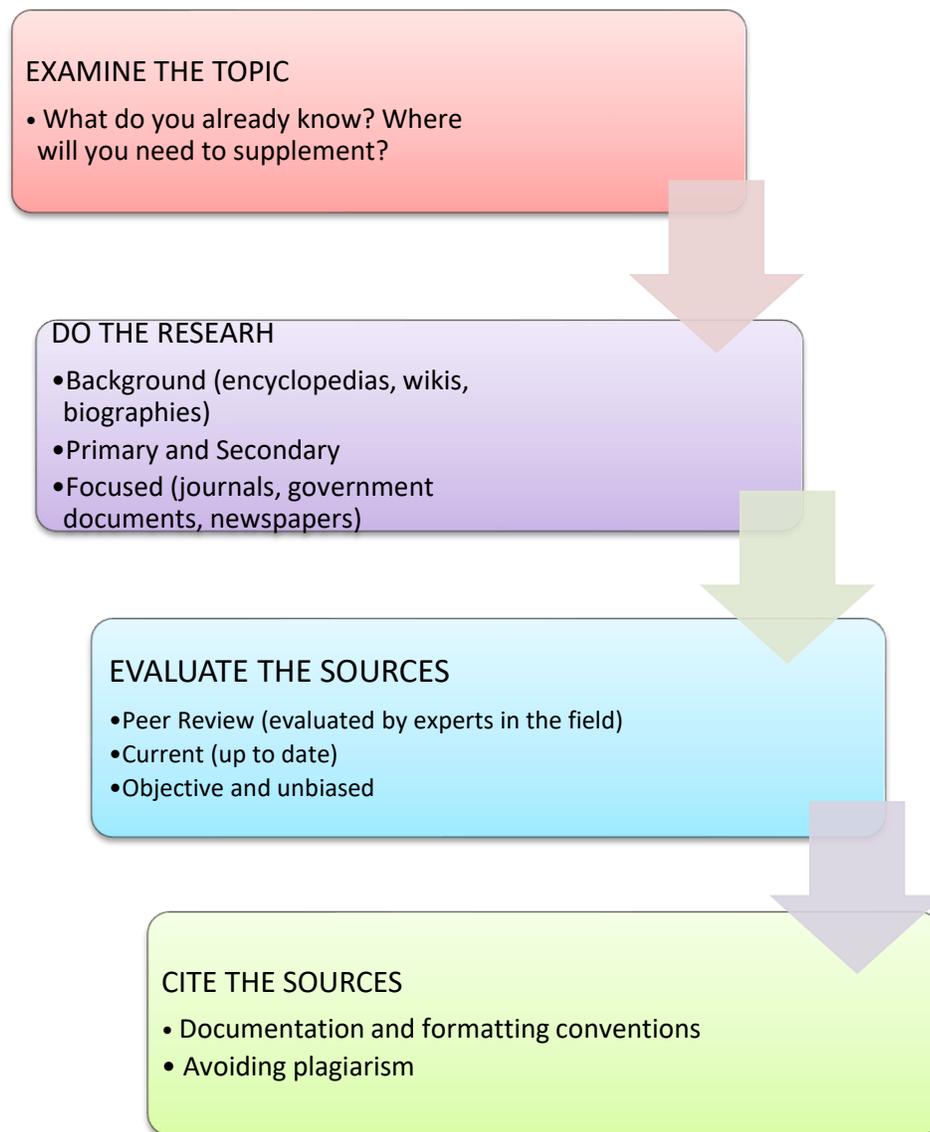


Use Your Resources Wisely

The Flow of Information



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Writing Program

Paraphrasing, Summarizing, and Quoting Your Information

College-level writing means raising the quality level of how you use your source material. What we're teaching you is standard in our field, and our job is to show you what's appropriate and what isn't.

In the examples following, we've defaulted to the citation methodology used in the English Department; however, quoting, summarizing, paraphrasing, and documenting each vary slightly depending on the field of study. Not all forms of documentation are appropriate in every case, and as young professionals, students should learn the exceptions and expectations.

Direct quotation is the action of using someone else's words to add weight or authority to what you're saying or to make sure that your reader hears the original speaker's voice. When quoting, use quotation marks around the words or phrases, and always give the source as well. A quotation puts the words of the original in a prominent position in your argument, so be sure that the words are worth quoting.

