Citing Images in MLA Style: The Caption

You must label all the images you use in your poster with “figure” numbers (the MLA refers to all images as figures) and a short citation. The following is an example:

Fig. 1. Grant, Vernon. *When a Fly Wipes His Feet on Your Food, He’s Spreading Disease!*

Number your images (or figures, as the MLA refers to them) in the order in which they appear on your poster from left to right. In the above example, Vernon Grant is the artist who created the image titled *When a Fly Wipes His Feet on Your Food, He’s Spreading Disease!* You can see that the artist’s last name appears first, followed by the first name and a period. The title of the image is included in italics and usually followed by a period unless there is some other kind of punctuation ending it.

If you don’t know the name of the artist, leave it out. If you don’t know the name of the image, you’ll have to create a short description of it. Below are examples of suitable captions:

**For an image with a title and an identifiable artist:**
Fig. 1. Grant, Vernon. *When a Fly Wipes His Feet on Your Food, He’s Spreading Disease!*

**For an image without a title (note that because the description is not a title, it is not italicized):**
Fig. 3. McVay, Brandon. Photograph of figure skater.

**For an image without an identifiable artist:**
Fig. 4. *Atlanta at Night.*

**For an image without a title or an identifiable artist:**
Fig. 2. Photograph of Atlanta, GA, at night.
Citing Images in MLA Style: The Bibliography

In your bibliography, cite each of the images you use in your poster. The citations should follow the following format:

Artist’s last name, Artist’s first name. Title of Work. Date of image’s creation. Title of Web Site from which You Retrieved the Image. Web. Date you accessed the image in the form of day month year.

An example of an image citation:


In the example above, you can see that the image was created in 1944, but it was accessed on Feb. 28, 2010. It is important to cite this because images can be altered or removed from a web site after you’ve used them.

Below are examples of how to cite an image when you aren’t able to find key pieces of information about the image you’re citing.

For an image without a title, create a short description of the image (note that because your description isn’t an actual title, it should not be italicized):

For an image without an identifiable artist:

For an image without an identifiable date of creation (note the use of “n.d.” instead of a year):

For an image you find in a book: