Writing with Sources

A Guide for Students

Gordon Harvey

Common Questions about Sources

1. *Shouldn't I always let a source speak for itself, by quoting it?* No (p. 3).
2. *If I cite a source's ideas, may I use any of its words that I want?* Not without quotation marks, since that particular way of putting the ideas is also your source's (p. 14b).
3. *If I change a few words in a source passage, may I simply cite it and not quote?* No. Both summary and paraphrase require substantial recasting of the source (p. 24c).
4. *Am I plagiarizing if I accidentally use a few vivid phrases from my reading without citing them?* Yes; it's your responsibility to avoid such accidents (p. 14b).
5. *If I use a phrase from a source repeatedly in my paper, must I quote and cite it every time?* Only on its first appearance, in most cases (p. 14b).
6. *If I use the same source throughout a paragraph, may I simply cite the source once at the start or end of that paragraph?* Only if you write each sentence in a way that precludes any doubt as to what comes from the source and what is your own thinking—and always use quotation marks when using the source's words (p. 5).
7. *If I get an idea after reading a book or article that I wouldn't have had before reading it, do I need to cite the book?* No; the idea itself is your own, even if it is (like most ideas) the result of reading. But you may want to acknowledge the book or article (pp. 20–21).
8. *If I find in a secondary source the very idea or argument that I have worked out on my own, should I start all over or just ignore the source?* Neither (p. 33).
9. *Do I have to cite ideas or words that come from a course text, when my instructor will know perfectly well where they came from?* Yes (p. 15).

[continued inside back cover]

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Preface

This book is an introduction to the conventions and rules of writing with sources at the college level. Without a grasp of this information you risk taking valuable time away from the creative process of writing and in certain circumstances could face disciplinary action. Even if you believe you already understand when and how to cite sources, you should compare your understanding with the instructions that follow. And don't hesitate to ask your instructor about rules or situations that are unclear to you, since they may come up again in other classes or in the rumored life *after* college.—GH

Introduction

Knowledge never stands alone. It builds upon and plays against the knowledge of previous knowers and reporters, whom scholars call "sources." These are not, in a scholarly paper, the source of your particular argument (*you* are), but rather persons or documents that help you arrive at and support your argument. They are sources of information that you interpret; of ideas that you support, criticize, or develop; of vivid language that you quote and analyze.

The distinction often made between "primary" and "secondary" sources refers to the way a source functions in an argument. A primary source functions as uninterpreted data; it doesn't itself discuss or analyze your subject. To use a primary source in your argument, you need to interpret or infer its significance. A secondary source does discuss your subject, and has already made inferences or claims about it, which you may accept or challenge. If your subject were the role that a certain ant behavior plays in ant reproduction, a body of statistical data (based on extended observation of several colonies) would function as a primary source in your argument. An article by E. O. Wilson that offered to explain the role of the behavior would be a secondary source. If, however, you were writing about the metaphors used by modern biologists, Wilson's article would be a piece of primary evidence.[1]

Acknowledging or "documenting" your sources, by citing, not only marks you as a fair and generous person, but makes your argument stronger. You cite a source by making a notation, in your paper, that refers your reader to a place where you provide publication data for the source, which allows your readers to find in it what

1. Not all disciplines use the same terms for this distinction. An historian, for example, may use the term "sources" to mean raw data or testimony and "works" to mean analyses based on such sources.

you have found. Citing sources both protects and bolsters your argument. Your citation says to a reader: *"Here is where I found this idea, these words, or this information. Here you can verify the summary of the idea I am giving you or find the context for the words I have quoted—in case you wish to check on them or pursue the matter yourself."* And it often says, *"this person deserves the credit for these thoughts or words; I hereby acknowledge my indebtedness."* But it also says, *"this learned scholar has found this to be so; it's not just my idiosyncratic opinion or blithe assumption."*

Acknowledging your sources is therefore at once an obligation, a service, and an advantage. With a primary source (like the ant statistics), although you go on to give your own interpretation of its data, you're obliged first to tell your reader in a citation exactly what data you are interpreting, who assembled it, and where to find it—so they can gauge, as you have done, its reliability. But your citation also alerts others who may want to use the data; and by allowing others to test and verify your conclusions, it enhances your credibility. Likewise with a secondary source (such as Wilson's article), you're obliged to credit other people for work they have done and you have built upon; it's dishonest and ungenerous not to credit them. But citing the secondary source also alerts other readers to its existence, and has distinct advantages for you. Where you accept and build upon an idea, citing saves you from having to demonstrate the truth of the idea all over again, and it enlists the source's authority on your behalf. Where you instead challenge or qualify an idea, citing its source makes your argument interesting *as* a challenge or qualification to a published position.