When to Quote:

- 1 – When the original phrasing is distinct and perfect for your purposes
- 2 – When the source adds authority to your purpose (in other words, when that authority would be lost by paraphrasing)
- 3 – When you, as the writer, are about to disagree; you'll need the exact quote to be fair to your reader
- 4 – When paraphrasing would dilute the effectiveness of your essay by substituting a lot of words for a few perfect ones

The Technique:

- 1 – The first time you quote someone, introduce your source fully and indicate what that person's authority is.
- 2 – Vary how you introduce quotations so that your style loosens up and your reader enjoys the process.
- 3 – Always provide a source notation for your reader and always provide quotation marks.
- 4 – Quotations are precisely identical to their original, word for word and punctuation mark for punctuation mark.

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To **summarize** a source is to **capture, briefly, the main points of the source**. For example:

The article “Teen Birth Rates” by Douglas Smith goes over the skyrocketing rates of birth to teen parents from the 1970s to 2000. These rates, he claims, can be directly related to the increase in abstinence-only educational policies, whose effectiveness has been widely debated.

Students frequently make the mistake of not summarizing but **describing** the source’s information. That mistake looks like this:

The Smith article talks about the birth rates in teens from the 1970s and the 2000s. It also discusses changes in abstinence-only education policies and whether they work.

The writer has probably read the material, but there’s no summarizing of the information. A true summary would answer the questions, not just list the questions: what are the birth rates? Have they gone up or down since the 1970s? What changes in abstinence-only education did the article mention, and does the article claim that these programs do work or that they don’t work?

When to Summarize:

- 1 – When you need to provide a quick overview of the entire source prior to using a small part of it
- 2 – When you’re comparing two sources’ coverage of an idea in order to draw your own conclusions

The Technique:

- 1 – Briefly sum up the highlights, without much detail
- 2 – Provide a source notation for the reader

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Distinct from summarizing is **paraphrasing**, in which you restate—entirely in your own words and sentence structures—a passage from an article or other source. In a paraphrase, you don't just hit the highlights as you would in a summary; a paraphrase **re-says** what you read, in words that make it clear that you understand the material. Words that you use in a paraphrase are *your own words*. Sentences in your paraphrase do not resemble the sentences in the original. There are many ways to paraphrase acceptably; your teacher is the final judge.

Original: *There is often great wisdom in comic strips. In 1976, Charles Schultz had Snoopy write a book on theology called "Has it ever occurred to you that you might be wrong?" In 1980, he had Linus ask his Sunday School teacher the exact same question. Imagine the results if more people accepted their religion as the best faith for them, but at the same time recognized that there are other religions which teach about other deities, other systems of morality, other religious practices, etc. Yet almost all of them motivate people to lead better lives. There might be fewer people willing to defend their particular religion by oppressing or killing followers of other religions and spiritual paths.*

Acceptable paraphrase: *The truths we can discover in comic strips can be profound, despite the humorous context; Peanuts author Charles Schulz once drew the blanket-carrying Linus asking his Sunday School teacher, "Has it ever occurred to you that you might be wrong?" The truth we can determine here is clear: what if the similarities between spiritual teachings outweigh the differences? What might happen if instead of attempting to stifle other teachings, we embraced the truths that our own beliefs might be wrong? We might see a true spiritual tolerance begin to emerge. (source annotation)*

When to Paraphrase:

- 1 – When the precise wording of the original is unnecessary
- 2--When you're working with several different sources, only one or two of which you plan to quote directly.

The Technique:

- 1 – Restate entirely in your own words
- 2 – Always provide a source notation for your reader
- 3 – Be careful that you are not simply substituting synonyms for individual words

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Here's an example of all three kinds of moves. The material is from an article titled "Learning to Be Your Own Best Defense in a Disaster", published in the **New York Times** by writer Tara Parker-Pope:

How prepared are you for an emergency? One sign is your behavior during the office fire drill. Do you stop working and make the walk down the stairs to the exit? Or do you stay at your desk, ignoring the alarm and pleadings of the security staff? I confess to being one of those employees who has routinely blown off the fire drill. But it was at my own peril. During the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, my offices in the World Financial Center were evacuated, but I didn't have a clue how to get out because I had never used the stairs during a drill. Fortunately, a co-worker led the way. Whether it's taking part in a fire drill, getting to know your neighbors or listening to the flight attendant's safety talk, there are several simple steps we can all take to improve our odds in an emergency. While most discussions of disaster preparedness focus on community resources, the most important variable in an emergency is your own behavior (*"Learning to Be Your Own Best Defense in a Disaster"*).

