

# Integrating Research into your Papers: Everything You Need to Know about Paraphrasing, Quotations, Signal Phrases, and Citations

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## Paraphrasing

Writers use this technique most often when conveying information from outside sources. Paraphrasing restates the author's meaning in your own words. Paraphrasing keeps the writing in your voice (you, the essay writer) while providing credit to the source.

### Why Paraphrasing is a Valuable Skill:

- It is better than quoting from an undistinguished passage.
- It prevents you from quoting too frequently.
- It will help you understand the meaning of the original text.

### Steps for Paraphrasing

- Re-read the original passage until you understand its full meaning.
- Set the original aside, and write your paraphrase
- Jot down a few words below your paraphrase to remind you later how you envision using this material.
- Check your rendition with the original to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the essential information in a new form.
- Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.
- Record the source (including the page) on your note card so that you can credit it easily if you decide to incorporate the material into your paper.

### It is plagiarism when:

- You half-copy the author's sentences.
- You plug in your own synonyms into the author's sentence structure.

### To avoid plagiarism when paraphrasing

- Avoid looking at the source while summarizing or paraphrasing.
- Close the text, write from memory, and then open the book to check for accuracy.

### Practice Paraphrasing

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## Direct Quotations

It is almost impossible to integrate numerous long quotations smoothly into your own writing, so try to limit your use of direct quotations.

### Use quotations when:

- Language is vivid.
- Exact wording is needed
- Important to let debaters express their position in their own words.
- When the words of an authority lend weight to an argument.
- When language of a source is the topic of your discussion.

### Quotation Length

- Quotations of fewer than four lines should be set in your paragraphs and punctuated with double quotation marks.
- Quotations of more than four lines should be indented (1 inch) and double-spaced. No double quotation marks are needed in an indented passage.
- **Do not overdo the long quotations. A good rule of thumb for any quotation is: Devote as much textual space to analyze/discuss the quotation IN YOUR OWN WORDS as you devote to the quotation itself.**

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## Integrating Quotations/Signal Phrases

Whenever you include a paraphrase, summary, or direct quotation of another writer in your paper, prepare your readers for it with an introduction, or signal phrase.

A signal phrase names the author of the source and often provides context for the source material. They also:

- Mark the boundaries between your thought and someone else's
- Establish the authority of your source.
- Provide helpful context

### Examples of signal phrases

As historian Benedict Anderson has noted, "... " (**shows the expertise of the source**)

The Policy Institute, an organization that advises companies about reducing risks from technology, reported that "... " (**explains the role of this policy which legitimates the source**)

"...," writes Mark Twain, "... " (**identifies the author**)

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## Good Verbs to use in Signal Phrases

|              |            |             |          |
|--------------|------------|-------------|----------|
| acknowledges | comments   | endorses    | reasons  |
| adds         | compares   | grants      | refutes  |
| admits       | confirms   | illustrates | rejects  |
| agrees       | contends   | implies     | reports  |
| argues       | declares   | insists     | responds |
| asserts      | denies     | notes       | suggests |
| believes     | disputes   | observes    | thinks   |
| claims       | emphasizes | points out  | writes   |

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## In-text Citations and Works Cited—MLA Format

Each academic discipline adheres to certain documentation standards. For example, the humanities most often use MLA or Chicago Style. The social sciences may use APA style, while the sciences will often require CSE style. Your instructor will notify you as to what style is required. When in doubt, ask!

For an in-text citation, you provide the author and page number of the source.

*Example:*

In her novel *Love*, Toni Morrison describes young love as “That magic ax that chops away the world in one blow” (63).

The magazine *Bantu World* and the beauty contests it sponsored helped to shape notions of “racial respectability” and feminine beauty in 1930s South Africa (Thomas 98).

## Works Cited

- If you cite a resource in your paper, you need to have a Works Cited page.
- It should be organized alphabetically by author.
- If the citation has two lines, the second line should be indented (called a “hanging indent.”). Do this by moving the bottom arrow on the ruler of your word processing program.
- Double space your document throughout.
- Only include any sources you cite (not sources you read but didn’t use).

## Writing your Works Cited

- Each source has a slightly different citation format, and the format is very particular.
- It is nearly impossible to remember every detail of every type of source.
- Your best bet: Use a website or a writer’s handbook to help you through it.
- I like the Purdue OWL (Online Writing Lab). Google it.

**Example Works Cited:**

Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. 1959. New York: Anchor Books, 1994.

Harrow, Kenneth W. "In Tribute to Things Fall Apart." *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*. 11.2 (2009): 154-156. *MLA International Bibliography*. Web. 13 Nov. 2011.

Morrison, Toni. *Love*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003.

Thomas, Lynn M. "The Modern Girl and Racial Respectability in 1930s South Africa." *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization*. Eds. Alys Eve Weinbaum, Lynn M. Thomas, Priti Ramamurthy, Uta G. Poiger, Madeleine Yue Dong, and Tani E. Barlow. Raleigh: Duke UP, 2008.

**PLAGIARISM AND YOU:****Or, HOW TO AVOID BEING (or even appearing to be)...A CHEATER**

Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional presentation of another's work as your own. Any time you are using another person's words or ideas, you must document that "borrowing" accordingly. No fault is attached to "over-documentation" in your essay. Plagiarism, of course, also includes turning in an essay you did not write yourself. You will be responsible for knowing Spelman College's policy on plagiarism. See the Student Handbook for details. Common sense must also factor into your considerations here: if a fact is cited in three or more sources, it need not be documented. For example, if you write that Americans have walked on the moon, you would not need to document that statement with a source.

*For complete information on your responsibilities and academic integrity, go to Spelman College's link:*

<http://www.spelman.edu/academics/catalog/catalogcurrent/academicintegritypolicy.htm>

**Test your plagiarism IQ!**

Circle the correct answer to the following questions:

Q: Papers are to express the original thoughts of the student. If a topic for a paper has been discussed fully among students prior to an assignment, then the students should consult the instructor about writing on that particular topic.

A: True or False

Q: A student may submit papers substantially the same in content for credit in more than one course, and does not need to consult any of the instructors in the current or present courses.

A: True or False

Q: Internet sources only need to be cited if they are used more than once in a paper.

A: True or False

Q: Which of the following is an instance of plagiarism?

- A. Paraphrasing without citing the original source
- B. Considering an idea "common knowledge," thus not citing its source, if the idea has appeared in three separate sources
- C. Paying a friend to write your paper for you, then turning it in as your own
- D. Both A & C

Q: If in doubt about whether to cite a source, which of the following would be the appropriate course of action?

- A. Consult a style manual, such as MLA or Chicago
- B. Don't cite the source. If you're not sure, no one else will be either
- C. Ask your instructor what action she would recommend
- D. Both A & C

Q: Would you rather... (Choose all that apply)

- A. Download a paper from the Internet and slap your name on it, risking your collegiate career for one lousy grade?
- B. Turn in a paper you have written, even when you know it is not the absolute best you can produce, and ask to meet with your instructor to discuss strategies for improving your performance in the course?
- C. Suffer the humiliation of telling friends and family that you flunked out of Spelman College because you were "ignorant" of the rules concerning plagiarism?
- D. Avoid plagiarism through rigorous honesty by telling your instructor that you are not turning in an assignment, because you were too busy following the gripping *Flavor of Love* marathon on VH1 and would have been tempted to "cheat"?
- E. Both A & C

## Online Resources on Paraphrasing, Quotations, and Documentation

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

<http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~wricntr/resources.html>

<http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/>

## Resources I used for this handout:

Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 2009.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

<http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism/cite/paraphrase.html>