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)