

# RESEARCH WORKSHOP I

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# How do you begin the research?

## **Step 1: Background Information**

*Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, Reference Materials*

Get a handle on your topic by gathering basic information such as key concepts, people, and dates.



## **Step 2: Refine Your Topic**

*Books, Articles, General Databases*

As you hone in on your research question, use more specialized materials to find out what kind of information exists on your topic.



## **Step 3: Scholarly Research**

*Academic Books, Peer-Reviewed/Scholarly Articles*

Consult materials written by experts in the field. What does the most up-to-date research in the field say about your topic?

# Types of sources

## PRIMARY SOURCES

Primary sources are materials that are eyewitness accounts or as close to the original event as possible.

- ▶ **What people said at the time:**  
interviews, speeches, letters
- ▶ **What people wrote:**  
autobiographies, personal journals or diaries, essays by artists, manifestos, newspapers
- ▶ **Documentations:** videos, photographs, drawings/sketches

## SECONDARY SOURCES

Secondary sources are interpretations and analyses based on primary sources.

- ▶ Scholarly articles: historians, art historians, other scholars who have written about the topic
- ▶ Reports analysing the historical context
- ▶ Encyclopedias, documentaries, journal articles

# What's a credible source?

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## Vincent van Gogh



From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

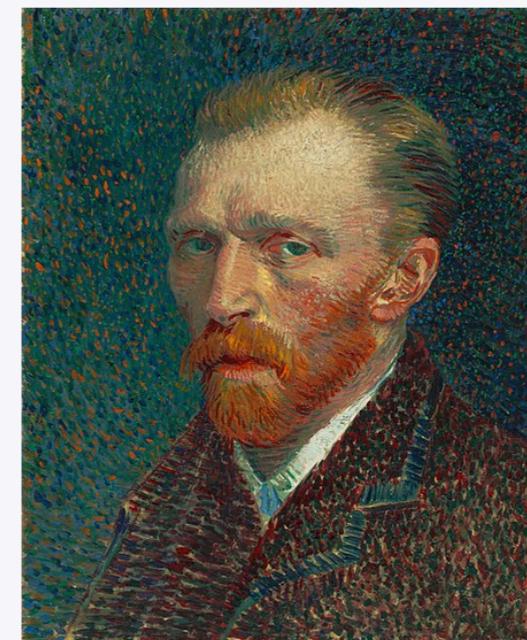
*"Van Gogh" redirects here. For other uses, see [Van Gogh \(disambiguation\)](#) and [Vincent van Gogh \(disambiguation\)](#).*

*In this [Dutch name](#), the [surname](#) is van Gogh, not Gogh.*

**Vincent Willem van Gogh** (Dutch: [ˈvɪnsənt ˈvɪləm vɑŋ ˈɣɔx] listen<sup>ⓘ</sup><sup>[note 1]</sup> 30 March 1853 – 29 July 1890) was a Dutch **Post-Impressionist** painter who posthumously became one of the most famous and influential figures in **Western art** history. In a decade, he created about 2,100 artworks, including around 860 **oil paintings**, most of which date from the last two years of his life. They include **landscapes**, **still lifes**, **portraits** and **self-portraits**, and are characterised by bold colours and dramatic, impulsive and expressive **brushwork** that contributed to the foundations of **modern art**. Not commercially successful, he struggled with **severe depression** and poverty, eventually leading to his **suicide** at age thirty-seven.