In both cases, careful citing suggests to your reader that you are a trustworthy analyst, strong enough in your own reading and thinking to acknowledge other opinions in your pursuit of the truth. The fear some students have, initially, that citations will make their paper appear less thoughtful could not be less warranted.

Although procedures for using and citing sources differ somewhat from discipline to discipline, and the best authority for questions about using sources in a particular course is always its instructor, there is considerable common ground among the disciplines. This book summarizes that common ground. It describes the main methods of integrating sources into your paper and for citing them, the basic standards for acknowledging them, and the ways in which they are most commonly misused—along with some steps you can take to avoid misuses in your own writing.

1

Integrating Sources into a Paper

1.1 Three Basic Principles

A source can appear in your paper in different ways. You can briefly refer to it; you can summarize its main ideas, events, or data; you can paraphrase it or one of its passages; or you can quote the source directly. Let three principles govern your thinking about these options.

FIRST PRINCIPLE: ***Use sources as concisely as possible, so your own thinking isn't crowded out by your presentation of other people's thinking, or your own voice by your quoting of other voices.*** This means that you should mention or summarize your source unless you have a good reason to paraphrase closely or quote more extensively.

When you **summarize**, in your paper itself or in notes you take before writing, you reduce a source text to its gist, using your own words but occasionally including quoted words or phrases from the source. Writing an essay about plagiarism in American universities, for example, you might summarize the long paragraph on the preceding page of this book:

> Harvey suggests that citations play several roles: they allow others to verify one's work; they eliminate the need for restatement; they help define one's own stance "as a challenge or qualification to a published position"; and they give credit where it is due.[1]

1. Writing with Sources (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998), 2.

You will usually be summarizing longer texts than this—whole chapters, articles, or books—so the requirement that a summary be both accurate and concise will present a greater challenge. A second important requirement is to always make clear who or what you are summarizing (*Harvey suggests*). A third is to put your summary, excepting any phrases you place in quotation marks (or source terms for which there are no real synonyms), in your own words. This means that, to avoid plagiarizing, you must alter both the language *and* the sentence structure of the source.

The same requirements apply to **paraphrase**, where your encapsulation follows more closely the source's particular order of presentation or reasoning:

> Harvey is another who, in describing the function of citing, relies on the standard distinction between primary and secondary sources. Citing a primary source, he notes, although a moral responsibility, also aids others who want to work on the topic and reflects the writer's impressive openness to verification. Citing a secondary source, likewise a responsibility, also makes the source known to other readers, and either allows one to rely on its authority without reproducing all its evidence, or suggests the importance of one's own paper as a critique of an authoritative statement.[2]

2. Writing with Sources (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998), 2.

You should encapsulate by paraphrase, rather than simple summary, when the particular logic or order of a source's presentation is important to your argument. But you will sometimes need to paraphrase *not* to encapsulate a long text, but to clarify a single difficult statement or concept. Such interpretive or explanatory paraphrasing, especially useful when writing about literary or philosophical texts, will usually be longer than what it paraphrases. To unpack the meaning of the short saying used later in this book, for example, you might paraphrase thus:

> On this point Harvey invokes the proverb that "a stitch in time saves nine," meaning that a step taken early to address a worsening situation will prevent the need for more difficult and elaborate action later on.[3]

3. Writing with Sources (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998), 32.

Reasons to **quote** a source directly include the following:

- The source author has made a point so clearly and concisely that it can't be expressed any better.
- A certain phrase or sentence in the source is particularly vivid or striking, or especially typical or representative of some phenomenon you are discussing.
- An important passage is sufficiently difficult, dense, or rich that it requires you to analyze it closely, which in turn requires that the passage be produced so the reader can follow your analysis.
- A claim you are making is such that the doubting reader will want to hear exactly what the source said. This will often be the case when you criticize or disagree with a source; your reader wants to feel sure you aren't misrepresenting the source—aren't creating a straw man (or woman). And you need to quote *enough* of the source so the context and meaning are clear.

SECOND PRINCIPLE: ***Never leave your reader in doubt as to when you are speaking and when you are using materials from a source.*** Avoid this ambiguity by citing the source immediately after drawing on it, but also (if discussing the source or quoting it directly) by announcing the source in your own sentence or phrases preceding its appearance, and by following up its appearance with commentary about it or development from it that makes clear where your contribution starts (for example by referring back to the source by name: *Compton's comment is useful in several ways . . .*). Although you don't need to restate the name of your source where it's obvious—certainly not in every sentence—if your summary of a source continues for many sentences, you should remind your reader that you are still summarizing, not interpreting or developing.

