SECTION 2:
COMMON FORMATS FOR DOCUMENTING SOURCES

A key to avoiding plagiarism is making sure to document your sources by providing a bibliography and in-text citations. Documenting your sources is a consistent expectation in academic classes, the workplace, and society. Documentation is the ethical way to use source material.

What do these terms mean?

Documentation: Giving your sources credit for the words, ideas, or other material that you borrow and use in your own work (paper, speech, or other project).

Bibliography: A list of all the sources you use.

In-text Citations: Source information provided with each separate quotation, paraphrase, summary, or other source material that you use.

Providing documentation in the form of a bibliography and in-text citations is the opposite of plagiarism, and both are required for complete and correct documentation.

What are the common formats for documenting sources?

Different academic disciplines and workplaces use different documentation styles, or formats, for in-text citations and bibliographies. The following are three of the most common:

- MLA (from the Modern Language Association): Frequently used in the humanities and fine arts, such as English, speech, theater, and art
- APA (from the American Psychological Association): Frequently used in the health professions and social sciences, such as sociology and psychology
- Chicago Style: Sometimes used in the humanities, including history

IMPORTANT: Always check with your instructor or assignment sheet to find out which documentation format you should use. Some instructors may not have a preference, as long as you use one of the formats correctly. However, some instructors will require a specific format.

The purpose of this section of the tutorial is not to cover every aspect of MLA format, APA format, and Chicago Style documentation. Instead, the purpose is to *introduce* you to bibliographies and in-text citations. The list of resources on the home page of this tutorial contains additional specific information and examples. IVCC's Tutoring and Writing Center and your instructor are also excellent resources.

How do you create a correct bibliography?

Regardless of what documentation format you use, each one requires a bibliography. Each documentation format requires you to list *all* of the sources you use. If you include even *one* quoted sentence or phrase or *one* idea from a source, you have to list that source on your bibliography. If you use only one source, you have to list it. If you use three sources or ten sources or twenty sources, they *all* have to be listed on your bibliography. IMPORTANT: *Not* listing a source you used is a form of **plagiarism**.

Each source you list on your bibliography is called a bibliography <u>entry</u>. Including a bibliography entry for a source allows your readers to know where you found your information and to find that same information in the same source if they are interested in doing so.

What you call your bibliography depends on what documentation format you are using: MLA, APA, or Chicago Style. Here is a list of what each format calls the bibliography:

- <u>MLA</u>: Works Cited page
- <u>APA</u>: References list
- <u>Chicago Style</u>: Bibliography

Regardless of which documentation format you are using, here are some key steps to creating a correct bibliography of sources:

1. <u>Know what kind of source you are using</u>. Examples of types of sources would be journal articles, books, chapters of edited books, interviews, and web pages. If you aren't sure what type of source you have, ask your teacher, a librarian, or a writing tutor in the IVCC Tutoring and Writing Center.

2. <u>Find a correct example of a bibliography entry for that kind of source</u>. Because different kinds of sources contain different types of publication information, books, articles, and web pages, for example, are all listed a bit differently. MLA, APA, and Chicago Style all publish their own manuals with updated information, and these manuals are available in the Tutoring and Writing Center and Jacobs Library. Many other reputable sources are available for correct examples, as well, such as the *IVCC Stylesite* and the *Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL)*, which are both listed on the home page of this tutorial.

   IMPORTANT: Make sure that you are always referencing the most updated and accurate information for the documentation format you are using. Especially if you look online, the information may be incorrect or outdated. If you are not sure if what you are using is correct or up-to-date, ask someone in the Tutoring and Writing Center or ask your instructor.

   It's also important to note that the capitalization, punctuation, type size, or other elements in the correct entry that you find may be different from how they appear in the source itself. That's because your source may not be following the same documentation format you are. Your goal is to find a correct example in MLA, APA, or Chicago Style format and then to make sure that your own entry for your own source matches the example.

3. <u>Use available tools to create to create an entry that matches the correct example</u>. Many library databases and even some web pages contain a pre-made citation for that source, often provided in multiple formats. Look for these pre-made citations, but *remember to check each one against a correct example you found.* If they don't match, you will need to make corrections or use another method to create your bibliography entry for that source.

   Another option is to use a citation generator. Citation generators are programs that assist you in creating bibliography entries. Some are online, like NoodleBib (available through the IVCC library website). Others include Citation Machine and EasyBib. Microsoft Word contains its own built-in citation generator, as well.

