

14 Incorporating Sources

Nothing sets the experienced researcher apart from the beginner more than the effective use of sources. But even a beginning researcher can project an ethos of credibility by following a few principles that show respect both for the writer's sources and for readers.

14.1 QUOTING, PARAPHRASING, AND SUMMARIZING APPROPRIATELY

You must build your paper out of your own words that reflect your own thinking. But you'll support much of that thinking with quotations, paraphrases, and summaries. As we've said, different fields use them differently: researchers in the humanities quote more than do social and natural scientists, who typically paraphrase and summarize. But you must decide each case for itself, depending on how you use the information. Here again are some principles:

- Summarize when details are irrelevant or a source isn't important enough to warrant much space.
- Paraphrase when you can state what a source says more clearly or concisely or when your argument depends on the details in a source but not on its specific words.
- Quote for these purposes:
 - The words themselves are evidence that backs up your reasons.
 - The words are from an authority who backs up your claims.
 - The words are strikingly original or express your key concepts so compellingly that the quotation can frame an extended discussion.
 - A passage states a view that you disagree with, and to be fair you want to state it exactly.

For every summary, paraphrase, or quotation you use, cite its bibliographic data in the appropriate style (see 14.5 and the Quick Tip). Under no circumstances stitch together downloads from the Web with a few sentences of your own. Teachers grind their teeth

reading such papers, dismayed by their lack of original thinking. Readers of advanced projects reject such patchworks out of hand.

14.2 INTEGRATING DIRECT QUOTATIONS INTO YOUR TEXT

Signal direct quotations in one of two ways:

- For four or fewer quoted lines, run them into your text, surrounded by quotation marks.
- For five or more lines, set them off as an indented block.

You can insert run-in and block quotations in your text in three ways.

- Drop in the quotation with a few identifying words (*Author says*, *According to Author*, *As Author puts it*, etc.).

Diamond says, "The histories of the Fertile Crescent and China . . . hold a salutary lesson for the modern world: circumstances change, and past primacy is no guarantee of future primacy" (417).

- Introduce the quotation with a sentence that interprets or characterizes it.

Diamond suggests what we can learn from the past: "The histories of the Fertile Crescent and China . . . hold a salutary lesson for the modern world . . ." (417).

- Weave the grammar of the quotation into the grammar of your own sentence.

Diamond suggests that the chief "lesson for the modern world" in the history of the Fertile Crescent and China is that "circumstances change, and past primacy is no guarantee of future primacy" (417).

You can modify a quotation, so long as you don't change its meaning and you signal deletions with three dots (called *ellipses*) and changes with square brackets. This sentence quotes the original intact:

Posner focuses on religion not for its spirituality, but for its social functions: "A notable feature of American society is religious pluralism,

and we should consider how this relates to the efficacy of governance by social norms in view of the historical importance of religion as both a source and enforcer of such norms" (299).

This version modifies the quotation to fit the grammar of the writer's sentence:

In discussing religious pluralism, Posner says that "a notable feature of American society is [our] religious pluralism" and notes how social norms affect "the efficacy of governance . . . in view of the historical importance of religion as both a source and enforcer of such norms" (299).

14.3 SHOWING READERS HOW EVIDENCE IS RELEVANT

By this point you may be so sure that your evidence supports your reasons that you'll think readers can't miss its relevance. But evidence never speaks for itself, especially not long quotations or complex sets of numbers. You must speak for such evidence by introducing it with a sentence stating what you want your readers to get out of it. For example, this passage bases a claim about Hamlet on the evidence of the following quotation:

When Hamlet comes upon his stepfather, Claudius, at prayer, he demonstrates cool rationality:*claim*

Now might I do it [kill him] pat, now 'a is a-praying,
And now I'll do't. And so 'a goes to heaven,
And so am I reveng'd. . . . [Hamlet pauses to think]
[But this] villain kills my father, and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge. (3.3)*report of evidence*

It is not clear how that quotation supports the claim, because nothing in it specifically refers to Hamlet's rationality. In contrast, compare this:

When Hamlet comes upon his stepfather, Claudius, at prayer, he demonstrates cool rationality.*claim* **He impulsively wants to kill Claudius but**

pauses to reflect: if he kills Claudius while praying, he will send his soul to heaven, but he wants Claudius damned to hell, so he coolly decides to kill him later:*reason*

Now might I do it [kill him] pat, . . .*report of evidence*

Now we see the connection. (Do the same with tables and figures; see 15.3.1.)

Lacking a reason that explains the evidence, readers may not see what it *means*. So introduce complex evidence with a sentence explaining it.

