


MLA Citation Style for Academic Writing

Center for Writing Excellence



Center for Writing Excellence (CWE)

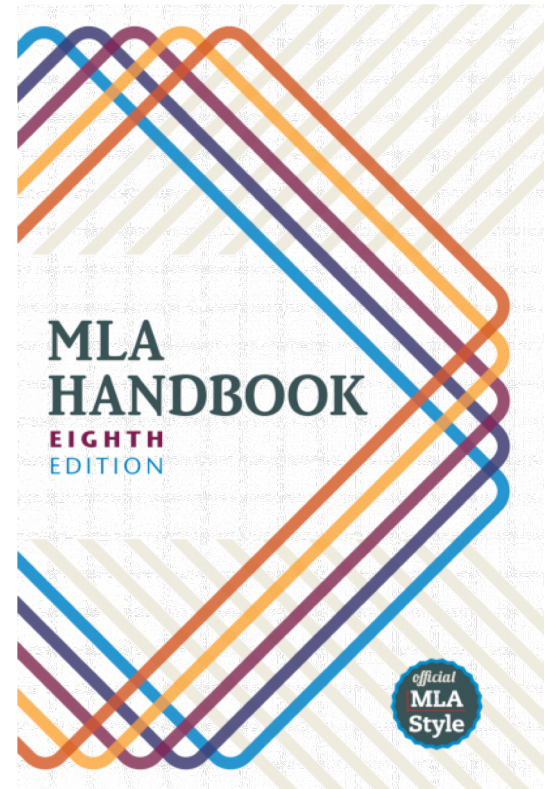
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There is no great writing, only great rewriting. - Justice Brandeis
Writing is 1% inspiration and 99% elimination. - Louise Brooks

What is MLA Style?

MLA provides guidelines for—

- Overall manuscript format
- Page numbers
- In-text citations
- Works cited



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MLA General Format

- Double-spaced throughout
- 1" Margins
- Paragraphs indented 1/2"
- Only one space after punctuation
- No title page



Sample First Page

Your last name 1

Your name

Instructor's Name

Your class

28 August 2019

Title

First paragraph xxxx xxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxx xxxxx xxxxxx

xxxx xxxx xxxxxx xxx

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In-Text Citations

In MLA style, all direct quotes/passages, paraphrases, class notes, class discussions, theories, and ideas not your own must be documented. Citations are done using an author-page parenthetical style.

A banner for the Center for Writing Excellence (CWE) at Montclair State University. It features a red and black pen lying horizontally. The text is arranged around the pen, with the university name and contact information on the left, the center name in large red letters in the middle, and two famous quotes on the right.

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Adding and Omitting Words

Adding words Use **[brackets]** around the words you want to add

Original: “This is how you do it.”

Revised: “This is how [she does] it.”

Omitting Words Use . . . for words you want to omit

Original: “She loved the Earth, plants, and animals, but she didn’t recycle.”

Revised: “She loved the Earth. . . but she didn’t recycle.”

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In-Text Citations

One Author

Direct Quotation:

Walker said, “When I was a young girl, our church was not only a place of worship, but the main location for neighbors’ gatherings as well, and I have integrated many of those situations into my novels” (26).

Paraphrase:

Walker said that her childhood was a combination of religious and social influences (26).

OR

Religious and social influences affected how she interpreted the world (Walker 26).



In-Text Citations

Two Authors

Examples:

Lewis and Johnson argue that “language change cannot be halted” (88).

After several studies, it has been determined that “language change cannot be halted” (Lewis and Johnson 88).

In-Text Citations

Three or More Authors

List only **the first author's last name**, and use **et al.** for the remaining authors' last names.

Examples:

According to Curran et al., “global warming needs to be taken seriously by individuals who believe there is no scientific evidence to support it” (65).

“Global warming needs to be taken seriously by individuals who believe there is no scientific evidence to support it (Curran et al. 65).

