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A Teacher's Guide to Plagiarism: Middle and High School Students

*Within this guide you will find a definition of plagiarism,
an explanation of how MLA style is used,
a practical outline for teaching its importance to middle and high school students,
and worksheets that may be used to practice citations in MLA style.*

Plagiarism, a word which can be defined as “literary theft” or the use of another’s “ideas or words ... without crediting the source”, stems from the Latin word *plagiarius*, which can be directly translated to kidnapper (Merriam-Webster). Words like “theft” and “kidnapper” denote a seriousness that is often overlooked when referencing plagiarism, but which can help provide significance that middle school and high school students will remember.

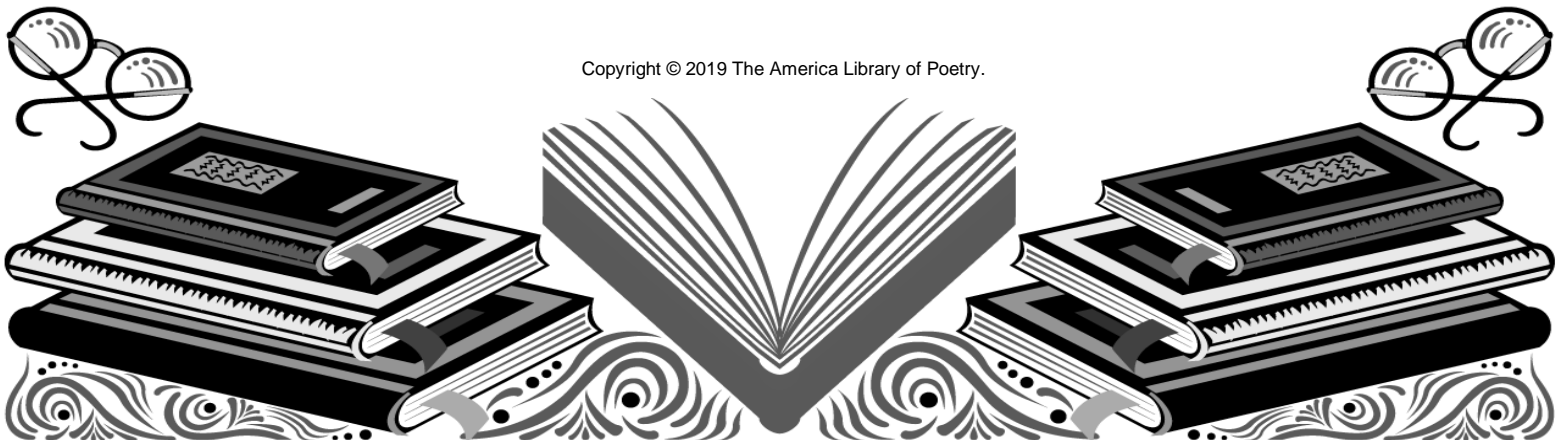
It is important to make students aware of the consequences of plagiarism and the disciplinary protocols followed by your school district, ie. Detention, suspension or academic probation. In some cases, an act of plagiarism can appear permanently on a student’s academic record.

Please remind students that when writing a paper or essay which requires the research of written material, they must properly credit the words and ideas they have read, regardless of the source.

One way to combat plagiarism is to teach your students how to properly cite sources, using the preferred citation style. There are many different citation styles, including MLA (Modern Language Association), APA (American Psychological Association), and Chicago/Turabian. The citation style commonly used in English classes (and for a wide range of other subjects) is MLA, and it is the MLA style which is outlined in this guide.

We hope you will find this resource helpful.
Please email any questions or suggestions to editor@libraryofpoetry.com

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Using MLA Citation Style

When using MLA, each citation will vary slightly from another, depending on the referenced source material, ie. a book, website, eBook, dictionary, etc., however, *The MLA Handbook* explains that each citation will contain the same fundamental elements in this specific order, “followed by the punctuation mark shown unless it is the final element, which should end with a period” (MLA Handbook, 8th ed., 20):

- ❖ Author.
- ❖ Title of source.
- ❖ Title of container,
- ❖ Other contributors,
- ❖ Version,
- ❖ Number,
- ❖ Publisher,
- ❖ Publication date,
- ❖ Location.

Author: The name of the author always appears first in a citation, beginning with the last name, followed by the first name, separated by a comma and ending with a period. If known, a middle name or suffix (Jr., II) is included after the first name (21).

