

# MLA Style Formatting



Most writing within humanities uses the Modern Language Association (MLA) Style. MLA Style helps a writer be consistent in formatting the text, allowing readers to focus on the writer's ideas. Additionally, incorporating and citing sources in MLA Style increases the writer's credibility and directs others to resources where they can learn more about the subject or topic.

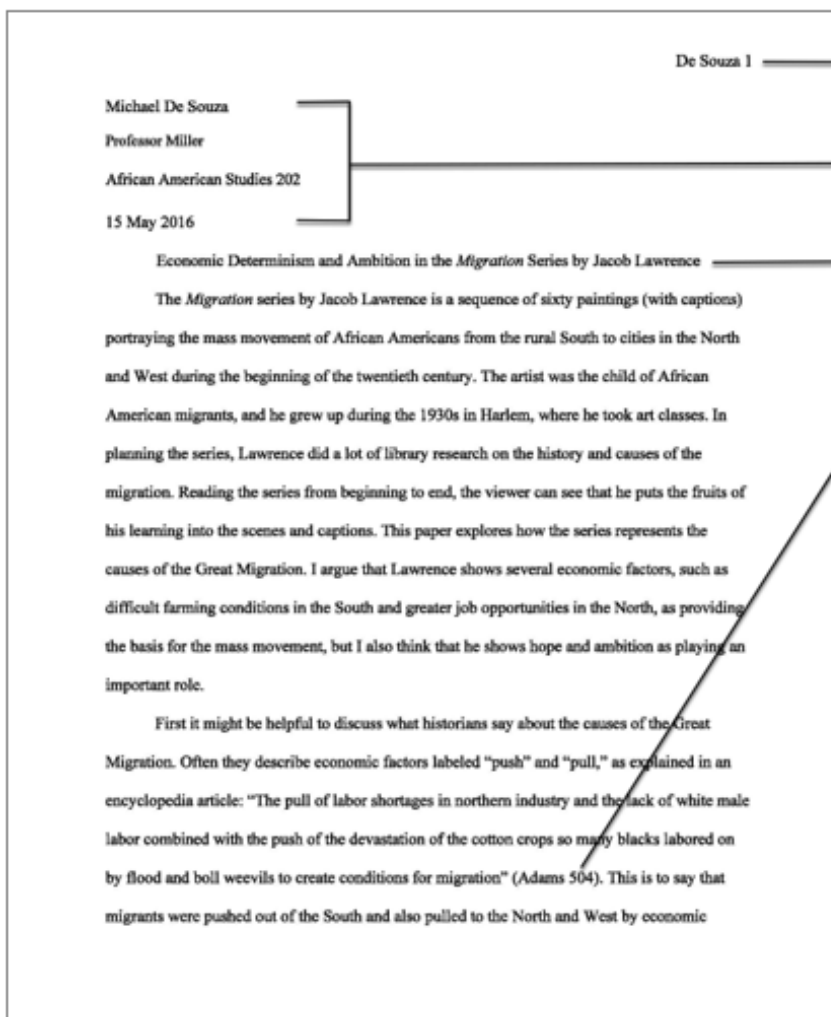
This handout, based on *MLA Handbook, Eighth Edition* and The MLA Style Center Online ([style.mla.org](http://style.mla.org)), focuses on formatting text in MLA Style, but writers should always tailor their work to their audience and assignment. For each topic, the corresponding handbook section is listed in parentheses; if no section is listed, the information is found at the MLA Style Center Online. **Note:** Formatting for *MLA Handbook, Eighth Edition* is the same as the seventh edition.

