

ENG4U1 ISU Research Essay: MLA Citation



- Let's say that you have chosen to read and research William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* for your ISU essay (of course this would not actually happen because this is one of our course texts).
- Your thesis is: "In *Hamlet*, William Shakespeare uses symbolism in order to reinforce and shape the theme of death in the play."
- Once you have established your topic, thesis, and potential arguments, you must now begin your focused secondary research from *academic* sources that you will then be able to effectively integrate (in the form of supporting quotations) into your ISU essay in a relevant and thoughtful way!

Framing Quotations:

- When deciding where and how to include a direct quotation within your essay, be sure that you are using it effectively as a way to *clarify* and *support* an important point in your writing, but that you do not simply plunk it into a paragraph without any smooth transition or explanation.
- Do not overuse quotations in an essay, because it can appear that you are letting another person's words speak for you (even though this is a research-based essay, you must include your own careful analysis of your thesis). Choose your quotations wisely and insert them in order to *highlight* and *prove* key information related to your thesis/arguments.
- As a result, it is crucial that you "frame" your quotations to ensure that they become a clear and valuable addition to your essay.
- Framing a quotation is as easy as ensuring that you *introduce the quotation* (connect it to the point that you are attempting to prove/support, tell me who is has said the following words), *insert the quotation* (do not forget to put the quotation within quotation marks with all of the punctuation kept inside of those quotation marks), and *explain the significance of the quotation* (this may occur in a separate sentence following the quotation).

Introduce the quotation + "Insert the quotation" + Explain the quotation

Example:

(Specific Example to Prove Your Thesis) In this revenge play, Shakespeare uses theatrical symbolism in order to create a crucial analogy which compares life to the theatre, therefore highlighting the doomed fate of the characters and the powerful theme of death in the text. **(Introduce the quotation)** The use of this device is further examined by academic author, Charles R. Forker, in his journal "Shakespeare's Theatrical Symbolism and Its Function in *Hamlet*" when he states that, **(Insert the quotation)** "Theatrical symbolism is frequently used by Shakespeare in order to associate the protagonist with pain and death, therefore relating man to the cosmos and the cycle of life" (Forker 1). **(Explain the quotation)** As Forker explores, Shakespeare continuously shapes this analogy through symbolism in order to reinforce the poignant idea that death is a mysterious inevitability that no one can escape, which becomes a point of obsession for Hamlet in the play.

Quotation Format within the Essay:

- If you are including a quotation that is four lines or less, it can be placed directly within the paragraph.
- If you are including a quotation that is more than four lines in length, it must be separated from the paragraph and indented. Therefore, it does not require quotation marks. Indented quotations do not need to be double spaced. Nonetheless, you should pay careful attention to spacing, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization, as all of these elements must be reproduced exactly as they appear in the original play text.

Parenthetical Referencing within the Essay:

- Directly after the first quotation in your essay, you must reference the author's last name and the page number from which you took the quotation (last name and page number with no comma in between) – **EXAMPLE:** (Smith 84)
- However, after the first quotation, if you are quoting the same author all the way through your essay (which you will not be), all you have to include is the page number in brackets following your quotation.
- Every time a quotation from a different source is introduced or integrated into your essay, you *must* identify the author and the page number within the parenthetical reference. As a result, if the first two quotations that you use in your essay are from scholarly critic, Patrick Findlay, the first time you quote him, you would have to identify within the following parentheses his name and the page number from which the quotation was taken.
- The second time you quote Findlay (if this quotation directly follows the first quotation by the same author) then all you would need to include in the next parentheses would be the page number (because it is understood that you are quoting the same author). However, if you then integrate a quotation in your essay from author Charles R. Forker, you would have to include the author's last name and the page number in the following parentheses. If you then went back

to quote Findlay next, you would also have to restate the author's last name and the page number in the parentheses.

- When including a parenthetical reference for an electronic source with *or* without page numbers (Internet website) you must follow this format: (author name, article name, website name)
- Please note that *any* and *all* sources that you cite within your essay must be formally cited on a separate "Works Cited" Page using proper MLA formatting (detailed explanation provided below).
- Also, please ensure that all punctuation that appears at the end of your quotation (periods, exclamation marks, question marks, etc.) is kept within the quotation marks. A period will follow the citation in parentheses.

Final punctuation mark + End quotation + Citation (Author Page #) + Period

Works Cited Page:

- On a separate sheet, included as the last page of your essay submission, you must include a "works cited" page that provides a detailed citation for your ISU novel and the secondary research that you referenced in your essay.
- The title of this page is Works Cited (not Bibliography)
- If there is more than one citation on this works cited page (which there should be), all of your sources must be ordered alphabetically by the author's last name.
- Double-space all sources provided, and indent the second, third, etc. line of a source.
- The following are template examples that show how to properly cite books, scholarly journal articles, and electronic sources in MLA format.

A Book:

Lastname, Firstname. *Title of Book*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.
Medium of Publication.

A Scholarly Journal Article:

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Medium of publication.

An Electronic Source (website):

Editor, author, or compiler name (if available). *Name of Site*. Version number. Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher), date of resource creation (if available). Medium of publication. Date of access.

A Helpful Website: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/1/>

