



IN-TEXT CITATIONS FOR LITERARY WORKS IN MLA

For **PROSE**, cite the author's name and page number.

At the end of Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour," Mrs. Mallard drops dead upon learning that her husband is alive. In the final irony of the story, doctors report that she has died of a "joy that kills" (25).

It may be helpful to also include other identifying information, such as chapter number, for works widely available in many editions, like this (Conrad 24; ch. 2).

If you cite more than four typed lines of text, use block quotes by setting the quote off from the text. First, introduce the quote as you normally would. Begin the quote on a new line and indent the entire quote one half-inch from the margin. Double-space the quote. Notice that the quote does not have quotation marks around it. Also, note that the punctuation is placed at the end of the quote, not outside the parentheses. The next line of the paragraph should begin back at the left margin.

Edgar Allan Poe sets the tone of "The Purloined Letter" in the first few lines of the text:

At Paris, just after dark one gusty evening in the autumn of 18--, I was enjoying the twofold luxury of meditation and a meerschaum, in company with my friend C. Auguste Dupin, in his little back library, or bookcloset, *au troisième, No. 33, Rue Dunôt Faubourg St. Germain*. For one hour at least we had maintained a profound silence; while each to any casual observer, might have seemed intently and exclusively occupied with the curling eddies of smoke that oppressed the atmosphere of the chamber. (564)

In this passage, Poe relies on depressing adjectives, such "dark"

Notice that the quote is double-spaced and does not have quotation marks. Also, note that the punctuation is placed at the end of the quote, not outside the parentheses.

For POETRY, use the line numbers. For the first reference, place "lines" in the citation. After the first time, just list the numbers. If you quote two or three lines, use slashes to designate the end of a line; place a space before and after the slash. Do not manually count lines numbers if none are given; instead, cite page number (or other division such as "canto 12"). If a stanza break occurs in the quotation, mark it with two forward slashes (/). Reproduce unusual spacing and indention as accurately as possible. If your quote ends in a dash, comma, or semicolon, you may omit that punctuation mark.

Hughes looks forward to a time when "Nobody'll dare / say to me / 'Eat in the kitchen'" (lines 11-13). Later in the poem, Hughes writes, "Tomorrow, / I'll be at the table / When company comes" (8-10).

If you cite more than three lines of POETRY, use block quotes by starting each verse on a new line, indenting a half-inch from the margin, placing the punctuation at the end of the quote, and including the line numbers in parentheses. After the quote, continue the paragraph at the left margin.

Langston Hughes explains his resilience against racism:

They send me to eat in the kitchen

When company comes,

But I laugh,

And eat well,

And grow strong. (2-7)

Notice that the quote is double-spaced and does not have quotation marks around it.

Also, note that the punctuation is placed at the end of the quote, not outside the parentheses.

The three verbs in the final lines of this passage, “laugh,” “eat,” and “grow,” all convey life; the speaker will ...

For DRAMA, you must differentiate between a prose play and a verse play. In a prose play, the dialogue will be written in typical sentences. In a verse play (such as ancient Greek works or plays by Shakespeare), the dialogue will be written in separate lines as in a poem.

For a **prose play**, cite with the author's name and page number as you would for any prose work. It may be helpful to also include other identifying information, such as act number, for works widely available in many editions, like this (Miller 9; act 1).

For a **verse play**, cite by division (act, scene, canto, book, part) and line, separating the numbers with periods. If a verse play uses line numbers only, see above for citing lines from poetry.

Hamlet contemplates his own mortality: "What is a man, / If his chief good and market of his time / Be but to sleep and feed" (4.4.33-5).

When citing DIALOGUE between two or more characters, use block quotes. Indent one half-inch, and begin each section of dialogue with the character's name. Capitalize the letters in the character's name, place a period after it, and start the quotation. Indent all his or her dialogue an additional amount, as shown. When the dialogue shifts to another character, start a new line indented half an inch.

Hamlet and his mother try to sort this out:

HAMLET. No, by the rood, not so:

You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife:

And--would it were not so!--you are my mother.

QUEEN. Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak. (3.4.14-17)

Whenever you OMIT a word, phrase, sentence, or more from a quoted passage, mark the omission with ellipsis points (three spaced periods with a space before and after each). The resulting passage should be grammatically correct. See section 1.3.5 of the *MLA Handbook* for more on using ellipsis points.

Foer writes, “We had all sorts of maps . . . and tools” (302).

If you must CLARIFY a quotation, the comment or explanation you insert should appear within the quotation in square brackets.

Atwood writes, “Frowning, she [Rita] tears out three tokens and hands them to me” (16).