14.4 THE SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF CITING SOURCES

14.4.1 Citations Benefit You

Citations protect you from a charge of plagiarism, but beyond that narrow self-interest, correct citations contribute to your ethos. First, readers don't trust sources they can't find. If they can't find your sources because you failed to document them adequately, they won't trust your evidence; and if they don't trust your evidence, they won't trust your paper—or you. Second, many experienced researchers think that if a writer can't get the little things right, he can't be trusted on the big ones. Getting the details of citations right distinguishes reliable, experienced researchers from careless beginners. Finally, teachers assign research papers to help you learn how to integrate the research of others into your own thinking. Proper citations show that you have learned one important part of that process.

14.4.2 Citations Help Your Readers

Readers use citations before, while, and after they read your paper. Before, many experienced readers will preview your paper by skimming your list of sources to see whose work you read and whose you didn't. As they read, readers use citations to decide how much they can trust the reliability, currency, and completeness of your evidence. Papers with outdated or only very recent citations of sources found on the Internet alert readers to be skeptical. But papers whose citations show range and depth in engaging sources

reassure readers. Finally, just as you depended on sources to start your bibliographical trail, so will some readers depend on *your* list to start theirs.

14.4.3 Citations Honor Your Sources

Finally, citations honor your sources. Few academic researchers get rich writing on topics such as “Ohio education, 1825–1850.” Their reward isn’t money; it’s the reputation they earn for doing good work and the pleasure they take in knowing that colleagues respect it enough to cite it—even in disagreement. Your sources may never know you cited them, but that doesn’t matter. When you cite sources, you honor them by acknowledging your intellectual debts.

In short, when you cite sources fully and accurately, you sustain and enrich the sense of community that gives written research both its scholarly and social value.

14.5 FOUR COMMON CITATION STYLES

It would be easier if we all cited sources in the same style, but we don’t. For academic research, there are two basic patterns, each with two common versions. The many differences among the styles can seem picky and irrelevant, but they matter to readers. So be sure to find out which style you should use, and consult the proper guide for your style. (You can also find reliable online guides.)

Many researchers today use citation software that automatically generates citations in the style they choose. Some teachers encourage this practice. Others feel that students should not rely on such assistance, but rather learn the details. If you don’t know where your teacher stands on the issue, ask.

14.5.1 Two Basic Patterns: Author-Title and Author-Date

All citation forms begin with the name of the author, editor, or whoever else is responsible for the source. We distinguish styles by what follows the author. If the title follows the author, the style is called *author-title*.

Anes, Lee J. *A Story of Ohio: Its Early Days*. Boston: Hobson Press, 1988.

This pattern is common in the humanities.

If the date follows the author, the style is called *author-date*.

Anes, Lee. 1988. *A story of Ohio: Its early days*. Boston: Hobson Press.

This pattern is used in the natural sciences and most of the social sciences, because in those rapidly changing fields, readers want to know quickly how old a source is. They can spot dates more easily when they come at the beginning of a citation.

14.5.2 Two Author-Title Styles

There are two versions of author-title style, each based on a well-known style manual.

- **Chicago Author-Title Style:** *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010). It is sometimes called Turabian style, based on a widely used condensed manual: Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013). When using this style, you list your sources in a bibliography and cite them in your text with footnotes or endnotes.
- **MLA Style:** *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 8th ed. (New York: Modern Language Association, 2016). You are mostly likely to learn MLA (Modern Language Association) style in a literature or composition course. In this style, you give a list of works cited and cite your sources parenthetically in your text.

These styles differ only in minor details, but those details matter, so be sure to consult the proper style guide.

14.5.3 Two Author-Date Styles

There are two versions of author-date style, each based on a well-known style manual.

- **Chicago Author-Date Style:** This style is also described in *The Chicago Manual of Style* and sometimes called Turabian style. When using it, you list your sources in a bibliography but cite them parenthetically in your text.
- **APA Style:** *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th ed. (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2009). This style uses parenthetical citations as well.

Like the author-title styles, these styles differ only in minor details. But again, those details matter, so be sure to follow the prescriptions of the style you use down to the last comma, space, and capital letter.

14.6 GUARDING AGAINST INADVERTENT PLAGIARISM

It will be as you draft that you risk the worst mistake a researcher can make: you lead readers to think that you're trying to pass off as your own the work of another writer. Do that and you risk an accusation of plagiarism, a charge that, if sustained, could mean, for a professional writer, an irreparably damaged reputation or, for a student writer, a failing grade or even expulsion. Students know they cheat when they put their name on a paper purchased on the Internet or copied from a fraternity or sorority file. Most also know they cheat when they pass off as their own long passages copied directly from their sources. For those cases, there's nothing to say beyond *Don't*.

