

Search Guide: MLA International Bibliography

Search Tips

All keyword searches are, by default, exact phrase searches unless you are using Boolean or proximity operators. This means that MLA looks for exact matches for all of the words you typed into the search box.

MLA Thesaurus

MLA citations feature subject terms taken from the *MLA Thesaurus*, a controlled vocabulary of over 49,000 topical terms and 327,000 names. New subjects and names are regularly added to reflect the state of current scholarship in literature, language, folklore, and linguistics.

Users should note that subject indexing in the bibliography is considerably richer for records from 1981 onwards. Before 1981, MLA bibliographers used a more simplified approach to classification, generally only noting the main concept of each article; for example, 'American Literature -- 1800--1899 -- Hawthorne, Nathaniel', or 'language -- bilingualism' or 'ethnomusicology -- musical instruments'. In 1981, a contextual indexing and faceted taxonomic access system (CIFT) was adopted, whereby which each item is assigned an order sequence of subject descriptors.

Subject descriptors are usually specific terms; appropriate cross-references are provided to similar or related terms in the index. Descriptors define the explicit content: for example, authors are not identified as belonging to groups unless their group identification is treated within the indexed document, and methodological approaches are specified only when they are discussed or clearly applied. Finally, descriptors are assigned for an item if, and only if, users seeking information on the topic indicated by a descriptor would be likely to want to retrieve the item.

MLA Directory of Periodicals

MLA Directory of Periodicals contains all information available on the journals and series on the bibliography's Master List of Periodicals. Over 7,100 titles are included; of these, over 4,400 are currently indexed. The entries list editorial addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses, frequency of publication, descriptions of the periodicals' scopes, circulation figures, subscription prices and addresses, advertising information, and submission guidelines. The directory also provides statistics on how many articles and book reviews the periodicals publish each year, as well as how many are submitted.

Boolean Operators

Boolean operators are used to broaden and narrow your search.

AND Find all the words. When searching for keywords in "Citation and Document Text," AND finds documents in which the words occur in the same paragraph (within approx. 1000 characters) or the words appear in any citation field. Use W/DOC in place of AND when searching for keywords within "Citation and Document Text" or "Document Text" to retrieve more comprehensive results.

Example: Derrida and deconstruction

Find articles which have the first word, but not the second word.

NOT *Example:* deconstruction NOT Foucault

OR Find any of the words.

Example: Foucault OR Derrida

Example Searches

The examples below illustrate the kinds of searches you can build.

1. To find articles on Franz Kafka's *The Trial* :

- From the MLAIB home page, click the Search link, then select Advanced Search
- On the Advanced Search screen, type Kafka in the Author as Subject field.
- Type **Trial** in the Author's Work field (note: you can also search for the original language title, in this case 'Der Prozess')
- Click the **Search** button

Tip: try using the [select from a list](#) >> link to choose exact search terms before you click **Search**

2. To find articles that discuss the influence of Dante on 20th-century American literature:

- From the Advanced Search screen, type **Dante** in the Literary Source field
- Type **American** in the National Literature field
- Type **1900-1999** in the Period field
- Click the **Search** button

3. Find a specific article for which you do not know the author or year, e.g. an article with 'mourning' in the title from volume 13 of *American Drama*

- From the Advanced Search page, type **mourning** in the Title Keyword(s) field
- Type **American Drama** in the Journal field
- Type **13** in the Journal Volume field
- Click the **Search** button

Where to find help

In North America:

- **Technical Support**
Phone: 800-889-3358
Email: tsupport@proquest.com
Web: <http://proquest.com/techsupport>
- **Search Assistance**
Phone: 800-889-3358
Email: technicalsupport@proquest.com
Web: <http://proquest.com/techsupport>
- **Product Help**
Product help and downloadable guides:
http://proquest.com/products_pq/training

Outside of North America:

- **Technical Support**
Email: support@proquest.co.uk
Freephone: 0880 220 710 (UK only)
Telephone: +44 1223 271 496 (Outside of UK)
- **Product Help**
Product help and downloadable guides:
<http://proquest.co.uk/pqtraining>