

Research Paper: Integrating Sources

Writing Center of Vanguard University | "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth" (John 17:17).

There are three basic ways of using or integrating your sources effectively into a research paper: summarizing, paraphrasing, and directly quoting. In all three cases, you need in-text citations to let readers know the source(s) of information.

Summaries express material in your own words. Summaries are usually shorter than the original material. Paraphrases use a number of words from the original material, but not every single word. Paraphrases are usually about the same length as the original. Be very careful that your paraphrase does not slip into *plagiarism*. Direct quotations are word-for-word excerpts. You must place quotation marks around the material. If the material is four lines or longer, format it as a block quotation.

Remember to set up all direct quotations with a sentence or phrase of your own, as in the following example, which succinctly points ahead to the quotation:

In the beginning of the Book of Acts, Jesus tells the disciples that the Holy Spirit would come to dwell on earth, saying that "[the disciples] [would] receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on [them]; and [they] [would] be [His] witnesses . . . " (NIV Acts 1:8).

Notice the editorial use of **brackets []** to show inserted material. These bracketed changes were made so the quoted material would remain in the same pronoun case as the rest of the sentence. The original text reads: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (NIV Acts 1:8). You should try to limit the use of brackets as much as you can, as in the following example:

In the beginning of the Book of Acts, Jesus tells the disciples that the Holy Spirit would come to dwell on earth: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses . . . " (NIV Acts 1:8).

Notice the use of ellipses . . . at the end of the quotation, indicating that material has been omitted. You should also try to limit the use of ellipses, because overuse can look suspicious: A reader might wonder why you've omitted so many words from the original source.

The following example is a block quotation for material four lines or longer:

After Jesus tells the disciples that the Holy Spirit would come to dwell on earth, He is taken up to heaven:

But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. (KJ Acts 1:8-9)

Note: Quotation marks are NOT placed around block quotations.

Integrating sources into your research paper also means providing logical connections and proper context for quoted material.

Here are suggestions for setting up quotations:

The author states/suggests/observes/argues/proposes/indicates/ that . . .

By (showing this and such a thing), the author states/suggests/observes/argues/proposes/indicates/ that . . .

Following (this and such), the author defines (key term) as . . .

Although (a rival author) argues that (this and such), the author proposes . . .

I contend, on the other hand, that the author is correct in concluding that . . .

Above all, the poet is popularly known as . . .

Critics such as (a rival author) surmise . . .

Other words you can use: assumes, remarks, writes, says, demonstrates, highlights, emphasizes the idea (or fact) that, proves, verifies, settles the question by (doing this and such), reasons, concludes, decides, insinuates, refutes, exposes, subverts, overturns, considers, establishes

