***From Inquiry to Academic Writing* by Greene and Lidinsky**

Chapter 7: From Summarizing to Documenting Sources

SYNTHESIS VERSUS SUMMARY

A **synthesis** is a discussion that forges connections between the arguments of two or more authors. Like a summary, a synthesis requires you to under- stand the key claims of each author's argument, including his or her use of supporting examples and evidence. Also like a summary, a synthesis requires you to present a central idea, a gist, to your readers. But in contrast to a summary, which explains the context of a source, a synthesis creates a context for your own argument. That is, when you write a synthesis com- paring two or more sources, you demonstrate that you are aware of the larger conversation about the issue, and begin to claim your own place in that conversation. Most academic arguments begin with a synthesis that sets the stage for the argument that follows. By comparing what others have written on a given issue, writers position themselves in relation to what has come before them, acknowledging the contributions of their predecessors as they advance their own points of view.

Like a summary, a synthesis requires analysis: You have to break down arguments and categorize their parts to see how they work together. In our summary of Lawson’s passage (p. 137), the parts we looked at were the key claims, the examples and evidence that supported them, the central idea (conveyed in the gist), and the context. But in a synthesis, your main purpose is not simply to report what another author has said. Rather, you must think critically about how multiple points of view intersect on your issue, and decide what those intersections mean.

Comparing different points of view prompts you to ask why they differ It also makes you more aware of counterarguments - passages where claims conflict (“writer X says this, but writer Y asserts just the opposite") or at least differ (“writer X interprets this information this way while writer Y sees it differently"). And it starts you formulating your own counterarguments: “Neither X nor Y has taken this into account. What if they had?"

Keep in mind that the purpose of a synthesis is not merely to list the similarities and differences you find in different sources, nor to assert your agreement with one source as opposed to others. Instead, it sets up your argument. Once you discover connections between texts, you have to decide what those connections mean to you and your readers. What bearing do they have on your own thinking? How can you make use of them in your argument?

WRITING A SYNTHESIS

To compose an effective synthesis, you must (1) make connections between ideas in different texts, (2) decide what those connections mean, and (3) formulate the gist of what you’ve read, much like you did when you wrote a summary. The difference is that in a synthesis, your gist should be a succinct statement that brings into focus not the central idea of one text but the relationship among different ideas in multiple texts.

To help you grasp the strategies of writing a synthesis, read the essays below by historians Charles Payne and Ronald Takaki which, like Steven Lawson’s essay, deal with race in America. You will see that we have annotated the Payne and Takaki readings not only to comment on their ideas, but also to connect their ideas with those of Lawson. Annotating your texts in this manner is a useful first step in writing a synthesis.

Following the Payne and Takaki selections, we explain how annotating contributes to writing a synthesis. Then we show how you can use a work- sheet to organize your thinking on the way to formulating the gist of your synthesis. Finally, we present our own synthesis based on the texts of Lawson, Payne, and Takaki.

*ABOUT THE READING*

*Charles Payne is a professor of history and African American studies at Duke University, where his current research focuses on urban education, the civil rights movement, social change, and social inequality. He is the principal investigator in an ethnographic study of the most improved low- income schools in Chicago. The following selection on the civil rights movement appears with Steven Lawson's essay in Debating the Civil Rights Movement, 1945-1968.*

CHARLES PAYNE

*From* Debating the Civil Rights Movement: The View from the Trenches

*Point of paragraph seems to be that the language used to describe the civil rights movement distorts the actual goals and results of the movement. Is this Payne’s main claim?*

The [civil rights] movement continues to exercise a considerable hold on the American imagination. Our understanding of social change, our conceptions of leadership, our understanding of the possibilities of interracial cooperation are all affected by how we remember the movement. Even much of the language that we use to discuss social issues derives from movement days. We think of the movement as a movement for “civil rights" and against “segregation.” Even those seemingly innocuous terms carry their own historical baggage.

 “Segregation” became the accepted way to describe the South’s racial system among both Blacks and whites. In its denotative meaning, suggesting separation between Blacks and whites, it is not a very accurate term to describe that system. The system involved plenty of integration; it just had to be on terms acceptable to white people. Indeed, the agricultural economy of the early-twentieth-century South probably afforded a good deal more interracial Contact than the modern urban ghetto. “White supremacy” is a more accurate description of what the system was about. “Segregation” is the way apologists for the South liked to think of it. It implies, “We’re not doing anything to Black people: we just want to keep them separate from us." It was the most innocent face one could put on that system. When we use the term as a summary term for what was going on in the South, we are unconsciously adopting the preferred euphemism of nineteenth-century white supremacist leadership.

