# INTEGRATING QUOTES (MLA Style)

When writing academic essays, you will often need to make references to other texts and bolster your arguments or claims with references to other texts. You will **attach a Works Cited page** to your paper, and you will integrate the ideas from other writers through **direct quotations**. However, the Works Cited page is not enough to show your reader where borrowed information comes from: you have to document a source every time you use a quotation. Giving credit to sources in your essay is called **in-text citation**. ***Remember: failure to document properly constitutes plagiarism*!**

Here are some guidelines to help you integrate sources into your writing:

1. Never quote anything you don’t fully understand.

2. When you quote, you **copy passages exactly as they appear in the source**, word for word. Quotes are marked with quotations marks. The page reference follows the quotation marks in parentheses; end punctuation goes at the end. If you mention the name of the author in your introduction to a quote, you do not need to repeat it in the parentheses that follow the quote.

**Example:** Alexandra Robbins portrays herself as a credible individual because "as a journalist, she views her role as that of an observer, not a participant" (5).

3. **Quotes have to follow the text exactly**. However, a partial quote must fit the grammar of the sentence into which it is integrated, so you might have to change a pronoun, a verb tense, or an initial capital letter to make it fit. Put square brackets [ ] around words or letters in a quote you had to change to make them fit your sentence.

**Example:** "Reading is a process, and it also changes you." ~Margaret Atwood,

Margaret Atwood wants her readers to realize that "[r]eading is a process, and it also changes [them]" (30).

4. **Beware of the Haunted Paper!** Never assume your reader knows your sources as well as you do: always provide the context in which a quote appears and explain how the quote ties in with your point. Quotes floating in a paper without proper context and connections with your points are called “ghost quotes.” They do absolutely nothing for your paper except earn you a bad grade. In the example below, the writer did not establish a clear connection between the point and the quote; this is a ghost quote.

**Example** (Ghost Quote): It is not enough (to some) to have perfect grades while balancing a

normal life. “Vera described Julie a great student who isn't getting into a top college” (5).

**Example** (Revised to Integrate Quote)**:** Robbins interviewed a college guidance counselor named Vera who conveys Julie as "a great student who isn't getting into a top college" (5). This comment about a wonderful student epitomizes the argument that it is not enough (to some) to have perfect grades while balancing a normal life.



NOTE: To make your life easier when you’re citing sources, you can use an online citation generator such as easybib.com. You simply choose the style guide you’re using (MLA) and fill in the blanks with the information for your source, and the machine shoots out a citation to use on the works cited page. Piece of cake! **However**, you will want to double check the citation you’re given. Technology is no less fallible than we are.

Remember that your works cited page should be double-spaced and the sources should be alphabetized by the author’s last name.

# Exorcising Ghost Quotes

**Work together to integrate the ghost quote into the context provided.**

\*Feel free to use the whole quote provided or part of the quote.

\*Feel free to use the whole context provided or part of the context.

\*Remember to ensure that the grammar of the quote fits the grammar of your sentence.

**Ghost Quote:** “The depiction of Jews as mice and Germans as cats seemed to be a reminder of German propaganda” (Stephen Feinstein 27)

**Context:** During the time that the Jews were being persecuted by the Nazis, they were dehumanized in German propaganda. Nazis saw Jews as an inferior race and this is paramount to why the Nazis are presented as cats in *Maus* because they are usually seen as hunters of mice.