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Game/Gaming: How to Play Citation Relay

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CITATION RELAY

A competitive-style classroom relay designed to teach citation writing.

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The University of Northern Colorado, May 2014

<http://library.unco.edu/>

What is Citation Relay?

In the game of Citation Relay, the class is divided into two large groups. These groups are the two teams that will be competing against each other overall. Within each group are smaller teams, usually of only 2 or three people. Each of these teams is responsible for writing the correct citations for whichever item they are given.

The items students are asked to cite are those items most commonly found in student research papers -- for example, a book, a chapter within an edited book, a peer-reviewed journal article, and, if there are enough students in the class, a newspaper article taken from the open Web.

What you will need:

Sources for your groups to cite:

- Academic books (one per large group)
- A print-out of a journal article (one per group)
- A chapter from an edited book or anthology (one per group)
 - Note: Use a post-it on the book's cover and at the start of the appropriate chapter to make it clear to students that a chapter within the text has been marked for citation.
- A print-out of a news article from the open Web, such as [The New York Times](#) or [The Los Angeles Times](#).

Now gather one source of each type above to prepare as bundles for each group.

- Write Citation Answer Keys for the source bundles.
 - Note: These are print-outs of the correct written citations for each of the item within a bundle for the instructor/judges to use in correcting citations. If there are concerns about format discrepancies in the literature, we recommend matching these answer keys to whichever online or print style guide you are providing for students during the relay event.



You will also need:

- A desk bell or small whistle, one per large group.
- A large dry-erase board, or chalkboard, one for each group.
- One colored marker for each group.
- Web-accessible computer terminals, or multiple print copies of citation guides (one per team)

How to Play Citation Relay:

Student teams are arranged in rows, but of course you can figure out whatever works for your classroom. In the sample below (Table 1), there are four rows of desks on each side of the room, and each desk has a mounted computer.

Table 1: classroom arrangement

Group 1	Group 2
Team 1-1 ☆	Team 2-1 ☆
Team 1-2 ▲	Team 2-2 ▲
Team 1-3 □	Team 2-3 □
Team 1-4 *	Team 2-3 *
☹	☹

☆ = book

▲ = journal article

□ = chapter within an edited book or anthology

* = news article from the open web

☹ = impartial, non-student judge

Hand out the materials to each row of students following the diagram above. So the front rows each get the journal articles, the next row the books, etc.

To write their citations allow the students to use standard, accessible sources. For example, your library catalog, and an online APA citation guide. (At Northern Colorado, our APA guide is hosted through LibGuides.) Limiting student access to only these Web sites ensures that students are seeing consistent information in both how citations are written, and in the expectations for their citations in future assignments.

There is one important ground rule to establish with students before they begin:



- All the teams within the group must have their citations completed before the first team can begin writing their citation on the board. This means if a team that is particularly good at citation writing finishes early, they are responsible for helping out other members of their group.

When you say, "Go!" students are allowed to look at their book or article and the two web sites. Working at the computers in front of them, Team members will work together to create the correction citation for their item.

When the entire group is ready, and all citations are agreed to be correct, they return to their seats, and the first team – and only the members of that team – take their marker and run to the front of the room to write their citation. When they are done writing, they ring the bell for their Group's instructor to check the citation.

- If the citation is **correct**, the first Team passes the marker (baton) to the next Team within their Group, that and that Team goes to the board to write their citation.
- If the citation is **incorrect**, the other Teams can help correct the citation. Other Teams may **not** leave their seats. Only one Team from each group can be writing at the white board at a time.
- It's important to note that judges do not provide advice or allow other students to help correct the citation until after each time the students ring the bell. This keeps students focused on the game and prevents the scene from devolving into chaos.
- When the citation is corrected, the Team passes the marker (baton) to the next Team, and the next citation is written on the board.

Because of the element of speed involved in the Relay – it is still surprising to talk about an "element of speed" and citation writing in the same sentence -- it is ideal to have one instructor on hand to "grade" and approve citations for each Group.

Winning Citation Relay:

As you can guess, the first Group that correctly cites all of the sources assigned to its teams is the winner of Citation Relay.



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