

Name _____

How to Cite AI as a Source



Objective - By the end of this activity, you will understand how and when to cite an AI tool (like ChatGPT) and how to format citations correctly in your writing.

Understanding When to Cite AI - You should cite AI tools when you directly quote something the AI said, when you paraphrase or summarize content the AI generated, or when you used the AI to produce specific information, analysis, or ideas that appear in your work.

You do not need to cite AI when you used it only for grammar help, organization, or idea brainstorming that did not produce text you included in your work.

How to Cite AI in Different Styles

APA Style (7th Edition, 2024 Update) - AI tools like ChatGPT are non-recoverable sources (they cannot be retrieved by others), so they are treated like personal communications.

In-text citation: (OpenAI, personal communication, October 6, 2025)

Reference entry (optional if required): OpenAI. (2025, October 6). *Response to a question about citing AI sources*. ChatGPT. <https://chat.openai.com/>

MLA Style (9th Edition) - MLA recommends treating AI as the author and including the prompt as a description.

Works Cited entry: OpenAI. *Response to "Explain how to cite AI as a source."* ChatGPT, 6 Oct. 2025, <https://chat.openai.com/>.

In-text citation: (OpenAI)

Guided Practice - Read the example below and follow the process.

Prompt: "Explain the causes of the French Revolution in simple terms."

AI Output: "The French Revolution began because of economic inequality, poor leadership, and a growing demand for citizens' rights."

Student Use: The student paraphrased this explanation in their essay.

Step 1: Decide if a citation is needed. Yes, because the student used the AI's ideas.

Step 2: Choose a citation style. APA Style.

Step 3: Write the in-text citation. (OpenAI, personal communication, December 6, 2026)

Step 4: Add to references (if required).

OpenAI. (2025, October 6). *Response to a question about the causes of the French Revolution*. ChatGPT. <https://chat.openai.com/>