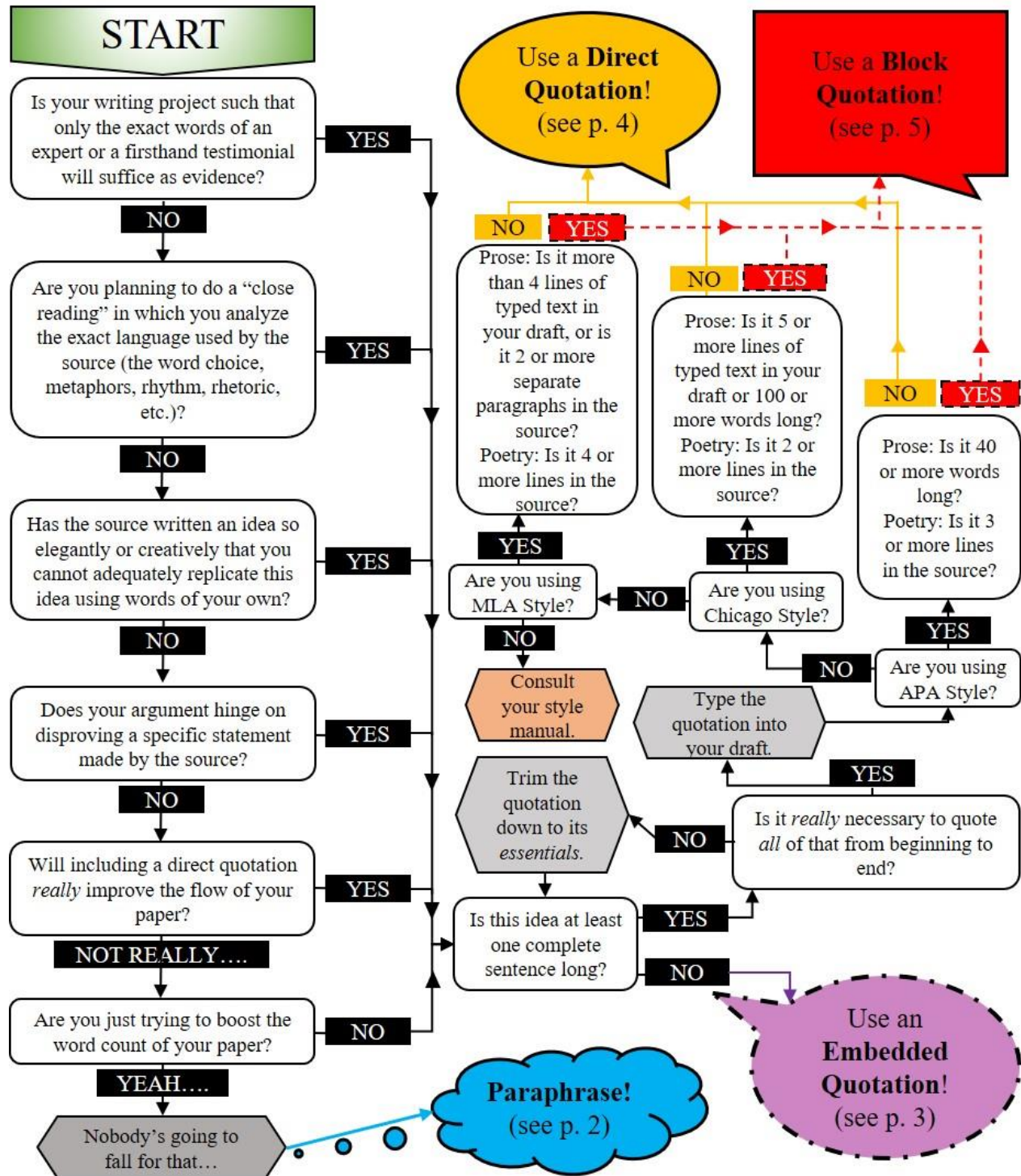


Using Source Materials Effectively

The following guide presents four of the main techniques which writers can use to bring outside sources into their arguments: **paraphrase**, **embedded quotations**, **direct quotations**, and **block quotations**. Use the flowchart below to determine which technique is best!





PARAPHRASE

A brief summary of a source's ideas, using your own words and sentence structure.

(Although you are not taking words directly from the original author, you must still cite your sources when using this technique.)

When to Use:

- ✦ To draw in another writer's ideas or information, but with an emphasis on *your* interpretation of or reflection on that information.
- ✦ When the source's ideas, methods, or information are important to convey to your reader, but the actual words used by the author are not essential to delivering this information.
- ✦ When using APA Style, which prefers succinct paraphrase of sources over direct quotation unless the author's words are absolutely essential.
- ✦ To avoid getting bogged down in the minutiae of your sources, so that you can keep the focus on your own argument.

