

Writing with sources can strengthen the credibility and validity of your work. There are three main ways to incorporate information from a source: **quoting**, **paraphrasing**, and **summarizing**. Deciding when to quote, paraphrase, or summarize is an essential part of the writing process since each strategy has a unique purpose. **Regardless of how a source is incorporated, the evidence needs to accurately represent the source material and include appropriate citation.** This handout covers general principles for incorporating sources, but always write with your audience and assignment in mind.

Note: This handout does not use any specific citation style, but sources should always be cited.

Quoting

Quoting uses the exact words of a source and should be used to **preserve the source's original tone**, **highlight a noteworthy claim**, or **maintain the author's original phrasing**. In most cases, quotes should be presented exactly as they are in the original text. If a quote must be changed, brackets and ellipses can be used to clarify content and context for the audience. Brackets can be used to change the verb tense of a word or clarify pronouns and word usage. Ellipses can signal that something has been omitted from a quote.

Original Quote: "It will not work unless you are willing to truly and deeply change yourself."

Brackets: "[Therapy] will not work unless [we] are willing to truly and deeply change [ourselves]."

Ellipses: "It will not work unless you . . . deeply change yourself."

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing restates a short passage to put the source's meaning into your own words. It should be used to **simplify**, **restructure**, or **condense the original text** to clarify information for your audience. Do not just change a few of the words from the source; rewrite the ideas entirely in your own words. Notice how in the following example, the paraphrase simplifies technical language and condenses the text to provide the most relevant information for the audience.

Original Text: As understanding of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has continued to progress, the American Psychiatric Association has updated their Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) to reflect these advances in understanding. In the DSM-5, PTSD is no longer categorized with anxiety disorders but now has its own dedicated section.

Paraphrase: Johnson notes how Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), once formally categorized as an anxiety disorder, is now officially considered an entirely separate condition.

Summarizing

Summarizing condenses longer works, such as books, journal articles, or films, to their main points, providing general information without including every detail. It should be used to **communicate the main idea of a source** or **introduce sources that will be used consistently throughout the work**. The goal of summarizing is to help the reader clearly understand a longer work.

Example: *Robin Hood* is a folk tale about a man who steals from the rich to give to the poor.

Example: Johnson's article analyzes the effect of therapy on individuals with PTSD.

Context and Analysis

When integrating sources, provide context before the evidence and then follow that evidence with your own analysis. Sandwiching the quote, paraphrase, or summary in between context and analysis helps your audience clearly understand how the evidence connects to your claim.

Provide Context for the Source

Give your audience context about the source. Include elements such as the author's background and credibility, the source's connection to your claim, or relevant historical context. Providing context ensures that your audience has an accurate understanding of the source.

Example: The understanding of PTSD evolved rapidly during the 20th century due to the Second World War; Emily Johnson, an award-winning psychologist, writes about the impact of PTSD.

Present the Source by Quoting, Paraphrasing, or Summarizing

Smoothly integrate your evidence by including phrases that introduce the author or source. Examples of signal phrases include: "according to. . ."; "the source states. . ."; or "[author] acknowledges. . ."

Example: Johnson examines the history of PTSD and proposes World War II as the defining moment when psychologists began understanding it as a mental health condition. However, an official diagnosis for PTSD would not develop until years later during the 1980s.

Analyze the Source and Explain Its Relevance

Your analysis should explain how the presented source information relates to your claim. Establish a connection between the source and your analysis, and share your perspective with your audience.

Example: Although Johnson is correct that World War II impacted the understanding of PTSD, the official PTSD diagnosis in the 1980s was more impactful and radically changed the treatment methods available for those suffering from trauma.