If “segregation” is a poor way to describe the problem, “integration” may not tell us much about the solution. It is not at all clear what proportion of the Black population was interested in “integration as a general goal. African Americans have wanted access to the privileges that white people have enjoyed and have been interested in integration as a possible avenue to those privileges, but that view is different from seeing integration as important in and of itself. Even in the 1950s, it was clear that school integration, while it would potentially put more resources into the education of' Black children, also potentially meant the loss of thousands of teaching jobs for Black teachers and the destruction of schools to which Black communities often felt deeply attached, however resource-poor they were. There was also something potentially demeaning in the idea that Black children had to be sitting next to white children to learn. The first Black children to integrate the schools in a given community often found themselves in a strange position, especially if they were teenagers. While some Black people thought of them as endangering themselves for the greater good of the community, others saw them as turning their backs on that community and what it had to offer. It is probably safest to say that only a segment of the Black community had anything like an ideological commitment to "integration," while most Black people were willing to give it a try to see if it really did lead to a better life.

*Supports the claim that “movement” language hides or distorts reality.*

*Payne talks about African Americans' preferring “privileges” and “resources” to "integration."*

*Integration might lead to fewer resources – what’s gained economically on the one hand would be lost on the other.*

*Is this “segment” the activists Lawson refers to? Are Lawson and Payne on the same page about the black community’s not being “monolithic” (Lawson, para. 5) in its approach to civil rights?*

*Lawson, by contrast, emphasizes that civil rights were vital to the struggle for equality.*

*Payne’s examples suggest that economic equality not legal rights, is what the civil rights movement was about.*

*Payne’s main point -- that the language of civil rights is limited because it ignores economic factors.*

We might also ask how “civil rights" came to be commonly used as a summary term for the struggle of African Americans. In the late 1960s, after several civil rights bills had been passed, a certain part of white America seemed not to understand why Black Americans were still angry about their collective status. “You have your civil rights. Now what’s the problem?” In part, the problem was that “civil rights" was always a narrow way to conceptualize the larger struggle. For African Americans, the struggle has always been about forging a decent place for them- selves within this society, which has been understood to involve the thorny issues of economic participation and self-assertion as well as civil rights. Indeed, in the 1940s, Gunnar Myrdal had demonstrated that economic issues were the ones that Black Americans ranked first in priority. At the 1963 March on Washington—which was initially conceived as a march for jobs—[the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's] John Lewis wanted to point out that SNCC was not sure it could support what became the Civil Rights Act of 1964 partly because it did not have an economic component:

What is in the bill that will protect the homeless and starving people of this nation? What is there in this bill to insure the equality of a maid who earns $5.00 a week in the home of a family whose income is $100,000 a year?

One hypothesis, of course, would be that “civil rights" becomes so popular precisely because it is so narrow, precisely because it does not suggest that distribution of privilege is a part of the problem.

*ABOUT THE READING*

*Ronald Takaki is a professor of ethnic studies at the University of California, Berkeley. An adviser to the ethnic studies PhD program, he was instrumental in establishing Berkeley's American cultures graduation requirement. Takaki is a prolific writer with several award-winning books to his credit, including A Pro-Slavery Crusade (1971), a study of the South's ideological defense of slavery; Violence in the Black Imagination (1972), an examination of nineteenth-century black novelists; the Pulitzer Prize-nominated Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans (1989); and A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America (1993). The essay that follows is from a collection he edited, Debating Diversity: Clashing Perspectives on Race and Ethnicity in America (2002), and is his response to the Los Angeles riots of April 29, 1992.*

RONALD TAKAKI

Policies: Strategies and Solutions

What happens, asked black poet Langston Hughes, to a “dream deferred?" Does it “dry up like a raisin in the sun," or “does it explode?" An answer was hurled at America during the bloody and destructive 1992 Los Angeles race riot. On April 29, a California jury announced its not-guilty verdict in the trial of four white police officers charged with beating Rodney King, an African American who had been stopped for a traffic violation. Videotaped images of King being brutally clubbed had been repeatedly beamed across the country. The jury's shocking decision ignited an explosion of fury and violence in the inner city of Los Angeles. During the days of rage, scores of people were killed, over 2,000 injured,12,000 arrested, and almost a billion dollars in property destroyed.

“It took a brutal beating, an unexpected jury verdict, and the sudden rampage of rioting, looting, and indiscriminate violence to bring this crisis [of urban America] back to the forefront," Business Week reported. “Racism surely explains some of the carnage in Los Angeles. But the day-to-day living conditions with which many of America’s urban poor must contend is an equally compelling story—a tale of economic injustice.” The usually conservative magazine pointed out that “the poverty rate, which fell as low as 11 percent in the 1970s moved higher in the Reagan years and jumped during the last couple of years. Last year [1991], an estimated 36 million people—or about 14.7 percent of the total population—were living in poverty. "

*What dream? Civil rights? Economic equality?*

*The dream is not only deferred; it seems to be moving further away!*

*Business Week links the riots to economic inequality.*

The explosion unshrouded the terrible conditions and the anger of poor African Americans trapped in inner cities. “South Central Los Angeles is a Third World country,” declared Krashaun Scott, a former member of the Los Angeles Crips gang. “There's a South Central in every city, in every state.” Describing the desperate conditions in his community, he continued: “What we got is inadequate housing and inferior education. I wish someone would tell me the difference between Guatemala and South Central." This comparison graphically illustrated the squalor and poverty present within one of Americas wealthiest and most modern cities. A gang member known as Bone commented that the recent violence was “not a riot-it was a class struggle. When Rodney King asked, ‘Can we get along?' it ain't just about Rodney King. He was the lighter and it blew up."

