

HOW TO USE SOURCES IN YOUR PAPER

...and avoid plagiarism.



A Tutorial



Using
outside
research
sources

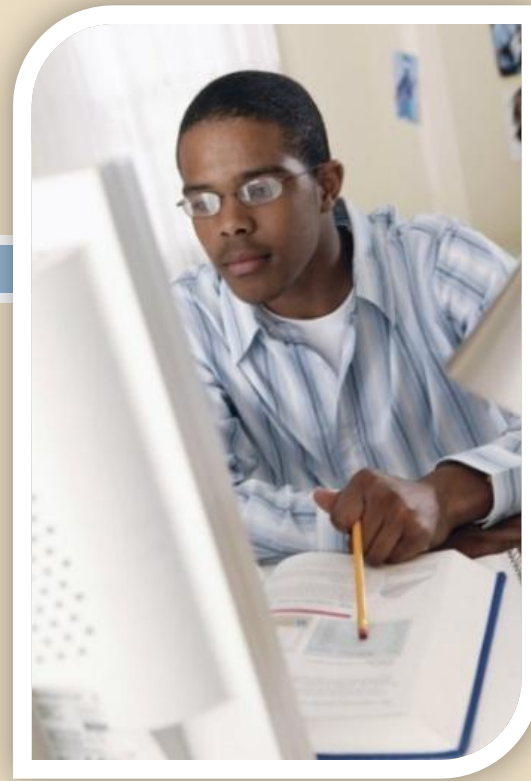
Most writers who are asked to use outside research sources in their academic papers have problems at one time or another with at least one of the following questions:

I'm lost!!



Common Questions

- ❑ What is a citation?
- ❑ Why do I need to cite?
- ❑ What is a source?
- ❑ What does it mean to quote, paraphrase, and summarize a source?
- ❑ What is a citation style?
- ❑ What does it mean to plagiarize?



Understanding why



Before learning what these words and phrases mean, it is important to understand why they are needed.



Why we need to cite sources

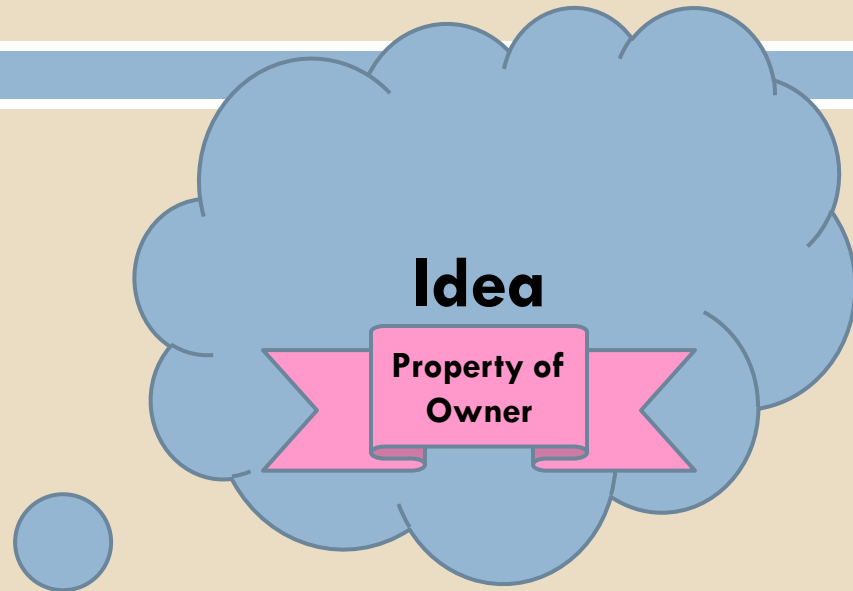
Intellectual property is the product of one person's mind.

The reason that the citation (or listing) of outside sources in a paper is needed is that in the United States and many other countries, the concept of intellectual property (property that is the product of someone's mind) is very important.



What is intellectual property?

Intellectual property is treated by the law in the same way as a new mechanical invention would be.



Intellectual property is an original idea or information (usually stated in words and/or numbers) that is treated as the property of its creator.



Whose idea is it anyway?

You must identify the words or ideas in your paper that are not your own.

This idea cannot be used by other another writer without a statement telling the reader that the idea or information is the product of someone else.



What is a citation?