THIRD PRINCIPLE: ***Always make clear how each source you introduce into your paper relates to your argument.*** This means indicating to your reader, in the words leading up your summary, paraphrase, or quotation of a source, or in the sentences that follow and reflect on it (or in both), what you want your reader to notice or focus on in the source. Notice how the student writer indicates this in the following excerpt, from a paper analyzing why people engage in self-destructive behaviors like smoking and drinking:

Scientists distinguish between "proximate" and "ultimate" explanations (Bell 600). An ultimate, long-range explanation of smoking, based on a study of human evolution, has greater appeal for many people than a more localized, proximate explanation—like chemical changes in the body or an oral fixation. But ultimate explanations may conflict with proximate evidence that seems more obvious, as does the explanation proposed by physiologist Jared Diamond in his recent book The Third Chimpanzee. Diamond cites the theory of zoologist Amotz Zahavi that self-endangering behaviors in animals (such as a male bird displaying a big tail and a loud song to a female) may be at once a signal and a proof of superior powers (196). Such a bird has proved, writes Diamond, "that he must be especially good at escaping predators, finding food, resisting disease; the bigger the handicap, the more rigorous the test he has passed." Humans share the same instinct that makes birds give dangerous displays, he suggests; and risky human actions, including the use of drugs, are designed to impress potential mates and competitors in the way Zahavi suggests risky animal actions are (198). Diamond's characterization of the message that teenagers send by smoking and drinking creates an image of a strutting animal:

> I'm strong and I'm superior. Even to take drugs once or twice, I must be strong enough to get past the burning, choking sensation of my first puff on a cigarette, or to get past the misery of my first hangover. To do it chronically and remain alive and healthy, I must be superior. (199)

An apparent problem with this ultimate, evolutionary explanation of smoking, however, is that people were smoking long before they knew it was dangerous, before they knew that doing it chronically made it harder to "remain alive and healthy." Public concern about smoking did not appear until the 1950s (Schmidt 29). Before that, moreover, many people smoked in private—removed from potential mates they might impress; men had a quiet pipe by the fire or actually left the ladies (or the ladies left them) to have a cigar after dinner. Finally, Native American peoples smoked tobacco for centuries, apparently for its pleasantly elevating effect (Wills 77).

The student uses her sources concisely and clearly. She summarizes, in passing, Bell's distinction between types of explanation, which

she accepts and applies to her own topic. She reduces Diamond's 10-page argument about smoking and drinking, which she doesn't accept, to a few sentences and short quotations. And she merely refers her reader to Schmidt and Wills, who provide support for her claims that concern about smoking is recent and that Indians smoked tobacco for its pleasant effect. (Later in the paper she uses, as primary sources, interviews she conducted with adolescents about their first smoking and drinking experiences.) She makes clear the relevance of the summary of Diamond to her argument in the sentence at lines 6–8 that leads up to the summary, providing an argumentative context for it *(But ultimate explanations may conflict with proximate evidence)* and then again by explicitly discussing the summarized material in the sentences following the quotation *(An apparent problem with this explanation)*. Since her summary of Diamond continues for several lines, she reminds the reader at the beginning of line 20 (*he suggests*) that she is still summarizing. And she has been careful to paraphrase at those times in her summary when she may have been tempted merely to repeat her source's words. When she paraphrases this sentence in Diamond's book:

> It seems to me that Zahavi's theory applies to many costly or dangerous human behaviors aimed at achieving status in general or at sexual benefits in particular.

her paraphrase, at lines 20–23, is different in both language and sentence structure:

> risky human actions, including the use of drugs, are designed to impress potential mates and competitors in the way Zahavi suggests risky animal actions are (198).

The student excerpt also illustrates one further rule: ***mention the nature or professional status of your source if it's distinctive.*** Don't denote a source in a psychology paper as "psychologist Anne Smith" or in a literature paper as "literary critic Wayne Booth." But do mention professional qualification, especially where you are quoting, when it isn't apparent from the nature of the course or paper—as here when the student uses a physiologist and a zoologist (lines 9–11). And do describe the nature of a source that is especially authoritative or distinctive: if it's the seminal article or standard biography, for example, or an especially famous or massive or recent study, or by the leading expert or a first-hand witness.

MENTIONING A TITLE IN YOUR PAPER: Underline or italicize a book (as in line 10, page 6) or collection, a journal or newspaper, play, long poem, film, musical composition, or artwork. Put in quotation marks the title of an individual article, chapter, essay, story, or poem. Don't underline the Bible or its books, or legal documents like the Constitution. Italicizing is the equivalent of underlining: don't do both, except for words already italicized or underlined in a title: The Making of *The Origin of Species* or *The Making of* The Origin of Species.