What exploded was anguish born of despair. Plants and factories had been moved out of central Los Angeles into the suburbs, as well as across the border into Mexico and overseas to countries like South Korea. The Firestone factory, which had employed many of the parents of these young blacks, was boarded up, like a tomb. In terms of manufacturing jobs, South Central Los Angeles had become a wasteland. Many young black men and women nervously peered down the corridor of their futures and saw no possibility of full-time employment paying above minimum wage, or any jobs at all. The unemployment rate in this area was 59 percent -- higher than the national rate during the Great Depression.

“Once again, young blacks are taking to the streets to express their outrage at perceived injustice," Newsweek reported, “and once again, whites are fearful that The Fire Next Time will consume them." But this time, the magazine noticed, the situation was different from the 1965 Watts riot: “The nation is rapidly moving toward a multiethnic future in which Asians, Hispanics, Caribbean islanders, and many other immigrant groups compose a diverse and changing social mosaic that cannot be described by the old vocabulary of race relations in America." The terms "black" and "white," Newsweek concluded, no longer “depict the American social reality."

*More recent examples of economic inequality than Payne’s. Decades after the civil rights movement, economic inequality remains an issue.*

*More examples of increasing economic inequality.*

*In a multiethnic Ameridcda, do Payne’s and Lawson’s focus on black-and-white civil rights still apply?*

At the street level, African American community organizer Ted Watkins observed: “This riot was deeper and more dangerous. More ethnic groups were involved." Watkins had witnessed the Watts fury; since then, he had watched the influx of Hispanics and Koreans into South Central Los Angeles. Shortly after the terrible turmoil, social critic Richard Rodriguez reflected on the significance of these changes: “The Rodney King riots were appropriately multiracial in this multicultural capital of America. We cannot settle for black and white conclusions when one of the most important conflicts the riots revealed was the tension between Koreans and African Americans.” He also noted that “the majority of looters who were arrested…turned out to be Hispanic. ”

Out of the ashes emerged a more complex aware- ness of our society’s racial crisis. “I think good will come of [the riot]," stated Janet Harris, a chaplain at Central Juvenile Hall. “People need to take off their rose-colored glasses," she added, “and take a hard look at what they’ve been doing. They’ve been living in invisible cages. And they’ve shut out that world. And maybe the world came crashing in on them and now people will be moved to do something." A black minister called for cross-cultural understanding between African Americans and Korean Americans: “If we could appreciate and affirm each other’s histories, there wouldn’t be generalizations and stigmatizations, and we could see that we have more in common." The fires of the riot illuminated the harsh reality of class inequality. “At first I didn’t notice,” a Korean shopkeeper said, “but I slowly realized the looters were very poor. The riot happened because of the gap between rich and poor" Executive director of the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, Steward Kwoh direly predicted that “the economic polarization between the 'haves' and ‘have nots’ would be the main ingredient for future calamities."

During the 1992 calamity, Rodney King pleaded: “We all can get along. I mean, we're stuck here for a while. Let's try to work it out." But we find ourselves wondering, how can we get along and how can we work it out? Is “the Negro today," as Irving Kristol contends, “like the immigrant yesterday," or do “race and class" intersect in the black community? Should there be limits on immigration from Mexico, or are these immigrants scapegoats for our nation's problems? What should we do and not do about crime?

What should be the future of affirmative action? Have American blacks, Nathan Glazer admits, turned out to be “not like the immigrants of yesterday”?

*Another comment on the new multicultural—black vs. white—reality.*

*Like Payne, Takaki emphasizes the importance of economic factors—rich vs. poor.*

MAKE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN DIFFERENT TEXTS

The texts by Lawson, Payne, and Takaki all deal with race in America, but race is such a large topic that you cannot assume that connections are going to leap off the page at you. In fact, each text deals with a main issue that does not immediately connect with those of the others:

* Lawson emphasizes the importance of federal actions for advancing the cause of civil rights.
* Payne contends that the terms we use to talk about the civil rights movement distort its goals and accomplishments.
* Takaki writes about the 1992 Los Angeles riots, arguing that desperate economic circumstances led to an outburst of multicultural violence.

But closer reading does suggest connections. Both Lawson and Payne are writing about the civil rights movement. They seem to agree that civil rights activists were a crucial minority in the black community, but they seem to disagree on the importance of legislation versus economic factors.

Notice how our annotations call out these connections: “Payne talks about African Americans’ preferring ‘privileges’ and 'resources' to ‘integration.’” “Are Lawson and Payne on the same page about the black community’s not being ‘monolithic’ . . . in its approach to civil rights?" “Lawson, by contrast, emphasizes that civil rights were vital to the struggle for equality." "Payne's examples suggest that economic equality, not legal rights, is what the civil rights movement was about.

Turning to Takaki, we notice that he is also writing about economic inequality and race, but in the 1990s, not the 1950s and 19605: More recent examples of economic inequality than Payne’s. Decades after the civil rights movement, economic inequality remains an issue." But Takaki adds another

factor: economic inequality in an increasingly multicultural America. Our comment: “In a multiethnic America, do Payne's and Lawson’s focus on black-and-white civil rights still apply?"

