

It's more complicated than one might expect trying to judge whether the Kindle is an environmental advance over the book. Traditional book publishing does have a substantial environmental cost, each year accounting for the loss of 125 million trees (in this country alone) and the production of 153 billion gallons of waste water (Salkever). A recent study by the media research company the Cleantech Group claims that, compared to conventional book publishing, the Kindle and other e-readers represent a substantial savings in carbon emissions; researcher Emma Ritch writes that "The roughly 168 kg of CO2 produced through the Kindle's lifecycle is a clear winner against the potential savings: 1,074 kg of CO2 if replacing three books a month for four years" (qtd. in LaMonica). It seems a difficult comparison to make, balancing the energy costs associated with production, transportation, and consumption of paper books vs. e-books. Furthermore, the assumptions given about how many books the user will download and how long he or she will keep the device before upgrading may not be valid, making the conclusions arrived at by Ritch and Cleantech less clear. The environmental costs associated with disposal are similarly unclear. The paper from books and newspapers makes up more than one-quarter of the volume of landfills in this country (Salkever), but the plastic and undisclosed chemicals in e-readers may also pose environmental hazards, according to a campaign coordinator for the international environmental activist group Greenpeace (Hutsko). To some observers, the Kindle represents yet another disposable device to add to consumers' arsenal of electronic appliances. A more environmentally friendly option for consumers may be to use the Kindle app to read books on the cell phones they already have (Salkever), or even, as Greenpeace coordinator Casey Harrell suggests half in jest, to return to the public library (Hutsko).

Holly Pappas 4/19/10 3:56 PM

Comment: Note that although I want to grab these figures I don't need the exact wording, so I've tried to change both the words and the sentence structure. (A synonym for "waste water" would be better, but I couldn't think of one.) Then in parentheses I give the last name author of article from which this information was taken. Note that the period you'd expect to come inside the closing quotation mark is moved to outside the closing parenthesis.

Holly Pappas 4/19/10 4:07 PM

Comment: Note that this is a quote **within** my source LaMonica. In this case, the person who wrote/spoke the quote must be acknowledged in my sentence (since she will not be named on the Works Cited page). What I need in the in-text citation is the name that will link to the correct Works Cited entry, but because LaMonica was not himself responsible for the words quoted, MLA uses the abbreviation qtd. in, for quoted in, to indicate that.