

Citing (quoting) within the text of your paper

Titles within your paper

- Short poem that is part of a collection/anthology, or a song title, use quotation marks:
In Al Pittman's "The Dance of the Mayflies," the imagery...
- Long poem published on its own, an album title or play title, italicize:
Cohen's 1971 album *Songs of Love and Hate* is...

POETRY & SONGS

In MLA, when you quote from a poem/song, there are 2 main differences:

1. Cite LINE numbers not page numbers (*be aware that some Professors may prefer page numbers instead of line numbers*). In the first parenthetical citation, use the word "line" or "lines" to indicate that you are using line numbers instead of page numbers. Afterwards, it's not necessary to include "line/s" in every citation.
2. Reproduce line breaks as they appear in the original poem/song by separating lines with a slash / or by using a block quotation.

Quoting 1 - 3 lines of poetry/lyrics:

- Place in quotation marks
- Use a slash / with a space before and after it to indicate the break between lines

For example:

In "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers," Rich writes that "Uncle's wedding band / Sits heavily upon Aunt Jennifer's hand" (lines 7-8).

Quoting 4 or more lines of poetry - Use a block quotation:

- Do not enclose in quotation marks
- Indent each line half an inch from the left margin (unless it involves unusual spacing)
- Keep the line breaks, spacing and alignment exactly as they appear in the original
- Place the line numbers in parentheses after the punctuation at the end of the last line

Examples of block quotations:

Dickinson concludes "I'm Nobody! Who Are You?" with a characteristically bittersweet stanza:

How dreary to be somebody!
How public, like a frog
To tell your name the livelong June
To an admiring bog! (lines 5-8)

E. E. Cummings concludes the poem with this vivid description:

it's
spring
and
 the
 goat-footed
balloonMan whistles
far
and
wee (16-24)

Quoting individual words:

Examples:

Roethke uses a variety of words in "My Papa's Waltz" that indicate physical violence, words such as "death" (3), "battered" (9), "scraped" (12), "beat" (13), and "hard" (14).

When Heaney uses a simile to compare his pen to a "gun," he creates a startling image (2).

Using ellipses when omitting a line(s) of poetry:

Examples:

Plath describes the speaker's perception of her physical appearance by saying, "An elephant, a ponderous house / ... / O red fruit, ivory, fine timbers!" (2, 4).

The persona in Hayden's poem would wake to hear the fire his father started before dawn:

Sundays too my father got up early
.....
I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress. (1, 6-8)

As a boy, the persona visited his grandfather in the fields: "Once I carried him milk... / He straightened up / To drink it" (Heaney 19-21).

PLAYS

In MLA, when you quote dialogue from a play, there are 2 main differences:

1. You generally cite act, scene, and line numbers instead of page numbers. For example, lines 109 to 112 from act three, scene two, would be cited as (3.2.109-12). Note that some plays may only have act numbers, some may only have scene numbers, and some may have neither. In that case, it may be preferable to cite page numbers.
2. You generally use a block quotation.

If a quotation of dialogue is very brief, you *may* decide to integrate it into your paragraph:

Example:

When Reagan asks Lear, "What need one?," Lear responds in exasperation, "O, reason not the need!" (2.4.257-58).

MLA recommends presenting dialogue as a block quotation:

- Do not enclose in quotation marks
- Indent each line half an inch from the left margin
- Each speaker's name should be in all capital letters followed by a period
- Place the act, scene and line numbers, or page numbers, in parentheses after the punctuation at the end of the last line

Example:

In *The Importance of Being Earnest*, two of the protagonists have the following exchange:

ALGERNON. I am sick to death of cleverness. Everybody is clever nowadays. You can't go anywhere without meeting clever people. The thing has become a public nuisance. I wish to goodness we had a few fools left.

JACK. We have.

ALGERNON. I should extremely like to meet them. What do they talk about?

JACK. The fools? Oh! about the clever people, of course. (51-2)

Works Cited List: How to Cite Poems

Poem that is part of a single author's collection:

Author Lastname, Author Firstname. "Title of Poem." *Title of Book*, Publisher/s, year, page #(s).

Example:

Markson, David. "I Ate My Love Alive." *Collected Poems*, Dalkey Archive P, 1993, p. 17.

Poem that is part of a collection that also has an editor(s):

Author Lastname, Author Firstname. "Title of Poem." *Title of Book*, edited by Editor's Firstname
Editor's Lastname, Publisher/s, year, page #(s).

Example:

Plath, Sylvia. "Suicide Off Egg Rock." *The Collected Poems*, edited by Ted Hughes, Harper &
Row, 1981, p. 115.

Poem that is part of a compiled collection or anthology:

Author Lastname, Author Firstname. "Title of Poem." *Title of Book*, compiled by Compiler's Firstname
Compiler's Lastname, Publisher/s, year, page #(s).

Example:

Bliss, Carman. "A Northern Vigil." *An Anthology of Canadian Poetry*, compiled by Ralph Gustafson,
Penguin Books, 1942, pp. 29-32.

Works Cited List: How to Cite Songs

Song:

For musical recordings, include "medium" or how you accessed it. For example: Vinyl LP, *iTunes* app, MP3 format, or a URL. For more examples see p. 330 of the *MLA Handbook*.

Artist (singer or band). "Song Title." *Album*. Publisher/s, year. Medium.

Example:

Cohen, Leonard. "Famous Blue Raincoat." *Songs of Love and Hate*. Columbia, 1971. Vinyl LP.

Song written by someone other than the performer/s:

Begin with the writer of the lyrics. List the performer/s after the album title.

Example:

Cohen, Leonard. "Famous Blue Raincoat." *Tower of Song: The Songs of Leonard Cohen*.

Performance by Tori Amos, A&M Records, 1995. *Spotify* app.

Song lyrics on a website:

For URLs you can omit "http://". If the website title and the publisher are essentially the same, you can leave out the publisher. If there is no date available on the website, use the date you accessed it instead. Date of access goes at the end of the entry.

"Title of Web Page." *Name of Website*, Publisher/s, day Mon. year, URL.

Example:

"Leonard Cohen - Famous Blue Raincoat Lyrics." *LyricsFreak*, www.lyricsfreak.com/l/leonard+cohen/famous+blue+raincoat_20082860.html. Accessed 30 July, 2017.

Works Cited List: How to Cite Plays

Author Lastname, Firstname. *Title of Play*. Publisher/s, year of publication.

Example:

Mighton, John. *The Little Years*. Playwrights Canada P, 2012.

Play that is part of a collection that also has an editor(s) or compiler(s):

Author Lastname, Author Firstname. "Title of Play." *Title of Book*, edited by or compiled by Firstname Lastname, Publisher/s, year, page #(s).

Example:

Winter, Jack, and Cedric Smith. "Ten Lost Years." *The CTR Anthology: Fifteen Plays from Canadian Theatre Review*, edited by Alan Filewood, U of Toronto P, 1991, pp. 133-90.

Video recording of a live performance:

Identify "Contributors" such as the director or performers, relevant to your research or that help identify the version you accessed. If there is no date available, use the date you accessed it instead. Date of access goes at the end of the entry.

Author Lastname, Firstname. *Title of Play*. Contributor/s, Production Company, day Mon. year of performance, Theatre Name, Location. *Title of Database or Website*, URL.

Example:

Shakespeare, William. *Othello*. Directed by Iqbal Khan, performance by Lucian Msamati, Royal Shakespeare Company, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon. *Digital Theatre+*, edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.qe2a-proxy.mun.ca/content/productions/othello. Accessed 8 Oct. 2020.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Memorial University Libraries *MLA Quick Guide*:

www.library.mun.ca/researchtools/guides/citations/mla/mlaquickguide/

MLA Handbook. 9th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2021.

- Available at our libraries in Reference or on Reserve: **Call # LB 2369 M53 2021**