**INTERTEXTUAL CITATIONS FOR A POEM**

**To cite one line of a poem, put it in quotation marks, followed by the line number. The first time you cite a line of poetry, use**

**the word “line” before the line number. If there is a source or a page number to include, provide that information first, followed by a semicolon. If you mention the source before the quote, do *not* repeat that information in the parenthetical reference.**

Before the Birth of One of Her Children  [🡨 *This is the title.*  
 ​](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/anne-bradstreet)All things within this fading world hath end,     
 Adversity doth still our joyes attend;  
 No ties so strong, no friends so dear and sweet,     
 But with death’s parting blow is sure to meet.     
 5 The sentence past is most irrevocable,     
 A common thing, yet oh inevitable.  
 ~~Anne Bradstreet

**EXAMPLE:** Bradstreet frames her poem “Before the Birth of One of Her Children” with a sense of mortality: “All things within this fading world hath end” (*poetryfoundation.org*; line 1). She also speaks to the death with extreme calm in establishing that the "sentence past is most irrevocable" and minimizing remorse by describing such an event as merely a "common thing" (5, 6).   
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To cite two or three lines, use a slash between lines; add line numbers at the end. If this is the first quote, use the word “lines.”**

**If the poem spans multiple pages, you will include the page numbers where applicable. This poem is on page 794-95. The break occurs after the second stanza.**

Incident

Once riding in old Baltimore,  
 Heart-filled, head-filled with glee,  
 I saw a Baltimorean  
 Keep looking straight at me.  
  
 5 Now I was eight and very small,  
 And he was no whit bigger,  
 And so I smiled, but he poked out  
 His tongue, and called me, ‘Nigger.’  
  
 I saw the whole of Baltimore  
 10 From May until December;  
 Of all the things that happened there  
 That's all that I remember.   
 ~~Countee Cullen

**EXAMPLE:** Reflecting on the “incident” in Baltimore, Cullen concludes, “Of all the things that happened there / That’s all that I remember” (*Perrine’s Literature* 795; lines 11-12). Cullen further introduces the initial emotional state of the speaker, describing that he was "[h]eart-filled, head-filled with glee" when he "saw a Baltimorean / Keep looking straight at" him (794; 2, 3-4).

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To cite more than three lines (more than four lines of prose), lead to the block quote usually with a colon. Continue with left align and double spacing. Single indent the quoted text; MLA no longer double indents block quotes. End with line numbers *after* the final punctuation. Provide analysis before beginning the next paragraph.** **Below exemplifies a block quote in an essay.**  
  
Elizabeth Bishop’s “In the Waiting Room” is rich in evocative detail:  
  
 It was winter. It got dark  
  
 early. The waiting room  
  
  was full of grown-up people,  
  
 arctics and overcoats,  
  
 lamps and magazines. (*poets.org*; 6-10)  
   
Her short initial sentences present a terse and direct tone, like a person trying simply to make note of the surroundings. The feeling

can seem clinical but also reflects detachment or denial.