Born into an upper-middle-class family, Van Gogh drew as a child and was serious, quiet, and thoughtful. As a young man, he worked as an **art dealer**, often traveling, but became depressed after he was transferred to London. He turned to religion and spent time as a **Protestant** missionary in southern Belgium. He drifted in ill health and solitude before taking up painting in 1881, having moved back home with his parents. His younger brother **Theo** supported him financially; the two kept a **long correspondence by letter**. His early works, mostly **still lifes** and depictions of **peasant labourers**, contain few signs of the vivid colour that distinguished his later work. In 1886, he moved to Paris,

**Vincent van Gogh**



*Self-Portrait*, 1887, [Art Institute of Chicago](#)

**Born** Vincent Willem van Gogh  
30 March 1853  
[Zundert](#), [Netherlands](#)

# but- you can look at the sources cited at the end

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Arts and humanities > AP®/College Art History > Later Europe and Americas: 1750-1980 C.E. > Modern and contemporary art



Van Gogh, The Starry Night



Van Gogh, The Starry Night



Cassatt, The Coiffure



Munch, The Scream



Gauguin, Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?



Sullivan, Carson, Pirie, Scott Building



Cézanne, Mont Sainte-Victoire

# Van Gogh, The Starry Night



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Vincent van Gogh, *The Starry Night*, 1889, oil on canvas, 73.7 x 92.1 cm  
(The Museum of Modern Art; photo: [Steven Zucker](#), CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

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## Vincent van Gogh

*The Starry Night*

Saint Rémy, June 1889

### New on view

MoMA, Floor 5, 502

The Alfred H. Barr, Jr. Galleries

**Vincent van Gogh has 6 works online.**

**There are 2,396 paintings online.**

In creating this image of the night sky—dominated by the bright moon at right and Venus at center left—van Gogh heralded modern painting's new embrace of mood, expression, symbol, and sentiment. Inspired by the view from his window at the Saint-Paul-de-Mausole asylum in Saint-Rémy, in southern France, where the artist spent twelve months in 1889–90 seeking reprieve from his mental illnesses, *The Starry Night* (made in mid-June) is both an exercise in observation and a clear departure from it. The vision took place at night, yet the painting, among hundreds of artworks van Gogh made that year, was created in several sessions during the day, under entirely different atmospheric conditions. The picturesque village nestled below the hills was based on other views—it could not be seen from his window—and the cypress at left appears much closer than it was. And although certain features of the sky have been reconstructed as observed, the artist altered celestial shapes and added a sense of glow.

Van Gogh assigned an emotional language to night and nature that took them far from their actual appearances. Dominated by vivid blues and yellows applied with gestural verve and immediacy, *The Starry Night* also demonstrates how inseparable van Gogh's vision was from the new procedures of painting he had devised, in which color and paint

Er zijn menschen met waar die schilders in den tijd dat zij nog  
 niet verdienen protegeren - goed -  
 Maar hoe dikwijls gebeurt het niet dat zulke beswerd eindigt - voor  
 beide partyen onaangenaam. Eenzijdig omdat de protekteur  
 onvoldoende is over geld dat gansch in 'water' is of althans  
 schijnt. Anderzijdig omdat de schilders meer verhooven  
 meer gebald <sup>en belangenstelling</sup> ~~meent~~ te mogen vergen dan men geven wil.  
 Maar in de meeste gevallen is het door nonchalance  
 van beide zyden dat de misstanden ontstaan.  
 Ik hoop dat het tusschen ons niet het geval zal wezen -  
 En ik hoop dat langzamerhand mijn studies u wat nieuwe  
 moed zullen geven. Noch gy noch ik zijn lydgewalen  
 van deel gesticht dat begouwen dat bacht dat de van u. lus leest  
 "Les vaillants" noemt.  
 Maar in dezen tijd het enthousiasme van loen te hoeden  
 is niet te min geraden naar 'my voorkomt' want dat  
~~het~~ het geluk de dapperen begunstigt en loch wil dikwijls  
 waar en wat daar ook van zij van <sup>of in de jaren 1800</sup> ~~het~~ geluk <sup>namelyk</sup> -  
 men moet werken en durven wil men wezenlyk leven.  
 En ik zeg laat ons veel schilderen en  
 productief zijn en ons zelf zijn met  
gebreken en kwaliteiten - ik zeg ons - omdat  
 het geld van u ~~te~~ dat ik weet u moete genuey  
 kost me te verschaffen u reyt geeft om als er  
 als goed en myn werk komt het ~~te~~ voor de  
 helft als u eigen creatie ~~te~~ <sup>te</sup> beschouwen.  
 Tracht eens iemand van le chat naar te speken  
 en te vragen of zy een krabbel van <sup>menschen</sup>  
 die ~~te~~ aardappeleters willen en op  
 welke grootte. want dat is me onverschillig.  
 Gegrut, met een handdruk