But many inexperienced writers don't realize when they risk being charged with plagiarism because they are careless or misinformed. You run that risk when you do any of the following:

- You quote, paraphrase, or summarize a source but fail to cite it.
- You use ideas or methods from a source but fail to cite it.
- You use the exact words of a source and you do cite it, but you fail to put those words in quotation marks or in a block quotation.
- You paraphrase a source and cite it, but you use words so similar to those of the source that anyone can see that as you paraphrased, you followed the source word by word.

- 14.6.1 **Cite the Source of Every Quotation, Paraphrase, or Summary**
You must cite your source every time you use its words, even if you only paraphrase or summarize them. If the quotations, paraphrases, or summaries come from different pages of your sources, cite each one individually. If a paraphrase or summary extends over several paragraphs, cite it only once at the end. (See the Quick Tip at the end of this chapter for guidance on citing sources in your text.)

The most common problem is not that students don't know that they should cite a source, but that they lose track of which words are theirs and which are borrowed. That's why we urged you in chapter 6 to distinguish in your notes between quotations, paraphrases, and summaries of sources and your own analyses, thoughts, and commentary. Always include the citation as soon as you add a quotation because you may not remember to do so later. Be especially careful to cite a paraphrase or summary as you draft it; otherwise, you may not even remember that it originated with a source.

- 14.6.2 **Signal Every Quotation, Even When You Cite Its Source**
Even if you cite the source, readers must know exactly which words are not yours, even if they are *as few as a single line*. It gets complicated, however, when you copy less than a line. Read this:

"Because technology begets more technology, the importance of an invention's diffusion potentially exceeds the importance of the original invention. Technology's history exemplifies what is termed an autocatalytic process: that is, one that speeds up at a rate that increases with time, because the process catalyzes itself" (Diamond 1998, 301).

If you were writing about Jared Diamond's ideas, you would probably have to use some of his words, such as *the importance of an invention*. But you wouldn't put that phrase in quotation marks, because it shows no originality of thought or expression.

Two of his phrases, however, are so striking that they do require quotation marks: *technology begets more technology* and *autocatalytic process*. For example:

The power of technology goes beyond individual inventions because “technology begets more technology.” It is, as Diamond puts it, an “auto-catalytic process” (301).

Once you cite those words, you can use them again without quotation marks or citation:

As one invention begets another one and that one still another, the process becomes a self-sustaining catalysis that spreads across national boundaries.

This is a gray area: words that seem striking to some are not to others. If you put quotation marks around too many ordinary phrases, readers might think you’re naive, but if you fail to use them when readers think you should, they may suspect you of plagiarism. Since it’s better to seem naive than dishonest, especially early in your career, use quotation marks freely. (You must, however, follow the standard practices of your field. Lawyers, for example, often use the exact language of a statute or judicial opinion with no quotation marks.)

14.6.3 Don’t Paraphrase Too Closely

You paraphrase appropriately when you represent an idea in your own words more clearly or pointedly than the source does. But readers will think that you plagiarize if they can match your words and phrasing with those of your source.

For example, here is a passage from Malcolm Gladwell’s *Outliers: The Story of Success*:

“Achievement is talent plus preparation. The problem with this view is that the closer psychologists look at the careers of the gifted, the smaller the role innate talent seems to play and the bigger the role preparation seems to play” (38).

This too-close paraphrase is plagiarism:

Success seems to depend on a combination of talent and preparation. However, when psychologists closely examine the gifted and their

careers, they discover that innate talent plays a much smaller role than preparation (Gladwell 38).

This paraphrase does not plagiarize:

As Gladwell observes, summarizing studies on the highly successful, we tend to overestimate the role of talent and underestimate that of preparation (38).

This phrasing is not a close match to the original. And notice that we chose not to put *talent* or *preparation* in quotes. We decided that those words are common enough to use as our own.

To avoid seeming to plagiarize, read the passage, look away, think about it for a moment; *then still looking away*, paraphrase it in your own words. Then check whether you can run your finger along your sentence and find synonyms for the same ideas in the same order in your source. If you can, try again.

14.6.4 Usually Cite a Source for Ideas Not Your Own

Most of our ideas are based on sources somewhere in history. But readers don’t expect you to cite a source for the idea that the world is round. They do, however, expect you to cite a source for an idea when (1) the idea is associated with a specific person *and* (2) it’s new enough *not* to be part of a field’s common knowledge. For example, psychologists claim that we think and feel in different parts of our brains. But no reader would expect you to cite a source for that idea, because it’s so familiar that no one would think you are implying it is yours. On the other hand, some psychologists argue that emotions are crucial to rational decision making. That idea is so new and tied to particular researchers that you’d have to cite them.

