Plays in MLA Format: Parenthetical Citations

The Rules:

- Just as you do in parenthetical citations for other types of sources, you must **include the author** if the author is not already named in the signal phrase.

- Use Arabic numbers to **identify the act number, scene number, and line number(s)** of the quote. Separate the act number, scene number, and line number(s) with periods.
  
  **Example:**
  Many people have heard the advice Polonius gives his son in *Hamlet*: “This above all, to thine own self be true.” (Shakespeare 1.3.78).

- If the play has no line numbers, use the page number instead.
  
  **Example:**
  In *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Anne tells Miep “I can smell the wind and the cold on your clothes.” (Hackett 2.1.58).

- If the play **is** divided into acts or scenes, but does not have line numbers, list any information that is available along with the page number.
  
  **Example:**
  Linda encourages her husband to have faith in Biff, saying “He’ll find his way” (Miller 2.983).

- If the play **is not** divided into acts or scenes, but **does** include line numbers, use the rules for poetry. The first time you quote from that work, write the word “line” in the parenthetical citation. In subsequent quotes, only the line number is necessary.
  
  **Example:**
  Oedipus first hears of the “king called Laius” and his death from Creon, but at that point, Sophocles provides few details (line 119). It is only through the testimony of a Messenger, a Herdsman, and Jocasta that Oedipus understands his “accursed” situation (1251).