

Anatomy of a Citation

Sample Citation:

Richard gives a blunt reply: “Chop off his head” (3.1.193).

^ ^
1 2

^ ^ ^ ^
3 4 5 6

-
- 1 Use a colon to introducing quotations, unless grammar requires a comma.
-
- 1-2 The grammar of your sentence must fit the grammar of the quotation in tense, number, and so on. If it does not, either alter your own words, or cite a different portion of the source text.
-
- 2-3 Do not use an ellipsis [...] at the beginnings or ends of quotations; use ellipses to indicate words omitted from within a quotation.
-
- 3a Place close-quotes before the line or page reference.
-
- 3b Omit any final punctuation marks from the citation except for question marks or exclamation marks. If an exclamation mark appeared in the source text, then the proper punctuation would be:
- Richard gives a blunt reply: “Chop off his head!” (3.1.193).
-
- 4 Enclose reference information in parentheses.
-
- 5a Cite reference numbers up to 101 like this: 34-37; above 100, repeat only the last two figures: 211-12 (but of course, 398-402 and 96-101).
-
- 5b Use arabic numerals rather than roman numerals for citations of all numbered sections and subsections — books, stanzas, lines and so on: *The Faerie Queene* 1.6.334-42 or *Paradise Lost* 4.634-58.
-
- 6 Place final punctuation after close-parentheses to end the sentence.

This anatomy of a citation borrows heavily from Alan H. Nelson's example citation in his [Instructions for Papers](#). (Nelson is Professor Emeritus in the Department of English at the University of California, Berkeley)