In-Text Citations

Multiple Works by the Same Author

When citing multiple works by the same author, include **author's name** and identify each work either by **italics** (books), or by **quotation marks** (articles or titles of short stories).

Example:

Gilman's narrator in "The Yellow Wallpaper" lives in a patriarchal society, whereas in "Her Story," the main characters live in a matriarchal society.



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In-Text Citations

Unknown Author

Use the first few words of the title in place of an author's name

Example:

We see so many global warming hotspots in North America likely because this region has “more readily accessible climatic data and more comprehensive programs to monitor and study environmental change...” (“Impact of Global Warming”).



In-Text Citations

Corporate Authors

*If a government agency is the author, **list the name of the government first, followed by a comma, and then the name of the agency.***

Example:

“Employment in the private sector declined in the second quarter” (United States, Dept. of Labor, 272).



In-Text Citations

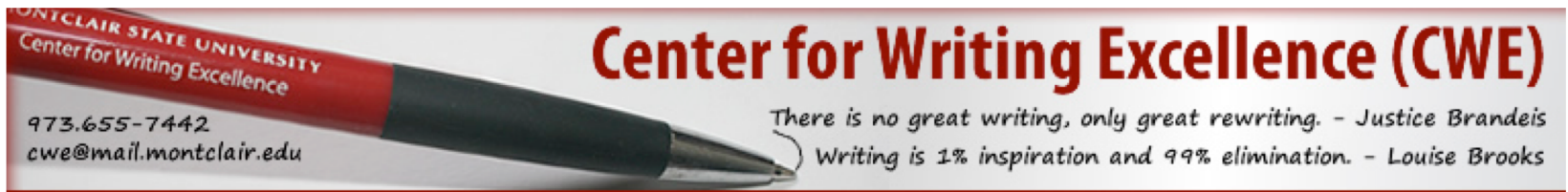
Drama and Plays

Put character's name in capital letters and a period after name, indent half an inch and start dialogue. Follow the pattern of spacing in the play.

Example: In the play *Titus Andronicus*, the Goth queen Tamora pleads for her son's life:

TITUS. I give him you, the noblest that survives,
 The eldest son of this distressed queen.

TAMORA. Stay, Roman brethren, gracious conqueror,
 victorious Titus, rue the tears I shed,
 A mother's tears in passion for her son;
 And if thy sons were dear to three,
 O, think my son to be as dear to me! (1. 1. 119-25)



In-Text Citations

Block Quotations

In Alcott's "A Whisper in the Dark", Sybil is a representation of that strong feminine identity without having to be masculine as symbolized by her hair. In various sections at the beginning of the short story, Sybil narrates her appearance in lengthy paragraphs:

I surveyed myself in the long mirror as I had never done before, and saw there a little figure, slender, yet stately, in a dress of foreign fashion, ornamented with lace and carnation ribbons . . . while blond hair wavy and golden, was gathered into an antique knot of curls behind, with a carnation fillet, and below a blooming dark-eyed face, just then radiant with girlish vanity and eagerness and hope. (Alcott 173)



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In-Text Citations

Poetry

Place quotation marks around a line or verse. Use forward slash (/) to separate line breaks and put a space before and after the slash. Use two forward slashes (//) for stanza breaks

Example:

Reflecting on the incident in Baltimore, Cullen concludes, “Of all the things that happened here / That’s all that I remember” (11-12).



In-text Citations

Indirect Quotations

When a quotation contains cited material from a secondary source, the original source must be acknowledged.

When possible, MLA recommends going to the original source to quote from it directly.