Ex. Last Name, First Name, Jr.

If there are multiple authors, the first author’s name appears almost identically as the above, listing the first author’s last name, followed by the first author’s first name, separated and followed by a comma. It then lists the second author’s first and last name and ends with a period (21).

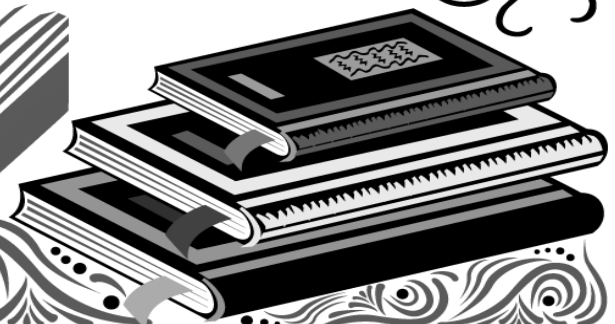
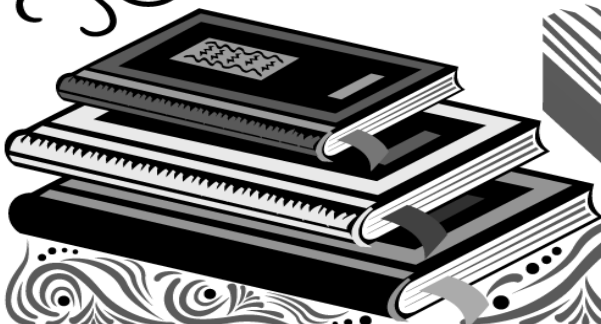
Ex. First Author’s Last Name, First Author’s First Name, and Second Author’s First and Last Name.

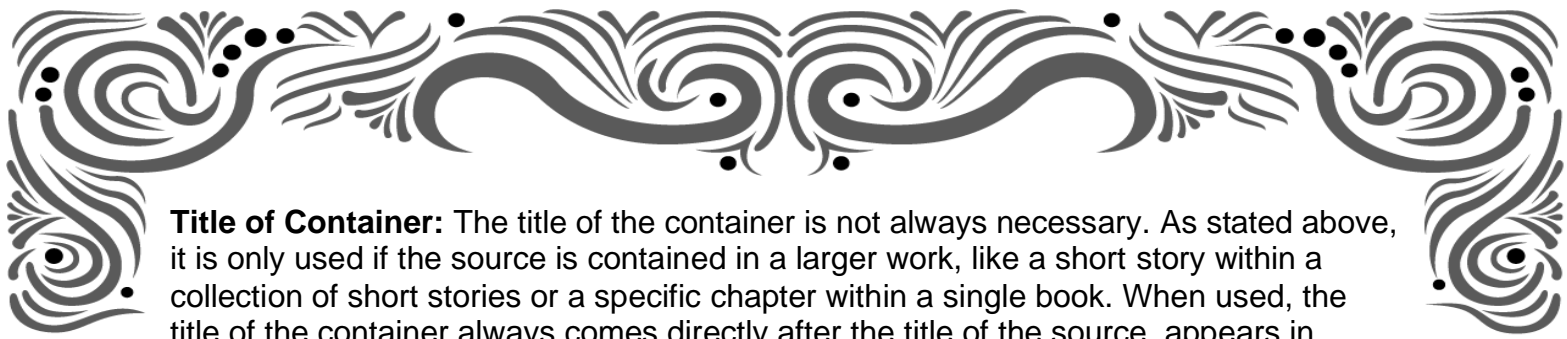
Title of Source: The title of the source is always directly after the author’s name. It either appears in italics or in quotation marks. If in quotation marks, the period is always placed inside the quotation marks, unless the title ends with other punctuation, in which case the period is omitted.

The cited work is always referred to as the source. When citing from a single book, it is considered the source and there is no container. If there is no container, the source appears in italics. When citing from a book that is, for example, a collection of short stories, the title of the short story is the source, and the title of the book title is the container. In this case, the source appears in quotation marks and the container appears in italics. This also applies when citing from a specific chapter within a single book (25).

Ex. Last Name, First Name. *Single Book Title*.

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Title of Container: The title of the container is not always necessary. As stated above, it is only used if the source is contained in a larger work, like a short story within a collection of short stories or a specific chapter within a single book. When used, the title of the container always comes directly after the title of the source, appears in italics and is followed by a comma unless it is the final element (30).