How to Use:

1. In a paraphrase, you are **NOT** trying to say everything the source said in approximately the same number of words. Paraphrasing is not done merely to avoid a computerized plagiarism checker. Therefore, you should **NOT** be studying the original text closely, using a thesaurus to swap out synonyms, changing the active voice into passive, and figuring out ways of reordering the phrases.
2. Rather, a paraphrase is proof that you understand the material so well that you can explain it clearly from memory using your own train of thought to recapture and relate that information. To that end, paraphrasing is best done *without* the original source in front of you. Jerry Plotnick from the University College Writing Centre at the University of Toronto advises that the best way to “capture the original idea” is to take “point-form notes” (i.e., writing down the main ideas and key facts without writing complete sentences) while reading your sources.
3. After reviewing your point-form notes, set them aside, turn to your draft, and condense the source's information into a clear, precise explanation.
4. Once you have summarized the information from your own memory, review the original source for accuracy. If you are still using exact phrases from the original source, either change these words or put them in quotation marks in the style of an embedded quotation (see p. 3).
5. Provide an in-text citation according to your discipline's style guide. Failure to cite information and ideas taken from other sources is considered plagiarism.

Examples:

MLA: Simone de Beauvoir notes that one challenge to an organized feminist movement is that, unlike in a labor movement where the workers might be in physical solidarity on the same factory floor, women are often isolated in their homes apart from each other (64-5).

APA: Archer and Rohloff (2015) demonstrate that the current technology allowing for sensitive data to be utilized without decryption is promising yet imperfect.

Chicago: Andres Christensen, however, finds that the Solomon Islanders have been remarkably resourceful at adapting to the challenges of globalization.¹³

EMBEDDED QUOTATION

Incorporating key words or phrases from a source into your own original sentences. This is done whenever you are quoting less than a complete sentence.

When to Use:

- ✦ When there are unique terms, phrases, or literary images in your source that you would like to quote, yet the full sentences in which those words appear are not essential to your paper.
- ✦ When you would like to tackle the process of quotation and interpretation at the same time, keeping the emphasis of your essay on your writerly voice instead of temporarily surrendering it to another writer.

How to Use:

1. Determine which key words or phrases you would like to import into your own sentence. You will need to put quotation marks (“xyz”) around all separate phrases that are pulled from the source.
2. Write a grammatical sentence that incorporates the borrowed words.
3. Use bracketed ellipses [...] with three dots to indicate that you have removed any text that should be within the quotation marks.
4. Use square brackets [like this] to indicate any changes that you’ve made to the wording within the quotation marks, such as clarifying pronouns or changing the verb tense in order to make the quote grammatically match your own sentence.
5. Use a bracketed [*sic*] to indicate that any typo, factual error, grammatical mistake, or other type of error was found in the original source. *Sic* is Latin for “thus” and shows that you are not the one who caused the mistake.
6. Include an in-text citation according to your discipline’s style guide.

Examples:

MLA: Although Thornton et al. have proven that the “mere presence” of a cell phone is sufficient to distract from the successful completion of cognitive tasks (479) and Przybylski et al. find that “the presence of mobile phones can interfere with human relationships,” especially “when [...] discussing personally meaningful topics” (237), it remains likely that cell phones are here to stay.

APA: Perhaps if America's media focused on globalization as much as other countries, Hertsgaard (2005) argues, they would learn to view foreigners as real embodied people rather than "incomprehensible, abstract stereotypes" (p. 109).

Chicago: A 14 February 1902 report from the *Montgomery Tribune* about “the unique sport of rooster pulling for the ladies, [...] in which a great number partisipated [*sic*]”⁸ seems to have been the exception that proves the rule that men were the foremost participants in blood sports.

DIRECT QUOTATION

Quoting at least one complete sentence from a source using the exact same words.

When to Use:

- ✦ When the original author has expressed an *idea* (not just facts or background info!) so well that you could not effectively replicate it using your own words.
- ✦ When you intend to closely analyze the source's exact words, images, or rhetoric.
- ✦ When you disagree with what the source has claimed.
- ✦ When only the words of an expert or a first-hand testimonial will suffice as evidence.

