

UNC Writing Center Resources

Using Sources Appropriately and Effectively

[Why We Cite](#) (2 min. video)

You know that instructors want you to cite your sources, but do you know why citations are so important?

[How We Cite](#) (2 min. video)

In much of your academic writing, you will use outside sources of information. How can you integrate sources into your papers? And how should you cite them?

[Citation Resources](#)

See for information on citing sources.

[Argument](#)

This handout will define what an argument is and explain why you need one in most of your academic essays.

[Evaluating Print Sources](#)

This handout will discuss strategies to evaluate secondary printed sources—books, journal articles, magazines, etc.—based on three criteria: objectivity, authority, and applicability to your particular assignment. Printed sources, whether primary or secondary, provide the evidence for most of the academic essays you will write in college. Non-print sources, such as webpages, works of art (performance and fine), and interviews often provide significant source material for analysis but are not covered in this handout.

[Evidence](#)

This handout will provide a broad overview of gathering and using evidence. It will help you decide what counts as evidence, put evidence to work in your writing, and determine whether you have enough evidence. It will also offer links to additional resources.

[Reading to Write](#)

This handout suggests reading, note-taking, and writing strategies for when you need to use reading assignments or sources as the springboard for writing a paper.

[Summary](#)

Knowing how to summarize something you have read, seen, or heard is a valuable skill, one you have probably used in many writing assignments. It is important, though, to recognize when you must go beyond describing, explaining, and restating texts and offer a more complex analysis. This handout will help you distinguish between summary and analysis and avoid inappropriate summary in your academic writing.

[Plagiarism](#)

This handout explains what plagiarism is and outlines steps students can follow to avoid plagiarizing.

[Quotations](#)

Used effectively, quotations can provide important pieces of evidence and lend fresh voices and perspectives to your narrative. Used ineffectively, however, quotations can clutter your text and interrupt the flow of your argument. This handout will help you decide when and how to quote like a pro.