

Teacher Notes: Citing Sources



There are many different styles for a Resource List or Bibliography. Most differences in style are questions of punctuation or the placement of the date. Teachers may choose to follow the model recommended by their division, school, or library. The most important rule to emphasize is *consistency*.

General Rules:

- The purpose of a resource list is to include sufficient details to allow the reader to locate or retrieve the source easily.
- Sources are placed in alphabetical order by author's last name, or by title if the author is unknown.
- If there are a number of sources, students may divide them into types: print, Internet, video.
- The most essential elements of citing a source are: author, title, and date. Each element is separated by punctuation (usually a comma or a period).
- The publication date is generally placed at the end. In the author-date style, the date is placed in parentheses immediately after the author's name.
- Book titles, encyclopedia titles, and magazine titles are italicized. In a handwritten resource list, they may be underlined.
- Direct quotations must be indicated as such by citing the reference directly in the text. This may be done by a footnote or a parenthetical reference. When citing a source directly in a piece of work, the essential elements are the author's name and date, (W. Grommet, 2005); or <exact website> and date consulted. <www.unesco.org> (4 January 2004). Students should also indicate the page number of the quotation if it is from a book or another longer published work.

Recommendations:

- All reference details should be recorded at the time of the first consultation of the source; this avoids problems with relocating the source later on.
- In some cases, all the necessary details are difficult to find or absent (e.g., websites, printed brochures...). In these cases, students should include all the details that will help in retrieving the source.
- Always use the copy-and-paste feature to reproduce a URL (Uniform Resource Locator) or Internet address to avoid errors. Use a separate line for Internet addresses. Students should also note the date they consulted the source, as sites are updated or change frequently. In the case of a very long URL, students should include the home address and specify the links they clicked or the search word they used to reach that page.

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Examples

The following examples are included as suggestions only. Emphasize uniformity and simplicity in resource or reference lists.

Book

Menzel, Peter. *Material World: A Global Family Portrait*. San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club Books, 1994.

or

Menzel, Peter (1994). *Material World: A Global Family Portrait*, San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club Books.

CD-ROM

"Topic", *CD-ROM Title in italics* [CD-ROM], publisher, date.

Note: Place the author at the beginning if indicated in the CD-ROM.

"United Nations," *Canadian Encyclopedia*, [CD-ROM], Historica, 2003.

Newspaper Article

Elliott, L. "Native leaders eyed for key cabinet post," *Winnipeg Free Press*, 16 November 2003.

Personal interview

Smith, John Joseph. World War II veteran, personal interview, 10 November 2003.

Television show

"Fifth Estate," CBC, 15 April 2005.

Video

Canada, a People's History, Episode 10, Taking the West, CBC, 2001.

Website

Include the exact page title, the name of the website (the date posted or last update at bottom of web page), and the date retrieved, followed by the URL link on a separate line or in brackets as follows:

<www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/peace/index.asp>.

United Nations, Cyber School Bus, Peace Education:

<www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/peace/index.asp>