

Citation and Referencing

When, where and how to cite and reference (and a couple of self-tests)

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Why should I cite my sources?

It's the honest thing to do! You are showing the reader when these are not your own words, thoughts, ideas, pictures, etc. By implication, when you don't cite a source you are saying that these are your own words, ideas, work etc.

You give credit where it's due, you say "thank you" to whoever's ideas, thoughts, pictures you are using. You are showing that this information, thought, picture, idea is not your own.

You show that you have done your homework, you have read around the subject and know the background, know what other people have to say.

You build on what is known on the way to making something new, even if it's new only to you; you show why you are interested in the subject, you may show the differences of opinion on the subject; you show how your paper adds to what is known.

You strengthen your arguments by showing that other people think the same way; the better known your sources are (in the subject you are writing about), the more strength you give your arguments.

You allow the interested reader to follow up, the reader who is startled by what you say and wants to see if it is true; the reader who does not believe what you say and wants to know why you said it; and the reader who is genuinely interested in what you say and who wants to know more.

You share the blame if your information turns out to be wrong. It wasn't your silly thought, you had good reason for thinking this was true. (And it might have been "true", once. Truth – or at least what is known and believed to be true – changes all the time as new discoveries and new interpretations are made.)

You share in the world of scholars; this is what scholars do. (And it's a real thrill when you see someone else citing your words, ideas, discoveries and creations. As they will.)

When should I cite my sources?

If you are writing scholarly work or a research paper, you need to cite your sources. If you are writing/ creating other kinds of work, you might or might not be required to cite your sources. If you are using someone else's exact words (quoting them) it's always a good idea to cite the source.

Any information which is new to you should be cited.

Any information which is generally well known need not be cited. (It's optional; you might consider citing it anyway.)

Any information which might be new to the reader should probably be cited. (So that the interested reader can look it up, can easily look further.)

Any information which might be controversial should be cited. (So that you can show *how* you know; you can support the information, you are not inventing it!)

Your opinion need not be cited, as long as it is clear that this is your opinion and not a statement of fact.

“Weasel words” need not be cited; they may be useful as a starting-point in your argument but it is not good practice to use them too often. (If you can't get your paper started, a weasel word statement is often a good way to get the writing underway. It's a good idea to go back and find a source to support those weasel words – in which case they won't be weaselly anymore!)

You cite other people's words, their thoughts, their pictures, their music, their creative endeavors. Anything which is not yours, which you got from somewhere else, you should cite.

You cannot over-cite, but you can under-cite. If in doubt, cite your source.

How should I cite this?

Many guides to referencing and citation are available. The style guides are different to each other, choosing to emphasise – or de-emphasise - different aspects of the reference. In Robert College we use MLA, the style guide of the Modern Language Association.

The main reasons for citing and referencing are:

- to show the reader when the material is not your own, in a way that does not interrupt the reading of the text,

- to lead the reader to your source material, if possible to the exact page/s on which the material was found.

You do the first, indicating to the reader that the text is not your own, in the text. If there is a page number, you usually show it here as well.

You do the second, give the reader the full details of your source, in a list of references or works cited, at the end of the text.

Special cases may apply. In a PowerPoint presentation, you might show a source at the foot of the slide, or you might list them all at the end. For an oral presentation, you might have your list of sources on an OHP slide or in a handout; for a play your sources might be in a printed program. The main points for citation and referencing still apply.

Use “quotation marks” when you use the *exact* words used by the writer or speaker. You are quoting them. Quotation marks indicate a quotation.

Do not use quotation marks when you use your own words to put across the author’s thoughts and ideas. Remember, even though you are using your own words, you still need to show the reader that the ideas behind the words belong to someone else, they are not yours.

In-text citation: you want to show the reader when the material is not your own, in a way that does not interrupt the reading of the text.

If the author is important, you can name her (or him) at the start of the sentence or paragraph where you use this author’s words or ideas.

Kirk advises, "Always validate or confirm information on individuals, institutions or groups, and countries that you find on the Internet. If you don't know who wrote what you read or why they wrote it, you don't know if it's trustworthy."