With these annotations, we are starting to think critically about the ideas in the essays, speculating about what they mean. Notice, however, that not all of the annotations make connections. Some try to get at the gist of the arguments: “Is this Payne's main claim?" Some note examples: “More examples of increasing economic inequality." Some offer impromptu opinions and reactions: “The dream is not only deferred; it seems to be moving further away!" You should not expect every annotation to contribute to your synthesis. Instead, use them to record your responses and spur your thinking too.

DECIDE WHAT THOSE CONNECTIONS MEAN

Having annotated the selections, we filled out the worksheet in Figure 7.2, making notes in the grid to help us see the three texts in relation to one another. Our worksheet included columns for

* author and source information,
* the gist of each author’s arguments,
* supporting examples and illustrations,
* counterarguments,
* our own thoughts.

A worksheet like this one can help you concentrate on similarities and differences in the texts to determine what the connections between texts mean. Of course, you can design your own worksheet as well, tailoring it to your needs and preferences. If you want to take very detailed notes about your authors and sources, for example, you may want to have separate columns for each.

Once you start noticing connections, including points of agreement and disagreement, you can start identifying counterarguments in the readings - for example, Payne countering Lawson's position that equality can be legislated. Identifying counterarguments gives you a sense of what is at issue for each author And determining what the authors think in relation to one another can help you realize what may be at issue for you. Suppose you are struck by Payne's argument that the term civil rights obscures an equally important issue in African Americans’ struggle for equality: economic equality. Suppose you connect Payne’s point about economic inequality with Takaki’s more-recent examples of racial inequality in the areas of housing, education, and employment. Turning these ideas around in your mind, you may decide that race-based economic inequality in a multicultural society is a topic you want to explore and develop.

**Worksheet for Writing a Synthesis**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Author and Source** | **Gist of Argument** | **Examples/Illustrations** | **Counterarguments** | **What I Think** |
| Historian Steven F. Lawson, from “Debating the Civil Rights Movement The View fromthe Nation"HistorianCharles Payne, from“Debatingthe CivilRights Movement: The View fromthe Trenches”Ethnic historian RonaldTakaki “Policies Strategies andSolutions” | Actions taken by the president, Congress, and theSupreme Court were all vital toadvancing thestruggle for civil rights.By granting African Americanstheir civil rights the SupremeCourt did not andcould not guarantee access toeconomic equality.Economicinequality urban areas where ethnicminorities livein poverty andsqualor. | The executiveorders, thelegislation,and the courtdecisions thatpromoteddesegregationContinuedinequalitiesbetween richand poorInadequatehousing, schools,employment | Desegregation cannot be legislated.The struggle was not simply about civil rights, it also was about achieving economicEquality.The executiveorders, legislation, and Court rulingsthat promoteddesegregationindicate thatthere was some attempt to achieveequality.Racial equality has been poverty is anindividual problem not a systemicone. | I’m not convinced by Lawson’sargument.An interesting argument, but I’mnot sure Payne tookthe best approach byworking withdefinitions.The multiethnic connection makesme want tolook into hisissue more deeply. |

**FORMULATE THE GIST OF WHAT YOU'VE READ**

Remember that your gist should bring into focus the relationship among different ideas in multiple texts. Looking at the information juxtaposed on the worksheet, you can begin to construct the gist of your synthesis:

* The first writer; Lawson, believes that the civil rights movement owes its success to the federal government.
* The second writer, Payne, believes that blacks' struggle for economic equality was not addressed by the actions of the federal government.
* The third writer; Takaki, seems to support Payne when he claims that poverty still exists for African Americans. But he broadens the issue of economic inequality, extending it to people of different racial backgrounds.

How do you formulate this information into a gist? You can use a transition word (we've used although) to connect the ideas these authors bring together while conveying their differences (Lawson’s emphasis on civil rights versus Payne and Takaki’s emphasis on economic inequality). Thus a gist about these essays might read:

**GIST OF A SYNTHESIS**

Although historian Steven Lawson argues that the federal government played a crucial role in extending civil lights to African Americans, other scholars, among them Charles Payne and Ronald Takaki, point out that the focus on civil rights ignored the devastating economic inequality that persists among people of color today.

Having drafted this gist, we returned to our notes on the worksheet and complete the synthesis, presenting examples and using transitions to signal the relationships among the texts and their ideas. It’s a good idea in a synthesis to use at least one illustration from each author’s text to support the point you want to make, and to use transition words and phrases to lead your readers through the larger argument you want to make.

