

MLA 8 In-Text (Parenthetical) Citations

The examples below are based on the *MLA Handbook 8th ed.* (2016), available at the information desk of the Learning Commons. Consult this book for additional examples. *More MLA examples can be found here:*

- **MLA Style guide from DCCC Library Services:** <http://libguides.dccc.edu/mla>
- **MLA Style guide from the Owl at Purdue:** <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/>
- **Citation help from the DCCC Learning Commons Information Desk** (phone 610-359-5149 or email library@dccc.edu)

The Basic Rules

- *A typical in-text citation* is made up of the element that comes first in the entry in the works-cited list (usually the author's last name) and a page number. The page number goes in parentheses which is placed where there is a natural pause in the text. *A parenthetical citation* that directly follows a quotation is placed after the closing quotation mark. If the author's name is *not* mentioned in the text, it and the page number are placed in parentheses after the closing quotation mark. Examples:

According to Naomi Baron, reading is “just half of literacy. The other half is writing” (194).

OR

Reading is “just half of literacy. The other half is writing” (Baron 194).

Works Cited

Baron, Naomi, S. “Redefining Reading: The Impact of Digital Communication Media.” *PMLA*, vol. 128, no. 1, Jan. 2013, pp. 193-200.

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- If you cite *several works by the same author* in your works-cited list, you must include a shortened form of the *source's title*:

Reading is “just half of literacy. The other half is writing” (Baron, “Redefining” 194).

- If you have *more than one author cited with the same last name*, include the *first initial* to differentiate them:

Reading is “just half of literacy. The other half is writing” (N. Baron 194). One might even suggest that reading is never complete without writing.

- *When a source has no page numbers* or any other kind of part number, *no number should be given* in a parenthetical citation. Do not count unnumbered paragraphs or other parts.

“As we read we...construct the terrain of the book” (Hollmichel), something that is more difficult when the text reflows on a screen.

- If you have an entry in your works-cited list *that begins with the title of the work*—either because the work is anonymous or because its author is the organization that published it—*your in-text citation should contain the title*. The title may appear *in the text itself* or *abbreviated before the page number in the parentheses*.

Reading at Risk: A Survey of Literary Reading in America notes that despite an apparent decline in reading during the same period, “the number of people doing creative writing—of any genre, not exclusively literary works—increased substantially between 1982 and 2002” (3).

OR

Despite an apparent decline in reading during the same period, “the number of people doing creative writing-- of any genre, not exclusively literary works—increased substantially between 1982 and 2002” (*Reading* 3).

Works Cited

Reading at Risk: A survey of Literary Reading in America. National Endowment for the Arts, June 2004. Research Division Report 46.

- *If you are paraphrasing* and not directly quoting one of your sources, it is still necessary to use an in-text citation. *If you are paraphrasing from more than one author or source*, you should list both sources in your in-text citation. *The only exception to using in-text citations is when you are stating factual information known as “common knowledge”* which includes information widely available in reference works, such as basic biographical facts about famous persons or the dates of major historical events, unless the facts are in dispute.

While reading may be the core of literacy, Naomi Baron argues that literacy can be complete only when reading is accompanied by writing (194).

OR

While reading may be the core of literacy, literacy can be complete only when reading is accompanied by writing (Baron 194).

OR

While reading may be the core of literacy, literacy can be complete only when reading is accompanied by writing (Baron 194; Jacobs 55).

- *If your source uses explicit paragraph, section or chapter numbers rather than page numbers*—as some publications on the Web do—give the relevant number or numbers, preceded by the label *par. or pars.* for paragraphs, or *sec., secs.* for sections or *ch., chs.* for chapters.

There is little evidence here for the claim that “Eagleton has belittled the gains of postmodernism” (Chan, par. 41).

FOR MORE EXAMPLES, consult the sources on the other side of this page.