Ex. Last Name, First Name. "Short Story Title." *Collection of Short Stories*,

Ex. Last Name, First Name. "Specific Chapter Title." *Book Title*.

Other Contributors: Other contributors include any editors, translators, adaptors, directors, etc. of the source. Names listed as other contributors always appear in first name, last name order. If another contributor is an editor, the phrase "edited by" is used. If another contributor is a translator, the phrase "translated by" is used. If another contributor is both an editor and a translator, the phrase "edited and translated by" is used. This applies to any category of contributor. Each phrase is left in lowercase text, followed by the name, and ending with a comma unless it is the final element (37).

Ex. Last Name, First Name. "Short Story Title." *Collection of Short Stories*,
edited and translated by Editor's First Name, Editor's Last Name,

If the editor or translator is also the author of the book, only the last name needs to appear under other contributors.

Ex. Last Name, First Name. "Short Story Title." *Collection of Short Stories*,
edited and translated by Last Name,

Version: The version is only included if the source notes that it has been published in more than one form. This is often identified as the edition when referring to books. Sometimes editions are numbered (second edition, third edition, etc.), though descriptions like revised, updated, and expanded, among others, may be used. When editions are numbered, they are listed in numeric form (2nd, 3rd, etc.). The words *revised* and *edition* are always abbreviated to rev. and ed., appear in lowercase, unless following a period, and end with a comma unless it is the final element (38, 107).

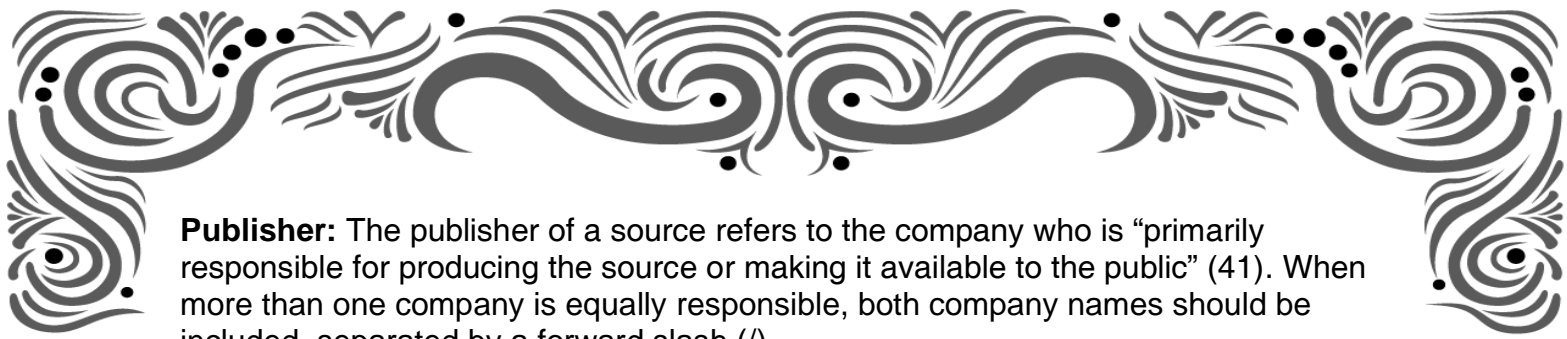
Ex. Last Name, First Name. "Short Story Title." *Collection of Short Stories*,
edited and translated by Editor's First Name, Editor's Last Name, 3rd ed.

Number: A number need only be included if a source has multiple volumes, for example, a journal or a television show. If a source uses a secondary numbering system, like an issue number in a specific volume of a journal or an episode in a specific season of a show, those should also be included. Any words always appear in lowercase font, unless following a period, and numbers appear in numeric form. The words *volume* and *number* should also be abbreviated to vol. and no. This element ends with comma unless it is the final element (39-40).

Ex. Last Name, First Name. "Short Story Title." *Collection of Short Stories*,
edited and translated by Editor's First Name, Editor's Last Name, 3rd ed., vol. 2,
no. 3.

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Publisher: The publisher of a source refers to the company who is “primarily responsible for producing the source or making it available to the public” (41). When more than one company is equally responsible, both company names should be included, separated by a forward slash (/).