Here is our brief synthesis of the three texts:

Although historian Steven Lawson argues that the federal government played a crucial role in extending civil rights to African Americans, other scholars, among them Charles Payne and Ronald Takaki, point out that the focus on civil rights ignored the devastating economic inequality that persists among people of color today. Indeed, Lawson illustrates the extent to which presidents, lawmakers, and judges brought an end to legal segregation, but he largely ignores the economic component of racial discrimination. Unfortunately, integration is still what Langston Hughes would call a “dream deferred" (quoted in Takaki). A historian, Charles Payne also observes that by granting African Americans their civil rights, the federal government did not - and could not - guarantee their access to economic equality. Ronald Takaki, an ethnic historian, supports Payne’s argument, demonstrating through a number of examples that economic inequality persists in urban areas where ethnic minorities live in poverty and squalor. Takaki also makes the important point that the problem of economic inequality is no longer a black-white problem, as it was during the civil rights movement. Today's multiracial society complicates our understanding of the problem of inequality and of a possible solution.

Writing a synthesis, like writing a summary, is principally a strategy for framing your own argument. In writing a synthesis, you are conveying to your readers how various points of view in a conversation intersect and diverge. The larger point of this exercise is to find your own issue - your own position in the conversation - and make your argument for it.

**Steps to Writing a Synthesis**

1. Make connections between different texts. Annotate the texts you are working with with an eye to comparing them. As you would for a summary note major points in the texts choose relevant examples and formulate the gist of each text
2. Decide what those connections mean F111 out a worksheet to compare your notes on the different texts track counterarguments and record your thoughts Decide what the s1m1lar1t1es and differences mean to you and what they might mean to your readers.
3. Formulate the gist of what you’ve read. Identify an overarching idea that brings together the ideas you've noted, and write a synthesis that forges connections and makes use of the examples you’ve noted. Use transitions to signal the direction of your synthesis.

**AVOIDING PLAGIARISM**

Whether you paraphrase, summarize, or synthesize, it is essential that you acknowledge your sources. Academic writing requires you to use and document sources appropriately, making clear to readers the boundaries between your words and ideas and those of other writers. Setting boundaries can be a challenge because so much of academic writing involves interweaving the ideas of others into your own argument. Still, no matter how difficult, you must acknowledge your sources. It's only fair. Imagine how you would feel if you were reading a text and discovered that the writer had incorporated a passage from one of your papers, something you slaved over, without giving you credit. You would see yourself as a victim of plagiarism, and you would be justified in feeling very angry indeed.

In fact, plagiarism - the unacknowledged use of another's work, passed off as one's own - is a most serious breach of academic integrity, and colleges and universities deal with it severely. If you are caught plagiarizing in your work for a class, you can expect to fail that class and may even be expelled from your college or university. Furthermore, although a failing grade on a paper or in a course, honestly come by, is unlikely to deter an employer from hiring you, the stigma of plagiarism can come back to haunt you when you apply for a job. Any violation of the principles set forth in Table 7.1 could have serious consequences for your academic and professional career.

Even if you know what plagiarism is and wouldn't think about doing it, you can still plagiarize unintentionally. Again, paraphrasing can be especially tricky: Attempting to restate a passage without using the original words and sentence structure is, to a certain extent, an invitation to plagiarism. If you remember that your paper is your argument, and understand that any paraphrasing, summarizing, or synthesizing should reflect your voice and style, you will be less likely to have problems with plagiarism.

Your paper should sound like you. And, again, the surest way to protect yourself is to cite your sources.

**TABLE 7-l Principles Governing Plagiarism**

1. All written work submitted for any purpose is accepted as your own work. This means it must not have been written even in part by another person.
2. The Wording Of any written work you submit is assumed to be your own. This means you must not submit work that has been copied, wholly or partially, from a book, article, essay, newspaper, another student’s paper or notebook, or any other source. Another writer's phrases, sentences, or paragraphs can be included only if they are presented as quotations and the source acknowledged.
3. The ideas expressed in a paper or report are assumed to originate with you, the writer. Written work that paraphrases a source without acknowledgment must not be submitted for credit. Ideas from the work of others can be incorporated in your works starting points, governing issues, illustrations, and the like, but in every instance the source must be cited.
4. Remember that any online materials you use to gather information for a paper are also governed by the rules for avoiding plagiarism. You need to learn to cite electronic sources as well as printed and other sources.
5. You may correct and revise your writing with the aid of reference books. You also may discuss your writing with your peers in a writing group or with peer tutors at your campus writing center. However, you may not submit writing that has been revised substantially by another person.

**STEPS TO AVOIDING PLAGIARISM**

1. Always cite the source. Signal that you are paraphrasing, summarizing, or synthesizing by identifying your source at the outset - “According to James Gunn,” “Steven Lawson argues," “Charles Payne and Ronald Takaki . . . point out.” And if possible, indicate the end of the paraphrase, summary, or synthesis with relevant page references to the source. If you cite a source several times in your paper, don't assume your first citation has you covered; acknowledge the source as often as you use it.
2. Provide a full citation in your bibliography. It’s not enough to cite a source in your paper; you must also provide a full citation for every source you use in the list of sources at the end of your paper.

**INTEGRATING QUOTATIONS INTO YOUR WRITING**

When you integrate quotations into your writing, bear in mind a piece of advice given you about writing the rest of your paper: Take your readers by the hand and lead them step-by-step. When YOU quote other authors to develop your argument-- using their words to support your thinking or to address a counterargument -- discuss and analyze the words you quote, showing readers how the specific language of each quotation contributes to the larger point you are making in your essay. When you integrate quotations, then, there are three basic things you want to do: (1) Take an active stance, (2) explain the quotations, and (3) attach short quotations to your own sentences.

