

DOC 2: Justice

USING THE MLA FORMAT TO CITE SUPREME COURT DOCUMENTS

Parenthetical citations in the body of the paper

When citing a Supreme Court case parenthetically (in-text) or referring to it in the body of your essay, underline or *italicize* the case name. Here are several ways to do this.

- For example, you can name the full case in the body of the sentence:

The Court's decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* explicitly signals the... (110).

(Note: only the page number is required in the citation if you name the court case in the sentence. Also, the page in parentheses refers to the pages in the DOC 2 Reader where the case can be found.)

- Or, if you do not write the court case in the sentence, you must use the full title in the parenthetical citation:

The Court's decision to strike down an important provision in the Voting Rights Act complicates this argument (*Shelby County v. Holder* 110).

- After the first mention of the case name in your paper, you can use a shortened version for the remainder of the paper. For example:

While the majority opinion in *Shelby* affirms... (109).

or

...directly relates to the argument for natural rights (*Shelby* 109).

Court Cases on the Works Cited Page

To list a Supreme Court case on your Works Cited page, use the following format:

[Plaintiff] v. [Defendant]. [U.S. Reports Citation]. [Original Page Numbers, if Available].
[Name of the Court]. [Year of the Decision]. [Reprint Information]. Print.

For example, a Works Cited citation of the case *Shelby County v. Holder* would look like this:

Shelby County v. Holder. 570 U.S. Supreme Court. 2013. Rpt. in *Dimensions of Culture 2: Justice*. Ed. Jeff Gagnon, Mark Hendrickson, and Michael Parrish. San Diego: University Readers, 2012. 109-112. Print.

Note that the name of the case is *not* underlined or italicized in its Works Cited entry.

(adapted from *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009.)