   It is not cheating or plagiarism to use a citation generator. However, you need to use a citation generator wisely. Assuming that a citation generator will guarantee that a bibliography is correct will often lead to mistakes. To avoid mistakes, check that

   - the citation generator is from a reliable source
   - it is using the most updated information for the documentation format you are using
   - you have provided it with the correct information (including the kind of source you are using and all the correct publication information).

   Once you use a citation generator to create an entry *remember to check it against a correct example you found.* If they don't match, you will need to make corrections or use another method to create your bibliography entry for that source.

   Of course, if you choose, you may just type a correct bibliography entry based on your source's information and made to match the correct example.

   If you are using more than one source, then you must repeat these basic steps for *every* source you are using.

4. <u>List your bibliography entries on your MLA Works Cited page, APA References list, or Chicago Style Bibliography</u>. MLA, APA, and Chicago Style all require you to list multiple sources in alphabetical order, based on the author's last name or, if there is no author, the first important word in each entry (typically the first word of a title, not including "A," "An," "The," "Of," etc.). Entries are typically double-spaced in an actual paper or other project and use a hanging indent (the first line is not indented, but the rest of the lines are).

Because this tutorial's purpose is to *introduce* you to documentation, it's not possible to provide an example of every type of source and how to list it in each different format. Again, you may consult the *IVCC Stylesite*, the *Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL)*, an updated style manual, or other reputable source for additional information and examples. You also may ask your teacher or a tutor for help. It takes time and attention to detail, but using the available tools and resources will enable you to create a correctly formatted bibliography for any project.

IMPORTANT: If you are giving a speech or creating some other kind of project (not a paper), it's possible your bibliography might be in a PowerPoint slide or some other form. In these cases, ask your instructor what form your bibliography should take, as well as what format to use.

How do you provide correct in-text citations?

Your bibliography, or list of sources, is not enough by itself to provide full documentation of your sources. While it tells your reader what sources you used, it does not tell your reader which specific words, ideas, or other material in your project came from which of the sources you listed. That's where in-text citations come in.

In-text citations provide just enough information with every piece of source material *as you use it* to tell your reader that you found the material in a source *and* which source on the bibliography it came from. The in-text citation allows your reader to refer to the right source on the bibliography for the full source information you've listed there.

IMPORTANT: Failing to include an in-text citation for source material is a form of **plagiarism**. It is essential that you include an in-text citation *every* time you use the words, ideas, or any other part of a source in a paper, speech, or other project.

As with the bibliography, there are differences in how in-text citations are provided in MLA, APA, and Chicago Style. Here is a list of what is typically required for each:

- MLA: Parentheses containing the author's last name (or shortened title if there is no author) and page number (if available) where the source material may be located in the source.
- APA: Parentheses containing the author's last name (or shortened title if there is no author), year of publication, and page number
- Chicago Style: A footnote based on the bibliography entry for each source and including the page number.

Because MLA and APA both make use of parentheses for in-text citation, citing your sources in these formats is also sometimes called parenthetical citation.

The key with all three documentation formats is that what your reader sees in your in-text citation matches exactly with what is listed alphabetically on the bibliography. If you provide a in-text citation, your reader must be able to find that source on your bibliography.

Again, it's not practical to show every possible example of in-text citation for these three documentation styles in this tutorial. As with your bibliography, consult the *IVCC Stylesite*, the *Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL)*, an updated style manual, or other reputable source for additional information and examples. You also may ask your teacher or a writing tutor for help.

IMPORTANT: As with a bibliography, if you are giving a speech or creating some other kind of project (not a paper), it's possible your in-text citations might be provided orally, in a

PowerPoint slide, or in some other form. In these cases, ask your instructor what form your in-text citations should take, as well as what format to use.

What are the key takeaways from this section?

- To avoid plagiarism, you must correctly and completely document your sources by creating a bibliography and providing in-text citations.
- You may be asked to use different formats, or styles, of documentation. Three common ones are MLA, APA, and Chicago Style. Always make sure you know which one you are supposed to use.
- To create a bibliography entry, know what kind of source you have, find a correct example for the format you are using, use the tools available, and then list each source alphabetically.
- To provide in-text citation, make sure to follow your documentation format requirements, create a match with your bibliography, and make sure you include in-text citation every time you use a source.
- This section of the tutorial should not be used as your only guide for documenting your sources, since it doesn't cover every type of source and every variation that might occur. You should consult the *IVCC Stylesite*, the *Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL)*, an updated style manual, or other reputable source for additional information and examples. You also may ask your teacher or a Tutoring and Writing Center tutor for help.

The next section of this tutorial (Section 3) covers how to quote, paraphrase, and summarize sources effectively in your paper or other project, regardless of which documentation format you use.