1.2 Rules for Quoting

General Principles

(a) ***Quote only what you need or is really striking.*** If you quote too much, you may convey the impression that you haven't digested the material or that you are merely padding the length of your paper. Whenever possible, keep your quotations short enough to embed gracefully in one of your own sentences. Don't quote lazily; where you are tempted to reproduce a long passage of several sentences, see if you can quote instead a few of its key phrases and link them with a concise summary.

(b) ***Construct your own sentence so the quotation fits smoothly into it.*** The student has done this at line 15–18 on page 6: *Such a bird has proved, writes Diamond, "that he must be especially good at escaping predators, finding food, and resisting disease; the bigger the handicap, the more rigorous the test he has passed."* If you must add or change a word in the quotation to make it fit into the grammar of your own sentence, put brackets [ ] around the altered word. A source passage like "nostalgia for my salad days" might appear in your sentence as *he speaks of "nostalgia for [his] salad days."* A source passage like "I deeply distrust Freud's method of interpretation" might become *Smith writes that he "deeply distrust[s] Freud's method of interpretation."* But use this cumbersome device rarely; ***always try to construct your sentence so you can quote verbatim.*** And if you need to change only an initial capital letter to a lower-case letter, do so silently, without putting brackets around the letter.

(c) ***Usually announce a quotation in the words preceding it*** (as the student does in line 15 with *writes Diamond*) so your reader enters the quoted passage knowing who will be speaking and won't have to reread the passage in light of that information. Withholding the identity of a source until a citation at the end of the sentence is acceptable when you invoke but don't quote or discuss a source (as with Bell, Schmidt, and Wills in the student excerpt, and commonly throughout science and social-science writing) or when the identity of a quoted source is much less important than, or a distraction from, what the source says—as for example when you are sampling opinion. In a history paper, for instance, you might give a series of short quotations illustrating a common belief in the divine right of kings; in an English paper you might quote a few representative early reviews of Walt Whitman. In neither case would the identity of the quoted individuals be important enough to require advance notice in your sentence. Otherwise, set up quotations by at least saying who is about to speak.

(d) ***Choose your announcing verb carefully.*** Don't say "Diamond *states*," for example, unless you mean to imply a deliberate pronouncement, to be scrutinized like the wording of a statute or a Biblical commandment. Choose rather a more neutral verb ("writes," "says," "observes," "suggests," "remarks," "argues") or a verb that catches exactly the attitude you want to convey ("laments," "protests," "charges," "replies," "admits," "claims," "objects," etc.).

Technical Rules

(a) ***Don't automatically put a comma before a quotation,*** as you do in writing dialogue. Do so only if the grammar of your sentence requires it (as the sentence at line 15 of the student excerpt on page 6 does, whereas the sentence at line 36 does not).

(b) ***Put a period or comma at the end of a quotation inside the close-quotation mark,*** as in lines 18 and 36 of the student excerpt; put colons and semicolons outside the close-quotation mark. But if your sentence or clause ends in a parenthetical citation, put the period or comma after the citation. (See the exception for block quotations in section 1.3f below.)

(c) ***Use a slash (/) to indicate a line-break in a quoted passage of poetry,*** inserting a space before and after the slash: *Hamlet wonders if it is "nobler in the mind to suffer / The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" or physically to act and thus escape them forever.*

(d) ***Punctuate the end of a quotation embedded in your sentence with whatever punctuation your sentence requires***, not with the source-author's punctuation. In the student's sentence at lines 15–18 on p. 6, Diamond may or may not end his sentence after "passed"; but since the student ends her own sentence there, she uses a period.

(e) ***Otherwise, quote verbatim***, carefully double-checking with the source after you write or type the words. If you italicize or otherwise emphasize certain words to make them stand out in a longer passage you have quoted for analysis, add in parentheses after your close-quotation mark the phrase (*my emphasis*) or the phrase (*emphasis added*). If the author has italicized, add (*Smith's emphasis*). If the source passage is misspelled or ungrammatical, add in brackets after the relevant word the italicized Latin word [*sic*], meaning "thus," to make clear that the mistake appears in the source.

OMITTING WORDS BY ELLIPSIS: Wherever you omit words from the middle of a passage that you are quoting, insert three spaced periods to indicate the omission: *"Even to take drugs once or twice," Diamond writes, "I must be strong enough to get past . . . the misery of my first hangover" (199).* If a sentence ends within the omitted portion, add an extra, fourth period and space, before the ellipsis, to indicate this. Don't use an ellipsis at the start of a quotation, and only use one at the end if you are quoting a block and have omitted words from the end of the last sentence quoted. Don't omit only single words or short phrases; and never omit words in a way that gives a false sense of what the passage says (see section 3.2a). If the text you are quoting *contains* ellipsis marks, put them in [. . .] square brackets.

