

SOCC WRITING CENTER

QUOTING, PARAPHRASING, AND SUMMARIZING

When to use a direct quotation:

- A) When you especially admire the way your source phrases a point – when his/her words say the idea best and you'd lose something if you paraphrased.
- B) When you need your source's terms – your source makes use of a vocabulary (set of specific terms) that you wish to use throughout your paper.
- C) When you want to argue against someone – when you let your opponent speak for himself, you can be sure you haven't misrepresented him. You can more effectively show the flaws in his/her argument by pointing to his/her words.

Quotation Form:

- A) Don't just quote: – Every quotation in your paper is like a miniature guest speaker. If the guest is not properly introduced, the significance of the things he/she is saying will be lost on your audience.
- B) Fit all bits and pieces into the grammar of your sentences – make the reading flow.
- C) Short quotations – less than four lines, are placed in quotation marks and integrated into the body of your paper.
- D) Long quotations – four lines or more, are blocked, indented 10 spaces (2 tabs or 1 inch), double spaced, and have NO quotation marks.
- E) If you add your own words to a quotation – bracket the words you've added, e.g. : He states that “it [Freshman Composition] is a royal pain in the keester” (Unger 36). Do NOT use parentheses, since they mean something altogether different.

The Research Paper: Acceptable and Unacceptable Incorporation of Reference Material

Suppose you have the quotation that follows: “The emotional cycles of individual men vary with the individual from 16 to 63 days; the average length for men is about five weeks.”

What are the ways that the quotation might be incorporated? Here are both acceptable and unacceptable ways.

Acceptable Incorporation

1. In his book Cycles: The Mysterious Forces that Trigger Events, Edward R. Dewey reports that the human male also has normal predictable emotional cycles. In reporting the work of Professor Rex Hersey of the University of Pennsylvania, Dewey says, “The emotional cycles of individual men vary with the individual from 16 to 63 days; the average length for men is about five weeks.”

2. The emotional cycles of individual men, according to Edward R. Dewey in a report on research, are predictable; although the cycles vary from 16 to 63 days, an average man will experience “high” emotions every five weeks.

Notice that even though you paraphrase the author’s words and cite his name in the text, you still must note the source. Most likely 10% or less of your paper will consist of direct quotation.

Unacceptable Incorporation

1. “The emotional cycle of individual men vary with the individual from 16 days to 63 days; the average length for men is about five weeks.” Human males have emotional cycles that are normal and can be predicted.

Do not begin with the quotation, the supporting evidence. As with any well-written paragraph, you should begin with a generalization or topic sentence, and follow with your evidence, which includes the quotation.

2. Human males have emotional cycles that are normal and can be predicted. “The emotional cycles of individual men vary with the individual from 16 to 63 days; the average length for men is about five weeks.”

The quotation occurs too abruptly; as a result, there is no indication of its relevance to the paragraph or the overall argument. Do not begin a sentence with the first words of a quotation; use a transition form to show its logical connection to your essay and its original authorship.

3. Human males have emotional cycles that are normal and can be predicted. This can be seen in the following quote: “The emotional cycles of individual men vary with the individual from 16 to 63 days; the average length for men is about five weeks.”

When you introduce a quotation, avoid wordiness, ambiguity (what does “this” mean?) and misuse of the word “quote.”

Methods of Incorporating Reference Material

Direct quotations can be introduced in several ways. By using a variety of verbs and sentence patterns, you can incorporate the quotations and ideas smoothly into your text. Each direct quotation or paraphrase should be carefully and thoughtfully synthesized into your writing; otherwise, your paper will lack effectiveness – the primary purpose in writing.

The following verbs and sentence patterns can be used according to the needs of your paper. Remember that paraphrases should also be introduced and must be attributed.

1. In a recent article, (your author) comments that

2. (Your author) believes that “. . . .”
3. Similarly, (your author) proposes that the problem becomes “. . . .”
4. (Your author) stipulates that “. . . .”
5. (Your author) makes this conclusion, “. . . .”
6. (Your author) reports that “. . . .”
7. “. . . . ,” suggests one author.
8. (Your author) concludes that (paraphrase)
9. . . . , according to (your author) , (paraphrase)
10. (Your author) verifies this theory by stating (paraphrase)
11. This idea is accepted by (your author) (paraphrase)
12. (Your author) adds that(paraphrase)

Other verbs that are equally good are listed here:

admit		mention		show
affirm		observe		submit
argue		propose		summarize
believe	rely		think	
confirm		reveal		theorize
contend		see		
declare	say			
demand		state		

Remember, in most papers, not more than one-fifth of the paper should be quoted material. You should intersperse the quotations and paraphrases with your own ideas, inferences, and beliefs. Synthesis of all the ideas is critical to a good documented paper.