In-text Citations

Indirect Quotations

Original Source: *In this original source, Alison Morgan quotes Joseph Flynn.*

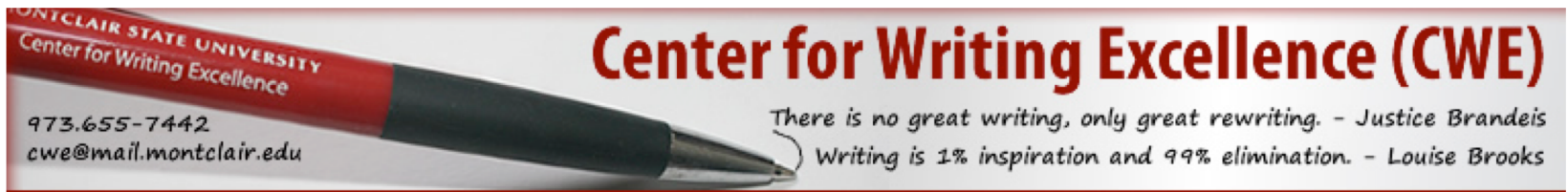
Flynn explains how Yeats made connections in a field where he had few contacts: “Yeats was attempting to create a national identity for Ireland through poetry, literature, and theater, and relied on his friend and mentor Lady Augusta Gregory to make introductions for him” (123).

In-text citation:

Flynn contends that, “Yeats was attempting to create a national identity for Ireland through poetry, literature, and theater, and relied on his friend and mentor Lady Augusta Gregory to make introductions for him” (qtd. in Morgan 123).

Works Cited: *(in addition to your book by Alison Morgan)*

Flynn Joseph. *The Irish Revival*. Royal Academy P, 2016.



Works Cited

Basic Format

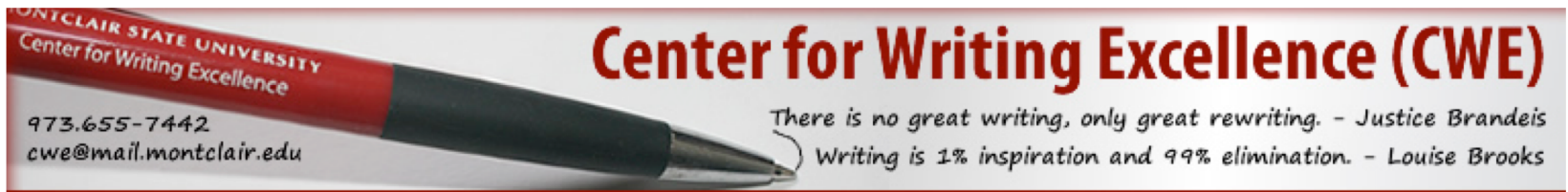
- Use Works Cited in the top center of a new page. Do not underline, bold, or italicize.
- Maintain double-spacing throughout, including between citation entries.
- Indent second and subsequent lines after the first line (hanging indent).

Works Cited

Core Elements

*A container is the “larger whole” that holds the source. A **book is the container** that holds a specific source such as a poem, an essay, or a narrative. Not all sources have Container 2.*

Author. “Title of Source.” ***Title of Container 1***, Other Contributors, Version, Number, Publisher, Publication date, Location. ***Title of Container 2***, Other Contributors, Version, Number, Publisher, Publication date, Location.



Works Cited

Types of Containers

Container 1

- Periodical that contains articles
- Television series that consists of several episodes
- Website that posts articles
- Book with several chapters

Container 2

- Publishers such as *Google Books*
- Academic databases such as *JSTOR*
- Streaming services such as *Netflix*

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Template

1. Author.	Goldman, Anne.
2. Title of source.	"Questions of Transport: Reading Primo Levi Reading Dante."
3. Title of container,	<i>The Georgia Review</i> ,
4. Version,	-----
5. Number,	vol. 64, no. 1,
6. Location.	pp. 69-88.
7. Publisher,	-----
8. Publication date,	2015,
9. Title of 2nd container,	<i>JSTOR</i> ,
10. Location. (Using 2 nd container)	www.jstor.org/stable/41403188

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Works Cited

Example

Goldman, Anne. "Questions of Transport: Reading Primo Levi Reading Dante." *The Georgia Review*, vol. 64, no. 1, 2010, pp. 69-88. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/41403188.

