

Using Sources Creatively

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn more techniques for integrating source material effectively as you polish your final draft. Specifically, this lesson will focus on:

1. Thoughtful Source Integration

When writing papers that require the use of outside source material, it is often tempting to cite only direct quotations from your sources. If, however, this is the only method of citation you choose, your paper will seem to be a collection of others' thoughts that contains little of your own analysis.

To avoid falling into this trap, follow a few simple pointers:

1. Avoid using long quotations merely as space fillers. While this is an attractive option when faced with a ten-page paper, the overuse of long quotations gives the reader the impression you cannot think for yourself.
2. Don't use only direct quotations. Try using paraphrases in addition to your direct quotations. To the reader, the effective use of paraphrases indicates that you took the time to think about the meaning behind the quotation's words.
3. When introducing direct quotations, try to use a variety of verbs in your signal phrases. Don't always rely on stock verbs, such as "states" or "says." Think for a little while about the purpose of your quotation and then choose a context-appropriate verb.

2. Source Integration in Action

When using direct quotations, try qualifying them in a new or interesting manner. Depending on the system of documentation you're using, the signal phrases don't always have to introduce the quotation.

Instead of saying:

"None of them knew the color of the sky" is the opening line of Stephen Crane's short story, "The Open Boat" (339). This implies the idea that "all sense of certainty" in the lives of these men is gone (Wolford 18).

Try saying:

“None of them knew the color of the sky,” the opening line of Stephen Crane’s “The Open Boat,” implies that “all sense of certainty” in the lives of these men is gone (Crane 339; Woldford 18).

The combination of these two sentences into one is something different. It shows thought on the writer’s part regarding how to combine direct quotations in an interesting manner.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that **thoughtful source integration** is an important part of polishing your final draft because it ensures that your sources are featured effectively throughout your essay. You also looked at an example of **source integration in action** to get an idea of how it can be done creatively.

Best of luck in your learning!

Source: This content has been adapted from Lumen Learning's "Using Sources Creatively" tutorial.