FY 100 Basic Citation Exercise
By Dr. Jennifer Mitchell, Fall 2020

College teachers hold high standards for giving credit to sources. This Basic Citation Exercise shows you how to cite and paraphrase within your own writing. This assignment should take you 2-3 hours to complete. *Follow all details in the instructions for each step, because they will save you time.*

To do this Exercise, you will read some webpages and write short responses. Then you’ll do some practice. The writing tasks are simple, but the reading will take a little time. It’s worth it, to be sure you understand how to avoid accidental plagiarism.

Combine all of your answers in one Word document. Follow our instructions carefully and cite well.

Save this document as a helpful guide for the future, and contact the Writers’ Block if you want help with your citing in this exercise.

**A note on bibliographies and citation machines:**

We focus on “in-text citation” or “parenthetical citation” in your paragraphs. Of course, the bibliography is also crucial. Your bib must have every source you’ve used, and it must apply the style your teacher assigns. “Citation makers” (like EasyBib) can help you build your bib.

However, keep in mind that:

- “Citation machines” like EasyBib help you draft your bibliography, but NOT with paraphrasing or citing in your sentences.
- It is your responsibility to correct the format of any bibliography you hand in by checking it against a credible guide (see our Resources page at the end of this exercise).
- Read more about this issue at [the Purdue OWL](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/).
Task 1: “WAKE-UP CALL”

READ: Potsdam Academic Honor Code, all of parts A and B; in part C, read sections 1 & 2.
READ: What is Plagiarism?, section 1, first four paragraphs ONLY; then go to section 3, and read all of that section.

THEN WRITE: Using what you learned from those two readings, write a short “wake-up call” addressed to your peers. Share just a few key points which might be new to your peers coming into college. What are the challenges they should keep in mind? Write 100-150 words or 10-15 sentences.

CITE: Each time you use something from one of the readings, name the author either in your sentence or in parentheses immediately after you use that source. The author is either the Georgetown University Honor Council OR the SUNY Potsdam College Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards. No pages numbers are necessary.

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

Create a Bibliography: Copy and paste your selected items from our Sample Bibliography page below. Only list the sources you actually used (i.e., paraphrased or quoted) in completing this exercise. Label your bib as “Works Cited.”

Note: Technically, a “bibliography” is a list of works which you consulted on the topic. A “works cited” page or “references” list shows only the sources which you actually used (that is, summarized, paraphrased, or quoted) in your paper.

MOST IMPORTANT RULES OF CITING:

• Give credit every time. Be sure to cite author and page in parentheses after each quotation or paraphrase. Follow the formats in Task 3, below.
• Authors’ names must be mentioned, either in sentence or in parentheses. (If no author, use the title, including just the first three words of the title in parentheses). If it’s extremely clear in your sentences which authors you are citing, you don’t need to include their name in parentheses.
• Be sure to use the readings accurately to make your points.
**Task 2: GUIDELINES for CITING**

**READ:** Read “Paraphrasing,” pages 3-5. This knowledge is crucial to your success in college writing.

**READ:** In the famous Purdue OWL, read the first two sections on this page. Read “Basic in-text citation rules” and “In-text citations: Author-page style.”

**WRITE:** Summarize two new or helpful points you picked up from “Paraphrasing” and also one new or helpful point from the Purdue OWL page. Write a few sentences for each of those, for a total of about 100 words. When you quote or paraphrase, mention the author – either SUNY Potsdam College Writing Center OR Purdue OWL – in the sentence or in parentheses. Include the page number in parentheses when there is a page number.

**BIB:** Copy and paste your selected items from our Sample Bibliography page below. Only list the sources you actually used (i.e., paraphrased or quoted) in the exercise. Label your bib as “Works Cited.”
Task 3: YOU BE THE JUDGE

READ this passage about writing process from the textbook, College Success. Then you’ll see some paraphrases of this passage, and you’ll evaluate them.

“Writing instructors distinguish between process and product. The expectations [we’ve] described here all involve the ‘product’ you turn in on the due date. Although you should keep in mind what your product will look like, writing is more involved with how you get to that goal. ‘Process’ concerns how you work to actually write a paper. What do you actually do to get started? How do you organize your ideas? Why do you make changes along the way as you write? Thinking of writing as a process is important because writing is actually a complex activity. Even professional writers rarely sit down at a keyboard and write out an article beginning to end without stopping along the way to revise portions they have drafted, to move ideas around, or to revise their opening and thesis. Professionals and students alike often say they only realized what they wanted to say after they started to write. This is why many instructors see writing as a way to learn. Many writing instructors ask you to submit a draft for review before submitting a final paper. To roughly paraphrase a famous poem, you learn by doing what you have to do.” (College Success 285)

WRITE: Why are the following paraphrases considered good or bad by a college teacher?