Works Cited

Page Example

Last name 15

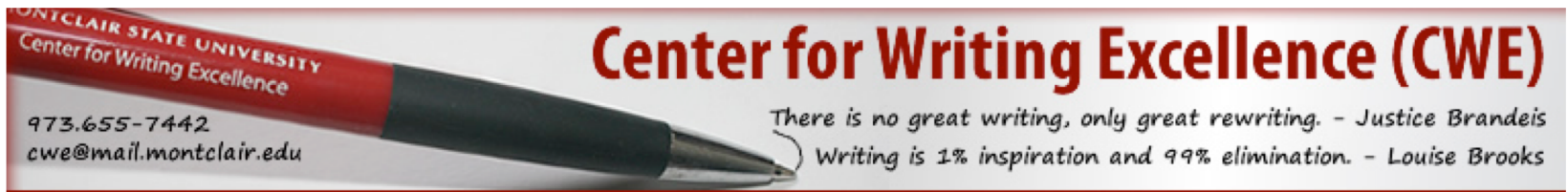
Works Cited

Baker, Kerry. "Great Expectations: Gender and Political Representation in the Pacific Islands." *Government & Opposition*, vol. 53, no. 3, 2018, pp. 542-568.

Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. Routledge, 1994.

Kincaid, Jamaica. "In History." *Callaloo*, vol. 24, no. 2, 2001, pp. 620-626. *Project Muse*, [doi:10.1353/cal.2001.0097](https://doi.org/10.1353/cal.2001.0097).

Murakami, Haruki. "As Concrete as Possible • Appetite in Literature." *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, Vintage, 1997, pp. 175-184.



Works Cited

Capitalizing Titles

Parts of speech that **are not** capitalized when they are in the middle of a title include:

- Articles (a, an, the)
- Prepositions (against, as, between, in, of, to): *The Merchant of Venice*
- Coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet)
- “to” infinitives (*How to Write a Resume*)

Works Cited

Formatting the Text Title for Non-Print Sources

Italics (whole works):

- The title of a television series
- Website
- Record album

Quotation Marks (smaller, specific works):

- The episode of the television series
- The posting or article on the website
- The song on the album
- A tweet

Works Cited

Formatting the Text Title for Print Sources

Italics for larger texts, such as a novel or book, and for volume of collected works:

Jacobs, Alan. *The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction*. Oxford UP, 2011.

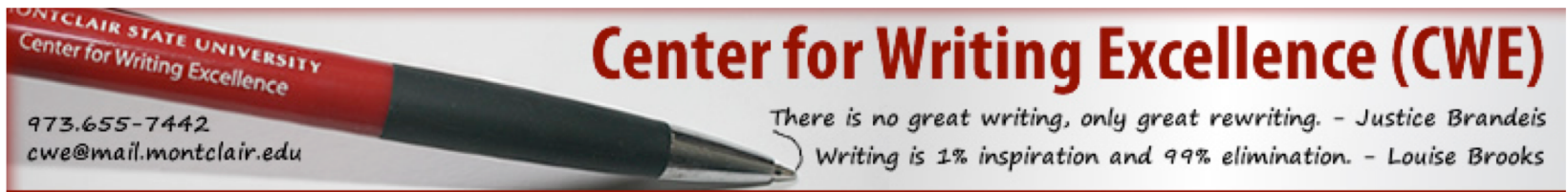
Eschholz, Paul, et al. *Language Awareness: Readings for College Writers*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009.

Quotation marks for titles of shorter works, such as essays, short stories, and poems:

Poe, Edgar Allan. "The Raven." *Collected Poems and Essays of Gothic Writers*, edited by Thomas Peterson, U of Vermont P, 2015, pp. 306-309.

Quotation marks for title of article, and ***italics*** for title of periodicals (journal, magazine, newspaper):

Akcesme, Banu. "Fighting Back Against the Encroachment of Patriarchal Power on Female Domains in Wuthering Heights." *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, vol. 6, no. 5, 2017, pp. 27-40.



