FY 100 Basic Citation Exercise

By Dr. Jennifer Mitchell for SUNY Potsdam FY 100, Fall 2015

College-level expectations for giving credit to your sources are higher than those in many high schools. What might have been “close enough” citation in high school won’t be good enough in college. We have designed this assignment so you do the work of learning this important skill now and are saved grief and stress later.

To college teachers, poor paraphrasing or skipping an author’s name after a sentence can easily look like plagiarism, which is a form of cheating and carries the same consequences. Therefore, this assignment focuses on college-level expectations for paraphrasing and citing in your sentences.

Of course, each writing assignment needs a complete and accurate bibliography. “Citation makers” (like EasyBib or BibMe) help you draft your bib, but it is your responsibility to edit the draft bib which the program creates. Expect it to contain formatting errors, and check it against a credible guide (see Tips at the end of this document).

Help is available on campus and on the web to help you learn the basics as well as more advanced citing later in your career. Again, see Tips.

In completing this Basic Citation Exercise, you’ll read seven pages in links and write about 400 words, equivalent to a bit more than a page. Plan to spend 1-2 hours. Submit your answers to all seven tasks in one Word document.
1: GUIDELINES for CITING

Read “Plagiarism and Citation Basics.”
Read “Paraphrasing,” pages 3-5.

TASK 1: Summarize the most helpful or surprising point you picked up from “Paraphrasing.” Write 75-100 words.

2: “WAKE-UP CALL”

Read Potsdam Academic Honor Code, parts A, B, and C (read sections 1-2 only in Part C).
Read What is Plagiarism?, section 3 plus the first four paragraphs of section 1 (up to Heilbroner).

TASK 2: Based on those two readings, what do you feel are the biggest challenges about college citation? Write a short “wake-up call” (100-200 words) addressed to your peers: remind them of key points from the readings which you think might be new to them.

• Cite the author of each source by naming the author in your sentence or in parentheses. Find authors’ names in Task 6, below.
3.5: PRACTICE

In these practice exercises, you’ll react to four sentences we wrote, then you’ll write four sentences of your own. You’ll be graded on how well you apply what you learned from the readings in Tasks 1-2.

We’re using Katherine W. Phillips’ “How Diversity Makes Us Smarter,” an article you already read for your summer essay. Since this source has no page numbers, just cite the author’s last name in parentheses, as you see in the examples below.

**TASK 3:** What is good or bad about each of the four paraphrases below? Write 20-25 words about each paraphrase below, pointing out its strengths or flaws.

**Original:** “Research has shown that social diversity in a group can cause discomfort, rougher interactions, a lack of trust, greater perceived interpersonal conflict, lower communication, less cohesion, more concern about disrespect, and other problems. So what is the upside?” (Phillips)

1. Good paraphrase: According to researchers, internal conflict can be greater within socially diverse groups than in groups whose members are socially similar. However, there are also huge advantages to working in socially diverse groups (Phillips).

2. Good paraphrase: Even though socially diverse groups can experience more internal conflict, Phillips shows the “upside” to diversity within groups.

3. Poor paraphrase: Diverse groups might experience discomfort, difficult interactions, poor trust, less communication, and higher disrespect. But there are some advantages.

4. Poor paraphrase: Researchers have found that socially diverse groups are uncomfortable (Phillips).
**TASK 4:** Choose a short passage (1-3 sentences) from Phillips’ article. Write two different paraphrases of that passage. Provide the original passage as well as your two paraphrases.

**TASK 5:** Write two sentences, each of which includes a short quote from Phillips.

- Your whole sentence could be a paraphrase of Phillips, with a short quote included: cite (Phillips) at the end of the sentence.
- Or your sentence might be your original thoughts and words, and only the quoted material represents Phillips’ article: cite (Phillips) at the end of the quotation itself, outside the quotation marks.

Examples:

Original: “This is how diversity works: by promoting hard work and creativity; by encouraging the consideration of alternatives even before any interpersonal interaction takes place. The pain associated with diversity can be thought of as the pain of exercise. You have to push yourself to grow your muscles. The pain, as the old saw goes, produces the gain. In just the same way, we need diversity—in teams, organizations and society as a whole—if we are to change, grow and innovate” (Phillips).

Paraphrases including short quotes:
- When socially diverse groups work well, they often show more “hard work and creativity.” Their members are more likely to “(consider) alternatives even before” they begin working together (Phillips).

- I know that to be successful in my career at college and beyond, I’ll need to “change, grow, and innovate” (Phillips) in response to all kinds of challenges.
6: BIBLIOGRAPHY

**TASK 6:** Here’s the bibliography of sources you’ve used in this assignment. Paste it in at the end of your Basic Citation Exercise. (This is the only time you can copy and paste without giving credit.)

- **Add** today’s date to the end of each item. This shows the date you read the document on the web, or the “date of access.” See sample under “proper citation format” here.

  Works Cited


Note for your future work: Technically, a “bibliography” is a list of works on the topic, but a “works cited” page or “references” list shows only the works you actually drew from (summarized, paraphrased, or quoted) in your paper. Be absolutely sure that every source you used in writing a paper is listed on that page. Then you are revealing that you used that source, not hiding it. And hiding a source is the definition of plagiarism.
7: TIPS

Task 7: Read the tips below. Bookmark on your own computer two or three links from anywhere in this exercise for future reference. Submit a list of those links as Task 7.

Help on campus: Potsdam College Writing Center peer writing consultants can help you with any aspect of your writing, including citation. Just contact us for a free appointment any time. SUNY Potsdam reference librarians can also help with citing, and lib.potsdam.edu includes good links. We really want to help you learn, so come find us with your questions, big and small.

Links: The best online guides to citation styles are Purdue OWL and CiteSource. The OWL includes sample papers with correct citation; CiteSource gives examples of citing unusual web sources.

Citation makers (like EasyBib or BibMe) help you to create a works cited page, but they don’t show you when to cite in your sentences and paragraphs. And the quality of the works cited page is still your responsibility: check to be sure that it really is correctly formatted by comparing the format to those at Purdue OWL or CiteSource.

Citation styles: Different fields of study use different styles. For example, English uses MLA style, but Psychology uses APA style and History uses Chicago style. Your teacher will tell you what style to use. In most 100- and 200-level courses, MLA style will be fine.

You’re done! We hope you learned something. Remember, you are responsible for learning how to cite and doing it thoroughly. Teachers won’t always spell it out: it’s your work, your academic integrity, and your consequences.