

How to Cite Primary Sources

rev. 12/22/10

Citing a Primary-Source Quote Found in a Secondary Source

Sometimes you will find a primary-source quote in a secondary source – e.g., a quote from Bill Clinton in a book about him. In this case, include the abbreviation **qtd. in** ("quoted in") within the parenthetical reference. E.g.:

Bill Clinton believes that a system of national service would represent "America at its best--building community, offering opportunity and rewarding responsibility" (qtd. in Landaus 43).

You can do the citation the same way when you paraphrase what someone said rather than give a direct quote:

Clinton believes that if we do not act now to curb childhood obesity, American children will face grave health conditions (qtd. in Landaus 23).

Here is the Works Cited entry for this source:

Landaus, Elaine. *Bill Clinton and His Presidency*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1997. Print.

Citing Primary Source Documents from MPI Library Databases

All of the MPI library databases create citations for primary source documents, just as they do for regular articles. So you can copy-paste the citations into your Works Cited page and then edit them if needed, just as you do for regular articles. (Follow the guidelines on page 3 of the MPI Style Sheet.) **BUT....**

...the DATE OF THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENT should be included, if available, in your citation. The date of the original document is sometimes already included as part of the title. However, if the original date is not already in the citation, you should add it in right after the document title, as in this example:

If it's not already written in the citation provided, add in the date of original source, if you can find it, right after the title. Write the date in MLA style (day-month-year).

Douglass, Frederick. "My Escape from Slavery." Nov. 1881. *My Escape from Slavery* (2009): 1.
History Reference Center. EBSCO. Web. 22 Dec. 2010.

A note about Gale Virtual Reference Library primary source citations:

The primary-source citations generated in Gale Virtual Reference Library often need editing, as they frequently wrongly list the name of the author as the title of the article instead. Here's an example of a primary source citation from Gale Virtual Reference Library for a speech by Richard Nixon:

"Nixon, Richard M." *Cold War Reference Library*. Ed. Sharon M. Hanes, Richard C. Hanes, and Lawrence W. Baker. Vol. 5. Detroit: U*X*L, 2004. 267-273. *GVRL--US History Subcollection*. Web. 12 Dec. 2010.

Because this document is actually a speech given by Richard Nixon, his name shouldn't be listed as the title. You should edit the citation by adding the actual title of the primary document (in quotation marks) and also its date (these will be written somewhere on the document page). List the author (not in quotation marks) at the start.

So here is the same citation as correctly edited (listing the correct author, title, and date at the start):

Nixon, Richard M. "Informal Remarks in Guam with Newsmen (Nixon Doctrine)." 25 July 1969.
Cold War Reference Library. Ed. Sharon M. Hanes, Richard C. Hanes, and Lawrence W. Baker. Vol. 5. Detroit: U*X*L, 2004. 267-273. *GVRL--US History Subcollection*. Web. 12 Dec. 2010.