Works Cited

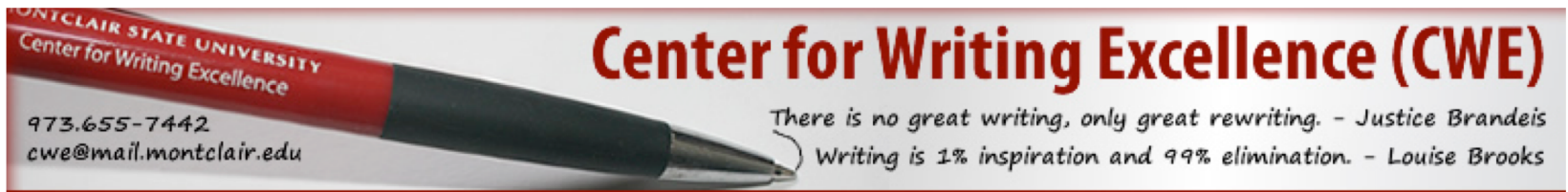
Books and Periodicals

Book

Malerman, Josh. *Inspection*. Del Rey, 2019.

Magazine

Nicklin, Mary Winston. "How to go Wild in the French Riviera." *National Geographic*, 5 Aug 2019, 20-21.



Works Cited

Translation

If the focus is on the translation of a source, treat the translators as the authors:

Sullivan, Alan, and Timothy Murphy, translators.
Beowulf. Edited by Sarah Anderson, Pearson,
2014.



Works Cited

Film and TV

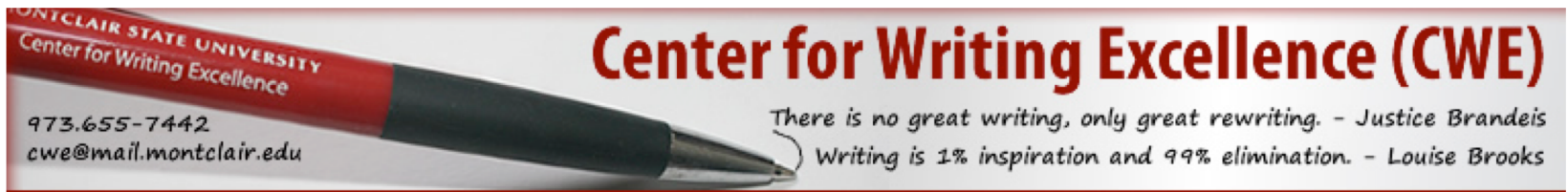
Performance of an individual:

Gellar, Sarah Michelle, performer. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.
Mutant Enemy, 1997-2003.

Whedon, Josh, creator. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Mutant
Enemy, 1997-2003.

A film or television series:

Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Created by Josh Whedon,
performance by Sarah Michelle Gellar, Mutant Enemy,
1997-2003.



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Works Cited

Authors

One author:

McDiarmid, Lucy. *At Home in the Revolution: What Women Said and Did in 1916*. Royal Irish Academy, 2016.

Two authors:

Dorris, Michael, and Louise Erdich. *The Crown of Columbus*. Harper Collins Publishers, 1999.

Three or more authors, use et al.:

Burdick, Anne, et al. *Digital_Humanities*. MIT P, 2012.



Works Cited

Editors

One editor:

Nunberg, Geoffrey, editor. *The Future of the Book*. U of California P, 1996.

Two or more editors:

Baron, Sabrina Alcorn, et al., editors. *Agents of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*. U of Massachusetts P, Center for the Book, Library of Congress, 2007.

An essay in a collection:

Lodge, Anthony. "French is a Logical Language." *Language Myths*, edited by Laurie Bauer, Penguin Books, 2017.



Works Cited

Corporate Author

Institution, organization, or government agency reports:

United Nations. *Consequences of Rapid Population Growth in Developing Countries*. Taylor and Francis, 1991.

When the organization is also the author, start with title, do not include an author, and list the organization as publisher:

Reading at Risk: A Survey of Literary Reading in America.
National Endowment for the Arts, June, 2004.