## General Format (*MLA Handbook* sections 1.3 and 3) and In-text Citations

**Font:** Clear, easily readable; standard size (e.g., Times New Roman, 12 pt. font)

**Line Spacing:** Double-spaced; no extra lines between heading, title, or body

**Margins:** 1-inch margins



**Header:** Right-align last name and page number, 1/2 inch from the top of the page

**Heading:** Left-align name, professor's name, class, and due date

**Title:** Centered; same size and format as the body of the paper

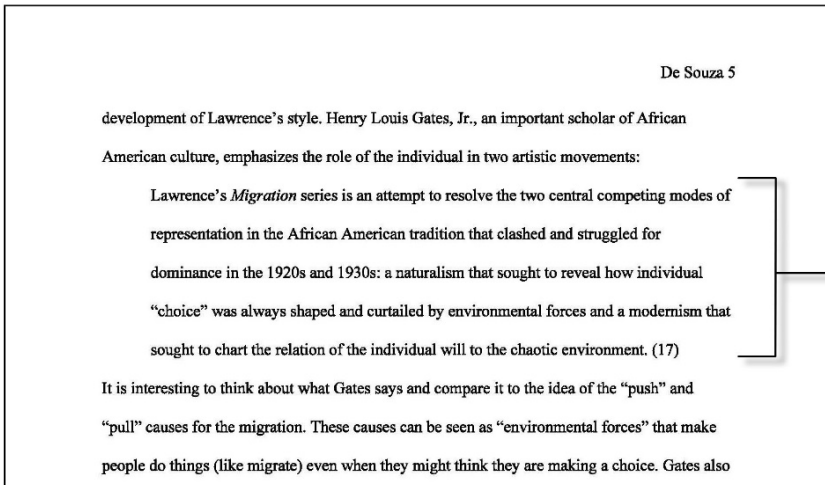
**In-Text Citations (*MLA Handbook* section 3):** Provide author's last name and page number (either in the body of the text or in the parenthetical citation). For more information on in-text citations see our "MLA Style Citations" handout.

**Example:** *Adams calls this "pull of labor" (12).*

or

*This is called "pull of labor" (Wright 12).*

**Fig. 1.** Sample MLA formatted paper from MLA Style Center; "Second-year course in African American studies." *The MLA Style Center*, Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

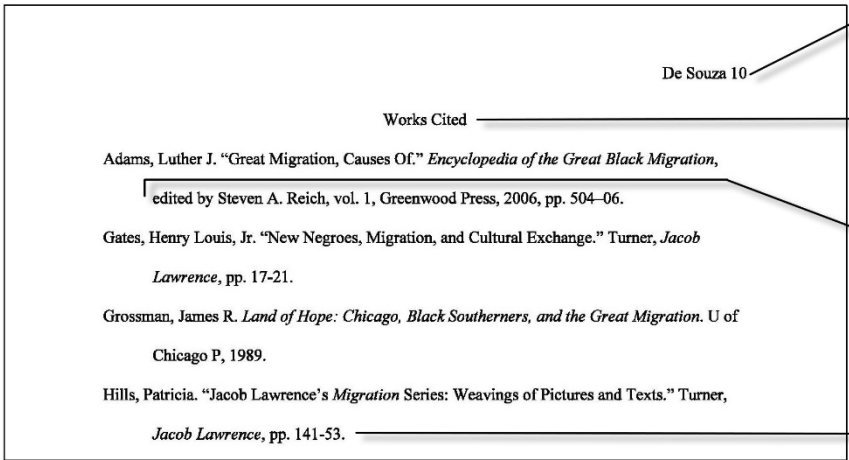


**Fig. 2.** Sample block quote from MLA formatted paper from MLA Style Center; "Second-year course in African American studies." *The MLA Style Center*, Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

**Block Quotes (MLA Handbook section 1.3.2):** When using a quote that extends more than four lines (using 1" margins) you must use block quote format: indent 1/2 inch from the left margin, double-space, *do not* use quotation marks, and place the citation *after* the period.

### Works Cited Format (MLA Handbook section 2.7)

The works cited page is formatted like the rest of the paper: 1 inch margins, double-spaced, a right-aligned header that includes last name and page number. List sources alphabetically with no extra lines between sources.



**Fig. 3.** Sample MLA formatted works cited page from MLA Style Center; "Second-year course in African American studies." *The MLA Style Center*, Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

**Header:** Continue the pagination from the rest of the paper

**Title:** Center and use same size and format as the body of the paper.

**Hanging Indent:** Set a 1/2" indent for citations over one line. (To set the indent in MS Word, highlight citations, right-click and select *Paragraph*. Under *Indentation*, select *Special Indent*. Click *Hanging*, and set it to 1/2".)

**Page Numbers:** List page numbers efficiently (e.g., 141-48 instead of 141-148).