CITING + WRITING

Doing strange things in literature, in art – I like that.

- Orhan Pamuk, Turkish novelist and recipient of the 2006 Nobel Prize in Literature in conversation with Eleanor Wachtel on CBC’s The Best of Writers and Company.

“Doing strange things” works for Pamuk and it could work for you too, but there are times when even a Nobel Prize Winner must follow a specific format or writing style. At AUArts, we use MLA Style. Below is an introduction to MLA Style and a few examples. Go to Academic Support at AUArts for comprehensive guides on MLA citations, essay writing, exam prep and time management.

MLA Style is used when writing academic papers and describes how to properly present your research in a paper and give credit to your sources. In addition to describing how to format Works Cited (bibliography) and conventions such as when to use [square] brackets or how to use italics, you will learn how to create in-text citations, brief references that show the sources you consulted (author, title, publication date).

Why follow a style guide?
1. Engage in scholarly conversation: Citations allow you, as well as other readers and scholars to keep track of the sources you consulted during your research. Your writing may or may not present new ideas, but the citations show how previous ideas and conversations have influenced your thinking and allows readers to follow a trail of crumbs to explore a wider conversation.
2. Avoid plagiarism: As part of an ongoing conversation, you also have a responsibility to give credit to other researchers.
3. Produce writing in a format easily accessible to other scholars: Like the particular format of addresses on envelopes.

A proper citation depends on the type of resource you are using. Is it a book, a journal, a database, or a website? All citations include certain core elements.

Works Cited Core Elements:
These core elements of a works cited list shown in the order they should appear. If an element is not relevant, simply omit it. The punctuation mark which follows the element is also shown.

1. Author.
2. Title of source.
3. Title container,
4. Other contributors,
5. Version,
6. Number,
7. Publisher,
8. Publication date,
9. Location.
Examples of Works Cited entries:

For a book:

Last Name, First Name. Title of Book. Publisher, Publication Date.

For a journal article:

Last Name, First Name. Title of source. Title container, Version, Number, Publication date, Location.

A newspaper article:

Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” Title of Newspaper, Day Month Year, pages.

An image/reproduction of artwork from the Web:

Last Name, First Name. Title of artwork. Year. Title of container, Location.

An Image/Figure Caption:

NOTE about captions: check with your instructors in case they prefer you to follow a different specific format.

**Example of in-text citation:**

In-text citations are used in your paper to credit the source of your information and direct your reader to the proper citation in your Works Cited. Below is an example of an in-text citation (author name, publication date), followed by the citation which would appear on the Works Cited page:

...From ACAD to the New York Times Books Section on Summer Reading, Jillian Tamaki’s latest graphic novel *Boundless*, pushes the boundaries of the graphic form in a collection of very diverse short stories which take an unsettling and poetic view of popular culture (Wolk 2017)...

On your Works Cited page, the below entry would appear in alphabetical order:


For further help with MLA format and citation examples (how to cite anthologies, interviews, conversations...), go to:

- **MLA Handbook 8th Edition** – 808.027 M685
- **The MLA Style Center**
- **Purdue Owl MLA Guide** – Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab’s comprehensive MLA Guide.
- **AUArts Learning Assistance Resources** for guides on MLA citations (other guides available on essay writing, exam prep and time management)
- **AUArts Writing Centre** (email for an appointment) or visit Drop-In Tutoring (email for specific requests, but not appointment necessary).

Return to Top Menu.
WRITING

Recommended reading for writing about art:

1. **Line Color Form: The Language of Art and Design** by Jesse Day – a brief primer for visual learners in design theory and terminology with hundreds of illustrations and minimal text as well as section on formal analysis, focusing on how to express observations in writing. Excellent source for students and ESL artists.

2. **A Short Guide to Writing About Art – 9th edition** by Sylvan Barnet – classic guide to student guide to “seeing and saying”.

3. **How to Write About Contemporary Art** by Gilda Williams – comprehensive guide to writing about contemporary art aimed at student and arts professionals, this How-To covers styles and content with practical tips (from academic essays to press releases and wall labels) and snappy titles like “Fear is the root of bad writing” and “The road to hell is paved with adverbs”.

4. **Inspiring writing in Art and Design: Taking a Line for a Write** by Pat Francis – Inspired by the studio and using ideas from creative writing practice, this book explores principles of writing in art and design, but mostly offers practical exercises and examples to support those who may have less experience in writing. A play on Paul Klee’s words to “take a line for a walk” this book hopes to help students loosen up their writing and have a bit of fun.

5. **Social Medium: artists writing 2000-2015** edited by Jennifer Liese – Highlighting “artists writing”, NOT artists’ writings, the work in this anthology has been chosen to represent those who have substantial practices in both art and writing and offer “surprising insight, sharp analysis, formal play, historical import ethical urgency, quixotic sensibility provocation or revelation”.

6. **Artist Scholar: Reflections on Writing and Research** by G. James Daichendt – With a focus on MFA students, this history and guide for artists discusses ways to improve work through critical writing.
Links to online writing resources:

The **AUArts Writing Centre** offers one-on-one assistance for all your writing needs. To set up an appointment, email writing.centre@auarts.ca

**Drop-In Tutoring** is also available. Contact the tutors at: tutoring@auarts.ca or go to Academic Support for guides on MLA citations, essay writing, exam prep and time management.

- **MLA Style Guide** (Purdue University).
- **Purdue Online Writing Lab** offers writing resources, including vidcasts, on general and subject-specific writing and job search writing.
- The Writing Center at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill offers a comprehensive range of **Tips & Tools handouts** on writing papers, citation, writing for specific assignments and fields as well as special guides for Art History and English as a Second Language (ESL) students.
- **Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design Writing Centre** (ECIAD) offers printable handouts for using sources, types of writing, and professional practice (Artist CV, Artist Statement, grant proposals, grad school applications).
- **Ontario College of Art and Design Writing & Learning Centre** offers booklets like 44 ways to write as well as handouts on annotated bibliographies and writing art reviews.

Return to Top Menu.
PLAGIARISM

AUArts’ Student Code of Conduct states clearly that academic dishonesty and misconduct (cheating) not only have the potential to damage a student’s record and academic career, but is also “destructive behaviour that can diminish the reputation of the institution and undermine the achievements of those who teach and learn in such an environment”.

Plagiarism is one form of academic misconduct and defined in the Code as the “copying or representing the work of others, without giving credit to the authors, and submitting the work as one’s own...This includes copying the work of fellow students, printed material from any source, graphics, data or research findings from any source, or material found on the Internet”. Check out the Learning Assistance Resources guides to citations for further explanations and tips on how to avoid plagiarism, or check out Joshua Vossler’s brief video on Avoiding Plagiarism.

Return to Top Menu.