Most books include the name of the publisher on the title page of the book, but it can sometimes appear on the copyright page, which is on back of the title page. When referencing websites, the publisher’s name can usually be found on the bottom of the home page, or on a separate page that outlines the site information. The publisher’s name always appears in mixed case with proper capitalization, and is ended by a comma unless it is the final element (41).

Ex. Last Name, First Name. “Short Story Title.” *Collection of Short Stories*, edited and translated by Editor’s First Name, Editor’s Last Name, 3rd ed., vol. 2, no 3, Publisher’s Name.

Publication Date: The publication date refers to the date that is most relevant to the information being cited. The publication date can typically be found in the same place as the publisher’s name. It may be a specific date in day, month, year form, or it may simply be the year of publication, depending on what your source provides.

If a book lists more than one date, use the most recent one. If using a book with multiple editions, use the date for the edition referenced.

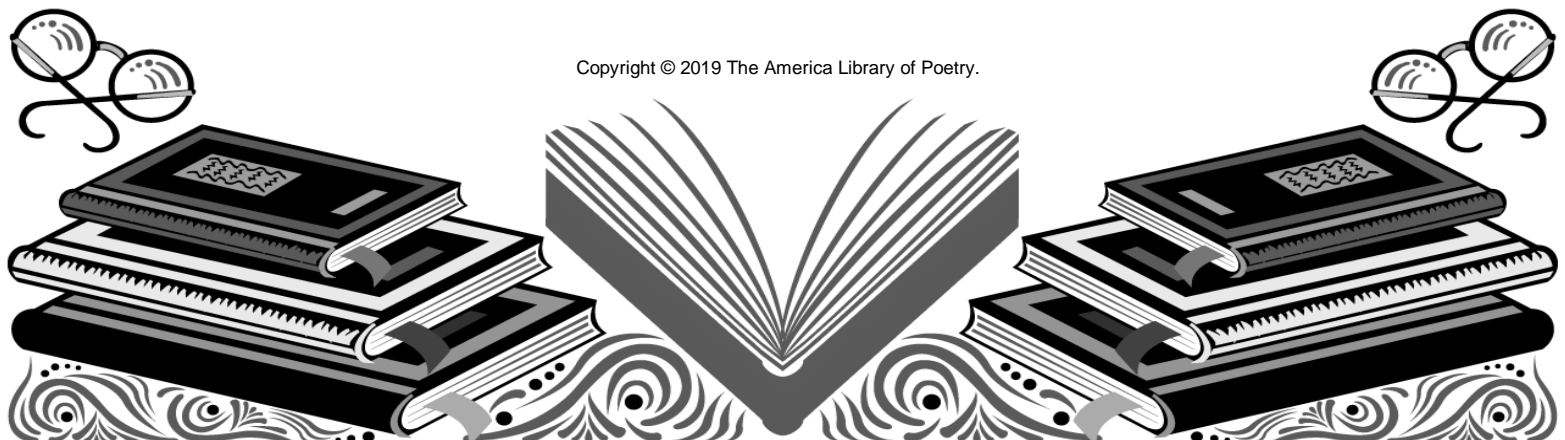
Numbers should appear in numeric form, and months can be abbreviated with a period at the end. The publication date is followed by a comma unless it is the final element (42-43).

Ex. Last Name, First Name. “Short Story Title.” *Collection of Short Stories*, edited and translated by Editor’s First Name, Editor’s Last Name, 3rd ed., vol. 2, no 3, Publisher’s Name, 15 Feb. 2019.

Location: The location refers to the specific location referenced, depending on the source material used. For a printed source, this refers to a single page (p.) or multiple pages (pp.). For an online source, this refers to the URL. When including a URL, the http:// or https:// should be omitted. Online sources can usually be subject to change at any time, so it is important to also include the date the site was accessed after the URL. The location should always end with a period (46-47).

Ex. Last Name, First Name. “Short Story Title.” *Collection of Short Stories*, edited and translated by Editor’s First Name, Editor’s Last Name, 3rd ed., vol. 2, no 3, Publisher’s Name, 15 Feb. 2019, pp. 10-20.

Ex. Last Name, First Name. “Short Story Title.” *Collection of Short Stories*, edited and translated by Editor’s First Name, Editor’s Last Name, 3rd ed., vol. 2, no 3, Publisher’s Name, 15 Feb. 2019, www.website.com. Accessed 20 April 2019.





