

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

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

- Integrating Paraphrase
- Integrating Direct Quotations