

# STETSON UNIVERSITY

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## Writing Center

### **Incorporating Sources Effectively**

- **Why is it important to incorporate sources effectively?**
  - It builds credibility with the reader.
  - It provides the paper or argument with necessary support that helps prove your thesis.
  - It provides a factual basis for your argument.
  - It demonstrates a certain level of effort and scholarship from the writer.
- **Steps to Integrating Sources**
  - **Step One: Understanding the source's strengths and limitations.**
    - This can be thought of as a multi-step process:
      - ❖ Read your assignment carefully so that you understand what you are being asked to do.
      - ❖ Select appropriate sources for your argument.
      - ❖ Think about what role your sources will play in your argument/assignment. (Ex: Does the source serve as an authoritative voice in support of your claim? If so, do not necessarily rely on this one source.)
      - ❖ Decide whether to summarize, paraphrase, or quote the source.
      - ❖ Use signal phrases or other strategies to integrate the source.
      - ❖ Has the source shaped your argument by raising a question, suggesting a line of thinking, or providing a provocative quotation?
    - Tips for choosing a source
      - ✓ When selecting and using sources, do not forget that this is your paper, not the source's paper.

- ✓ When selecting sources, do not merely read the abstract and decide to use the source.
- ✓ Do not ignore a source because it disproves your argument!
- Questions to ask when evaluating online sources
  - ✓ Who wrote the source? Is the author listed, and if so, do they have credibility problems?
  - ✓ Is the source accurate and credible? Can this information verified in another source? Does the source appear to contain bias?
  - ✓ Does the source come from an academic source?
- **Step Two: Actually Integrating the Source into your writing**
  - We will review three techniques:
    - ❖ Framing the source material.
    - ❖ Signal phrases.
    - ❖ Quoting and paraphrasing.
  - **Framing:**
    - ❖ Framing a source is introducing the source in your own words and giving a brief analysis.
    - ❖ This gives the reader an idea of the purpose of the source in your paper, and a transition from your ideas to the support provided by the source.
    - ❖ This should occur throughout the document, starting with the topic sentence.
      - Example: Mandelbum's historiography of Major League Baseball can prove useful to the creation and utilization of symbolic capital in the National Basketball Association.
  - **Signal Phrases:**
    - ❖ Signal Phrases are introductory clauses that signals to the reader a shift in point of view from you to your source.
    - ❖ They are like transitions for sources! Think of them like turn signals for sources: they are marking when you want to make a transition from the scholars' viewpoint to your own.

- Example: Celeste Jones notes the apparent contradictions in the existing literature.

- Example Signal Phrases: *Argues, Notes, observes, Acknowledges, Suggests, Addresses, Asserts, Believes, Claims, Comments, Compares, Confirms, Contends, Declares, Denies, Disputes, Emphasizes, Notes, Observes, Refutes*

- **Quoting and Paraphrasing:**

- ❖ book, with acknowledgment of the source
- ❖ Paraphrasing: A restatement of a text or passage in another form or other words, with acknowledgement of the source
- ❖ Quoting or paraphrasing without citing the source is plagiarism!
- ❖ Why paraphrase?
  - It is better than quoting information from an undistinguished passage.
  - It helps you control the temptation to quote too much.
  - The mental process required for successful paraphrasing helps you to grasp the full meaning of the original.

**Example for Practice:** *Which one is correctly paraphrased?*

The quote: "Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final [research] paper. Therefore, you should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes."

Lester, James D. *Writing Research Papers*. 2nd ed. (1976): 46-47.

1. In research papers students often quote excessively, failing to keep quoted material down to a desirable level. Since the problem usually originates during note taking, it is essential to minimize the material recorded verbatim (Lester 46-47).
2. Students often use too many direct quotations when they take notes, resulting in too many of them in the final research paper. In fact, probably only about 10%

of the final copy should consist of directly quoted material. So it is important to limit the amount of source material copied while taking notes.