



*Illinois Valley Community College  
Writing Center*

FORMATTING TITLES IN MLA STYLE

**General Rules**

These rules apply to titles in the text, in parenthetical citations, and in Works Cited entries.

- Capitalize all important words, such as nouns and verbs.
- Do not capitalize any article, preposition, or conjunction unless it is the first word.

Articles	A, An, The
Prepositions	(incomplete list) About, After, As, By, In, Of, Off, On, To, Until, With,
Conjunctions	And, But, Or, Nor, For, So, Yet

- Italics and underlining are the same thing! Choose one.
- No titles get both quotation marks and underlining

**Your essay's title**

- Your own essay's title should be written in plain text. Do not add extra spaces before or after your title. Center your title.
- A good title is specific to your topic. Your title should be simply the name of the assignment or title of the text you have been asked to write about. This is an acceptable title:

Smith 1

John Smith

Professor Jones

ENG 1001-01

18 April 2006

Loss of Innocence in Toni Cade Bambara's "The Lesson"

Because children have less experience in the world and less exposure to its unfair and unpleasant aspects, they more often believe that the world and its inhabitants are inherently good.

**The Rule:**

**Short works, works that are part of longer works, are formatted in quotation marks**

**Long works, works that are in their entirety, are italicized or underlined**

**Titles of Short Works**

Poems  
Newspaper Articles  
Short Stories  
Magazine Articles  
Web Pages  
Songs  
Chapters  
TV Show Episodes

**Titles of Long Works**

Book  
Website  
Play  
Film  
Newspaper  
TV Show  
Magazine  
Album