



Incorporating Information Sources into Your Research Paper – English Transcript

It's time to write a research paper. You've thought about your topic, gathered many sources, and taken extensive notes. So how do you actually present those sources in your paper? In this tutorial, you'll learn how to effectively incorporate the information from your sources into your research paper. You'll learn how to structure your sources, include your own analysis, and use sources to support an argument.

Throughout history, famous people, including activists, speakers, businessmen, and even artists, have used ideas that came before them to create their own original ideas. Isaac Newton famously said, "If I have seen further, it is only by standing on the shoulders of giants." Building on balanced, multiple sources allows you to see the whole picture and to come to your own understanding of your topic. You can think of writing a research paper as presenting an argument or a point of view. Every research paper contains a thesis.

A thesis is the central argument, the main point or claim of your paper. All of the information from the sources included in your paper must relate back to your thesis in some way. It's your job to use these sources to support your thesis. It's a good practice to include sources that agree with your thesis, as well as those that don't agree with it. Examining and addressing multiple sides of the issue usually makes your own argument or position stronger. It can help to think about sources on a given topic as a conversation between people you have not met.

First, you listen to the conversation for a while. "Humans have caused drastic climate change, and now polar bears are in danger." "Data indicates climate change is causing a decline in polar bear populations." "Climate change is part of a natural cycle. This is just a scare tactic."

As you listen, you develop an understanding of the people that are participating in the conversation. You heard an opinion from a passionate environmental activist, another from a data-driven researcher, and even one from a skeptic. Then you think about how each person's viewpoint affects the argument they're making. After listening to the conversation for a while, you jump in. When one person presents their ideas, you respond with your own thoughts.

This is one of the main differences between this type of research paper and other papers that you might have written in the past. It is not enough to just present information from your sources. You also have to summarize the information and draw your own conclusions about what you read. Often, this analysis involves adding your own ideas and responses to those sources, like jumping into the conversation.

There are three main ways to present ideas from another source in your research paper-- direct quote, paraphrase, and summary. A direct quote has the exact words from a source. You should include quotation marks and enough information about your source so that you can document it later.

A paraphrase is an idea or details from a source written in your own words. It's usually about



the same length as the original quote. No quotation marks are needed, but citation is necessary.

A summary has the main ideas from a source written in your own words. It's shorter than the original quote and used to give an overview of many ideas. No quotation marks are needed, but citation is necessary.

Be sure to document the details about the sources you use so you can cite them correctly within and at the end of your paper. Whenever you present ideas from an outside source, there are three main components that you need to include. First, provide a lead-in. It may include source information, background information, and/or transition phrases. The lead-in is a way for you to provide context for the information. Next, include the ideas from one or more sources as either a direct quote, a paraphrase, or a summary. Make sure to always properly cite ideas from outside sources.

Finally, include an analysis of the ideas that you've presented. Your analysis will include your response, interpretations, or arguments to the ideas. Remember that ideas that you present from your sources must always relate back to your thesis in some way. Therefore, in your analysis, make sure that you clearly present how these ideas relate to your thesis.

Take a look at this example. Notice that it includes a lead-in, a direct quote, and the first portion of the analysis. Keep in mind that certain facts may require immediate analysis, like in this example. You may also group several related ideas and then offer your analysis.

For specific examples, and for more information about this topic and the entire research process, explore OSLIS. Thank you to the Oregon CLIP project for allowing the OSLIS Committee to adapt their tutorials. OSLIS -- Learn to Research. Research to Learn.