The three most common citation styles are:

-MLA

-APA

-Chicago

This statement to the reader, which needs to be included in the body of a paper as well as in a list at the end of a paper, is known as a citation, and it takes a slightly different form depending on the citation style used. Three of the most commonly used citation styles are:

- MLA (Modern Language Association) (MLA)
- APA (American Psychological Association)
- Chicago

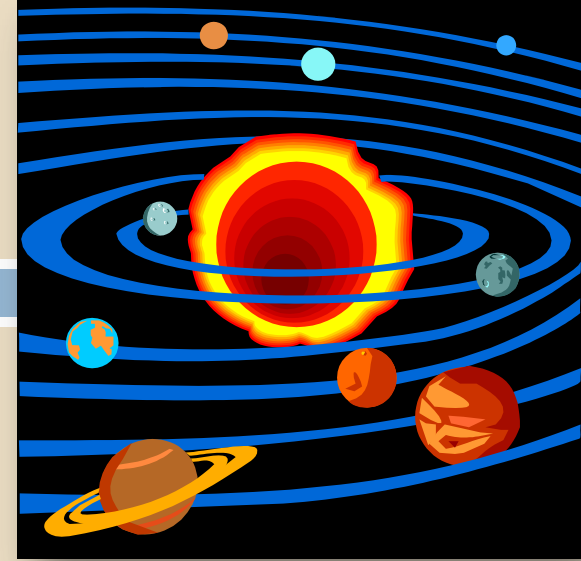


When don't you need a citation?

You don't need a citation for information that is common knowledge.



What is common knowledge?



One example of common knowledge is the fact that the earth revolves around the sun. Just about everyone knows that this fact is true, so citing it would not be necessary.

If you're not sure if something is common knowledge or not, ask your instructor.



What is a source?



A source can be many different things:

- an academic journal,
- a book,
- a web site, or
- an interview



Why are sources important?



If a published writer's information or idea supports your argument or opinion, your reader will be more likely to believe it.



Finding Sources



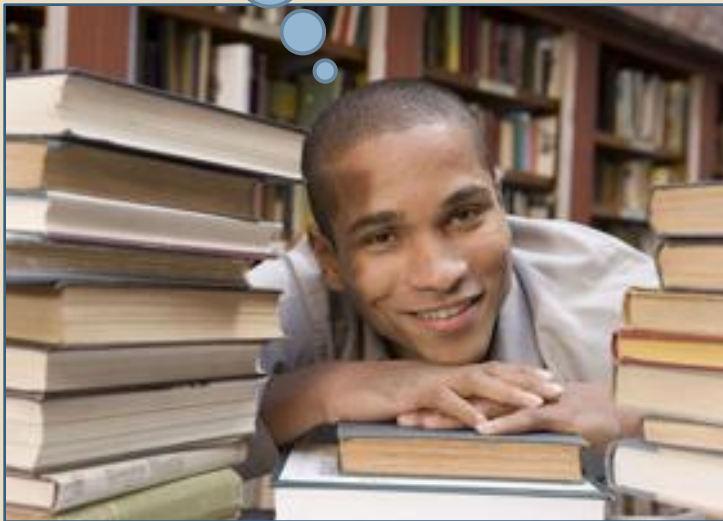
Scholarly journal articles

It can take some time to find useful research sources. Also, keep in mind that scholarly (peer-reviewed) journal articles are oftentimes quite narrowly focused. The best way to use a narrowly-focused scholarly article is as an example of a general point you're trying to make in your research paper.



Books

I love
books!



Many students find it easier to use books as research sources because they are not as narrowly-focused as scholarly articles.



Another tip

Whether you're using a book or a journal article in your research paper, one helpful tip to keep in mind is that it is sometimes possible to find additional useful research sources *in your original sources' own* works cited or references list.



What about Wikipedia?

Most instructors will not accept a Wikipedia article as a research source, but it can still be useful to read an article on your topic in Wikipedia first in order to get a broad overview of your subject. Also, some Wikipedia articles list links to scholarly sources at the end of them.



Where can I find scholarly (peer reviewed) sources?

Three great places to find research sources (books & scholarly [peer reviewed] journal articles) are the college's library catalog, the EbscoHost database (accessed through the college Library's webpage) and Google Scholar.

