

In-Text or Parenthetical Citations Explained

Citing your sources on the works cited page will let readers know what sources you borrowed information from when writing your paper. However, it will not let readers know where in your paper you used these sources. In-text citations are used to indicate where each source on the works cited page was used in your paper.

In-text citations are brief citations in the paragraph of your writing placed at the end of a sentence or paragraph before the period. For each citation on the works cited page you must have a corresponding in-text citation in your paper. The first entry used for the citation on the works cited page must be the same as the first entry of the in-text citation. This makes it easy for the reader to match the in-text citation in the paper with the source on the works cited page by quickly scanning the left margin of the works cited page. The first entry of a citation is usually the author's last name. If no author is given use the editor. If no editor is given use the title. When citing books or other sources with page numbers the in-text citation will contain the page numbers where the information you borrowed was found. Below is an example of a citation on the works cited page and its corresponding in-text citation.

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook*. Sixth. New York, NY: Modern Language Association, 2003. 238. Print.

(Gibaldi 238) -- The corresponding in-text citation with page number

The diagram is contained within a light blue rectangular box. At the top, the title reads "Example: In-Text Citation and Matching Entry on the Works Cited Page". Below this, the text "A Very Short Paper" is centered. The main body of text states: "In-text citations must clearly point to specific sources in the works cited list (Gibaldi 238). Each reference in the works cited list must have a corresponding in-text citation." A horizontal line separates this text from the "Works Cited" section below. Under "Works Cited", the citation "Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook*. Sixth. New York, NY: Modern Language Association, 2003. 238. Print." is listed. A black arrow originates from the text "(Gibaldi 238)" in the paragraph above and points directly to the author's name "Gibaldi, Joseph." in the Works Cited entry. To the right of the text area, there is a stack of several books.

For further information about in-text citations use the link below:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/>