When to Paraphrase

A paraphrase (or indirect quotation, as it is also called) restates another person’s ideas in your own words. Unlike a summary, it is used with short passages – usually a sentence or two – and it does not condense or shorten the original.

Paraphrasing is necessary because as you incorporate your source material into your

paper, you cannot string together a series of quotation from a variety of sources. The material must be integrated into a consistent and even style. Also, by recasting the ideas of your sources into your own words, you maintain control over the material and can more easily use it to support and develop your own views. If you have trouble restating a passage, you probably do not understand it thoroughly. Ideas that are paraphrased have been assimilated, a process far different from copying material word for word.

As with summaries, paraphrases must be accurate, undistorted, and *completely* rewritten into you own wording and sentence structure. The most blatant form of plagiarism is following too closely the wording of another writer while giving the impression that the wording is your own. To avoid plagiarism in you paraphrases (or summaries), consider the following suggestions:

1. Rearrange the order of the information in the original.
2. Have a thesaurus or dictionary handy and look up synonyms for key words.
3. Rephrase complex material into easy-to-understand sentences.
4. If you retain unusual terminology or phrases from the original, enclose them in quotation marks.

Original: With their strange haircuts and hello-Dali lyrics, the Pixies are déjà vu rebels, college radio's latest great white hope.

Weak paraphrase: The rock group Pixies are déjà vu rebels appearing to college students with the hello-Dali lyrics.

The phrases "déjà vu rebels" and "hello-Dali lyrics" should be in quotation marks, if they are used at all, because they are unique phrases of the original.

Acceptable paraphrase: One critic notes that the "hello-Dali lyrics" of the Pixies rock group have made them popular with college students.

Or

The Pixie's visual and lyrical eccentricity, reminiscent of the rebellion of earlier times, makes them popular on college campuses.

Documenting Paraphrases and Using Lead-Ins (signal phrases)

Since you must acknowledge the source of all ideas that are not your own, you must provide documentation with all paraphrases. As with summaries, source information can be identified with your choice of one of three stylistic options. Documentation can be placed (1) entirely in the narrative of the text, (2) partly in the text and partly in parentheses, or (3) entirely in parentheses. See below.

Options for Lead-ins (signal or tag phrases)

As explained earlier, whenever you place information about the source in the narrative of your paper, you are creating a *lead-in* or *signal* or *tag phrase*. The first time you cite a source, it is preferable to give both first and last name and some information about the author. A lead-in or signal phrase can be placed at the beginning, as in the following paraphrase (lead-in is underlined):

MLA: James Prochaska, a professor at Harvard's medical school, stated that more than 300,000 Americans die annually as a direct result of tobacco smoking (31).

APA: Prochaska (1992), a professor at Harvard's medical school, states that . . . smoking (p. 31).

A lead-in can be placed in the middle (lead-in is underlined):

MLA: Despite the fact that the U.S. public has been warned for years about the serious health threat posed by tobacco smoking, James Prochaska, a professor at Harvard's medical school, believes that more than 300,000 Americans die annually as a direct result . . . (31).

APA: Despite the fact . . . Prochaska (1992), a professor at Harvard's Medical school, believes that . . . result . . . (p. 31).

Or a tag can be placed at the end (tag is underlined):

MLA: More than 300,000 Americans die annually as a direct result of Tobacco smoking, asserts James Prochaska, a professor at Harvard's medical school (31).

APA: More than 300,000 Americans . . . smoking, asserts Prochaska (1991), a professor at Harvard's medical school (p. 31).

Literary Present Tense

Even though most sources have been written in the past, it is preferable to cast all lead-ins, signal phrases or tags in "literary present tense." Note that any number of active verbs can be used. Avoid repetition and be exact in your word choice. Consider the following list:

accepts

convinces

negates

acknowledges	declares	notes
adds	denies	observes
affirms	describes	outlines
agrees	disagrees	proposes
argues	discusses	refutes
asserts	disputes	rejects
believes	emphasizes	reports
cautions	endorses	responds
challenges	explains	shows
claims	grants	suggests
comments	highlights	thinks
confirms	implies	urges
contends	insists	verifies
contradicts	maintains	writes

SUMMARIZING

When to Summarize

One of the most important skills that you will need to develop in order to incorporate secondary sources into your writing is summarizing. The ability to *summarize* – to restate concisely the main facts or ideas of a longer work – is useful for all kinds of learning, and it is essential for writing papers requiring secondary sources. It is possible to summarize entire books, whole articles or essays, or just portions of your sources. Essentially, when you summarize, you state the major concepts in your own vocabulary and sentence style, omitting much of the detail of the original. Also when you summarize a source in your paper, you summarize in order to support a point you want to make. All source material must be directed toward the development or explanation of your own ideas. Otherwise, you run the risk of letting someone else’s ideas stand for or overshadow your own.