Quoting:

*Tara Parker-Pope, writer for the **New York Times**, admits that during the attacks of September 11, 2001, she didn't know how to follow the orders to evacuate. She writes, "I didn't have a clue how to get out because I had never used the stairs during a drill" ("Learning to Be Your Own Best Defense in a Disaster").*

Summarizing:

*In her **New York Times** article, Tara Parker-Pope points out that we are often at fault for not knowing how to respond to emergencies. When we do not go through the emergency drills as required, we don't learn the proper methods to protect ourselves ("Learning to Be Your Own Best Defense in a Disaster").*

Paraphrasing:

*We may be our own worst enemies when it comes to being prepared for disasters, according to Tara Parker-Pope of the **New York Times**. Relating the story of her own negligence during office fire drills, Parker-Pope shows the near-disaster she escaped only by relying on others: because she had ignored the drills, she had no idea that she was supposed to use the stairs rather than the elevator during the attacks on the*

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World Trade Center. She was lucky to find a co-worker who had paid attention during fire drills, and she cautions us now that we can save our own lives by paying attention during emergency preparedness drills” (“Learning to Be Your Own Best Defense in a Disaster”).

To give another example of how professors explain these details, here’s one from the English Department. Andy Dehnart’s worksheet uses **MLA style documentation**.

Sample passage from a text:

Not for nothing, though, was Harry the youngest Seeker in a century. He had a knack for spotting things other people didn’t. After a minute’s weaving about through the whirl of rainbow features, he noticed a large silver key that had a bent wing, as if it had already been caught and stuffed roughly into the keyhole. “That one!” he called to the others.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone

By J.K. Rowling, page 280

Attribution with quoted material

- **Attribution** tells the reader where the information came from

Harry Potter “had a knack for spotting things other people didn’t,” Rowling writes.

Attribution with quotes and MLA Citation

- **Citations** allow the reader to find the original source

Harry Potter “had a knack for spotting things other people didn’t,” Rowling writes (280).

In the first Harry Potter book, we learn that Harry Potter “had a knack for spotting things other people didn’t” (Rowling 280).

Quotation marks with citation

- **Quotation** marks indicate material that you did not write

Rowling explains that Harry Potter “had a knack for spotting things other people didn’t” (280).

Modifying a quotation

- If you need to make a quotation work grammatically in a sentence, mark

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changes with [brackets], or eliminate sections with an...ellipsis.

Harry Potter “[has] a knack for spotting things other people didn’t. After a minute’s weaving...he noticed a large silver key” Rowling writes.

from the sky. Instead, integrate it into the text.

“He had a knack for spotting things other people didn’t,” Rowling writes.

Using full-sentence quotations

- If you use a full sentence, do not just drop it into the paragraph as if it fell

Credit Where Credit is Due

Formally acknowledging what others have written before you is a feature of good academic writing and presentations. If a writer uses the ideas, words, images, software sound of someone else, credit must be given to the original author or work. Not to do so results in **plagiarism**. Plagiarism is using ideas, quotes, software, etc., as if they were one’s own without crediting the original author or work. Stetson has an official policy regarding plagiarism in the Student Code of Conduct. Purposeful violations of the Honor Code render students liable for disciplinary action. Thus it’s in your best interests to learn, carefully and completely, how to avoid charges of academic dishonesty.

We know that most students coming to Stetson have no intention of plagiarizing. Even when the plagiarism is accidental, however, students have to be held accountable for it. Plagiarism is simple to define: [it’s using someone else’s ideas, words, or research](#). So many ways to commit plagiarism exist that we can’t list them all here, but some of the most common forms include the following:

- ✚ inadequate paraphrasing of reference material
- ✚ copying and pasting sentences, paragraphs, or entire essays from electronic sources without documenting
- ✚ imitating published or non published sources without documenting the source
- ✚ buying an essay from a friend, website, or any other source
- ✚ recycling an essay that you’ve written for another course

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BE SMART

1. Always keep proper records of your materials
2. When you use them, document them correctly
3. When you **quote**, don't change any words; when you **paraphrase**, restate the entire argument in your own words (sentence structures included).
4. Whether you're quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing, you are still working with someone else's materials; you must always document your sources. There are no exceptions.