Other Important Notes

Quotations:

A quotation is directly pulling brief “words, phrases, lines, and passages” from a source to help “explain or illustrate” ideas (75). When quoting a source, it should be kept identical to the original work, and when incorporated, should be contained within quotation marks (“”).

When incorporating a quotation that is more than four lines long, it should be considered a block quotation. Block quotations are “indented half an inch from the left margin,” and are normally prefaced by a colon (77). The parenthetical reference is included directly after the quotation, after any necessary punctuation.

If a quotation is too long to use, unnecessary words or sentences may be omitted by using an ellipsis (...) in their place (81-82).

In-Text Citations:

An in-text citation directs a reader to a specific source on the works cited page without much interruption. It should include the first element listed in a source on the works cited page and a location if it is a page number.

When the first element is the author’s name, typically only the last name needs to be included in an in-text citation with the page number. The exception to this rule is when there are multiple authors with the same last name, in which case the first initial can be included. Normally, it appears in parenthesis, and “is placed, when possible, where there is a natural pause in the text,” so as to not disrupt the flow (54-55).

When the first element is the title of the source, rather than the author, the in-text citation is the title, followed by the page number, in parenthesis (56). The punctuation to end the sentence should always appear after the parenthesis (76).

On the Works Cited Page:

The MLA citation style always includes a separate Works Cited page at the end of a piece of writing. This page includes any sources used. The title is centered on the top of the page, and is not bolded, italicized, or underlined. Sources are single spaced, left justified and appear in alphabetical order by their first element.

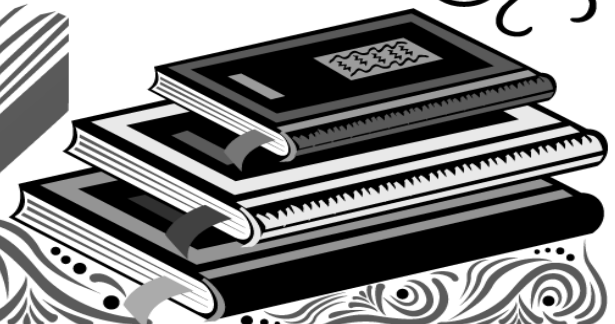
If a source is longer than one line, the additional lines are indented in what is called a hanging indentation, but the first line remains left justified.

If an element is not available, it may simply be omitted on the Works Cited page.

Find more information in *The MLA Handbook. 8th ed.*

Please find below worksheets to practice citations in MLA style.

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Name: _____

Date: _____

**Practicing In-Text Citations
and Creating Works Cited Pages
in MLA style: Books**

Choose two of your favorite books, or books you have recently read, to practice in-text citations and creating a works cited list entry.

Pick a quotation from each book and write it in the space provided below. For each quotation, include the proper in-text citation (using parenthesis at the end of the quotation), and create a works cited list entry.

Book 1

Book Title: _____

Quotation: _____

Works Cited List Entry:

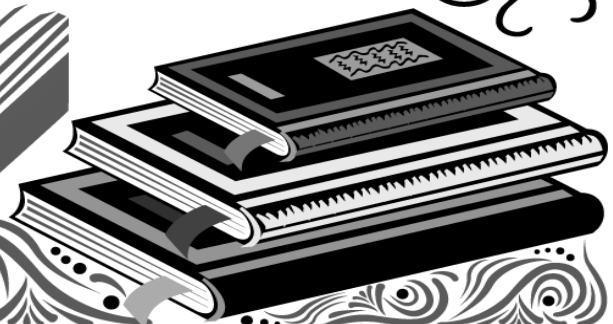
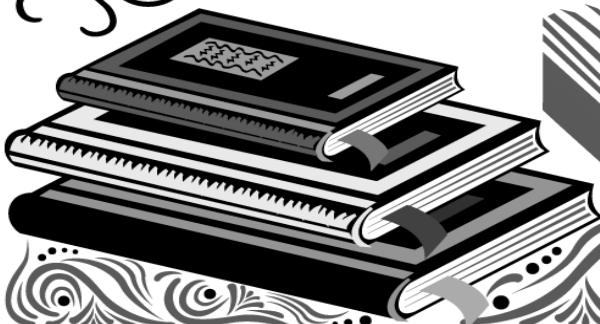
Book 2

Book Title: _____

Quotation: _____

Works Cited List Entry:

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Name: _____

Date: _____

**Practicing In-Text Citations
and Creating Works Cited Pages
in MLA style: Websites**

Choose two of your favorite topics (a subject, animal, color, etc.) and Google common facts about those topics to practice in-text citations and creating a works cited list entry. Open a search result about each topic and pick a quotation from each page to write in the space provided below. For each quotation, include the proper in-text citation (using parenthesis at the end of the quotation), and create a works cited list entry.

