• Text Citation Strategies and Ideas

Summary

A summary condenses information, perhaps reducing a chapter to a short paragraph or a paragraph to a single sentence. A summary should be written in your own words; if you use phrases from the source, put them in quotation marks and include page numbers (see quotation below). Do not include your opinion or analysis; a summary is objective and should merely restate the author's points. When writing a summary, you will include paraphrases, quotations, and signal phrases, as defined below.

Paraphrase

Like a summary, a paraphrase is written in your own words, but whereas a summary reports significant information in fewer words than the source, a paraphrase is less condensed, retelling the information with more detail. If you retain occasional choice phrases from the source, use quotations and a page citation so it is clear which words are from the source and which are your own. Even when you do not use an exact quotation, if the idea you are paraphrasing is unique and not your own, you need to cite the source!

Quotation

A quotation consists of the exact words from a source. When you quote, copy the words of your source exactly, including punctuation and capitalization. Lastly, introduce all quotations with a signal phrase (see below) telling the reader who is speaking and include the page number where you found the quote.

Signal Phrase

Readers need to move from your own words to the words of a source without feeling a jolt. Avoid dropping a quotation into your essays without warning the reader. Instead, provide clear signal phrases, which often include the author's name and the title of his/her essay, to provide context and prepare readers for a quotation. In the following example, the signal phrase is "Turback claims that":

> Turback claims that "regulated sport hunting has never driven any wild species into extinction" (74).

Some verbs to introduce quotes

acknowledges	advises	agrees	argues	asserts
believes	claims	charges	concludes	criticizes
declares	describes	discusses	disputes	emphasizes
expresses	interprets	lists	objects	observes
offers	opposes	remarks	replies	reports
reveals	states	suggests	thinks	writes

Suggestions and strategies for text citation

- One purpose of an in-text citation is to help readers find the source in the Works Cited list; therefore, you need to include, either in the signal phrase or citation, enough of the source information for readers to find the matching entry (for example, the author's name, the text title if the author has more than one source in the list, etc.).

- If the signal phrase includes the author's name, or if it's clear you're referring to an author you've previously identified, you do not need to put the last name in the citation because you've already indicated it.

- If you've not included the author's name in a signal phrase, then you need to cite it in the parenthetical citation.

- The page number is always necessary unless it's a web source or another source without page numbers.

- If you are summarizing or paraphrasing several sentences in a paragraph, put the in-text citation at the end of the last sentence you paraphrased.

- Make sure to go the extra step of analyzing the quote by adding your thoughts to the conversation (that is, assess it). Resist dropping quotes into your paper and thinking they will speak for themselves. Instead, you must demonstrate you understand what is being said and add your own thoughts so the reader is learning more. In your own words, explain the quotation's meaning, relevance, or importance to your argument. Remember, quotes are meant to support your argument, not make them for you.

- For quotations longer than four lines, indent the entire quote ten spaces and do not use quotation marks unless the passage includes a quotation or direct speech. Do not overuse long quotes for they will draw attention away from your own point. Learn to pick out the most relevant part of a quote and incorporate it into your own phrasing.

- If you omit something from a quotation, use an ellipsis (...) to indicate the removed word(s). If you change something in a quote, enclose the change in brackets ([ ]).

- If you use quotes within a quote, use single quote marks (') for the internal quote. For example:

  Smith writes, "She wore a blue dress on Sunday. 'You look beautiful in blue,' mother said" (40).