1.3 Quoting Blocks

If you need to quote more than five lines of prose or two verses of poetry, indent the passage as a block. The student whose paper is excerpted on page 6 does this when she quotes three consecutive sentences of Diamond's book at line 26 (*"I'm strong and I'm superior"*) that give a particularly vivid statement of Diamond's theory. This makes her paper more persuasive by giving her criticisms a specific focus, and it reassures readers that she is not misrepresenting Diamond by selecting out a few weak or misleading phrases. You

should quote a block, however, only when you will consider closely the language of your source—e.g. when discussing a speech by Lincoln, an argument by Kant, an eyewitness account of a revolution, or a key policy statement, but rarely in a science or social science paper—and only when you will follow up your quotation with some analysis of it. Otherwise, long passages of other people's voices will drown out your own voice and will take up space that you should be devoting to your own ideas.

The basic rules for quoting blocks are these:

(a) ***Indent all lines 10 spaces from the left margin***, to distinguish a block from a paragraph break. Single-space the block, to distinguish it further from the rest of the text, unless your instructor prefers double-spaced blocks (as a few instructors do, and most publications).

(b) ***Don't put an indented block in quotation marks***; the indenting replaces quotation marks. Only use quotation marks in an indented block where the source author him or herself is quoting or is reporting spoken words (as when Homer reports Achilles' funeral oration in the *Iliad*).

(c) ***Tell your readers in advance who is about to speak and what to be listening for.*** Don't send them unguided through a long stretch of someone else's words. Notice how the student sets up the block quotation in lines 23–25, telling us beforehand both what we will be listening to and what we should listen for: *Diamond's characterization of the message that human teenagers send by smoking and drinking creates an image of a strutting animal.*

(d) ***Construct your lead-in sentence so that it ends with a colon***—pointing the reader ahead (as the student does at line 25) to the quotation itself. Occasionally, clarity or momentum may be better served by having your lead-in sentence run directly into your quotation, in which case you may require a comma or no punctuation at all. But this should be the exception, not the rule.

(e) ***Follow up a block quotation with commentary that reflects on it and makes clear why you needed to quote it.*** Your follow-up—unless you have discussed the quotation in the sentences leading up to it—should usually be a few sentences long, and it should generally involve repeating or echoing the language of the quotation itself, as you draw out its significance. Any quotation, like any fact, is only as good as what you make of it. After her block quotation of

Diamond, the student follows up at length, echoing the language of the quotation (*"remain alive and healthy,"* line 36) in her analysis of it. Another way to state this rule would be to ***avoid ending a paragraph on a block quotation.*** End with a follow-up commentary that pulls your reader out of the quotation and back into your own argument about the quoted material.

(f) ***When using an in-text parenthetic citation, put your citation of a block quotation outside the period at the end of the last sentence quoted.*** This makes clear that the citation applies to the whole block, not only to the last sentence quoted. Note where the *(199)* comes at the end of the block quotation in line 31, page 6.

1.4 Using Discursive Notes

You will occasionally want to tell your reader something that neither directly advances your argument nor acknowledges or documents a source. For this you should use a discursive footnote or endnote. Except in a long research paper or thesis, use discursive footnotes sparingly; in most cases, if the note is really interesting enough to include, you should work it into the argument of your paper—or save it for another paper. But you may sometimes wish to do the following:

(a) briefly amplify, qualify, or draw out implications of your argument—as on page 1 of this book, and in these two examples:

> 6. These differences are not small: in 1990 the US spent 45 percent more per capita than Canada, nearly three-quarters more than Germany and three times as much as the United Kingdom (Kingshorn 121; Connors 11).

> 12. The use of the word "smelly" in this passage is illuminated by Jeffrey Myers's observation that Orwell "uses odor as a kind of ethical touchstone" (62). Orwell concludes his essay on Gandhi, Myers notes, by remarking "how clean a smell he has managed to leave behind" and says that the autobiography of Dali, the moral antithesis of Gandhi, "is a book that stinks."

(b) announce a non-standard edition or your own translating:

> 3. All translations from Pasteur are my own; I use the Malouf edition, which is based on an earlier and more complete draft of the treatise.

(c) direct your reader to further reading, or mention the ideas of another writer that are similar to yours:

> 5. See chapter 3 of George Folsom's Rectitudes (London: Chatto, 1949) for an excellent summary of gnostic doctrine and a slightly different critique of the ontological argument, stressing agency rather than effect.

