

Citing Sources & Avoiding Plagiarism 11/17/20 Simpson

Please watch the video on "Citing Sources & Avoiding Plagiarism" on the UWP website:

To find it, follow this path: "www.writing.ufl.edu," then "Resources," then "Video Resources," then "Writing Strategy and Grammar," then "Rhetoric & Writing Strategy." The first video in that section is the Citing Sources video.

Two main reasons to cite sources in your academic papers:

1. To show what material comes from other sources -- in other words, to avoid plagiarism
2. To allow your reader to follow your sources.

Two types of Plagiarism: intentional and unintentional

The second type of plagiarism -- unintentional -- happens much more frequently. While the possible penalties for unintentional plagiarism are technically the same as for intentional plagiarism, in my experience most professors do not treat unintentional plagiarism as harshly as they do intentional plagiarism.

Common forms of unintentional plagiarism:

1. providing citations in the body of the paper but not in a Works Cited list (or Bibliography) at the end
2. providing a Works Cited list (bibliography) at the end, but no in-text citations
3. improperly paraphrasing

All sources must be cited at two points in the paper:

-- in the body of the paper, right where you use part of your source (called "in-text citations")

Example: "... produced a five-year cancer-free rate of 62%" (Smith, 48).

Most commonly, in-text citations feature one word to identify the source (usually the author's last name) and a page number (if the source is paginated).

-- at the end of the paper, in a Works Cited list.

Link to good overview list of APA, MLA and Chicago citation styles for most sources:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/citation_style_chart.html

Paraphrasing:

To "paraphrase" is to put someone else's writing in your own words.

Unfortunately, there is no rule for exactly how much you must change the original text.

One common student problem: thinking "How LITTLE can I change the original before it is considered a paraphrase, so that I can drop the quotation marks?"

Example: In one of the best-known plays in history, Shakespeare has Hamlet considering suicide in a long speech, part of which includes these famous lines:

"To be or not to be, that is the question..."

Years ago, I was teaching Hamlet in a literature course, and in one of the student papers I found words to this effect:

Hamlet considers killing himself, thinking to exist or not to exist, that is the question.

This student stayed too close to the original, only changing the word "be" to the synonym "exist."

Let's look at a couple of other ways that the student could have done this:

1. *Shakespeare has Hamlet contemplate suicide (Act X, Scene, X).*

This is very far from the original, and it is a good paraphrase; it indicates the subject of Hamlet's thoughts, without using Shakespeare's words.

an alternative:

2. *Shakespeare has Hamlet contemplate suicide in the famous, "To be or not to be" soliloquy (Act X, Scene X, lines x-xx).*

This version paraphrases the subject of Hamlet's thoughts, and quotes only the key line, which it doesn't try to change. In this case, we've paraphrased the content and context of the scene, and we've quoted only the key part that we want to focus on.

Remember:

Since there is no specific rule, rather than trying to change the original as LITTLE as possible to be able to drop the quotation marks, your goal should be to change the original so substantially that there is no doubt that it is far enough from the original to drop the quotation marks.

Tip: When in doubt, *paraphrase your paraphrase*. Then compare your second paraphrase to the original. If there is still any doubt, do a third paraphrase, or as many more as necessary.

Also: even when you paraphrase properly, and can thus omit quotation marks, you must STILL CITE the original source.

Three-Step Process to Integrate Quotes Gracefully into Your Papers:

1. Introduce with Context

- examples of context can be *the writer* (especially if she is famous, or an expert in the field), *the publication* (prestigious sources will carry more weight than Wikipedia or a tabloid), or *the date* (especially in technological fields, more recent findings carry more weight than older ones)

2. Select only the crucial/key quote (and paraphrase the rest)

-- don't do the "book report" giant block quotes. Paraphrase the less important background context, and save your quotes for the key thoughts

-- in hard sciences, the money quote is often the key finding, especially if unexpected

Example:

A link between smoking and various cancers -- including lung, throat, mouth and tongue -- is well established. However, an article by Stanford oncologist Joe Smith in the Fall 2013 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association found a link to cancer in an unexpected organ. Smith studied 1500 smokers over a 10-year period and found that "heavy smokers were 6 times more likely to develop brain cancer than were non-smokers" (Smith, 184).

-- in liberal arts, the money quote is often something very well said (in which case a paraphrase will be a change for the worse), or distinctively said (in which case a paraphrase will water down or substantially change the meaning or power -- to exist or not to exist)

Example:

Nobel Prize-winning economist Milton Friedman analyzed the negative economic effects of a central government controlling a national economy. In area after area -- housing, commodities, durable goods, delivery of services -- he documented disastrous results. At the end of his 1990 book Command and

Control versus the Free Market, he caustically summed up his findings: "If you put the federal government in charge of the Sahara desert, in five years you'd have a shortage of sand" (341).

3. Follow the quote with analysis/critique/commentary

-- Don't just assume that a quote will stand on its own. Follow it with some comment to demonstrate why you quoted it: because it relates to your topic; because it perfectly sums up one position in a debate; because it contradicted previous findings, etc.