WRITING GUIDE: Integrating Sources

Academic writing needs to be supported with evidence, which can be incorporated into your own writing through direct quotations, paraphrased ideas, summaries, statistics, graphs or other external sources. Remember, sources cannot do the work for you. You must use your sources to support your own ideas. You also need to clearly show how ideas relate to each other and contribute to the central point. This is what is meant by providing a context for your sources. Remember that good paragraphs should be unified, coherent, and well developed. Keep these points in mind as you integrate your sources. Follow a source with a comment that helps to interpret the information.

TIPS FOR INTEGRATING A SOURCE

- Use direct quotations when original words are more effective or when you need exact wording for accuracy

- Provide background information or a context for the quotation

- Use a lead-in phrase to introduce a quote, paraphrase or summary

- Only cite words that help develop an idea or support a point.

- Use ellipses (…) to eliminate unnecessary words or sentences from original source & square brackets to add words to maintain grammatical sense.

- Provide the author's title, or affiliation and full name the first time you cite a source to establish the authority of your source and add support to the claim.

  Examples:

  - The **Honorable Justice Murray Sinclair** explains that …
  - **Medical Researcher James Lock** has discovered a new fungus that….

- In subsequent citations, only mention the last (family) name of the author

  Examples:

  - **Sinclair** also argues …
  - **Lock's** discovery means that….

MAKE SURE YOUR QUOTES MAKE SENSE:

Sometimes when you are using a partial quote it is necessary to insert a word or some explanatory phrase so that you avoid quoting out of context and maintain correct grammar in your text. **USE SQUARE BRACKETS [ ]** when you need to insert your own comment into quoted material in order to clarify an idea or term.

Example:

Legal scholar Jay Kesan notes that "[a] decade ago, losses [from employee computer crimes] were already mounting to five billion dollars annually" (311).

SETTING UP LONG QUOTATIONS

Quotations longer than 4 lines are set-off from the rest of the text. MLA, CMS and APA styles require indenting quotations 1.27cm from the left margin. Quotations are introduced with a lead-in phrase, without quotation marks, and are usually followed by a colon. In MLA, the period is placed before the bracket. Below is an example, using MLA format. For assistance with other citation styles, consult the sample papers on the Academic Writing Styles page.

> The difference, Lane argues, between these old methods of data gathering and electronic surveillance involves quantity:
>
> > Technology makes it possible for employers to gather enormous amounts of data about employees, often far beyond what is necessary to satisfy safety or productivity concerns. And the trends that drive technology --- faster, smaller, and cheaper --- make it possible for larger and larger numbers of employers to gather ever greater amounts of personal data. (3-4)
>
> In an age when employers can collect data whenever employees use their computers---when they send email, surf the Web, or even arrive at or depart from their workstations ---the challenge for both employers and employees is to determine how much is too much.

INTRODUCING A SUMMARY OR PARAPHRASE

Lead-in phrases *are used to indicate that an idea belongs to someone else, provide information, explain a concept, support a claim, or refute an argument.*

The lead-in phrase in the following example helps link the entire paraphrase or summary to the main argument. By omitting the lead-in phrase at the beginning, readers may assume that only the sentence at the end is being cited.

EXAMPLE: UNSUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION OF A QUOTE

It appears that Jellyfish populations are proliferating at a rate never seen before and many people attribute this phenomenon to climate change. "Increase in the temperature of the water due to climatic change, the reduction in the number of predators due to over-fishing and the increase in nutrients due to the contamination of the coasts may be some of the reasons" ("About Jellyfish").

SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION OF A QUOTE

It appears that Jellyfish populations are proliferating at a rate never seen before and many people attribute this phenomenon to climate change. However, according to Oceana, an international organization dedicated to ocean conservation, the causes of these blooms are not clear, but it appears that an "increase in the temperature of the water due to climatic change, the reduction in the number of predators due to over-fishing and the increase in nutrients due to the contamination of the coasts may be some of the reasons" ("About Jellyfish"). Thus, until more scientific evidence is gathered to support these claims, we can only speculate that there is a link between jellyfish blooms and climate change.

Remarks:
The second example is better because the lead-in phrase, "according to …" helps blend the quotation better with the author's words. It also includes the name of the organization, which lends some extra credibility to what the student writer is saying. The quote is also followed by a commentary that helps interpret it. Since this is a quote from a webpage article that does not identify the author, the title of the article is used as the identifier in the in-text citation.

EXAMPLES OF LEAD-IN PHRASES

As Hedges and Burchfield (2002) have noted, "…"
Jackson answered objections with the following analysis: "…"
Hopkins and Taylor (2004), medical researchers, pointed out that "…"
In the words of Sagan, "…"

INTEGRATING STATISTICS AND OTHER FACTS

You do not need to use a lead-in phrase to introduce numerical information or statistics as it is generally assumed that the citation refers to the numerical facts.

> Roughly 60% of responding companies reported disciplining employees who had used the Internet in ways the companies deemed inappropriate; 30% had fired their employees for those transgressions (Greenfield and Davis 347).

This handout was compiled with help from the following:

"About Jellyfish". *Oceana.org*, n.d., *eu.oceana.org/en/feature-about-jellyfish*. Accessed 21 Nov. 2016.

Hacker, D. and N. Sommers. *Canadian Writer's Reference* (5th ed.). Bedford-St. Martin's, 2012.

Soles, Derek. *The Essentials of Academic Writing, Canadian Ed.* Nelson Education, 2014.

Wysocki, Anne Frances et al. *The DK Handbook, Canadian Ed.* Pearson, 2013.