6.1  
 Vincent

398 Waarde Theo, het heeft my eenigzins verwonderd nog  
 niet eens een woordje van u ontvangen te hebben.  
 Gezult zeggen ge hadt het nu te druk daaraan  
 te denken - en dat kan ik den ook wel  
 begrypen -  
 Het is reeds laat - maar ik wilde u nog eens zeggen  
 dat ik reyt hartelyk hoop dat voortaan de  
 correspondentie weer wat levendiger zal worden  
 dan ze den laatste tijd wel was -  
 Meerly gaau twee krabbels naar een  
 paar studies die ik maakte terwyl ik leeren  
 bezig ben op nieuw aan die boeren om  
 een schotel aardappels.  
 Ik kom er daarnet van thuis - en heb by het  
 lamplicht nog gewerkt er aan - afschaan  
 ik het by dag hetmaal heb aangezet.



Zie hier hoe de compositie nu gevorderd is  
 Ik heb het op een vrij groot doek geschilderd ~~te~~  
~~te~~ en zoud de schets nu is het geleef ik er veel  
 leeren in -



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JOURNAL ARTICLE

# Van Gogh's "Bedrooms at Arles": The Problem of Priority

Richard R. Brettell and Van Gogh



Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies  
Vol. 12, No. 2, The Helen Birch Bartlett Memorial Collection (1986), pp. 136-151 (16 pages)

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1 of 16 pages



## Van Gogh's Bedrooms at Arles: The Problem of Priority

RICHARD R. BRETTELL,  
*Searle Curator of European Painting*

WHEN Vincent van Gogh's *Bedroom at Arles*

# What should you be looking for?

- ▶ The depth of the source: some sources, like smarthistory articles or museum labels may be credible, but are often intended to give an overview not an in-depth study of the work
- ▶ Who the audience is: it's important to judge who the work is written for, which would also affect the language and depth
- ▶ Who the author is: with online blogs for example, you might not even have the author listed. Is the author a recognized art historian or scholar?
- ▶ Is it relevant to now?: With a discipline like art history, some sources can be very dated, can have old arguments that have since been challenged- while you can still use older scholarship, it's important to be critical when doing so and think about how you might be responding to it today

# Where can you look for sources?

To find books:

- ▶ Brooklyn College Library: [library.brooklyn.cuny.edu](http://library.brooklyn.cuny.edu) (here's a guide on how to log in, search material etc. <https://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/artresourceguide>)
- ▶ Interlibrary loan (if the book isn't available at CUNY): <https://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/interlibraryloan>
- ▶ Finding a book at a library near you: <https://www.worldcat.org>
- ▶ Google books: <https://books.google.com> (often has sections or complete PDFs of books)

# Where can you look for sources?

To find articles:

Here's a full list of databases you have access to through CUNY: <https://www.cuny.edu/libraries/e-resources/>

For art history specifically, these are some good databases:

- ▶ [jstor.org](https://www.jstor.org)
- ▶ <https://www-oxfordartonline-com.central.ezproxy.cuny.edu>
- ▶ <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/metpublications/>
- ▶ [academia.edu](https://www.academia.edu)
- ▶ [researchgate.net](https://www.researchgate.net)

# You found a credible source . . . now what?

Highlight, underline, take notes, add comments

- ▶ What is the main topic? What is the purpose of this text?
- ▶ What is the author's main argument? (underline what you think is the thesis statement)
- ▶ Underline or highlight key sentences that might be useful to your own topic
- ▶ Jot down comments you have or questions that come up when reading- what is the author not addressing? What do you make of their argument?
- ▶ What kind of information can you use from the reference? Remember that not all details of the text will be relevant to your argument.

