Preparing an Electronic Notecard

Citation: Begin by preparing a correctly formatted MLA works cited entry. Remember that spacing and punctuation are critical.

To Prepare your Works Cited Entry, bibliographic citation:

Use the following guidelines for deciding how to prepare your citation. Use this list in default order. In other words, the options at the top of the list should be considered the higher authority for any given type of source than those farther down the list:

A. Source-provided citation, i.e. CQ Researcher or Biography Resource Center
B. Tip sheet provided by database company, i.e. LexisNexis
C. Documentation Tip sheet found on your Course Guide, i.e. Academic Search Premier, Opposing Viewpoints, or Infotrac
D. Citation guidelines provided from your text
E. MLA’s general guidelines as found in the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (6th edition) or on the Purdue OWL

Content: The “Content” section is a summary of the source.

To Write a Summary:

1. Read, Read, Read your source. Read to the point of thorough understanding. Make notes on source. Identify the thesis, or the main idea, of the source.

2. Divide your source into logical sections. Determine where the source shifts focus or moves on to a new key point. The Comp II book refers to each of these sections as a “stage of thought.” Write notes on your source indicating where you see each new stage of thought begin.

3. Come up with a short phrase to indicate the key point of each stage of thought. Write this phrase on your source itself. Then, write one or two sentences which explain what each stage of thought is about. These sentences form the body of your summary.

4. Write the body of your summary in the order of the stages of thought within your source. Use 1 or 2 sentences for each stage of thought.

5. NOW, write your introduction of your summary. The first sentence should introduce the title, author, and general subject of the source. The second sentence should be your paraphrase of the thesis.

   • Like the standard summary, the first sentence introduces the source by including the author(s), title and topic of the source.
   • The second sentence is your statement of the thesis, the main idea, of the source. This is a paraphrase.
• All additional sentences include a **paraphrase**, if at all possible, of the key ideas presented in the source. If you cannot paraphrase well, then simply quote and include the correct parenthetical citation

• **DO NOT INCLUDE:**
  - Your opinion of the source or the content
  - Details

**Reaction:** The “Reaction” section includes your notes to yourself about:

• How you will use the source
• What is useful about the source
• The weaknesses of the source
• Additional research that the information within the source prompts you to go a’searchin’ for

THIS is where you include your opinion!!

**Quotes:** Each source **must include at least 3 quotes.** If a source isn’t valuable enough to need three citations of specific information, then it isn’t valuable enough to spend your time preparing an e-notecard for it. Quotes must include the correct parenthetical citation.

THIS is where you include the specific details from the source. Even if you decide to paraphrase the details within your paper, you will nonetheless have the correct information and the citation, which you will use to avoid all possibility of plagiarism.