

Writing Center Handouts

Incorporating Sources Effectively

Why is it important to incorporate sources effectively?

- It shows academic honesty.
- It gives credit to the original authors.
- It demonstrates your sources are of good quality and your paper is well-researched.
- It provides the paper or argument with necessary support.
- It demonstrates a certain level of effort and scholarship from the writer.

Steps to Integrating Sources

1) Evaluate 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.
- ✓ Do not merely read the abstract and decide to use the source.
- ✓ Do not ignore a source because it disagrees with your argument.

When evaluating **online** sources, ask:

- ✓ Who wrote the source? Is the author listed, and if so, what is their credibility?
- ✓ Is the source accurate and credible? Can this information be verified by another source? Does the source appear to contain bias?
- ✓ Does the source come from academic researchers or organizations?

2) Integrating the Source into Your Writing

Listed are three potential techniques for source incorporation:

- a. Framing
- b. Signal Phrases
- c. Quoting and Paraphrasing

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.
- Ex: Mandelbaum's historiography of Major League Baseball can prove useful to the creation and utilization of symbolic capital in the National Basketball Association.

Signal Phrases are introductory clauses that signal to the reader a shift in point of view from you to your source.

- Think of them like turn signals for sources; they mark when you want to make a transition from the scholars' viewpoint to your own.
- Ex: Celeste Jones notes the apparent contradictions in the existing literature.

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

Quoting and Paraphrasing occurs when you directly reference or rephrase the source material.

- Quoting or paraphrasing without citing the source is *plagiarism*
- Whether you cite directly or paraphrase is up to your rhetorical purposes and varies in citation styles.
- Examples with APA formatting:
 - Quotation
Studies have shown that "students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes" (Lester, 2020, p. 46), which can often take away from student understanding and opinion.
 - Paraphrase
While note taking, students often quote excessively, failing to keep quoted material down to a desirable level (Lester, 2020).