EBSCO Research
HOST Databases

Basic Search | Advanced Search | Visual Search | Choose Databases

Sign In to My EBSCOhost | [Keyword](#) | [Publications](#) | [Subject Terms](#) | [Cited References](#) | [Indexes](#) | [Images](#)

Find: Search Clear

in Academic Search Premier

Refine Search Results

Limit your results:

Full Text	<input type="checkbox"/>
References Available	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Checking this limit box along with your search will select only peer reviewed articles

Navigation arrows: left and right

Where to find Google Scholar:

Go to www.google.com and select “Scholar” from the drop down list under “more.”



Sources continued

Always
try to find
reliable
sources.

Other websites can also sometimes be used as a reliable research source.

Always check with your instructor if you are unsure about using a particular website as a source.



Quotes, Paraphrases, and Summaries



Why use quotations, paraphrases, and summaries?

Evidence makes papers stronger.

Writers include quotations, paraphrases, and summaries in their paper because they can make their own claims and arguments stronger.





It is important for the writer of an academic paper to understand the difference between a quote, a paraphrase, and a summary of a source.



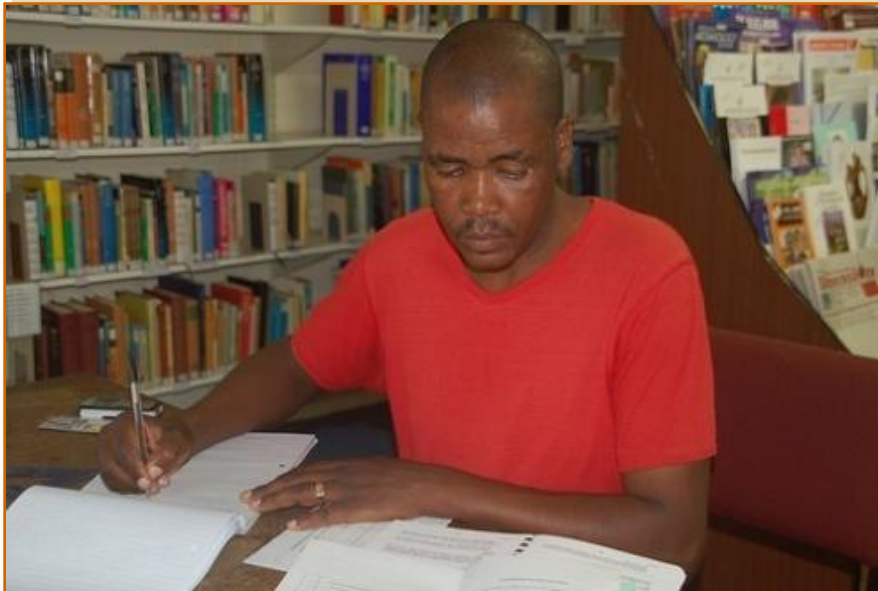
What is a quotation?

A quotation is an **exact** copy of a group of words from a research source. Although some words from the original source text may be left out of a quotation (using ellipses [...]), the words that are copied must be exactly the same as those from the source.

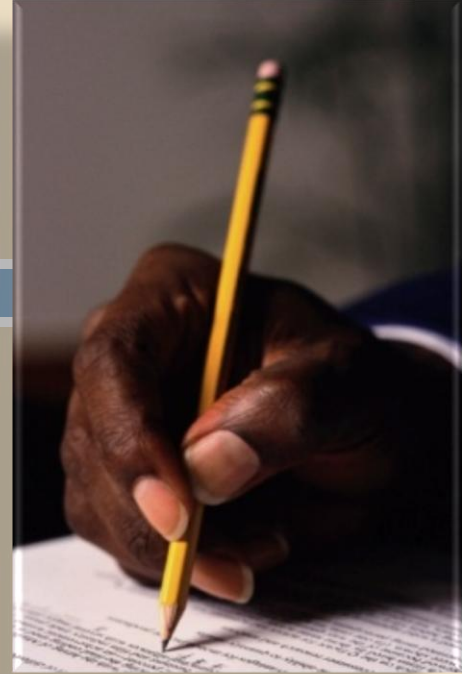


How many quotations can I use?

Never insert a large number of quotations into your paper while only using your own words to connect the quotations - in other words, **do not quote too often in your paper.**



What is a paraphrase?

