A Guide for Citing Sources

What is a citation?
A citation provides details on a source, such as its title and authors. When you use a source, you give credit to the authors for the information you found with a citation. A list of all your citations is called a bibliography.

Why should you cite?
When you share ideas that are not your own, you need to tell your audience where you found them. This helps others find the same information. When you do not cite a source and take credit for research or an idea that is not your own, you are plagiarizing.

Keep in mind not everything published online, or even in books, is true. Sometimes, authors:
- Make mistakes, such as not understanding the information they found.
- Present only the facts that fit the story they want to tell – and hide the other facts that don’t fit their story. This one-sidedness is called bias, and this type of writing is not truthful because it does not tell the whole story.
- Use outdated information when new discoveries are made about a topic. Everything changes all the time!

By citing your sources, you allow others to check your work and make sure that the information you are using is correct. Likewise, when you use sources cited by others, you can check whether their information is correct.

It’s always good to question sources – especially those used by professionals like museums, libraries and the media – because you want to guarantee that the information you are learning and teaching to others is true.

How do you cite sources?
There are several styles for citing sources in your text and in your bibliography. Different academic fields typically use different styles – ask your teacher or professor which one to use for your assignment. To learn how to correctly format your citations, check out these websites:

- Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab (OWL): General research resources, including guides to different citation styles
- Zotero: Free software program for organizing and citing research
- Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide
- MLA Style Quick Guide

Many museums and research libraries – including us! – specially format citations for sharing their sources. Learn how to correctly cite from the Museum and Memorial’s Collection with this guide.
National WWI Museum and Memorial Citation Style

**Objects from the Online Collections Database**

*Example:*

**Objects from Online Collections Database – Individual Letter(s)**

*Example:*

**Online Exhibits**

*Example:*

**Articles and Website Interactives**

*Example:*

**Exhibitions**
<“Exhibit Title.”> Museum Exhibit. (Kansas City, MO: National WWI Museum and Memorial). Visited <Date of visit>.

*Example:*

Questions on citations? Contact [research@theworldwar.org](mailto:research@theworldwar.org) or call 816.888.8142.