**Take an Active Stance**

Critical reading demands that you adopt an active stance toward what you read - that you raise questions in response to a text that is telling you not only what the author thinks but also what you should think. You should be no less active when you are using other authors' texts to develop your own argument. Certainly taking an active stance when you are quoting means knowing when to quote. Don't use a quote when a paraphrase or summary can convey the information from a source more effectively and efficiently. (Don’t forget to acknowledge your source!) More important, however, it means you have to make fair and wise decisions about what and how much you should quote to make your researched argument:

* It's not fair (or wise) to quote selectively - choosing only passages that support your argument - when you know you are distorting or misrepresenting the argument of the writer you are quoting. Ideally, you want to demonstrate that you understand the writer’s argument and that you want to make evenhanded use of it in your own argument, whether you agree or disagree, in whole or in part, with what the other writer has written.
* It's not wise (or fair to yourself) to flesh out your paper with an over- whelming number of quotations that could make readers think that you either do not know your topic well or do not have your own ideas. Don’t allow quotations to take over your paragraphs and shape your own words about the topic. In structuring your paragraphs, remember that your ideas and argument - your thesis -- are what is most important to the readers and what justifies a quotations being included at all.

Above all, taking an active stance when you quote means taking control of your own writing. You want to establish your own argument and guide your readers through it, allowing sources to contribute to but not dictate its direction. You are responsible for plotting and pacing your essay. Always keep 1n mind that your thesis is the skewer that runs through every paragraph, holding all of the ideas together. When you use quotations then you must organize them to enrich, substantiate, illustrate, and help support your central claim or thesis.

**Explain the Quotations**

When you quote an author to support or advance your argument, you must be sure that readers know exactly what they should learn from the quotation. Read the excerpt below from one student’s early draft of an argument that focuses on the value of service learning in high schools as a means for creating change. The student reviews several relevant studies - but then simply drops in a quotation, expecting readers to know what they should pay attention to in the quotation.

Other research emphasizes community service as an integral and integrated part of moral identity. In this understanding, community service activities are not isolated events but are woven into the context of students’ everyday lives (Yates 360-3); the personal, the moral, and the civic become "inseparable” (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens 15). In their study of minority high schoolers at an urban Catholic school who volunteered at a soup kitchen for the homeless as part of a class assignment, Youniss and Yates found that the students under- went significant identity changes, coming to perceive themselves as lifelong activists. The researchers’ findings are worth quoting at length here because they depict the dramatic nature of the students' changed viewpoints. Youniss and Yates write:

Many students abandoned an initially negative view of homeless people and a disinterest in homelessness by gaining appreciation of the humanity of home- less people and by showing concern for homelessness in relation to poverty, job training, low-cost housing, prison reform, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, care for the mentally ill, quality urban education, and welfare policy. Several students also altered perceptions of themselves from politically impotent teenagers to involved citizens who now and in the future could use their talent and power to correct social problems. They projected articulated pictures of themselves as adult citizens who could affect housing policies, education for minorities, and government programs within a clear framework of social justice. (362)

The student's introduction to the quoted passage provided a rationale for quoting Youniss and Yates at length; but it did not help her readers see what was important about the research in relation to the student’s own argument. Our student needed to frame the quotation for her readers. Instead of introducing the quotation by saying “Youniss and Yates write," she should have made explicit that the study supports the argument that community service can create change. A more appropriate frame for the quotation might have been a summary like this one:

One particular study underscores my argument that service can motivate change, particularly when that change begins within the students who are involved in service. Youniss and Yates write that over the course of their research, the students developed both an "appreciation of the humanity of homeless people" and a sense that they would someday be able to ”use their talent and power to correct social problems" (362).

In the following example, notice that the student writer uses Derrick Bell's text to say something about the ways the effects of desegregation have been muted by political manipulation\* The writer shapes what he wants readers to focus on, leaving nothing to chance.

The effectiveness with which the meaning of *Brown v. Board of Education* has been manipulated, Derrick Bell argues, is also evidenced by the way in which such thinking has actually been embraced by minority groups. Bell claims that a black school board member's asking "But of what value is it to teach black children to read in all-black schools?" indicates this unthinking acceptance that whiteness is an essential ingredient to effective schooling for blacks. Bell continues:

The assumption that even the attaining of academic skills is worthless unless those skills are acquired in the presence of white students illustrates dramatically how a legal precedent, namely the Supreme Court's decision in Brown rc Board of Education, has been so constricted even by advocates that its goal -- equal educational opportunity - is rendered inaccessible, even unwanted, unless it can be obtained through racial balancing ofthe school population. (255)

*\*This quotation is from Derrick Bell's Silent Covenants: Brown v. Board of Education and the Unfulfilled Hopes for Racial Reform (Oxford UP, 2005).*

Bell's argument is extremely compelling, particularly when one considers the extent to which "racial balancing" has come to be defined in terms of large white majority populations and small nonwhite minority populations.