How to Use:

1. Introduce with a “signal phrase” in your own words that establishes or clarifies authorship, such as **Heidegger claims**, or **According to Cixous**.
2. Include the exact quotation in quotation marks (“xyz”). Try to include only sentences that are essential. The direct quotation must function grammatically as a complete sentence with subject, verb, and completed idea; a sentence fragment will not work in this technique. If quoting from more than one line of poetry, put a forward slash (/) between each line.
3. Use bracketed ellipses [...] with three dots to indicate if you have removed any words from the quotation.
4. Use square brackets [like this] to indicate any changes that you've made to the wording, such as clarifying names.
5. Use a bracketed [*sic*] to indicate that any typo, factual error, grammatical mistake, or other type of error was found in the original source. *Sic* is Latin for “thus” and shows that you are not the one who caused the mistake.
6. Provide an in-text citation according to your discipline's style guide.
7. Follow with an interpretation that highlights how this quotation connects to your larger argument. Consider: What is the author saying here? Why have you shared this information with your reader? How does this quotation fit in with your other sources and evidence? How does this quotation help to advance your argument?

Examples:

MLA: Danticat writes, “You often thought that without the trees, the sky would fall on your head. You learned in school that you have pencils and paper only because the trees gave themselves in unconditional sacrifice” (67). This image of the land as a willing sacrificial victim to the progress of the writer's own self-expression underscores the novel's key theme.

APA: She claims, “The Milgram Shock Experiment famously revealed that it is impossible for most people to resist the trappings of authority” (Dixon, 2016, p. 32). When given direct orders by the “scientist” in charge, however, most people *were* able to put their foot down.

Chicago: According to an EPA pamphlet (2008), “Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S., after cigarette smoking.”¹¹ Government organizations have made radon regulation a central concern for public health.

BLOCK QUOTATION

An especially long direct quotation.

(Consult the flowchart (p. 1) to determine the length requirements for your discipline's style guide.)

When to Use:

- ✦ When a source expresses a complex idea in better and fewer words than you would need.
- ✦ When you intend to give a thorough analytical “close reading” of a descriptive passage from the text (such as a scene in a short story or a stanza from a poem), breaking down the author's use of images, word choice, etc.
- ✦ Use in moderation or you risk giving the impression that you are just trying to lengthen your paper or that you have few original ideas of your own!

How to Use:

1. As with a stand-alone direct quotation, provide a brief signal phrase within your paragraph that establishes authorship and introduces the quotation. Unlike with a shorter quotation, this signal phrase should end with a colon (:)
2. Break to a new line in your document. Type the entire quotation exactly as it appears. If you are quoting lines of poetry, try to replicate the formatting (line breaks, spacing, punctuation, etc.) as it appears on the page. As with the manipulated direct quote, use brackets, ellipses, and [*sic*] to indicate any changes you have made to the text.
3. Highlight the entire passage and press the Tab button twice. This will move the entire quotation as an aligned “block” closer to the center of the page.
4. You do not need to put quotation marks around a block quote (unless the actual text begins and/or ends with quotation marks). The block format itself indicates that this is a quotation.
5. Place your in-text citation at the end of the block. This citation will come after the quotation's punctuation, not before as with a stand-alone direct quote.
6. Break to a new line in your document. Do not press tab since you are not actually starting a new paragraph. Finish your paragraph by providing your explanation or interpretation of the quotation.

Example (in MLA):

They do possess pride in their heritage and are often ostentatious about this pride, as when Mrs. Todd interrupts one of her mother's anecdotes by insisting upon a correction about the lineage's health and fitness:

“None of our family was ever subject to fits,” interrupted Mrs. Todd severely. “No, we never had fits, none of us, and ‘twas lucky we didn’t ‘way out there to Green Island. Now these folks right in front: dear sakes knows the bunches o’ soothing catnip an’ yarrow I’ve had to favor old Mis’ Evins with dryin’! You can see it right in their expressions, all them Evins folks.” (Jewett 97)

The Evins folks are another branch of the Bowden family, presumably a branch with weaker genes. Mrs. Todd's rebuke is a rare contradiction to her own mother's memory, and it remains uncertain whether the Blacketts/Todds were really superior in medical history to the Evinses.

Pro-Tip:

Typically, each of your paragraphs should end with *your* final word on a matter, not someone else's. Regardless of the technique you choose, be sure to follow your incorporated source material with additional reflection and commentary of your own.

Additional Resources

For more guidance on how to effectively incorporate source materials into your writing, consult these additional resources available on Temple University's Student Success Center website.

[Avoiding plagiarism when using source materials](#): Do I need to cite this information, or is it common knowledge? Can paraphrasing be considered plagiarism? How can I avoid being accused of plagiarism when writing a research paper?

[Signal phrases and effective verbs for referring to source material](#): I'm quoting my sources a lot, and it sounds repetitive to keep writing "She writes.... She says.... She writes...." What other verbs can I use when referring to source materials in my writing?

[Synthesizing sources: definitions and questions](#): My instructor wants me to "synthesize" multiple sources in my research paper. What does that mean, and how do I do it?