A Quick Guide to MLA Style (8th Edition)_____

Modern Language Association, or MLA style, is one of the most common ways of citing sources and is frequently seen in English and Writing classes, including WRT 098 and 150 classes at Grand Valley State University. MLA focuses on writers and their works, which is why author(s) and titles are the first pieces of information in sources on the Work(s) Cited page.

Work(s) Cited Page

The handbook for MLA style is currently in its eighth edition and has introduced a new system for the Work(s) Cited page. This streamlined style responds to technology and multi-media's influence on the world of source documentation by creating a list of 9 "core elements" that applies to any source material.

A given source might not have something for every element (say, "Other contributors", for instance), but you should give as much information as possible for your source. The 9 elements, in the punctuation style of the Work(s) Cited page, are listed below. Following those are examples of common source citations.

*Note: Location does not refer to physical location (except in some cases of citing art housed in a particular location), but rather to the location of your quoted material in the source. This is often page number for texts, and URL/DOIs for work accessed online.

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

Book (eBook, PDF, hard copy):

> Pynchon, Thomas. *Gravity's Rainbow*. The Viking Press, 1973.

Article in an online database:

> Alim, Samy. "Street Conscious Copula Variation in Hip Hop Nation Language." *American Speech*, vol. 77, no. 3, *Project Muse*, Fall 2002, muse.jhu.edu.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/article/2856

*Note: The handbook specifies that you should follow instructor preference for the inclusion of URLs. Also, include stable   links (i.e. DOIs) whenever possible. As well, never include "http://" or "https://" when listing URLs.

Work from a website:

> Beaubien, Jason. "Why Healthy Teens are Taking a Daily Anti-Aids Pill." *NPR*, 21 Jul. 2016, www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2016/07/21/486599013/why-healthy- teens-are-taking-a-daily-anti-aids-pill.

Important Considerations/Differences from Earlier Handbooks

- ➢ When the container title and the publisher are essentially the same, the publisher does not need to be included in addition to the container title.
- ➢ Similarly, for a case of organization as author, only include that information once (in the publisher space) if the organization name and publisher are essentially the same
- ➢ Medium of publication is no longer necessary.
- ➢ The location of the publisher is no longer required.
- ➢ Date of online access is now considered optional and the inclusion should be judged on whether or not it will clarify anything essential about the source.
- ➢ When specifying volume and issue number, the format is no longer "77.2", but rather "vol. 77, no. 2" as to clarify what exactly the numbers refer to.
- ➢ When a scholarly journal's issue is marked with a season (Fall, Spring, etc.) always include

that in the space for publication date (see ex. for Article in online database above)
  - ➢ When information is missing, do not use markers like "n.d." for "no date", but rather leave the information out and move on to the next available piece of information.
  - ➢ When indicating page number in the location space, use "p." for a single page and "pp." for multiple pages. (p. 25, or pp. 25-30). *Note, these markers are not used for in-text citations*

In-Text Citations

In-text citations should match source material in your paper with the source information on your Work(s) Cited page. Readers will look for the first bit of information for each Work(s) Cited entry, and this is usually the author's name. Where applicable, include a page number, indicated only by the number.

Alim and Smitherman state, "[Insert quoted material]" (78).

"[Insert quoted material]" (Alim and Smitherman 78).

Sometimes a source will not have an identified author, but you should never put "Anonymous" unless the author is specifically identified as "Anonymous".

In the case of no author at all, use a shortened version of the title (in quotes):

"[Insert quoted material]" ("Why Healthy Teens").

Sometimes when there is no author listed, the organization who produced the document is actually the author. In this case, use the organization's name as you would the author's.

"[Insert quoted material]" (National Council of Teachers of English).

Note: If your cited material runs to more than one page, give the range of pages (123-24 or 33-34).

Note: When you have multiple authors with the same last name, include their first initials to distinguish. (A. Smitherman and B. Smitherman state, "[...]")

Style and Formatting
  - ➢ Use Times New Roman 12 pt. font throughout your entire paper
  - ➢ Everything should be double-spaced
  - ➢ Dates will appear with the day first, followed by the month abbreviated to three letters, and then the year (eg. 25 Jul. 2010)
  - ➢ Put your name, your professor's name, your class, and the date in the top left corner. (Your title will follow this information)
  - ➢ Your paper title and the title of your Work(s) Cited page should be centered with no special formatting or quotation marks
  - ➢ If using a header, include your last name and a page number separated by a space on the right side of the page

For more information:
https://www.mla.org/MLA-Style/What-s-New-in-the-Eighth-Edition
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/22/