Topic 1

Topic: _____

Quotation: _____

Works Cited List Entry:

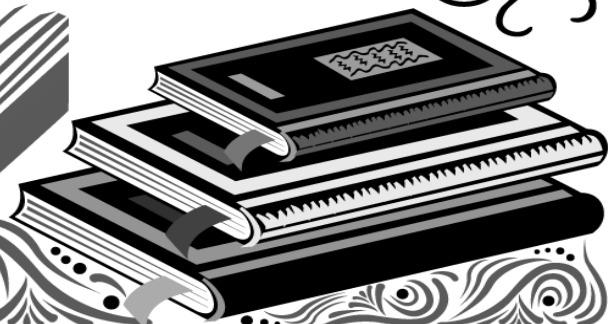
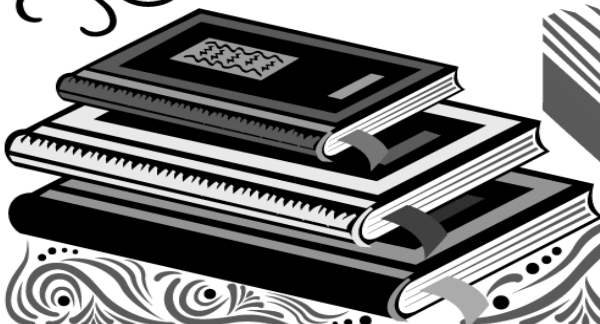
Topic 2

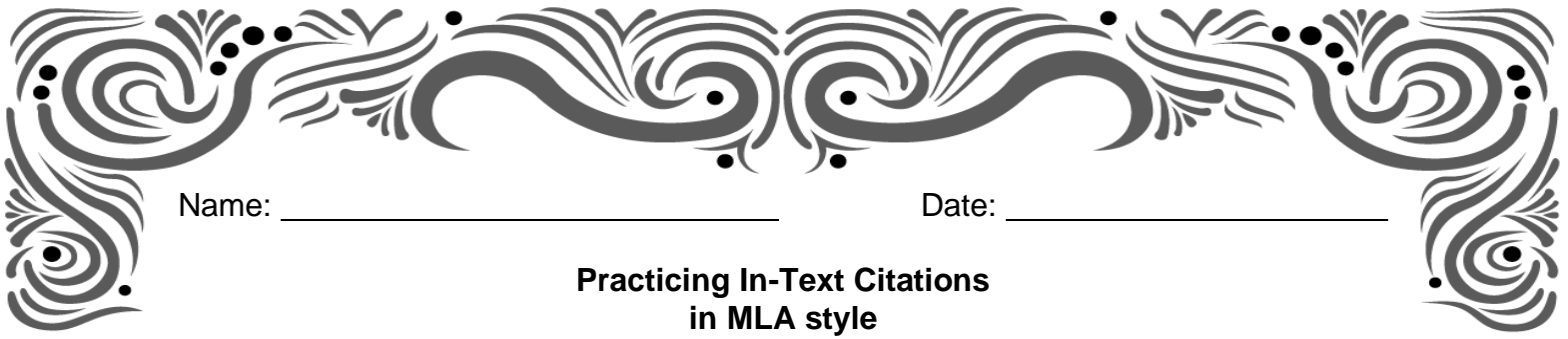
Topic: _____

Quotation: _____

Works Cited List Entry:

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Name: _____

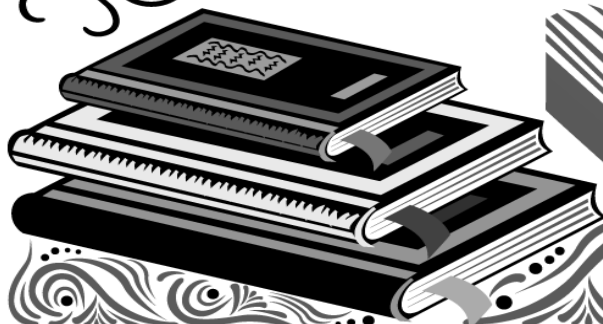
Date: _____

Practicing In-Text Citations in MLA style

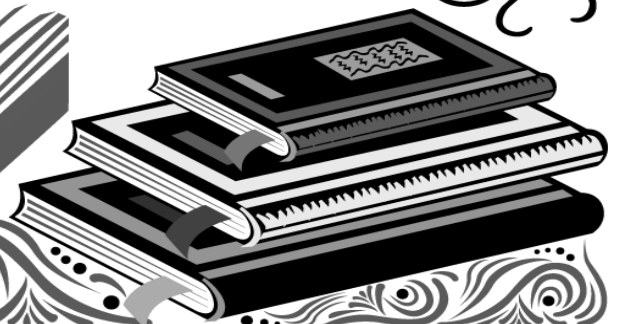
Write two paragraphs incorporating a part of each of the four quotations you used on the previous two pages. They can be about anything you like, as long as they make sense. Don't forget to include the in-text citations in parenthesis.

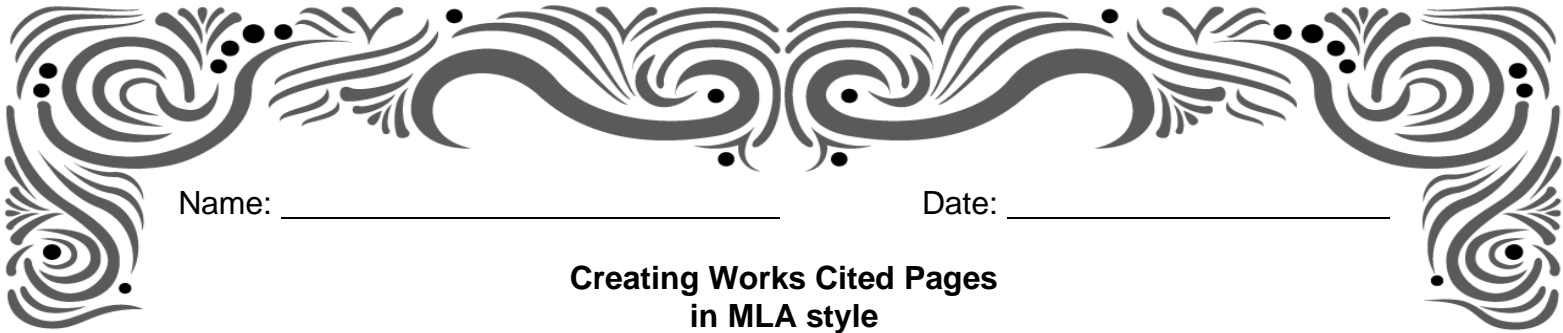
Paragraph 1

Paragraph 2



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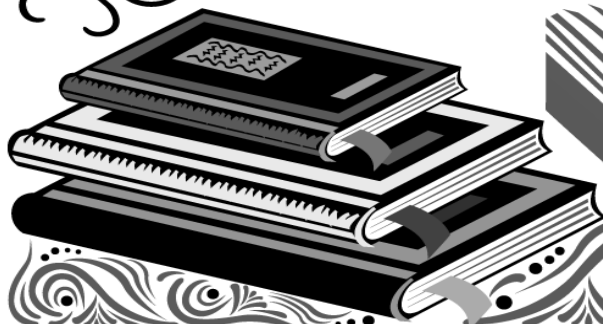
Name: _____

Date: _____

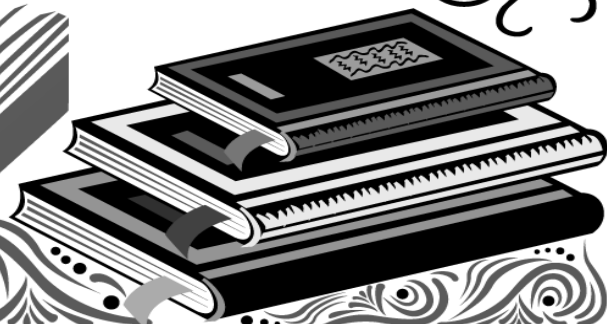
Creating Works Cited Pages in MLA style

Using the four works cited list entries you created on the previous pages, create a works cited page. Don't forget to put your sources in alphabetical order.

Works Cited



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Works Cited

MLA Handbook. 8th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

“Plagiarize.” *Merriam-Webster*, Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2019,
www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plagiarizing. Accessed 14 May 2019.