

Integrating Sources

Integrating a source means using another author's writing to help build your credibility, argument, and show how you acquired knowledge. Be sure to cite everything you use to give credit to authors who inspired and informed your work. To be an effective and coherent writer follow the 4 steps below when using a source.

1 Introduce the Source

To be effective, a source must be effectively contextualized (put into context). Use a signal phrase to let readers know what to expect.

Ex: New York Times critic and reporter Jane Doe writes "Thousands of people attended the event."

2 Provide and Cite Evidence:

Generally, there are 3 ways to integrate sources:

- Quotations - integrate a source's exact words into your own writing.

Note: quotations should be kept to a minimum

- Paraphrases - restate passages into your own words. The purpose is to think critically about what has been read and present it in a way that is easy to understand within the context of our own text.

- Summaries - significantly condensed information to present a source's key ideas, particularly those that are relevant to your point of view.

Note: Don't forget: You will need a citation of your source for any of the above in a Formal Works Cited, at the end of your paper, in accordance with MLA format.

3 Clarify your Intent

After providing your source, you need to explain how you understand that information and place it into the language of your text, drawing connections to other ideas, especially if some of the vocabulary doesn't line up exactly between your essay and the internal source chosen. What does this information mean to you? This may seem obvious, but a reader may not have the same background as you and might not make the connection. Also call attention specific word choice, inclusions, or omissions that drew you to this detail.

4 Connect to Your Argument

Now that a reader understands the piece of evidence you have incorporated, explicitly connect the evidence to the topic and/or Main Idea of the paragraph. How does it matter to your argument or specific point? How does it prove your point?

Full Example:

- **Main Idea:** The spread of popular children's media is creating new issues for parents to consider.
- **Signal Phrase:** Professor David Buckman Chair of the psychology department at University of Illinois states
- **Evidence:** "The media are seen to have disrupted the process of socialization, upsetting the smooth transmission of values from one generation to the next (45)"
- **Intent:** This indicates that parents are less able to pass on the tradition of their home culture due to medial influence
- **Connections:** which in turn is leading to the homogenization of cultures at a large scale.