(d) explain something about your citing system, or about your use of terms, or about the meaning of your acronyms and abbreviations:

> 2. Unless otherwise noted, references to Locke are to The Second Treatise of Government, ed. C. B. Macpherson (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1980), which is cited by page number only.

> 3. Dickinson's poems are cited by their number in the Johnson edition, not by page number.

> [4]In this paper NK will refer to a natural cell-killer.

If you are using the MLA, APA, or CBE citation style in your paper, superscript the numbers of your discursive notes, as in the last example above. If you are using MLA style, do not indent the first line of the note; otherwise do. (See sections 2.3, 4.1, and 4.2 for information on citation styles.)

2

Citing Sources

2.1 When to Cite

You cite a source by making a notation or signal in your paper that refers your reader to a place where you give full publication data about the source. For all types of assignments (papers, problem sets, take-home exams, computer programs, lab and other reports) and for all types of sources (expert and student, printed and online; textual, numerical, graphic, and oral), you should cite on the following occasions:

(a) ***Whenever you use factual information or data you found in a source,*** so your reader knows who gathered the information and where to find its original form. (But see "common knowledge," section 2.2b.)

(b) ***Whenever you quote verbatim*** two or more words in a row, or even a single word or label that's distinctive or striking, so the reader can verify the accuracy and context of your quotation, and will credit the source for crafting the exact formulation. Words you take verbatim from another person also need to be put in quotation marks, even if you take only two or three words; it's not enough simply to cite. If you go on to use the quoted word or phrase repeatedly in your paper, however, as part of your analytic vocabulary, you don't need to cite it each subsequent time—provided you have established the source initially.

(c) ***Whenever you summarize, paraphrase, or otherwise use ideas, opinions, interpretations, or conclusions arrived at by another person,*** so your readers know that you are summarizing thoughts formulated by someone else, whose authority your citation invokes, and whose formulations readers can consult and check against your summary.

(d) ***Whenever you make use of a source passage's distinctive structure, organizing strategy, or method,*** such as the way an argument is divided into distinct parts or sections or kinds, or a distinction is made between two aspects of a problem; or such as a particular procedure for studying some phenomenon (in a text, in the laboratory, in the field) that was developed by a certain person or group. Citing tells your readers that the strategy or method isn't original with you and allows them to consult its original context.

(e) ***Whenever you mention in passing some aspect of another person's work,*** unless that work is very widely known, so readers know where they can follow up on the reference.

When you're in doubt as to whether to cite a source or not, cite. Note that these rules apply even to sources assigned as **readings for a class** or included in its source book, to sources that merely summarize other sources, and to **take-home exams** (which, unlike in-class exams, allow direct access to sources). The fact that your instructor will instantly recognize your use of a course text doesn't change the need to acknowledge it. Your goal is to write an argument persuasive to all interested readers, not just to your instructor. Again, it might seem unnecessary to cite **background information** to your argument, such as an account of a work's historical context or a survey of previous work done on the topic. But even if these matters are common knowledge in the field, if *your* knowledge of them isn't first-hand, your reader needs to know where your version of the background facts came from.

Finally, since a **lecture** is a carefully constructed presentation by an authority in the field, and may itself draw on other authorities, you should cite if you use a distinctive idea, phrase, or piece of information from a lecture (see 4.2e). Some instructors may want

QUOTING OR CITING A PASSAGE YOU FOUND QUOTED OR CITED BY ANOTHER SCHOLAR: when you haven't actually read the original source, cite the passage as "quoted in" or "cited in" that scholar—both to credit that person for finding the quoted passage or cited text, and to protect yourself in case he or she has misquoted or misrepresented (see "Indirect Source" pages 48–9). Always read for yourself any source that's important to your argument, rather than relying on an abstract or a summary in another source.

you to regard their lectures, for the purposes of their class only, as common knowledge not to be cited; but ask about this before incorporating lecture material.

2.2 When Not to Cite

If you find yourself citing sources for almost everything in your paper, or for entire paragraphs, you are probably giving too much rehash of other people's ideas and need to generate more ideas of your own. But you may also be citing when you don't need to, as on the following occasions:

(a) ***When the source and page-location of the relevant passage are obvious*** from a citation earlier in your own paragraph. If you refer to the same page in your source for many sentences in a row, you don't need to cite the source again until you refer to a different page in it or start a new paragraph of your paper (as the student on page 6 doesn't give a page reference for lines 15–18). Note, however, that your language needs constantly to make clear where you are drawing on a source, not giving your own ideas, by using phrasing like *"Aristotle further observes that..."* It *isn't* enough, when your paragraph draws repeatedly on a source, simply to give a single citation at the start or end of that paragraph—unless you write each sentence so as to preclude ambiguity about where the words, ideas, or information come from.