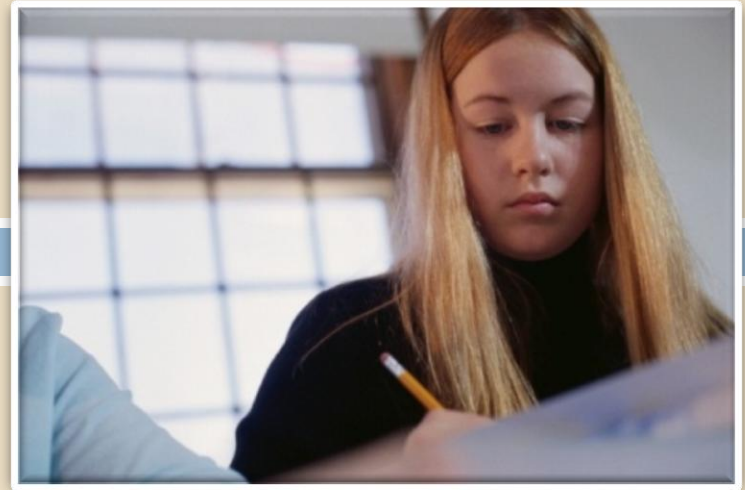


Paraphrase = in your own words.

A paraphrase, on the other hand, is a restatement of a source's idea that is written ***completely in your own words.***



Paraphrasing continued



In most situations, paraphrasing a source works better than quoting a source because a writer can focus only on the most important information needed, using a smaller amount of words than is often possible when quoting.



Paraphrasing versus quoting



A paraphrase can be more difficult than a quotation for some writers, however, because both a higher level of writing skill as well as a complete understanding of a source's idea or ideas is needed in order to paraphrase correctly.



What is needed in order to be able to paraphrase well?

Being able to understand your sources very well is very important.

*In order to paraphrase correctly and effectively, you need to **understand the original source sentence (or sentences) very well**. Reread it as many times as you need to in order to understand it completely, and always look up unfamiliar words in a dictionary, if necessary.*



The Power of Paraphrasing

The mental work needed to paraphrase successfully helps a writer to understand the full meaning of an author's words and ideas.



What is a summary?

A summary is very similar to a paraphrase; it is also written by the writer of a paper in his or her own words. A summary is different from a paraphrase because it only summarizes the ***main idea of a source or the author of a source***. In other words, a summary is more condensed and less specific than a paraphrase.



Introducing a paraphrase or a quote

When paraphrasing or quoting a source, it's important to use a "signal phrase" to introduce your source (for example: [name of author] "says," "states," "argues," etc).



Connecting to a source's ideas



After inserting a quote, paraphrase, or summary into your paper, you should always follow it up with a comment or an explanation of the connection between it and your own thoughts and ideas.

Otherwise, your reader will not know how your quote, paraphrase, or summary connects to your own words and ideas. Also, your instructor will not be certain that you really understand your sources' idea(s).



Connecting ideas continued

It is **not** acceptable to insert a large number of quotes or paraphrases in your paper with only a few of your own words and without explaining ***the connection*** between the words and ideas of your sources to your own thoughts and ideas.



Plagiarism

What happens when a writer doesn't cite his or her sources when quoting, paraphrasing or summarizing, or includes the ideas and words of any other person (including classmates and friends) in his or her paper?



Plagiarism continued

He or she would be guilty of the act of **plagiarism**. **Plagiarism** is a serious academic crime that can result in very negative consequences for those students who are found guilty of it.



The consequences of plagiarism

Plagiarism
may end
your
college
career.

The consequences of plagiarism are very serious, and could include the following:

- ▣ receiving an “F” on a paper
- ▣ being put on academic probation, or
- ▣ being suspended from the College
- ▣ being expelled from the College