# How do you use the sources for your paper?

- ▶ **Be selective:** Only include information that pertains to your paper. Not all information from the source will be relevant or serve your purpose
- ▶ **Use quotes effectively:** think about what directly quoting the author does for your argument- does it have a crucial idea of thesis original to the author? Is it from a primary source that provides new insight?
- ▶ **Always analyse the quotes:** What is your contribution to this discussion? How are you interpreting the quote? It's not enough to just insert a direct quote without telling the reader why or how it's important to your paper.
- ▶ **Read with a critical lens:** Remember that you are allowed to agree or disagree with the source, as long as you explain why. First identify what the author's argument is- are you adding to this, proposing a different take etc., providing a new framework by which to look at this?

# Why should you cite your sources?

To credit the ideas to the authors of your sources, to show the reader the credibility of your work, to place your writing within the discipline

## What counts as plagiarism?

If you use the **words or ideas** of another writer without acknowledging that writer it is considered plagiarism.

As I read your paper, I will be asking "How do they know this information?"

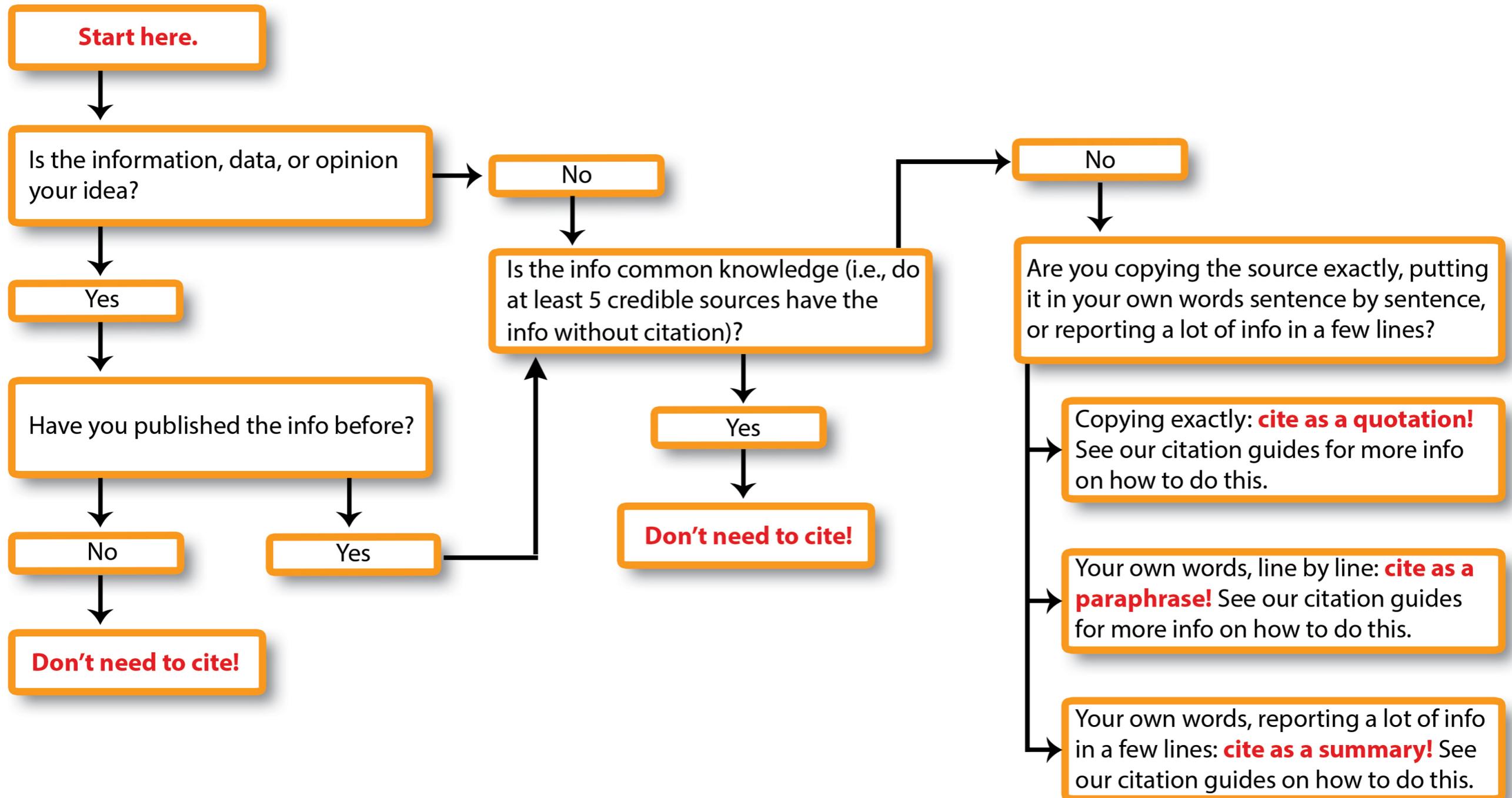
## When are citations required?