(b) ***When dealing with "common knowledge,"*** knowledge that is familiar or easily available in many different sources (including encyclopedias, dictionaries, basic textbooks) and isn't arguable or based on a particular interpretation. The date of the Stock Market Crash, the distance to Saturn, the structure of the American Congress, the date of birth of the discoverer of DNA: this is commonly available knowledge. In the paper excerpted on page 6, the student doesn't need to cite her passing reference to Freud's notion of "oral fixation" (line 6), or to the fact that gentlemen used to have an after-dinner cigar separate from the ladies (line 40–41). If she had gone on to say that this after-dinner ritual occurred even in matriarchal societies—an unfamiliar idea—she would have needed to cite a source. Obviously, what counts as "common knowledge" varies from situation to situation; when in doubt, ask—or cite anyway, to be safe. Note that when you draw a *great deal* of information from a *single* source, you should cite that source even if the information is common knowledge, since the source (and its particular way of organizing the information) has made a significant contribution to your paper.

(c) ***When you use phrases that have become part of everyday speech***: you don't need to remind your reader where "all the world's a stage" or "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" first appeared, or even to put such phrases in quotation marks.

(d) ***When you draw on ideas or phrases that arose in conversation*** with a friend, classmate, instructor, or teaching assistant—including conversation by e-mail or other electronic media. You should acknowledge help of this kind, however, in a note (see section 2.4). Be aware that these people may themselves be using phrases and ideas from their reading or lectures; if you write a paper that depends *heavily* on an idea you heard in conversation with someone, you should check with that person about the source of the idea. Also be aware that no instructor or teaching assistant will appreciate your incorporating his or her ideas from conversation verbatim into your paper, but will rather expect you to express the ideas in your own way and to develop them.

2.3 Methods of Citing

When you cite sources is more important than *how* you cite them, but knowing how makes it easier to know when. The basic requirements are to give your reader enough information to locate your source, and to be clear and consistent in the way you give it. "Enough" information means the author's name, the title of the item and of any volume that includes it, the date of the volume's publication, and often the particular page number to which you refer. When the volume is a journal, you need to give its volume number and the inclusive page numbers of the item; when it's a book, you need to give the place of publication and usually the name of the publisher. Online, oral, and other sources require further information (see section 4.2).

Several recognized styles of presenting this information are detailed in chapter 4. Most styles use one of three basic methods:

(a) ***Sequential Notes:*** In this method, you insert a raised reference numeral into your paper after a sentence in which you use source material—or, if required for clear attribution, after a particular phrase in the middle of your sentence. This numeral refers your

reader to a note at the bottom of the page (**footnote**) or end of the paper (**endnote**) that begins with the same numeral and gives information about the source:

> Diamond suggests that humans share the same "unconscious instinct" that makes birds give dangerous displays.[7]

Here, the raised *7* refers the reader to the following note that gives source and page:

> 7. Jared Diamond, The Third Chimpanzee: The Evolution and Future of the Human Animal (New York: Harper Collins, 1992), 199.

Citing by footnotes or endnotes adds minimal clutter to the body of your paper, and it disrupts the flow of your sentences less than other citation methods. Pages 35–37 and 44–58 illustrate the *Chicago Manual* note style.

(b) ***In-Text Citing***: In this method, you indicate in the text of your paper itself not only the name of the source author, but also either the number of the specific *page* on which the information, idea, or passage is found (in the humanities) or the *year* in which the source was published (in the social sciences and sciences), or *both* (in a social-sciences variation). The author's name may appear in the sentence itself or in parentheses; the page number or year of publication always appears in parentheses. This sentence uses **author-page** style:

> Physiologist Jared Diamond proposes that self-destructive human actions are an evolutionary signal of superior powers (196).

This uses **author-year** style:

> Recent explanations suggest that such actions are evolutionary signals of superior powers (Diamond, 1992).

And this uses **author-year-page** style:

> Diamond (1992: 196) has proposed that self-destructive human actions are an evolutionary signal of superior powers.

These signals in the sentence refer the reader, in author-page citing, to an alphabetical list of "Works Cited" whose entries look like this:

> Diamond, Jared. The Third Chimpanzee: The Future and Evolution of the Human Animal. New York: Harper Collins, 1992.

Since author-page citing keeps the exact page-location in the source attached to your use of the source passage in your paper, it works well for papers about longer texts, and for literary or philosophical papers that quote and examine passages closely or examine many different passages from the same source. See pages 37–39 for details of MLA style.