Works Cited

Citing Online Sources

- Follow the order for citations in general.
- If no author is found, use the title of the article or webpage.
- Use the first few words from the title.
- Only use accession date if content is likely to change.



Works Cited

Online Sources

Follow the same rules as though citing a print source, but include the website URL

With an Author:

Accession date is included because blogs can change.

Hollmichel, Stefanie. "The Reading Brain: Differences between Digital and Print." *So Many Books*, 25 Apr. 2013, somanycbooksblog.com/2013/04/25/the-reading-brain-differences-between-digital-and-print/. Accessed 19 Apr 2018.

Without an Author:

"The Impact of Global Warming in North America." *Global Warming: Early Signs*, 1999. www.climatehotmap.org/.



Works Cited

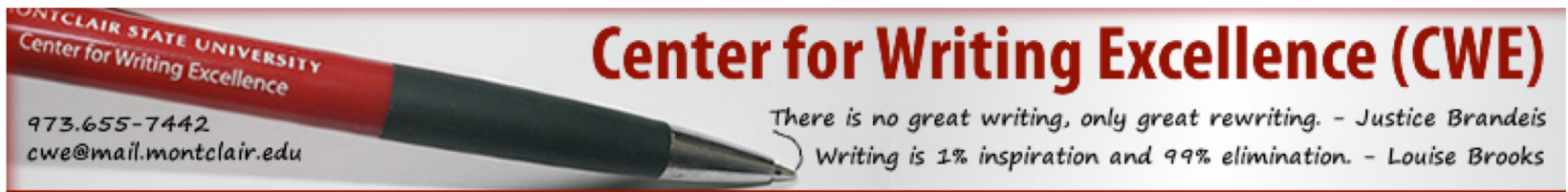
Online Sources

Scholarly Article:

Olakunle, George. "Alice Walker's Africa: Globalization and the Province of Fiction." *Comparative Literature*, no. 4, 2001, pp. 354-372. EBSCOhost, doi.10.2307/3593524.

Magazine Article:

Holub, Christian. "Toni Morrison, *Beloved* author and Nobel Prize winner, dies at 88." *Entertainment Weekly*, 6 Aug 2019, <https://ew.com/books/2019/08/06/toni-morrison-beloved-author-nobel-prize-winner-dies/>.



Works Cited

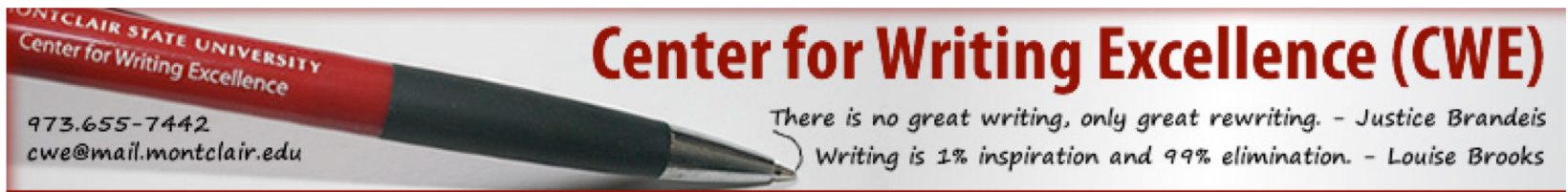
Online Sources

With publisher information:

Manifold Greatness: The Creation and Afterlife of the King James Bible. Folger Shakespeare Library / Bodleian Libraries, U of Oxford / Harry Ransom Center, U of Texas, Austin, manifoldgreatness.org.

Without publisher information:

Ellis, Lindsay. "Death, Personified." *Youtube*, uploaded by PBS Digital Studios, 24 Jan 2019,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vQjHILQ0OQ>.



MLA Resources

CWE Digital Dashboard

<https://www.montclair.edu/center-for-writing-excellence/cwe-digital-dashboard/resources-for-writers/citing-sources/#MLA>

MLA Style Website

<https://www.mla.org/MLA-Style>

Online-Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue University

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>



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