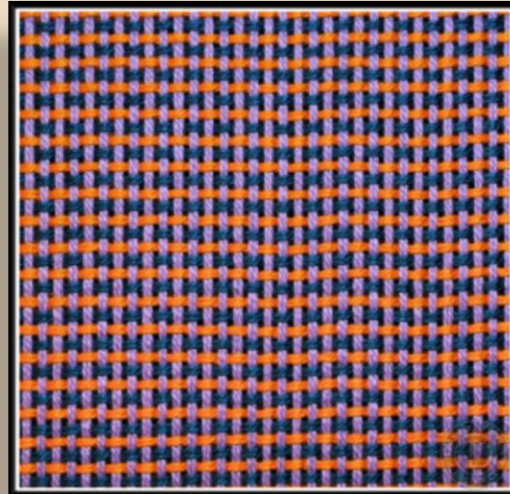


Avoiding plagiarism

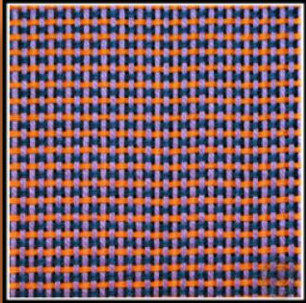
To help you avoid plagiarizing a source's language and sentence structure (which is still considered plagiarism), ***don't look at your source's words*** while you are paraphrasing or summarizing.



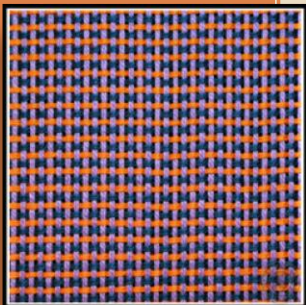
Weaving your research paper together



How do I connect my ideas to my sources' ideas?



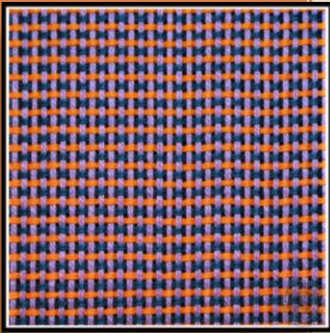
One picture that may be helpful to think about when writing a paper using outside sources is that of weaving a piece of fabric together using two threads of different colors.



By writing a paper using outside sources, you are weaving a piece of fabric with two *separate* but interwoven (woven below and above each other) threads.



Weaving your fabric, continued

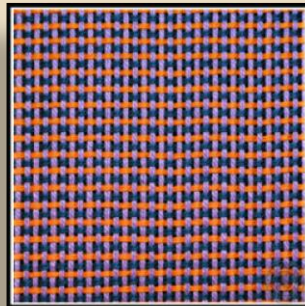


The first thread (we'll call it the blue thread) represents ***your*** words and ideas.



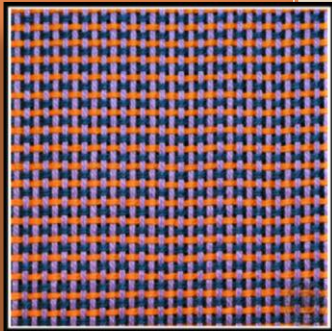
Weaving your fabric, continued

The second thread (let's call it the red thread) is made up of the words and ideas of ***your sources (other people)*** - these are the quotations, paraphrases, and summaries in your paper. Both of these threads should combine to create a complete and clear whole.



How do I label my sources' ideas?

These threads will run over and around one another, but ***the words and ideas of other people will always need to be clearly labeled*** in the text of your paper.



Works cited and references pages

At the end of your research paper, you will need to include a page where you list your research sources in alphabetical order, using the last name of the author or author's of your source. This page is called the "Works Cited" page in MLA style and the "References" page in APA style.



Works cited and references pages continued

This list will tell your reader which sources you used and where you got them. The reader will then know where to find your source if he or she has any questions about the source or what it says.



What should a research paper do?

A research paper should:

bring together different evidence, facts, and opinions about a subject from different sources and then explain the meaning of and discuss these sources' ideas and information.



What should a research paper not be?

A research paper should not:

be just a summary of sources or the paper's subject; in other words, it should not be a book report, nor should it only discuss the writer's opinions.



What should a research paper show?



A research paper should show at least two things:

1. What you have learned and think about a topic, and
2. What other people know and have said about the same topic.



Why critical thinking is important

Critical thinking = your own personal judgment and opinion.

To think critically about an idea, concept, or information means to think very carefully about all of its strengths and weaknesses or positives and negatives.

It is critical thinking that will allow you to offer the reader ***your personal and original*** view of the ideas, concepts, and/or information that you discuss in your paper.



Planning your work



Writing a strong research paper takes a lot of time and work, but if you start early and divide the entire process into many small steps, it will be much easier and much less stressful to complete.

We at the Academic Support Center wish you good luck as you begin your research and writing journey!

