



Citing Prose, Poetry, and Drama

Dr Robert G. May | Department of English

MLA documentation style includes two main components: 1) **the page of Works Cited**, which identifies the sources you cite in the body of your essay, and 2) **An in-text citation**, the insertion within your text of a brief reference that indicates the source you cited.

A typical in-text citation consists of two components: 1) **a reference to an entry in the page of Works Cited** (usually the author's surname), and 2) **a reference to a location in that source** (usually the page number), placed in parentheses at the end of the quotation.

You may omit the first component of an in-text citation (the reference to an entry in the page of Works Cited) if your signal phrase indicates the source (e.g., if it refers to the author's name).

The second component of an in-text citation (the reference to a location in the source) is usually a page number or range of page numbers, but it can be other location information depending on the genre you are writing about: **prose, poetry, or drama**:

Prose	Poetry	Drama
For prose works for which the source provides page numbers, cite the page number of the source:	For poetry works for which the source provides division numbers (e.g., book, part, canto, etc.) and line numbers, cite the division and line numbers of the source, separating them with periods:	For drama works for which the source provides division numbers (e.g., act, scene, etc.) and line numbers, cite the division and line numbers of the source, separating them with periods:
The narrator reflects, "It is very seldom that mere ordinary people like John and myself secure ancestral halls for the summer" (Gilman 29).	The opening lines hint at the poem's themes: "What dire offence from am'rous causes springs, / What mighty contests rise from trivial things" (Pope 1.1-2)	Orsino's soliloquy begins, "If music be the food of love, play on, / Give me excess of it that, surfeiting, / The appetite may sicken and so die" (Shakespeare 1.1.1-3).
If your quotation begins on one page of the source and ends on the next page, cite both page numbers of the source:	For poetry works for which the source provides line numbers only (without division numbers), cite the line numbers , preceding the first citation only with the word "line" or "lines":	For drama works for which the source provides division numbers only (without line numbers), cite either the page number of the source, or the division number , preceding it with "act" or "sc."
The narrator's husband says, "I am a doctor, dear, and I know. You are gaining flesh and colour, your appetite is better, I feel really much easier about you" (Gilman 36-37).	The sonnet concludes with a rhyming couplet: "And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare / As any she belied with false compare" (Shakespeare, lines 13-14).	<i>The Glass Menagerie</i> begins with detailed stage directions: " <i>The Wingfield apartment is ... one of those vast hive-like conglomerations</i> " (Williams, sc. 1).
For prose works for which the source does not provide page numbers (e.g., on a Web site or in an e-book), omit the reference to a location:	For poetry works for which the source provides neither division numbers nor line numbers, cite the page number of the source:	For drama works for which the source provides neither division numbers nor line numbers, cite the page number of the source:
Following the birth of her only child, Gilman suffered "a serious bout of what today would be diagnosed as postpartum depression" (Gannon).	The four-line poem begins on a light note: "you fit into me / like a hook into an eye" (Atwood 324). However, it ends ominously: "a fish hook / an open eye" (324).	According to the stage directions, the play takes place in " <i>A room in a large house,</i> " with " <i>A door down right</i> " and " <i>A gas-fire down left</i> " (Pinter 91).