

# Three Steps to Incorporating Sources

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1. **Briefly introduce your source with credentials.** The introduction serves two purposes: to separate your own writing from that of your source and to give your reader a reason to believe that your source is a good one. Both functions are important, but neither needs to be elaborate. Simply mentioning the author's (or the publication's) name alerts the reader that he or she is leaving your ideas momentarily and entering someone else's; that action helps the reader to keep things straight and makes it clear that you are not borrowing ideas without attributing them.

## Examples

- In the September 2001 edition of *College Composition and Communication*, Larry Beason catalogs the reactions of businesspeople to grammatical errors. Beason asserts that "xxxxxx."
  - According to Yale Law School's Greg Fullerton, "xxxxx."
  - An editorial in the *Times of London* claims that "no news is good news."
2. **Deliver the source's information in summary, paraphrase, or direct quotes.** You do not need to quote the source directly but can paraphrase or summarize a vital piece of information. Just remember not to let your quoting (or paraphrasing or summarizing) become the heart of your discussion; the only reason to quote someone else's ideas is to support your own. The authors you quote have had their say; this paper is your turn to speak.
  3. **Directly connect the information to a point (paragraph's topic sentence, section's main point, another source's ideas, or the paper's thesis).** You're not finished once you've quoted your source material. Now you have to connect the dots between the source material and your ideas. You cannot assume that your reader understands how your source material supports your point; that's your job as the writer. By making those connections, you've not only made the reason for including this information clear to your reader, but you've also signaled to the reader that he or she has returned to your ideas. And ultimately, your ideas are what the paper is all about.

## Examples

- "...injected with growth hormone" (22). **However, other scientists see this theory as only partially complete. For example...**
- ...says the extinctions were selective. **So the supernova theory took a backseat to other extraterrestrial theories such as the theories involving asteroids and comets.**

– Roberta Reavey, Rowan University,  
Glassboro, New Jersey