

A model of how to use quotations and do MLA in-text citations.

Text of part of the paper.

THESIS: Zombies have become very popular in the past 40 years because they can be used to criticize current social or cultural issues, as an exploration of people’s fear of disease and mortality, and, on a lighter side, as a chance to watch mindless, easy-target monsters get wiped out in video-game style.

Comment [E1]: You can decide where your thesis statement would work best in the opening section of the paper. Your instructor may have a specific suggestion for where it would work best depending on the assignment.

maybe a paragraph or two on background about zombies

Zombies make great symbols for criticizing current social issues. Most discussions of zombies in America begin with a reference to George Romero’s 1968 movie *Night of the Living Dead*. That movie inspired several sequels as well as hundreds of other movies about the undead or living dead. For Romero, zombies represented average Americans with a never-ending appetite for shopping for things. Many critics agree that Romero’s work is a “critique of brainless American consumer culture: upon reanimation, the mindless zombie mob congregates around a mall” (Dunnington 2). After seeing any of the living dead movies, it is not hard to see crowds at the mall in a whole new way. Beneath their normal appearances, one can sense an endless hunger for the latest fashions or things on sale.

Comment [E2]: This topic sentence clearly makes reference to the first idea presented in the thesis statement.

Zombies can also be used to comment on American politics. Gail Collins, an editorial writer for *The New York Times*, uses zombies to make fun of the current battle between a few conservative Republicans, Tea Party members, and the majority of money-hungry, big-spending Democrats. “But we’ve entered the era of zombie politics: a small cadre of uninfected humans have to band together and do whatever it takes to protect themselves against the irrational undead” (2). This type of humor makes fun of both groups, but it works to give some perspective on how the heroes, budget cutters, see the hungry enemy, the spenders, who will consume future generations with debt.

Comment [E3]: This direct quote from a source is used to back up the writer’s general comments. Direct quotations should be enclosed in quotation marks and the author’s last name and the page number go in the parenthesis followed by a period outside the parenthesis.

Comment [E4]: Do not end a paragraph with a quotation. You should reflect on its meaning and bring your paragraph to a close with your ideas.

Comment [E5]: Sometimes you may want to introduce your author before you quote from him or her. This is called a **signal phrase**.

Comment [E6]: If you have used the signal phrase with the author’s name, you include only the page number in the parenthesis. Note the period goes after the parenthesis.

a paragraph on how zombies represent non-Christians who do not believe in life after death

Some people who write about zombies see them more as a representation of each person’s deepest fears rather than a comment on society in general. Within our imaginations, death both fascinates and terrifies us. At the end of October when we see nature dying around us, we explore the world of the dead through Halloween and Day of the Dead activities. Any gathering of people on these special days is bound to include a ghost, vampire, or zombie and a performance of Michael Jackson’s “Thriller.” Some people have fun with this, but others see a more serious, frightening side. Zombies really are walking corpses, and they represent what we would look like when our own bodies decompose (“Zombies” 4). People try to have fun with

Comment [E7]: This topic sentence works as a transition from the first section of the paper to the second idea presented in the thesis statement.

Comment [E8]: This is an example of a paraphrase of an idea found in the source. You do not use quotation marks around it, but you do give the author or source credit. There is no author for this section from a website, so you put the title of the page or article in quotation marks and include the page number if you can determine one.

the scary side of life, but maybe, deep down, the laughter is covering a deeper fear of death. A local psychologist said he often sees an increase in nightmares and intensities of phobias in some of his patients during this time of year (Smith). Seeing zombies, goblins, monsters, and ghosts everywhere we look for this one week of the year may remind some people of their deeper fears about death and the afterlife, but it also may be a way for us to acknowledge, share, and deal with them.

Comment [E9]: If you include ideas or information from an interview, you can quote directly using quotation marks or you can paraphrase. This is a paraphrase of what Dr. Smith said. Interviews can be conducted in person, by phone, or by email. If you use a signal phrase with the person's name no citation is necessary, but you must include the interview on the Works Cited page.

Another deep fear of most people is disease. History classes teach about the horrors of the plagues in the Middle Ages. Modern plagues include AIDS, swine and bird flu, cancer, and super-germs that do not respond to antibiotics. Zombies can represent both the devastating effects of disease on the human body as well as the idea of how the infection itself spreads. "Romeroesque Zombies multiply by infecting their victims through the mixing of bodily fluids (saliva, etc.)" ("Zombies" 4). In times of pandemics, people avoid coming close to one another, stay away from social settings, and even avoid travelling. Some wear masks and gloves, and many use hand sanitizer daily. Perhaps people see others as sources of disease and infection. In his book *The Zombie Survival Guide*, Max Brooks is very direct in his use of medical words to describe zombies.

Comment [E10]: I want to make a general comment on this paragraph. It appears to have a lot of quoted material, but it follows the general idea that most of the content of the paragraph is the writer's ideas that are backed up by or illustrated by the quotations used. A common mistake in writing papers using research is to rely too much on the sources. As a general guideline, don't use more than 2 quotes (direct or paraphrased) in a paragraph and make sure that you have used them within your ideas.

Time is on the side of the undead. With each day their ranks will swell, making containment and extermination more and more difficult. Unlike its human counterparts, an army of zombies is completely independent of support. . . . Like the virus that gave it life, this undead force will continue to grow, spreading across the body of this planet until there is nothing left to devour. Where will you go? What will you do? (155)

Comment [E11]: Titles of books, web sites, movies, newspapers, or magazines go in italics. MLA does not use underlining.

Comment [E12]: What's this called when we used the author's name to introduce the quotation?

Comment [E13]: The use of the 3 dots is known as an ellipsis. It is used to indicate that something has been left out of the original source. The period after the word *support* belongs to the sentence.

Brooks managed to write an entire book to answer these questions. His answers suggest that "you" head for the safety of the woods and stock up on weapons and supplies. Fortunately, his book can be found in the humor section of the library.

Comment [E14]: This is an example of a block quotation. It is used when you choose to quote more than four lines from a source. Just to confuse us, MLA does not require quotation marks for this direct quote and it puts the end punctuation at the end of the sentence with nothing after the page number parenthesis. Note the double indentation of the left margin for a block quotation.

several paragraphs about zombie video games and movies like *Shaun of the Dead*

Comment [E15]: The you in this sentence is set off in quotation marks because it shows the writer knows not to use second person you in formal writing. This has a special purpose related to the use of you in the quotation.