14.6.5 Don’t Plead Ignorance, Misunderstanding, or Innocent Intentions

Some students sincerely believe that they don’t have to cite material downloaded from the Web because it’s free and publicly available. They are wrong. Other students defend themselves by claiming

Why the Fuss over Honest Mistakes?

Some students wonder why teachers are so unforgiving of honest slip-ups. *What's the harm?*

First, they harm your credibility. One failure to acknowledge a source can lead readers to doubt your honesty, a career-ending judgment for an advanced student. But they matter even to a beginner. Your teacher is preparing you to write not for her but for others who will have only your words to judge your ethos. She needs to see that you know not only how to use sources thoughtfully but how to acknowledge them carefully and completely.

Other students think plagiarism is a victimless offense. It is not. Recently, two young scholars were praised when they used in a new way methods and ideas published twenty years earlier. They mentioned their source in passing but failed to acknowledge their specific debt fully. In doing so, they not only claimed undeserved credit but deprived the older scholar of credit he deserved. Worse, by omitting the bibliographical trail that led to his work, they kept readers from rediscovering it. The credit he lost cost him not only reputation but also perhaps grants, promotions, and ultimately higher pay.

they didn't *intend* to mislead. Well, we read words, not minds. Here is how to think about this issue: If the person you borrowed from read your writing, would she recognize your words or ideas as her own, including paraphrases, summaries, or even general ideas or methods? If so, you must cite that source and enclose any of her exact words in quotation marks or set them off in a block quotation. No exceptions, no excuses.

QUICK TIP Indicating Citations in Your Paper

You must indicate in your paper every place where you use a source. The three of the four most common citation styles—Chicago author-date style, MLA style, and APA style (see 14.5)—use parenthetical citations that direct readers to specific pages in the source, with enough information to find the corresponding entry in a list of sources.

Some have claimed that Castro would reform Cuban politics (Smith 1999, 233).

If you use Chicago author-title style, you may instead use a raised number, or superscript, that directs readers to a correspondingly numbered note at the bottom of the page or at the end of the paper.

Some have claimed that Castro would reform Cuban politics.⁵

5. George Smith, *Travels in Cuba* (Boston: Hasbro Press, 1999), 233.

PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

A parenthetical (or in-text) citation includes only the information a reader needs to locate the source in a list of sources at the end of your paper. Depending on your field, that list will be called your bibliography, references, or works cited. What you include in an in-text citation depends first on whether you use author-title or author-date citation style. For example, here are the author-title forms for citing a single-author work if you do not mention the author in your sentences and you have only one work by that author in your list of sources:

Chicago Author-Title (Author, page[s])

Only one writer provides data on this matter (Kay, 220).

MLA (Author page[s])

Only one writer provides data on this matter (Kay 220).

If in your list of sources you list more than one publication for an author, you must add a short title so that readers will know which

publication you are citing. In this case, the format in both styles is the same:

Chicago Author-Title and MLA (Author, *Short Title*, page[s])

Only one writer provides data on this matter (Kay, *A Life*, 220).

In author-date style, you must add the date to every citation:

Chicago Author-Date (Author date, page[s])

Only one writer provides data on this matter (Kay 2006, 220).

APA (Author, date, p. xxx)

Only one writer provides data on this matter (Kay, 2006, p. 220).

If you have mentioned the author, drop the name from the citation:

Chicago Author-Date: Kay is the only writer who provides data on this matter (2006, 220).

MLA: Kay is the only writer who provides data on this matter (220).

APA: Kay is the only writer who provides data on this matter (2006, p. 220).

There are additional rules for citations if a work has more than one author, if you cite more than one work by the same author, and so on. For these, consult the appropriate guide.

NOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

In Chicago author-title style, you use notes—footnotes at the bottom of the page or endnotes following the paper—to direct readers to sources in a bibliography. Notes include the same information as a bibliography entry, but the form differs in three ways: notes list names not last name, first name, but first name last name; individual elements of a note are separated by commas rather than periods; and publication data are in parentheses.

NOTE FORM: 5. George Smith, *Travels in Cuba* (Boston: Hasbro Press, 1999), 233.

BIBLIOGRAPHY FORM: Smith, George. *Travels in Cuba*. Boston: Hasbro Press, 1999.

For details, consult the Turabian guide or *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Researchers are increasingly using parenthetical citations rather than notes, because notes duplicate the information listed in a bibliography. If in doubt, ask your teacher.