Notice how the student's last sentence helps readers understand what the quoted material suggests and why it’s important by embedding and extending Bell's notion of racial balancing into his explanation.

In sum, you should always explain the information that you quote so that your readers can see how the quotation relates to your own argument. (“Take your readers by the hand … ") As you read other people’s writing, keep an eye open to the ways writers introduce and explain the sources they use to build their arguments.

**Attach Short Quotations to Your Own Sentences**

The quotations we discussed above are **block quotations**, lengthy quotations generally of more than five lines, that are set off from the text of a paper with indention. Make shorter quotations part of your own sentences so your readers can understand how the quotations connect to your argument and can follow along easily. How do you make a quotation part of your own sentences? There are two main methods:

* Integrate quotations within the grammar of your writing.
* Attach quotations with punctuation,

If possible, use both to make your integration of quotations more interesting and varied.

**Integrate Quotations within the Grammar of a Sentence**. When you integrate a quotation into a sentence, the quotation must make grammatical sense and read as if it is part of the sentence:

Fine, Weiss, and Powell expand upon what others call "equal status contact theory" by using a "framework that draws on three traditionally independent literatures - those on community, difference, and democracy” (37).

If you add words to the quotation, use square brackets around them to let readers know that the words are not original to the quotation:

Smith and Wellner assert that they "are not alone [in believing] that the facts have been incorrectly interpreted by Mancini” (24).

If you omit any words in the middle of a quotation, use an **ellipsis**, three periods with spaces between them, to indicate the omission:

Riquelme argues that "Eliot tries…to provide a definition by negations, which he also turns into positive terms that are meant to correct misconceptions" (156).

If you omit a sentence or more, make sure to put a period before the ellipsis points:

Eagleton writes, "What Eliot was in fact assaulting was the whole ideology of middle- class liberalism .... Eliot's own solution is an extreme right-wing authoritarianism:

men and women must sacrifice their petty 'personalities' and opinions to an impersonal order" (39).

Whatever you add (using square brackets) or omit (using ellipses), the sentence must read grammatically. And, of course, your additions and omissions must not distort the author’s meaning.

**Attach Quotations with Punctuation.** You also can attach a quotation to a sentence by using punctuation. For example, this passage attaches the run-in quotation with a colon:

For these researchers, there needs to be recognition of differences in a way that will include and accept all students. Specifically, they ask: ”Within multiracial settings, when are young people invited to discuss, voice, critique, and re-view the very notions of race that feel so fixed, so hierarchical, so damaging, and so accepted in the broader culture?" (132).

In conclusion, if you don’t connect quotations to your argument, your readers may not understand why you've included them. You need to explain some significant point that each quotation reveals as you intro- duce or end it. This strategy helps readers know what to pay attention to in a quotation, particularly if the quotation is lengthy.

**STEPS TO INTRGRATING OUOTATIONS INTO YOUR WRITING**

1. Take an active stance. Your sources should contribute to your argument, not dictate its direction.
2. Explain the quotations. Explain what you quote so your readers understand how each quotation relates to your argument.
3. Attach short quotations to your own sentences. Integrate short quotations within the grammar of your own sentences, or attach them with appropriate punctuation.

**CITING AND DOCUMENTING SOURCES**

You must provide a brief citation in the text of your paper for every quotation or idea taken from another writer, and you must list complete information at the end of your paper for the sources you use. This information is essential for readers who want to read the source to understand a quotation or idea in its original context. How you cite sources in the body of your paper and document them at the end of your paper varies from discipline to discipline, so it is important to ask your instructor what documentation style he or she prefers.

Even within academic disciplines, documentation styles can vary. Specific academic journals within disciplines will sometimes have their own set of style guidelines. The important thing is to adhere faithfully to your chosen (or assigned) style throughout your paper, observing all the niceties of form prescribed by the style. You may have noticed small differences in the citation styles in the examples throughout this chapter. That's because the examples are taken from the work of a variety of writers, both professionals and students, who had to conform to the documentation requirements of their publication or of their teachers.

Here we briefly introduce two common documentation styles that may be useful in your college career: the Modern Language Association (MLA) for listing bibliographic information in the humanities, and the American Psychological Association (APA), in the social sciences. The information is basic, for use when you begin drafting your paper. In the final stages of writing, you should consult either the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (6th ed.) or the Publication Manual ofthe American Psycho- logical Association (5th ed.). Although you'll need the manuals for complete style information, both the MLA (<http://www.mla.org/style_faq>) and the APA (<http://www.apastyle.org/faqs.html>) maintain Web sites for frequently asked questions. Again, before you start your research, check with your instructor to find out whether you should use either of these styles or if there's another style he or she prefers.

MLA and APA styles have many similarities - for example, both require short citations in the body of an essay linked to a list of sources at the end of the essay. But it is their differences, though subtle, that are crucial. To a great extent, these differences reflect the assumptions writers in the humanities and in the social sciences bring to working with sources. In particular, you should understand each style’s treatment of the source's author, publication date, and page numbers in in-text citations, and verb use in referring to sources.

