MLA In-text Citations

Rules for in-text citations:
1. All sources must be introduced in full at first use.
2. After the initial introduction, author name and page number are required in some combination in the text.
3. Readers should always know when a source is speaking; when necessary, use attributive tags to indicate a switch to source information. Sources are referred to in present tense.
4. All quotations should be introduced; no sentence should begin with quotation marks.
5. All quotations should be explained; no paragraph should end with quotation marks.

First Use Example: Jillian Cruze, in “Technologies of the 21st Century,” claims that the newest technologies only “serve to reduce the public into a mass consciousness; they take away agency, identity, and voice” (26). For example, while it may appear that we construct identities through personal Twitter pages, forcing messages into 140 characters tends to produce a language of absence, lacking in detail and description, and ultimately voice.

After First Use: Moreover, these technologies serve to reproduce a mediated reality and “bar us from participating in the real world, as we are so preoccupied with fictional spaces like Facebook, Farmville, and Twitter” (Cruze 26). Users sometimes spend hours constructing fictional worlds, such as in game platforms like Farmville and The Sims, and this does not encourage participation in their own life in a meaningful way.

After First Use: Moreover, Cruze argues that these technologies serve to reproduce a mediated reality and “bar us from participating in the real world, as we are so preoccupied with fictional spaces like Facebook, Farmville, and Twitter” (26). Users sometimes spend hours constructing fictional worlds, such as in game platforms like Farmville and The Sims, and this does not encourage participation in their own life in a meaningful way.

Paraphrase: Some critics posit that society is in technology-overload and that it has had detrimental consequences for identity and perceptions of reality. Specifically, according to Cruze, social networking and gaming tools have created extensions of identity for users, but that identity is fabricated and inauthentic (26).

*Notice that all of the quotations are not only introduced in some way, but also are “unpacked” or explained. This ensures that the sources are used thoughtfully and that the writer remains the primary voice.

To effectively introduce sources, use a variety of lead-ins and action verbs:
- According to Johnson, ….
- Jackson and Thomas, experts in popular culture, found that ….
- Smith and Wess speak to these concerns:
- Cruze insists…….

Example Action Verbs:
- admits
- compares
- insists
- rejects
- agrees
- confirms
- notes
- reports
- argues
- contends
- observes
- responds
- asserts
- declares
- points out
- suggests
- believes
- denies
- reasons
- thinks
- claims
- emphasizes
- refutes
- writes

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