An important reason for summarizing (and paraphrasing) is to convert passages that are difficult, jargon-ridden, or technical into language that is clearly understandable to your reader. If the meaning of a passage is difficult to determine, use the following steps to arrive at an accurate summary:

1. Look up unfamiliar words in a dictionary and substitute easy-to-understand synonyms or definitions. Then read the passage again to make sure that you understand it.
2. Change the sentence structure. After you have reread the passage, put it away so that you cannot refer to it and immediately write your own version. You should understand the passage sufficiently well to reproduce the meaning in your own sentence style and vocabulary.
3. Finally, check your summary against the original to make sure that you did not distort the meaning and that you have the facts recorded accurately and the names spelled correctly.

Essential Elements of a Good Summary

A good summary meets both of these criteria:

1. It accurately reflects the meaning and intention of the original without distorting or slanting the information.
2. It is completely reworded to reflect your own vocabulary and writing style.

The following excerpt is from a book by Kate Muir titled Arms and the Woman. Specific examples of weak summaries follow the excerpt.

Original: It would make more sense if the military took advantage of perceived, and actual, differences between men and women. When soldiers complain about the problems of integration and the resentment on both sides, these are management and leadership problems, and not the fault of women.

An army which accommodates women and uses them to best advantage rather than wasting time making excuses will find integration far less painful.

Weak summary (inaccurate): Women in the military continue to cause problems for leaders and enlisted soldiers resulting in painful integration (Muir 196).

This summary is inaccurate because although Muir states that integrating women into the military is still causing resentment and problems, she specifically claims that women are not the cause.

Weak summary (slanted): Because of leadership and management problems, sexual discrimination in the military is still commonplace and few women achieve the leadership roles they deserve (Muir 196).

The writer of this summary has given the original passage a slant by identifying sexual discrimination as the cause, something the author does not explicitly state or intend. Although it is perfectly acceptable to draw conclusions based on source information such conclusions must be identified as your own and not confused with the summaries of those sources.

Weak summary (plagiarized): When soldiers complain about the problems of integration and the resentment on both sides, the leaders and managers should view it as an issue worth addressing (Muir 196).

The writer has plagiarized by using some of the exact wording of the original.

Acceptable summary: The solution to integrating women into the military can be resolved by proper leadership and management, taking advantage of gender differences rather than making excuses (Muir 196).

Documenting Your Sources

The first step in summarizing source material is writing the summary accurately, without bias, in your own words and writing style.

The next step is making sure that you give credit to the author for the ideas you have summarized. MLA style requires two pieces of information for proper documentation, the author's last name and page numbers;

(Davidson 12-14)

APA style requires one additional piece of information, year of publication:

(Davidson, 1991, pp. 12-14)

(Notice that the APA uses the abbreviations *p.* and *pp.* for *page* and *pages* and requires commas between the elements.)

From the author's last name, your readers can easily find the complete listing for the source by referring to your reference list, which will be arranged alphabetically according to the authors' last names. Remember that your reference list entries do not give the page numbers of specific passages. Book entries contain no page numbers at all, and article entries contain the pages of the *entire* article. The only way your readers will know where to find the specific passage you are documenting is by the page (or pages) you list for it *in the text*.

Page numbers can be omitted if you are citing the entire work:

MLA: One critic (Frazer) has argued that . . .

APA: One critic (Frazer, 1990) has argued that . . .

Page numbers are also unnecessary if you are citing one-page articles and nonprint sources.

There are three basic stylistic options for incorporating documentation, and you should be able to use them all in your writing.

Option 1. You can work all of the information about your source smoothly into the wording of your sentence. Such explanatory material is called a lead-in or signal phrase. Including a page number in the narrative or lead-in of your paper is usually a bit awkward, and placing it in parentheses is preferable; nevertheless, you may want to use this option when a specific page reference is unnecessary:

MLA or APA: As early as page one of his 1990 book *Environmental Crises*, Martin Mahler begins uncovering the political motivation behind much of our nation's pollution problems.

