

## MLA: Citing Lesser-Known Sources

One of the things that can make citation feel difficult is having to cite a type of source that you don't use as often as books and journals.

Here's a guide to citing some less commonly used sources in MLA, including poetry, songs, and artwork, as well as other types of images.

### MLA In-text Citations

Guidelines from the MLA Handbook (9<sup>th</sup> edition) and the MLA Style Center:

<https://style.mla.org/mla-format/>

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### Poetry

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Most likely, if you are citing a poem for class, it either came from the web or an anthology (your textbook of collected works by one author or various authors).

For your Works Cited page, you'll cite a poem on the web like a page on a website. Here's an example:

Frost, Robert. "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." *Poetry Foundation*, [www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/42891/stopping-by-woods-on-a-snowy-evening](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/42891/stopping-by-woods-on-a-snowy-evening). Accessed 13 April 2021.

A poem in your textbook should be cited like a work in an anthology.

Poe, Edgar Allan. "The Raven." *Complete Poems*, edited by Thomas Ollive Mabbott, University of Illinois Press, 2000, pp. 350-74.

In-text citations for poems have a few different options because poems come in a variety of lengths. If you use a short poem without labeled line numbers, go ahead and simply refer to the author and page number in your citation. You can even omit the page number if your poem came from the internet!

If you've chosen a poem where there are numbered lines, stanzas, books, or cantos, you'll need to cite the numbers in text. For a poem with line numbers, it would be (Poet's LastName line 12) or (Poet'sLastName lines 18-24). After your first citation, you can omit the word(s) "line/lines" and move to just using the numbers. To avoid citation clutter, you can use the poet's last name in a signal phrase.

If you need to cite more than one part, (e.g., a canto and a line) separate the two parts by a period. You don't need to label the parts, and you should start with the bigger part first. For example, to cite a book and a line number, you'd write 6.84 for book 6, line 84.

You can find more information about these breakdowns at <https://style.mla.org/number-parenthetical-poem/>.

## Songs

Occasionally, an assignment will come along where you get to incorporate music! To cite a song, you'll use quotation marks for the song title and italics for the album title.

Queen. "Bohemian Rhapsody." *A Night at the Opera*. EMI Records, 1975, URL if you sourced it online.

To cite a song in-text, mention the song in your sentence in a signal phrase like "In the Queen song Bohemian Rhapsody..." .

## Artwork

If you're working on a paper where you need to look at and react to a piece of art, there are slightly different citations depending on whether you viewed the piece online or in-person.

If you looked at a piece in person, you'll need to credit the author, the work's title, the date, and the place you saw the artwork.

Monet, Claude. *The Water Lily Pond*. 1899, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

If the city you saw the piece in is part of the name of the museum, you don't need to add the city at the end.

Here's the citation for this same piece of art at its online home.

Monet, Claude. *Bridge Over a Pond of Water Lilies*. 1899. The Met.

[www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/437127](http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/437127)

Because the Met has the title catalogued slightly differently on their site, the citation changes a bit. Additionally, the website name is used, rather than the name of the physical museum.

You'll use this same format for photographs, sculptures, and other works of art as well, and you'll cite it in-text the same way as a song.

## Other Image Types (Graphs, Charts, and Tables)

If you insert a graph, chart, table, or other type of image from a source (outside of a catalogued artwork), cite the general source that you found it in for your Works Cited page. For example, if you use a chart from *The New York Times*, you should cite the periodical article in your Works Cited.

Tables have slightly different rules for in-text citation than other sources. You'll still need to cite the author of the source, and you should include the table number in brackets:

(Author p# [table#])

Graphs, charts, and other images (maps, diagrams, and even videos and podcasts) should be labeled as figures in a paper if the actual image or a link is included. Label the item Fig. with the number corresponding to the entry in your paper (the first figure is Fig. 1 and so on), and give the item a caption. If you include the source information in your caption, you do not need to duplicate it on the Works Cited page.

If you use a graph, chart, or table of your own creation, there's no need to cite yourself since you are the author of the paper. Just explain where you got your data, and you're good to go!

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