Or again:

There is vital need for students to be trained and given opportunity to ask real questions, essential questions, to practise thoughtful reading and careful fact-finding. This would avoid “Meaningless Project Syndrome,” which Gawith explains is “Cognitive bypass learning - where facts come through the keyboard or pages and land on the screen or a bit of paper without being processed through the mind.”

If the author is not important, the name goes (in parentheses) at the end of the sentence or paragraph.

Many studies show very clearly the consequences of limited reading competence, for instance that children with poor reading skills tend to have lower self-esteem, and are more likely to have discipline problems at school; that nearly two-thirds of the U.S. prison population is illiterate, and so are three-quarters of unemployed adults (Fuchs et al, 2001).

Sometimes, especially on the Internet, no author is named. If you want to use this material, note the first few words of the title in parentheses at the end of the sentence or paragraph.

The Report suggested that using the kinds of reading matter found in their homes often gets reluctant readers more interested in reading, but noted that few schools actually do this (Reading for purpose...).

References (Works Cited) : all works cited in the text should be listed in the References list (Works Cited) at the end of the paper.

All works listed in the list of Works Cited should be cited in the text.

The list should be in alphabetical order, and include enough information for the reader to find it. The information you need, and the way it is set out will be found in the style guide. Short guides cannot cover all kinds of material, so you may need to ask for help. Not all sources (especially Internet sources) have all the information and you may need to leave some out.

Works Cited

Fuchs, Douglas, et al. "Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies in Reading." *Remedial and Special Education* (22.1) 2001. July 1, 2006. <http://www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/reading/peer_assisted.html>

Gawith, Gwen. "Ban Projects - Begin Teaching Information Literacy..." *TheSchoolQuarterly.com NZ Information Literacy Archive : Information Literacy : Learning and Thinking*, 1998. January 1, 2006. <http://web.archive.org/web/20021029183614/www.theschoolquarterly.com/info_lit_archive/learning_thinking/99_gg_bptil.htm>

Kirk, Elizabeth. (2002, February 12). "Information and its counterfeits: Propaganda, misinformation and disinformation," 2002. June 23, 2006. <<http://www.library.jhu.edu/elp/useit/evaluate/counterfeit.html>>

"Reading for purpose and pleasure : an evaluation of the teaching of reading in primary schools." Office for Standards in Education, 2004. 18 December 2006.<<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/socialinclusion/children/Ofstedread.html>>

Note that a list of **Works Used** or Works Consulted is *different* to a list of Works Cited. Here you list works you have looked at and which have helped influence your thinking, but which you have not cited in the text. Be very clear as to what your teacher wants. If s/he wants a list of Works Used (often called a bibliography), you might prepare a list of Works Cited AND a list of Works Used.

Here are some examples; can you find all five citations?:

Studies in various teaching subjects confirm that children are good at finding information, but less good at deciding beforehand exactly what information they are looking for, or where to find it and how they will recognise it once found, or afterwards deciding what to do with the information they have found and how to use it (Gawith).

Neate (p. 130) takes this further: if there is no purpose to reading, it is difficult to know what is important in the text, in which case everything becomes equally important. She suggests that purpose depends on several factors, including reason for reading, motivation for reading, relation to what is already known and what must be found out, what one does with the reading, and similar considerations; awakening prior knowledge and asking oneself questions before and during reading heightens alertness. Indeed, as McTighe and Reeves put it: "It is impossible to think critically about something of which one knows nothing."

Children, of course, are disadvantaged here, for their prior knowledge and awareness of relationships is necessarily limited, they know almost nothing.

Smith describes five strategies used by good readers: they predict what they are going to read, and revise their predictions as they go along; they picture what they are reading; they relate what they are reading to what they already know; they monitor their reading as they go along, and they resolve difficulties and discrepancies as they read or re-read.

Reading for purpose involves more than just decoding words. It is part and parcel of a larger task. Fitzgerald, quoting herself from an earlier paper, declares, "Evaluation is an immensely difficult and complicated process. Research shows that evaluating information is a complex task usually performed within the context of an even more complex task, such as decision making or arguing. Also, the literature teems with examples of people failing to evaluate information well."

[Extracted from "From literacy to information literacy: reading for understanding in the real world" by John Royce, a paper presented at the IASL/SLA Joint Conference in Dublin, June 2004.]