Write just a sentence or two about each paraphrase.

- Is the paraphrase accurate?
- Is the paraphrase really in our own original wording -- or is it using the authors’ words from the passage above?
- Is the source given credit correctly, in the sentence or in parentheses?

Examples of Good Paraphrases: What did we do right?

1. When writing, it is important to recognize that the product and process are two different things. The “product” is the final piece of writing that you submit to your professor, while the “process” pertains to how a writer creates their work (College Success 285).

2. The authors of the textbook, College Success, list things to consider when writing a paper. They mention how you begin a paper, the organization of concepts and how you make changes in your writing. These steps are all a part of one’s writing “process” (285).

3. For many people, writing is not a simple straightforward process. Even people who write professionally typically edit and reorganize their work before they submit it (College Success 285).
4. Often, writers are unsure of what they want to convey in their paper at the start. It isn’t until they are in the midst of writing that they determine what it is they want to say (College Success 285). That’s because writing leads to new ideas.

5. According to College Success, professors will often ask students to submit a draft of a paper before they complete the final product. This is a chance for professors to teach, and for the writer to make changes to their work (285).

**Examples of Bad Paraphrases: What’s wrong here?**

6. Professional writers and college students both often say they only realized what they wanted to say after they started writing.

7. Thinking of writing as a process is important. That’s because writing is actually a complex activity. Even professional writers rarely sit down at a keyboard and write out an article beginning to end. They stop along the way to revise portions they have drafted, to move ideas around, or to revise their opening and thesis (College Success 285).
Task 4: YOU’VE GOT THIS

Go back to the long quotation from *College Success* in Task 3. Practice citing and paraphrasing. The book is called *College Success*, and there is no author; therefore, your in-text citations should say *(College Success 285)*. If you mention the title in your sentence, then just give the page number.

**Paraphrase:** Copy one sentence, then present your excellent paraphrase of that sentence in your own words. Include parenthetical citation.

**Paraphrase with short quote:** Copy a different sentence. Then insert your excellent paraphrase with one short, exact quotation from the original in quotation marks *as part of your paraphrase*. Include parenthetical citation. Always keep quotation marks on exact words, if you take three or more words.

You’re done! See our Sample Bib and Resources below.

**Remember, you are responsible** for learning how to cite and doing it thoroughly. Teachers won’t always spell out requirements in the same way, so your initiative to learn and check the formats is essential.
Always be absolutely sure that every source you used in writing a paper is listed on the bib page. If you do not include a source, then, in the eyes of your professors, you are hiding your use of a source and claiming the work as your own. And that’s plagiarism.

Works Cited


*The OWL at Purdue.* “MLA In-Text Citations: The Basics.” Purdue University, n.d.,
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_in_text_citations_the_basics.html.


SUNY Potsdam College Writing Center. “Paraphrasing.” *SUNY Potsdam.* SUNY Potsdam, 2013,

Resources: Help when you need it

Help on campus:

- **Potsdam College Writers’ Block** peer writing tutors can help you with any aspect of your writing, including citation. Just contact us for a free appointment.

- SUNY Potsdam librarians can also help with citing, and [libraries.potsdam.edu](http://libraries.potsdam.edu) includes good links. They really want to help you learn, so bring your questions, big and small, to the reference desk at the base of the stairs. See their [research desk hours here](http://research.desk.hours). They’re definitely available for virtual chat, too!

- Group tutoring is also available from [Academic Support Lab](http://academic.support.lab) and individual tutoring is available for students in the TRiO and EOP programs. Sign up early in the semester and stick with it, or the resource won’t be available.

Links:

The best online guides to citation styles are [Purdue OWL](http://Purdue.OWL) and [CiteSource](http://CiteSource). The OWL includes sample papers with correct citation and information on all aspects of writing. CiteSource shows how to cite various kinds of web sources.

Different fields of study use different styles, including MLA, APA, ASA, CSE, and Chicago footnotes. Your teacher will tell you what style to use. In most 100- and 200-level courses, MLA style will be fine.

**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](http://Purdue.OWL) or [CiteSource](http://CiteSource).