Option 2. You can put part of the source information in the narrative of your paper (or lead-in) and part of it in parentheses:

MLA: Martin Mahler argues convincingly that political interests are delaying solutions to environmental problems (1).

APA: Mahler (1990, p.1) argues convincingly that political interests are delaying solutions to environmental problems.

Or

Mahler (1990) argues convincingly that political interests are delaying solutions to environmental problems.

Option 3. You can put all of your documentation in parentheses, usually at the end of the sentence. This method is generally used once you have established the identity of the source and now want to emphasize the ideas without repeatedly cluttering the narrative with reference information:

MLA: The cleaning of our nation's environment is often impeded by political interests (Mahler 1).

APA: The cleaning of our nation's environment is often impeded by political interests (Mahler, 1990, p.1).

General Guidelines for Documenting Sources

1. The first time you cite a source, it is best to use a narrative lead-in or signal phrase giving the author's name (first and last for MLA; last name only is acceptable for APA) and as much additional information as you can fit smoothly into your sentence. By including information about the author's background, current title or position, and level of expertise, you are doing your readers a service. The more information you provide, the more convincing and credible your source will seem:

MLA: Martin Mahler, a well-known advocate of environmental protection and author of several books, states that political interests are impeding environmental cleanup (1).

APA: Mahler (1990), a well-known advocate of environmental protection and author of several books, states that political interests are impeding environmental cleanup (p. 1).

Once the identity of your source has been established, you need only mention the last name for either MLA or APA in later reference.

2. If our source has more than one author, mention them in the same order in which they are listed in the source:

MLA: Herman, Brown, and Martel predict dramatic changes in the earth's climate in the next 200 years (174).

APA: Herman, Brown, and Martel (1991) predict dramatic changes in the earth's climate in the next 200 years (p. 174).

For later references to sources with three or more authors, both MLA and APA cites only the first author followed by *et al.* (Herman et al).

3. If your summary is longer than one sentence, it is not necessary to document each sentence, but you are required to make it clear at the beginning of the summary that all of the information to follow is from a source. The best way to handle this situation is to "frame" your summary with documentation information at the beginning and end of the summarized material. The following examples show unacceptable and acceptable methods of documenting a summary of more than one sentence. Although the formatting follows MLA style, the same general principles apply to APA.

Unacceptable: David Hernandez, the new chair of the Federal Trade Commission, reports that consumer protection agencies seldom respond to an individual complaint (112). Instead they watch for patterns in consumer complaints (Hernandez 112). Identifying businesses that systematically violate trade regulations is an ongoing process (Hernandez 112).

Because the last two sentences are not documented, the reader would incorrectly assume that they are not part of the Hernandez report but are original ideas of the

writer.

Acceptable: David Hernandez, the new chair of the Federal Trade Commission, reports that consumer protection agencies seldom respond to an individual complaint. Instead they watch for patterns in consumer complaints. Identifying businesses that systematically violate trade regulations is an ongoing process (112).

Here the summarized material is “framed” with source information at the beginning (author’s name in a lead-in) and at the end (page number in parentheses).

Acceptable (APA format): Hernandez (1991), the new chair . . . ongoing process (p. 112).

4. If the source does not list an author, you must mention the title, since that is how it will be listed on your reference list. If you are putting that information in parentheses, you need not use the entire title, just enough so that the reader can find it.

Full title in lead-in

MLA: The article “Rising Toll of Teenage Alcoholism” points out that television beer commercials present drinking role models that most young people see as desirable (17).

APA: The article “Rising Toll of Teenage Alcoholism” (1992) points out . . . as desirable (p. 17).

Shortened title in parentheses

MLA: A recent *New York Times* article makes the point that television beer commercials present drinking role models that most your people see as desirable (“Rising Toll” 17).

APA: A recent *New York Times* article makes . . . as desirable (Rising Toll,” 1992, p. 17).

5. If your reference list contains more than one source by the same author, you must indicate which work you are documenting by including the title (for MLA only):

MLA: It is now theoretically possible to re-create an identical creature from any animal or plant by using the DNA contained in the nucleus of any somatic cell (Thomas, “On Cloning” 73).

APA format includes the date of each source in all documentation, and because different works by the same author will rarely have the same date, they can be easily identified on the reference list. If two or more works by the same author do have the same publication date, list them alphabetically by title on the reference list, and place lowercase letters after the year to identify them in the text:

APA: . . . of any somatic cell (Thomas, 19901, p. 73).

Source unknown