There are many ways of showing that you are citing an author in-text. You can show whether you agree or disagree with the author, show whether there is doubt or controversy about the author's statement, show whether the statement may no longer be true, and so on.

Should this be cited? Circle your answer.

1. There is great disagreement as to which is the world's deadliest disease.
Cite the source No need to cite the source

2. In a book on germ warfare as a potential terrorist tactic, it was suggested that "...scientists are convinced that the next bioterror threat is not anthrax but a genetically modified strain of smallpox, the world's deadliest disease."
Cite the source No need to cite the source

3. Smallpox has been eradicated, so here "deadliest" is perhaps used in a historical sense; it was the disease from which, once caught, victims almost always died.
Cite the source No need to cite the source

4. In 2001, an American television station reported, "Malaria, the world's deadliest disease, could be wiped out within 25 years if U.S. scientists succeed in a genetic-engineering project involving mosquitoes that carry the disease."
Cite the source No need to cite the source

5. Another television reporter said, also in 2001, that tuberculosis was the world's deadliest disease.
Cite the source No need to cite the source

6. In a speech in Africa, British Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown stated that HIV/ AIDS is the world's deadliest disease.
Cite the source No need to cite the source

7. Asked, "What is the deadliest disease in the world?" the Online Expert at the World Health Organization (WHO) notes that ischaemic heart disease is believed to be the biggest killer, worldwide, in 2002, responsible for an estimated 7.2 million deaths, followed by another heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, responsible for an estimated 5.5 million deaths.
Cite the source No need to cite the source

8. Influenza, on the other hand, may be an even bigger killer. 15 million people around the world die from this disease every year.
Cite the source No need to cite the source

9. Fifteen million deaths a year may even be small, compared with the forty million deaths caused by the Great Flu Epidemic of 1918.
Cite the source No need to cite the source

10. So, what is the world's deadliest disease? Much may depend on your definitions, of "deadliest" and of "disease". It could be the disease which kills the most number of people per year. It could be the disease which, once contracted, is most certain to kill. It could be the disease which, over the centuries and the millenia, has killed most people. It could be the one-off epidemic which killed most people.
Cite the source No need to cite the source

11. It could also be that the deadliest diseases changes from year to year, so that heart diseases ranked most highly in 2002, influenza in 2001, tuberculosis in year 2000, and so on.
Cite the source No need to cite the source

Based on ideas in "Cite it? Don't have to cite it?" in:
Lathrop, Ann and Kathleen Foss, *Guiding students from cheating and plagiarism to Honesty and integrity: strategies for change*. Libraries Unlimited, 2005, p. 208.

Situations : do I need to cite this? Circle your answer.

12. You download a .jpg picture to use in an article you are writing for the school newspaper.
Cite the source No need to cite the source
13. You talk to an uncle about the time his experiences in Germany during World Cup 2006, and include several incidents in a report you are writing on sport.
Cite the source No need to cite the source
14. You find some great copyright-free pictures in Wikimedia, and use them in a PowerPoint presentation.
Cite the source No need to cite the source
15. You use the term “out of the frying pan and into the fire” in a story you are writing called “Bad Choices.”
Cite the source No need to cite the source
16. You discover the term “powerpointlessness” on a web-page. It’s just what you need for the title of a paper you have written.
Cite the source No need to cite the source
17. A week after reading an article in *Scientific American*, you mention several facts from it in an essay you are writing for homework.
Cite the source No need to cite the source
18. You have been a fan of Real Madrid football club for many years. You prepare a class presentation on the club.
Cite the source/s No need to cite the source/s
19. You take a number of screengrabs from world wide web pages, and use them in an essay on trends in web page design.
Cite the sources No need to cite the sources
20. In a box in the cellar, you find have some postcards sent by members of your family during the First World War, nearly 100 years ago. You use the postcard messages in a story you are writing about soldiers in war.
Cite the source No need to cite the source
21. After reading an article in the American magazine *NewsWeek*, you use some of the story as background information in an essay you are writing in Turkish.
Cite the source No need to cite the source
22. You find the exact sentence “Marijuana is a green, brown, or gray mixture of dried, shredded leaves, stems, seeds, and flowers of the hemp plant” on 10 different web sites. Clearly this is common knowledge, and you use it in a biology project.
Cite the source No need to cite the source

