

How Do I Cite or Use Quotes?

Your assignment is to write a paper in which you use textual support to prove your points. You might want to ask yourself the following questions:

What's the difference between citing and quoting?

- ✓ In your paper, every time you refer to the ideas you have found through your research, you need to cite (using proper style, i.e., MLA, APA, CMS, etc.)
- ✓ Only when you borrow not only the idea but the actual words should you quote (after which you will still need to cite your source appropriately).

How much support do I need to use?

- ✓ Make it a goal to use at least one quote from the text or paraphrased material (with citation) to support every “big” idea or major point you have included in your paper.
- ✓ Use enough textual evidence to explain how or why you formulated an idea.

Am I using too many quotes?

- ✓ It is important to remember that you never want quotes/textual support to outweigh your own analysis.

Should I be using my own words?

- ✓ Whenever possible, paraphrase! Paraphrasing is not simply changing a few words in a particular quote by using the thesaurus; rather, it is a thoughtful, often shorter version of the source material. When paraphrasing, remember to cite the source.

Some Suggestions...

- ✓ Be careful not to fall into the trap of “hanging quotes.” A hanging quote is a quote that stands all by itself in a sentence without any of your own words to introduce it or comment on it.
 - Hanging Quote:
“There are many theories of poetic origins” (Bloom 59).
 - Introduced Quote:
Despite the argument that all poetry proceeds from direct experience, Bloom argues that “[t]here are many theories of poetic origins” (59).
- ✓ Try to end paragraphs or conclude major ideas/points of your paper with your own words, not someone else's.
- ✓ Do not use “back-to-back quotes,” one after another, without interjection of your own thoughts. There is a reason that you utilize a specific quote, right? Make sure you explain that reason rather than expecting the quote to do so on its own.