

# Working with Sources

Incorporating the ideas of other authors into your writing is an essential part of academic writing. Quoting the words of an author is one of the academically acceptable methods for providing support for a point or backing up your argument. Quotations need to be grammatically incorporated into the natural flow of your writing. Here is a part of a paragraph written by a student. Notice how she has incorporated quotations into her paragraph.

Working long hours under stressful conditions, especially in fast-food restaurants, appears to promote some forms of delinquent behavior. Lou DeRosa, a 29 year old manager of a McDonald's, said, "This is a survival job. A lot of people can't handle it." In addition to low wages and a hot, high-speed work environment, some employees complain of poor treatment by managers. Through Mark Kershaw's own experience as a manager he agrees that "there are some managers who treat them like slaves."

## Introducing Sources

Suppose you are going to quote from the article, "Fatigue" by Jane Brody. In the first reference to this article, you would give the full name of the author, the complete title of the article, and a brief explanation of the article's main point or argument. You might also include the the publication and the author's credentials, which often informs the reader of how the text is relevant to your point, or why the source is an authority on the topic.

Here are three ways of doing this:

In her article, "Fatigue," Jane Brody claims that many people complain of fatigue these days.

In "Fatigue" Jane Brody writes, "Fatigue is one of the most common complaints brought to doctors . . . ."

According to Jane Brody in "Fatigue," the tiredness that people complain about generally does not have to do with exercising too much.

**Note that these three sentences are based on two simple patterns. The first two follow this pattern:**

**In + [title], + [author] *writes*, + quotation (or paraphrased claim)**

The third sentence uses a different pattern:

**According to + [author] in [title], + quotation (or paraphrased claim)**

Of course, there are just two sentence patterns you can use to introduce sources. Experiment with different sentence structures in your writing.

### **Warning: A Problem**

Frequently, students start these introduction sentence with a prepositional phrase:

In this article

In this book

In Brody's essay

In such cases, remember that the word after the *in* (article, book, essay) cannot be the subject of the sentence. For example, the following sentence is incorrect:

In this article stated that Ethiopia is once again facing a famine.

Students sometimes try to solve this problem by putting the word *it* in as the subject, but this is incorrect as well. AGAIN the following sentence is INCORRECT:

In this article, it stated that Ethiopia is once again facing a famine.

Articles and books don't talk or "state"; authors do. If you know the name of the author, use that as the subject of the sentence:

In this article, Fernandez states that Ethiopia is once again facing famine.

If you don't have access to the author's name just substitute "the author states."

### **Formatting Titles**

When you reference an outside reading or text in your writing, you often need to include its title. Titles are formatted differently from the regular text in your paper to indicate that it is a title. Longer works that stand alone (they are not part of a larger publication) are set in italics. Here are a few examples:

Book: *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Newspaper: *The Wall Street Journal*

Movie: *Straight Outta Compton*

Government Report: *Food Security in the U.S.*

Shorter works that are part of a larger text, are set in quotation marks. Examples of this are a newspaper article that is one small section of the larger newspaper, the title of 1 chapter from a book, the title of one television episode.

Newspaper article: "Living on Iraq Time"

Chapter title: "All or Nothing or Something Else"

TV episode: "The Police Secret"

### **Using Signal Phrases to Introduce Quotation or Paraphrase**

After you've introduced the source, in later references to that text you would simply use the last names of the author with no further mention of the title of the article in a **signal phrase**:

Brody writes, "Here fatigue is a warning sign . . . ."

According to Brody, "tired housewife syndrome" is a major part of psychological fatigue.

Also, aim to vary the kinds of words you use in your signal phrases. It is up to you to decide which word will best describe what the author is doing in the quotation you are introducing:

Brody explains, argues, sympathizes, contradicts, criticizes, praises, describes, explores, compares, contrasts, responds...

# Introducing Quotations Exercises

Using quotations and sources A and B below, complete exercises 1 and 2.

A. Quotation: Although the breakup of the Soviet Union marked the end of the Cold War, in Eastern Europe Communism has been replaced by new ethnic strife.

Source: Mario Cuellar, *The More Things Change*

B. Quotation: It is difficult to defend free speech when groups exploit it, as is done in some popular music, to foment racial and sexual prejudices.

Source: Sarah Murray, "The Aesthetics of Injustice," in *Current Social Issues*

1. Referring back to the sections "Introducing Sources," "Formatting Titles," and "Using Signal Phrases," write four sentences using quotation A. Each time, you should introduce the quotation in a different way. In your first two sentences, use an "In . . ." pattern and an "According to . . ." pattern, quoting this author for the first time. In the next two sentences, assume that you have already quoted him before.
2. Referring back to the sections "Introducing Sources," "Formatting Titles," and "Using Signal Phrases," write four sentences using quotation B. Each time, you should introduce the quotation in a different way. In your first two sentences, use an "In . . ." pattern and an "According to . . ." pattern, quoting this author for the first time. In the next two sentences, assume that you have already quoted her before.

**Attention:** This exercise requires that you place the above quotes very carefully into the patterns on the Working with Sources handout, paying close attention to all the details you find there.