



# The Writing Center

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

**DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS**

## Introducing Source Material

Introducing sources is an important skill for academic writing. Many academic disciplines and citation styles require that sources are introduced using a signal phrase. These phrases can show where information originated and add context to the source. Some disciplines use sources in a way that may not need to be introduced or qualified, and simply providing a citation is sufficient. Be sure to abide by the styles and demands of a discipline/style when writing and incorporating source material.

Background information is sometimes important, but writers should use it strategically. Only include background information about the author or text when the information helps establish credibility.

- For instance, in a paper on current health care legislation it may be insufficient to say “Ryan, a United States Representative, said...”
- Readers may need more context in order to understand who Ryan is: “Ryan, a leading opponent to the Affordable Care Act, believes...”

### Introducing Sources

Here are a few simple examples of introducing a source using a signal phrase. Phrases such as these signal to the reader that the following information is a quotation or paraphrase.

- According to Jones,
- Jones states...
- In his recent study, Jones found...

It also may be necessary to introduce a larger body of thought or a collection of sources:

- Recent scholarship on global weather patterns shows...
- Many agree that...
- Others (Jones 1982; DeVry 1997) would argue...

### Establishing Credibility

Providing background information is necessary when the source’s information is contentious or relatively unknown. In the following examples, the writer’s goal is to reassure the reader of the source’s value and credibility.

- Jefferson’s seminal study on planetary gases projected him to the top of his field and built the groundwork for his more experimental research by...
- A frequent contributor to the *New Yorker* magazine, the *New York Times*, and author of several books on the ethics of environmental science Michael Specter believes...

When beginning a signal phrase or introducing a quotation, writers have numerous words to choose from that describe their opinions about the author in question. The following table offers a variety of straightforward and expressive words that, used correctly, can add emphasis and meaning to a paper.

Straightforward Words:	Expressive Words:		Extremely Expressive Words:	
Argues Asks Cites Finds Names Notes Says Shows States Suggests Views Writes	Accepts Acknowledges Addresses Adds Admits Advances Affirms Agrees Alleges Allows Analyzes Announces Answers Articulates Asserts	Determines Discovers Evaluates Examines Explains Hypothesizes Identifies Illustrates Implies Interprets Investigates Mentions Observes Offers Points out	Acquiesces Appraises Ascertains Bemoans Castigates Concedes Critiques Delineates Discerns Emphasizes Encapsulates Encourages Envisions Estimates Exhibits	Minimizes Misappropriates Moralizes Muses Nurtures Obscures Overlooks Perceives Persuades Postulates Preempts Preaches Rationalizes Rebukes Recapitulates
<b>Counterargument Words:</b>  Chastises Contrasts Counters Criticizes Denies Denounces Negates Questions Renounces Retaliates Retorts Warns	Believes Categorizes Claims Clarifies Comments on Compares Concludes Concurs Confirms Considers Contemplates Contends Declares Defines Demonstrates Describes	Ponders Presents Promotes Proposes Proves Recognizes Reinforces Refers to Reports Responds Restates Reviews Stresses Summarizes Supports Verifies	Expounds on Foreshadows Fosters Furnishes Generates Grants Immortalizes Impoverishes Impugns Jests Lambastes Lavishes Magnifies Maintains Maligns Manipulates	Reconciles Reminisces Repudiates Revokes Savors Scrutinizes Sentimentalizes Stipulates Surpasses Sympathizes Synthesizes Traces Transcends Uncovers Withholds Witnesses

For further information on related concepts, please see the following handouts:

- Integrating Paraphrase
- Integrating Direct Quotations