**How to find and read documentation directories**

Let’s say you’ve been assigned to write an essay, and you have to do some research for it. You notice this line on the assignment sheet: Cite your sources in MLA style.

Citing sources is easy once you know how to find and use the documentation directories in A Writer’s Reference.

If you’re like me, you know you’ve used MLA style for other papers, but can’t remember all the rules. But that’s where your handbook comes in. It has sections that cover MLA, APA, and Chicago styles, and each section has lists called directories to help you find the citation models you need. See how the sections are color coded? I’m going to flip to orange for MLA.

Notice that there’s a directory of models that shows how to cite sources in your essay, and one that shows how to cite sources at the end of your essay. You’ll probably have to do both. Let’s say that for your essay, you use a newspaper article and an online video for sources.

Look at the directory on page 393. Skim the headings. See the heading that says “Articles and other short works”? Look for “article in a newspaper.” Did you find your article online? No? Ok, print. There it is--turn to page 434. Follow the model. That’s for citing the source at the end of your paper. The in-text citation model for a newspaper article is in the other directory I mentioned, just as easy to use.

Ok, now an online video. That wouldn’t be under “books and other long works.” Keep going…. “Web sites and parts of Web sites?” No… Audio, visual, and multimedia sources? Bingo. Here’s , “video or audio from the Web.” I follow the page number, and here’s how to cite a YouTube video.

Now you’re familiar with the layout of a directory. Remember that there are directories for all three styles in the handbook. You can go back to these models over and over as you write for all of your courses, not just this one. Good luck!