For every statement that contains a fact that is not general knowledge:

- ▶ "Brooklyn College is in Brooklyn, New York" - does not need citation
- ▶ "Benjamin West's painting *Agrippina Landing at Brundisium With the Ashes of Germanicus* is an example of Neoclassicism during the Age of Enlightenment" - needs citation

All direct quotations

Any time that you are paraphrasing information or an argument you found in another source.



For more information about this and other important citation resources, visit the Purdue OWL's citation style guides.

**APA:** [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_style\\_introduction.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html)

**MLA:** [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_style\\_introduction.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_style_introduction.html)

**Chicago:** [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/chicago\\_manual\\_17th\\_edition/chicago\\_style\\_introduction.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/chicago_style_introduction.html)

...and more!

# How should you cite your sources?

What's important is consistency, sufficient number of sources and complete citations

More guidelines here: <https://mehta1010.commons.gc.cuny.edu/citation-guide/>

- ▶ Humanities disciplines commonly use an **MLA style**, which is what I recommend for this class (but you can choose a different style if you prefer as long as you are consistent throughout)
- ▶ Either footnotes or in text citations (depending on the citation style you are using) following all quotes or paraphrased ideas in the body of the text. MLA uses in-text citation for secondary sources (Author's last name, page number)
- ▶ A complete bibliography of all sources referenced at the end of the paper
- ▶ Accurate image captions are crucial for art history

Artist's name

*Title of Artwork*

date

medium

Museum collection (if available)

# Examples of citations (MLA)

## Books with one author:

- ▶ Gleick, James. *Chaos: Making a New Science*. Penguin, 1987.

## Journal or magazine articles:

- ▶ Poniewozik, James. "TV Makes a Too-Close Call." *Time*, 20 Nov. 2000, pp. 70-71.
- ▶ "Business: Global Warming's Boom Town; Tourism in Greenland." *The Economist*, 26 May 2007, p. 82.

## Article in scholarly journal:

- ▶ Bagchi, Alaknanda. "Conflicting Nationalisms: The Voice of the Subaltern in Mahasweta Devi's *Bashai Tudu*." *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1996, pp. 41-50.

Note, if you are citing an article that you found on a database like jstor, you should cite the original article, not cite jstor as a web source

## Website or other online source:

- ▶ Lundman, Susan. "How to Make Vegetarian Chili." eHow, [www.ehow.com/how\\_10727\\_make-vegetarian-chili.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_10727_make-vegetarian-chili.html). Accessed 6 July 2015.