Author-year and author-year-page signals refer to an alphabetical list of "References," whose format emphasizes date of publication:

> Diamond, J. (1992). The third chimpanzee: The future and evolution of the human animal. New York: Harper Collins.

Author-year citing emphasizes year, rather than page number, because in a biology or psychology paper you are usually citing authors who over the years have written many short papers on a subject, in a steady process of developing, testing, and correcting hypotheses. And you are usually citing those papers for their main idea or finding—not for a particular aspect or section of a paper, or for the wording of a particular passage. Author-year-page style accommodates social scientists (like anthropologists and linguists) who work as often with passages from books as with articles. Pages 39–42 give specifics of APA, CBE, and an author-year-page style.

(c) ***Coding***: Many journals in the sciences require you to identify each of your sources by a symbol or marker—usually a numeral but sometimes an initial letter of one or more author surnames. This numeral or letter appears in parentheses or brackets in your paper each time you refer to that source, and it refers to a list of "References" at the end of the paper. Often sources are coded by order of their first mention in the paper. This sentence cites the third source mentioned:

> Recent explanations have suggested that such actions are evolutionary signals of superior powers (3).

Even if this source is cited again, late in the paper, it is still identified by its code number (*3*); and it appears third in your list of references. In another version of the method, sources are coded by their number in an alphabetic list of references—in which case the (*3*) in the example above would refer to the third source in the alphabetic list. Or, if you were coding by initials, Diamond might be cited at the end of the sentence as [*D*], and listed after the symbol [*D*] in an alphabetical

list of references. An article by Wallace, Dobbs, and Hershey might be coded as [*WDH*].

Like footnoting, coding has the advantage of requiring little apparatus in your text. And like in-text citing, it eliminates the need to make a note each time you use a certain source. It's appropriate for papers in the sciences, including biology, physics, chemistry, and math, where sources are mostly brief articles that you don't directly quote.

ABBREVIATED CITATION FOR FREQUENTLY USED SOURCES: When you write a paper that closely analyzes, or refers repeatedly to, one or a few texts, you can use a note to signal an abbreviated form of citation. You can do this in several ways:

1. Unless otherwise noted, references to Locke are to The Second Treatise of Government, ed. C. B. Macpherson (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1980), which will be cited by page, chapter, and section number.

2. Act, scene, and line numbers refer to Hamlet, ed. Harold Jenkins, Arden edition (London: Methuen, 1982).

3. Page references to NA refer to Stevens's The Necessary Angel: Essays on Reality and the Imagination (New York: Knopf, 1951); CP is his Collected Poems (New York: Knopf, 1955), and OP his Opus Posthumous, ed. Samuel French Morse (New York: Knopf, 1957).

Such a note allows you to cite the source each time (by page or section or line number, or abbreviation plus page, section, or line number) without having to footnote or supply author and date each time. Having provided the third note, you might write this in your paper: *In one early poem, he symbolizes the imagination is as a "bottle of indigo glass" (OP 22).*

2.4 Acknowledging Uncited Sources

Any time you write a paper of more than a few pages, you draw on many influences: both sources you cite and less immediate or formal sources such as the lessons of former teachers, conversations with friends, class discussions, books you read in the summer or for other classes. When you have benefitted substantially from information or

ideas in sources like these that don't appear in your list of references, you should acknowledge their help in a **footnote or endnote of acknowledgment**. Doing so shows you to be both generous and intellectually self-aware.

If you are acknowledging help of a general kind, evident throughout your paper, put the raised reference-number for the note immediately after your title or at the point at which you first state your main idea, and put the note at the bottom of your first page or at the beginning of your endnotes. If you are acknowledging help on a specific point, put the note at the bottom of that page or at the appropriate point in your sequence of footnotes or endnotes. Some samples:

1. My understanding of Reconstruction is influenced by my reading of W. J. Cash's Mind of the South (New York: Knopf, 1941) and by discussions with Carol Peters and Tom Wah.

7. I am indebted for this observation and for the term "self-researching" to Susan Lin's comments in Anthro 25 (2/6/98).

1. I wish to thank Roberto Perez for his objections to an earlier draft of this paper, and for directing me to the Gosson article.

1. Work for this assignment was done in collaboration with Vanessa Praz, who is mostly responsible for the "Methods" section.

6. I owe this example to Norma Knolls, whose help in understanding the mathematics of decision theory I gratefully acknowledge.

2. In this paper I use an analogy between soul and state developed in Prof. Caroline Hill's lectures for Sociology 144, Howard University, fall term 1993–94.