In college, we have several ways to indicate that a source being used. For example, we use **quotation marks**. We can offer a **parenthetical reference** to a page number, and we can indicate an electronic source by **mentioning the author's name** in our own text and **providing a link** to the original location in the bibliography.

Plagiarism is simple to avoid, so even unintentional plagiarism is unnecessary. The bottom line is very clear: **always cite your sources**. Always document your quotations. And when you're not sure about whether you need to document a quote, go ahead.

Visit the [Stetson University Writing Program website](#) for discussion of plagiarism:

Visit Stetson's [duPont-Ball Library website](#) for discussion of plagiarism:

Look at this [video tutorial](#) from San Jose State University for further discussion of plagiarism.

Or look at this [site](#) for further explanation of plagiarism and how to avoid it.

Here's another way to be sure that you understand the distinctions between paraphrasing and plagiarizing: an original passage, followed by several student answers. Ask your professor to go over this section in class so that everyone understands completely, and **be sure to ask how your professor wants you to handle these situations.**

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ORIGINAL PASSAGE

There is often great wisdom in comic strips. In 1976, Charles Schultz had Snoopy write a book on theology called: "*Has it ever occurred to you that you might be wrong?*" In 1980, he had Linus ask his Sunday School teacher the exact same question. Imagine the results if more people accepted their religion as the best faith for them, but at the same time recognized that there are other religions which teach about other deities, other systems of morality, other religious practices, etc. Yet almost all of them motivate people to lead better lives. There might be fewer people willing to defend their particular religion by oppressing or killing followers of other religions and spiritual paths. ("Which Religion, if any, is the True One?")

<u>Student Version</u>	<u>Discussion</u>
1. Imagine the results if more people accepted their religion as the best faith for them, but at the same time recognized that there are other religions which teach about other deities, other systems of morality, other religious practices, etc.	<u>Plagiarism</u> . Passage is quoted word for word without quotation marks or documentation.
2. Imagine the results if more people accepted their religion as the best faith for them, but at the same time recognized that there are other religions which teach about other deities, other systems of morality, other religious practices, etc ("Which Religion").	<u>Plagiarism</u> . Documentation suggests that the passage has been paraphrased; however, documentation is not enough to avoid plagiarism. Entire passage must be enclosed in quotation marks as well as accurately documented.
3. "Imagine the results if more people accepted their religion as the	<u>Correct</u> . Since the words are those of the original author, the whole passage is

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<p>best faith for them, but at the same time recognized that there are other religions which teach about other deities, other systems of morality, other religious practices, etc. Yet almost all of them motivate people to lead better lives” (“Which Religion”).</p>	<p>contained within quotation marks. The documentation acknowledges the source. To make this work well in an essay, the student would need to integrate the quotation so that it does not appear to be a “dropped” quotation.</p>
<p>4. If people would just accept that their religion may be best only for them, maybe fewer people would want to defend their particular religion by oppressing or killing the followers of other religions (“Which Religion”)</p>	<p><u>Plagiarism.</u> Inadequate paraphrase provides accurate documentation but presents as “paraphrased” text that is too close to the original or is taken word for word. An acceptable paraphrase completely restates the original wording and sentence structure. All quoted material must be surrounded by quotation marks.</p>
<p>5. According to “Which Religion, If Any, is the True One?”, most belief systems are similar in that they encourage us to be better people. The article asks that we “imagine the results if more people accepted their religion as the best faith for them” and allowed others the same freedom of belief. Perhaps, as the authors put it, the result would be “fewer people willing to defend their particular religion by oppressing or killing followers of other religions” (“Which Religion”).</p>	<p><u>Correct.</u> The student writer includes many of her own words but is careful to enclose in quotation marks those portions that are the original author’s words. The documentation acknowledges the source. Note also the smooth blending of quoted material into the student’s sentences. The student has indicated very clearly the separation between her own ideas and those of the source.</p>

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