

Writing Center

Introducing Source Material in Research Papers

from *The Little Brown Handbook, 4th Edition*

When using summaries, paraphrases, and quotations as source material in your paper, be careful to integrate them into your own sentences and at the same time explain why you are using them. Source material that is dumped in readers' laps is unlikely to achieve what you intend it to, as the following example illustrates:

A Dumped Quotation:

In short, many news editors and reporters maintain that it is impossible and perhaps not even desirable to keep personal opinions from influencing the selections and presentation of facts. "True, news reporters, like everyone else, form impressions of what they see and hear. However, a good reporter does not fail to separate his opinions from his facts." (Lyman 52).

The writer of this passage provides no clues that the quotation contradicts the first sentence and doesn't explain who Lyman is and why his opinion is worthwhile. With some rewriting, the quotation can be smoothly integrated into the writer's sentences.

An Integrated Quotation:

In short, many news editors and reporters maintain that it is impossible and perhaps not even desirable to keep personal opinions from influencing the selection and presentation of facts. Yet not all authorities agree with this view. Harold Lyman, a newspaper editor for more than forty years, grants that "news reporters, like everyone else, form impressions of what they see and hear." But, Lyman insists, "a good reporter does not fail to separate his opinions from his facts" (52).

In this passage, the second sentence and the words *grants*, *But*, and *insists* tell us what to expect in the quotation. The phrase identifying Lyman, *a newspaper editor for more than forty years*, tells us why Lyman is quoted and why we should value his opinion. You should introduce borrowed material with a verb that conveys information about the source author's attitude or approach to what he or she is saying. The following lists possible verbs you can use.

Verbs for Introducing Summaries, Paraphrases, and Quotations:

Author is Neutral: comments, describes, explains, illustrates, notes, observe, points out, records, relates, reports, says, sees, thinks, writes

Author Infers or Suggests: analyzes, asks, assesses, concludes, considers, finds, predicts, proposes, reveals, shows, speculates, suggests, supposes

Author Argues: alleges, claims, contends, defends, disagrees, holds, insists, maintains

Author Agrees: admits, agrees, concedes, concurs, grants

Author is Uneasy or Disparaging: belittles, bemoans, complains, condemns, deplures, deprecates, derides, laments, warns