**Author.** MLA style requires you give the author’s full name on first mention in your paper. The humanities emphasize “the human element” - the individual as creative force - so the MLA uses the complete name at first mention to imply the author’s importance.

**Publication Date**. In-text citations using MLA style leave out the date of publication. The assumption: that the insights of the past may be as useful as those of the present.

**Page Numbers**. The MLA requires page numbers be included with paraphrases and summaries as well as quotations (the written text is so important, a reader may want to check the exact language of the original).

**Verb Use**. The MLA uses the present tense of verbs (“Writer X claims") to introduce cited material, assuming the cited text’s timelessness, whether written last week or centuries ago.

Whenever you consult a source -- even if you don’t end up using it in your paper -- write down complete citation information so you can cite it fully and accurately if you need to. You also should note any other information that could be relevant -- a translators name, for example, or a series title and editor. Ideally, you want to be able to cite a source fully without having to go back to it to get more information.

**The Basics of MLA Style**

In-Text Citations. In MLA style, you must provide a brief citation in the body of your essay (1) when you quote directly from a source, (2) when you paraphrase or summarize what someone else has written, and (3) even when you use an idea or concept that originated with someone else. In the excerpt below, the citation tells readers that the student writer's argument about the evolution of Ebonics is rooted in a well-established source of information. Because the writer does not mention the author in the paraphrase of her source in the text, she gives the author’s name in the citation:

The evolution of US Ebonics can be traced from the year 1557 to the present day.

In times of great oppression, such as the beginning of the slave codes in 1661, the language of the black community was at its most ”ebonified” levels; whereas, in times of racial progress, for example during the abolitionist movement, the language as a source of community identity was forsaken for greater assimilation (Smitherman 119).

The parenthetical citation refers to page 119 of Geneva Smitherman’s book *Talkin and Testifyin: The Language of Black America* (1977). Smitherman is a recognized authority on Ebonics. Had the student mentioned Smitherman's name in her introduction to the paraphrase, she would not have had to repeat it in the citation. Notice that there is no punctuation within the parentheses and no *p.* before the page number. Also notice that the citation is considered part of the sentence in which it appears, so the period ending the sentence follows the closing parenthesis.

By contrast, in the example that follows, the student quotes directly from Richard Rodriguez's book Hunger of Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez (1982):

Many minority cultures in today’s society feel that it is more important to maintain cultural bonds than to extend themselves into the larger community. People who do not speak English may feel a similar sense of community and consequently lose some of the individuality and cultural ties that come with speaking their native or home language. This shared language within a home or community also adds to the unity of the community. Richard Rodriguez attests to this fact in his essay "Aria.” He then goes on to say that "it is not healthy to distinguish public words from private sounds so easily” (183).

Because the student mentions Rodriguez in her text right before the quotation (“Richard Rodriguez attests"), she does not need to include his name in the citation; the page number is sufficient.

**Works Cited**. At the end of your researched essay, and starting on a new page, you must provide a list of works cited, a list of all the sources you have used (leaving out sources you consulted but did not cite). Entries should be listed alphabetically by author’s last name or by title if no author is identified.

**STEPS TO COMPILING AN MLA LIST OF WORKS CITED**

1. Begin your list of works cited on a new page at the end of your paper.
2. Put your last name and page number in the upper-right corner.
3. Double-space throughout.
4. Center the heading (“Works Cited") on the page.
5. Arrange the list of sources alphabetically by author’s last name or by title if no author is identified.
6. Begin the first line of each source flush left; second and subsequent lines should be indented 1/2 inch.
7. Invert the author's name, last name first. In the case of multiple authors, only the first author's name is inverted.
8. Underline the titles of books, journals, magazines, and news- papers. You can put them in italics if your instructor says to do so. Put the titles of book chapters and articles in quotation marks. Capitalize each word in all titles except for articles, short prepositions, and conjunctions.
9. For books, list the place of publication and the name of the publisher, and the year of publication. For chapters, list the editors of the book and the book title, and the publication information. For articles, list the journal title, volume and series numbers, and the date of publication.
10. List the relevant page numbers.

The steps outlined here for compiling a list of works cited apply to printed sources. MLA formats for citing online sources vary, but this is an example of the basic format:

Author. "Document Title.” *Name of Site*. Date posted/revised. Site Sponsor. Date you accessed the site <URL>.

**Things to remember:**

* Invert the author’s name or the first author's name.
* Underline the name of the site. (Again, you can use italics with your instructor's okay.)
* MLA accepts both day-month-year and month-day-year formats for dates. Just be consistent.
* If the site sponsor - usually an institution or organization - isn’t clear, check the copyright notice at the bottom of the Web page.
* Notice that there's no punctuation between the date you accessed the site and the angle-bracketed URL.
* When a URL runs more than one line, break the URL following a slash. And don’t insert a hyphen to indicate the break.

In addition to online sources, you will likely use other nonprint sources in researching your papers. Our students, for example, regularly analyze films, recordings, television and radio programs, paintings, and photographs. For details on how to format these sources, consult the MLA Handbook or go to Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab (GWL) site (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/O1/>).