Using the MLA Database

The MLA database is the standard resource for English majors and professional English instructors at the university level. It contains tens of thousands of essays, books, and conference papers on all subjects related to language and literature. This will be the place you need to go for your articles.

Here's how you use it.

Go to the WSU library web site (http://library.weber.edu).* In the menus along the bottom, you'll see one that says "find." Underneath it is "articles and databases." Click on that.

Next, you'll see this:

Next, you'll have to select the database you want. This is a two-step process. First, you'll see this:

You'll need to click the "title" tab. Once you do this, you'll be able to find databases by the first letter in their names. It looks like this:
From that dropdown menu (with the "A" in it), select the Ms:

Not sure where to start? Try Academic Search Premier

Once you select that, you'll be faced with all the databases beginning with "M." Click on "MLA Bibliography."

MAS FullTEXT Ultra
Provides full text for nearly 460 gene magazines.

MDX Health Digest
Full-text consumer health database with questions, 1988 - present, updates m

MEDLINE (EbscoHost)
All fields of medicine, nursing, dentistry, the pre\-clinical sciences from journal to present.

MLA Bibliography
MLA International Bibliography has citations for books and dissertations. 1963 to the
Once you do that, you'll find yet another choice: two different MLA databases.

Choose Databases
To search within a single database, click the database next to the databases and click Continue.

Select the "MLA International Bibliography."
Whew. That's it.

Now you can search. Here's a search for Matthew Arnold's famous poem, "Dover Beach":

Just type your search terms in that "Find" box and hit "search." You can limit them in a variety of ways (for instance, if you want to find only texts published between certain dates, or in certain languages, or only from "peer-reviewed" journals. Most importantly, you can limit your search to only return results accompanied by an online version. This will be very useful, but may not return the best results.

Here's what the results look like:
The first result is an essay called "Robert Frost's Liberal Imagination" and is contained in a book called Roads Not Taken: Rereading Robert Frost. The book was edited by Earl J. Wilcox and Jonathan Barron, and was published by the U of Missouri Press in 2000. The second result is from the same book.

The third result is a journal article called "Patterns of Intermittence in Arnold's 'Dover Beach'" and was written by Franco Marucci. It was published in the South Carolina Review, volume 14, in May of 1999. It can be found on pages 261-280. The fourth result is also a journal article. This one is from the Iowa Review (a major journal of poetry) in 1998, volume 28, issue 3, and is on pages 104-127.

Make sense?

Here's where things get interesting. See how the search says "this title is not held locally"? That means our library either doesn't have the book or doesn't have a subscription to the journal. You will have to use interlibrary loan to get it.

But look at the last result in this picture. See where it says "linked full text" at the bottom? That means we have a copy of it online. If you click that, you can get, usually, both a web page version of it and a PDF scan of the original. I recommend the PDF, because it will have the page numbers.

* These instructions assume you will be doing this from on-campus.