

Citing Poetry in the Text of Your Paper (Parenthetical Documentation)

Because poems are often reprinted in various editions and anthologies, **they are cited by line number rather than by page number.**

Quoting Three Lines or Fewer MLA

When you are quoting three lines or fewer from a poem, you may incorporate the quotation into the body of your paragraph.

Tips for quoting up to three lines of poetry:

- Use slashes (/) to indicate line breaks within the poem
- Keep all punctuation intact as it appears in the poem
- Use quotation marks to denote the beginning and end of the quotation

If you have included the name of the poet elsewhere in your paper, do not include the poet's name in your parenthetical citation. Instead, include the first significant word of the poem's title, followed by the line number(s). This is especially important if you are quoting more than one poem by the same author in your paper.

Example

Eliot immediately engages the reader with his use of the second person in the opening lines: "Let us go then, you and I / When the evening is spread out against the sky" ("Prufrock" 1-2).

However, if you have mentioned the title of the poem in the sentences immediately preceding your quotation, you can cite the line number only.

Example

In his "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," Eliot immediately engages the reader with his use of the second person in the opening lines: "Let us go then, you and I / When the evening is spread out against the sky" (1-2).

If you have not mentioned the poet or the title of the poem include all in your parenthetical

"Let us go then, you and I / When the evening is spread out against the sky" (Eliot "Prufrock" 1-2).

MLA Works Cited for Class handout quoting another source

Citation description:

Author of quoted source. "Title of work from a published collection. (e.g. poem or article)." *Title of Publication. (book or periodical).* "Title of Handout." Handout. Title of course. (Name of instructor.) Name of school. Date of handout.

Note: If any of the above information is not given, leave the information out.

Citation example:

Aldiss, Brian. "Flight 063." *Icarus Poems: A Selective Arachniography.* Handout. Composition, Literature and Critical Thinking: English 110. (Professor Jeff Westfall.) Skyline College. Feb. 2006. Print.

For this paper your works cited entry should look like this:

Donne, John. "Air and Angels." "John Donne Poems." Handout. Humanities. (Mr. Fannon.) Saugus High School. Sept. 2015. Print.