

# Citing and Using Outside Sources in Writing

## Incorporating Sources into Your Own Paper

**Summarizing:** Summarizing involves reiterating the main idea or thesis of someone else's work. Summarizing is helpful in your introduction – especially if your paper is a reaction to a particular essay or article. Your summary should generally include what you consider the author's purpose in writing, the audience he/she is hoping to reach, and a short synopsis of what his/her essay is about.

**Paraphrasing:** Paraphrasing involves restating another's statements in your own words. You still should include a page number and include the paraphrased source in Works Cited.

**Quoting a Source:** Use direct quotations sparingly and make sure you explain the significance of the quotes you choose and avoid "dropping" quotes in your paper.

### MLA Style

- ✗ Smith is outraged at the destruction of the rainforest. "By 2020 many rare species of birds will become extinct" (30).
- ✓ Smith is outraged at the destruction of the rainforest; he notes that "by 2020 many rare species of birds will become extinct" (30).

### APA Style

- ✗ According to Ferguson (2004), "Students often had difficulty using APA style, especially when it was their first time." (p. 196)
- ✓ According to Ferguson (2004), "Students often had difficulty using APA style, especially when it was their first time" (p. 196).

## Using Quotes Successfully

Do not end a paragraph with a quotation; explain its significance in your own words – especially how this quote supports the point you are trying to make in your thesis.

Think about the 2:1 rule. Generally, your own words should take up at least twice the space as the quoted material you use; your quotes should not make your argument for you. They should be used as support.

Provide some context for the quotes you select. If you are quoting someone who says, for example, "Professor Jackson's proposal is flawed," you need to provide some background as to why the person you are quoting feels this way.

The first time you quote an author, give the full title of the author's article or source, as well as any information you can find about the author which shows his or her credibility.

**Example:** "According to Dr. Matthew Larson, who is a pediatrician studying childhood obesity...."

Another handout you may be interested in...

**APA Citation; MLA Citation**

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## Rules for Parenthetical Citations -- MLA Style

- ✓ Quotes of more than four lines should be indented 10 spaces from the left-hand margin with no quotation marks.
- ✓ Long quotes should be double-spaced and the note that the period should come before the parenthetical citation.
- ✓ Incorporate entire sentences or phrases into your own sentences by using quotations and page references.  
**Example:** Smith argues, "Our government could do more to save the rainforest" (31).  
**Example:** Smith is outraged that the U.S. Government is apathetic to environmental issues and believes they "could do more to save the rainforest" (31).
- ✓ Omit part of an original quote by using ellipses in a pair of brackets.  
**Original Quote:** "The destruction rate, which grows at an alarming 20% every year, is a frightening reminder that the government is not doing its job."  
**Modified Quote:** "The destruction rate [...] is a frightening reminder that the government is not doing its job" (30).
- ✓ Cite a quote from an indirect source. For example, let's say you want to use a quote from Jack Larsen that you found on page 6 of an article by John Mason. You would attribute the quote to Larsen within your sentence.  
**Example of Citing an Internal Source:** Jack Larsen claims that "our public education system in the United States is failing more students than it is helping" (qtd. in Mason 6).

## Rules for Parenthetical Citations -- APA Style

- ✓ When directly quoting from a source, include the source's author, year of publication, and the page number for the reference (preceded by "p."), introduce the quotation with a signal phrase that includes the author's last name followed by the date of publication in parentheses.
- ✓ When using APA format, follow the author-date method of in-text citation. This means that the author's last name and the year of publication for the source should appear in the text, E.g., (Jones, 1998), and a complete reference should appear in the reference list at the end of the paper.
- ✓ If you are paraphrasing an idea from another source, you only have to make reference to the author and year of publication in your in-text reference, but APA style guidelines encourage you to also provide the page number (although it is not required).
  - Always capitalize proper nouns, including author names and initials. Example: D. Jones
  - If you refer to the title of a source within your paper, capitalize all words that are four letters long or greater within the title of a source. Example: Permanence and Change.
  - Exceptions apply to short words that are verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs.  
Example: Writing New Media, There Is Nothing Left to Lose.  
**NOTE: In your References list, only the first word of a title will be capitalized.**  
**Example: Writing new media**
  - When capitalizing titles, capitalize both words in a hyphenated compound word.  
Example: Natural-Born Cyborgs
  - Capitalize the first word after a dash or colon .  
Example: "Defining Film Rhetoric: The Case of Hitchcock's Vertigo"
  - Italicize or underline the titles of longer works such as books, edited collections, movies, television series, documentaries, or albums.  
Example: The Closing of the American Mind; The Wizard of Oz; Friends
  - Put quotation marks around the titles of shorter works such as journal articles, articles from edited collections, television series episodes, and song titles.  
Example: "Multimedia Narration: Constructing Possible Worlds"