Three ways of incorporating other writers’ work into your own writing differ according to the closeness of your writing to the source writing.

Depending on your subject area, you will use particular citation formats, such as MLA or APA.

**Using Quotations:**

**Must be identical to original;**

**Use a narrow segment of the source;**

**Must match source word for word;**

**Must be attributed to original author.**

**Paraphrasing:**

**Involves putting a passage from source material into your own words. A paraphrase must also be attributed to the original source.**

**Summarizing:**

**Involves putting the main ideas) into your own words, including only the main point(s).**

**Incorporating source material (From *Everyone’s An Author,* pp. 388-398)**

Whether you quote, paraphrase, or summarize source material, you need to be careful to weave it in smoothly with your own writing—and at the same time to distinguish what you say from what your sources say. In addition, you must make clear how the ideas you’re citing related to your own ideas. And, of course. you’ll need to credit your source with in-text documentation.

Use signal phrases to introduce source materials, telling readings who said what you’re quote, paraphrasing, or summarizing and providing some context if need be. Don’t just drop in a quotation or paraphrase or summary. You need to introduce it. And while you can always use a neutral signal phrase such as “he says” or “she claims” try to choose verbs that accurately reflect the stance of those your citing. In some cases, “she says” reflects that stance, but usually you can make your writing livelier and more accurate with a more specific signal verb.

**Use a signal phrase and parenthetical documentation to clearly distinguish your own words and ideas from those of others.**

As Ernst Mayr explains, Darwin’s theory of evolution presented a significant challenge to then-prevalent beliefs about man’s centrality in the world (9).

If you do not give the author’s name in a signal phrase, include it in the parenthetical citation.

Darwin’s theory of evolution presented a significant challenge to then-prevalent beliefs about man’s centrality to the world (Mayr 9).

**Sometimes you’ll want or need to state the author’s credentials in the signal phrase,** explaining his or her authority on the topic—and at the same time lending credibility to your own use of that source.

According to music historian Ted Gioia, record sales declined sharply during the Great Depression, dropping by almost 90 percent between 1927 and 1932 (127).

Choose verbs that reflect the author’s stance toward the material—or your own stance in including it. Saying someone “notes” means something different than saying he or she “insists” or “implies.”

Because almost anyone can create a blog, most people assume that blogs give average citizens a greater voice in public dialogue. Political scientist Matthew Hindman questions this assumption: “Though millions of Americans now maintain a blog, only a few dozen political bloggers get as many readers as a typical newspaper” (103).

Signal phrases often come first, **but to add variety to your writing, try positioning them in the middle or at the end of a sentence.**

The ancient Chinese philosopher Zhuangzi presented an alternate take on books: “Men of the world who value the Way all turn to books. But books are nothing but words. Words have value; what is of value in words in meaning “ (152).

“Attracting attention,” observes Richard Lanham, “is what style is all about” (xi).

‘We’ve got to stop the debate! Enough with the debates!” pleaded John McCain last Sunday on Meet the press (31).

Noting the importance of literacy in American lives today, rhetorician Deborah Brandt argues, “Writing is at the heart of the knowledge economy” (117).

Useful signal verbs:

acknowledges contends replies

adds declares reports

agrees disagrees responds

asserts implies says

believes notes suggests

claims objects thinks

concludes observes writes