

INCORPORATING SOURCES INTO THE RESEARCH PAPER The following paragraphs appear in the book *Fatherless America: Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem*, by David Blankenhorn. These paragraphs will be used to demonstrate how a student can incorporate sources into a research paper.

The United States is becoming an increasingly fatherless society. A generation ago, a child could reasonably expect to grow up with his or her father. Today, a child can reasonably expect not to. Fatherlessness is approaching a rough parity with fatherhood as a defining feature of childhood. This astonishing fact is reflected in many statistics, but here are the two most important: Tonight, about 40 percent of U.S. children will go to sleep in homes in which their fathers do not live. More than half of our children are likely to spend a significant portion of childhood living apart

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PART 5 STRUCTURING THE COLLEGE ESSAY 596

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from their fathers. Never before in this country have so many children been voluntarily abandoned by their fathers. Never before have so many children grown up without knowing what it means to have a father. Fatherlessness is the most harmful demographic trend of this generation. It is the leading cause of the decline in the well-being of children. It is also the engine driving our most urgent social problems, from crime to adolescent pregnancy to domestic violence. Yet, despite its scale and social consequences, fatherlessness is frequently ignored or denied.

Avoiding Plagiarism: Using Direct and Indirect Quotation A large part of writing a research paper is knowing how to incorporate the ideas of others into your text. This involves using a combination of carefully chosen direct and indirect quotations that will appear throughout the research paper. These quotations will lend authority to the points you are making. You must, however, be selective in using quotations. Students are sometimes tempted to include too many quotations or use quotations that are too long. Another common problem is the use of quotations that are not justified in the context of the material being presented. Unless every part of the quotation relates directly to the content of your paper, the quotation will seem out of place. Also, don't assume that your reader will see the relevance of a quotation. Always use the quotation in such a way that your reader will understand how the quotation relates to the point you are making.

Direct quotation reproduces the exact words of another writer, using quotation marks.

The example below shows how a student could incorporate a direct quotation from the second paragraph of the Blankenhorn excerpt into a research paper. According to David Blankenhorn, "Tonight, about 40 percent of U.S. children will go to sleep in homes in which their fathers do not live."

Indirect quotation uses one's own words to report on what another person has spoken or written.

The example below shows how the direct quotation above can be changed into an

indirect quotation. Notice that the information is the same, but in the case of the indirect quotation, the writer uses his or her own words to express the ideas. No quotation marks are used. David Blankenhorn claims that approximately 40 percent of American children live without fathers in their homes. NOTE: If a direct quotation is four or more lines long, it is usually set off by indenting the quotation and not using quotation marks.

°demographic characteristic of a certain population

CHAPTER 33 OTHER COLLEGE WRITING: THE RESEARCH PAPER AND THE ESSAY EXAM 597

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Avoiding Plagiarism: Paraphrasing A second method of using the words or ideas of another writer is called paraphrasing. You use paraphrasing when you want to retain all the information a source offers, from a paragraph to a full page of material. When you paraphrase, you are required to pay close attention to your source because you must restate every idea contained in that source. Your paraphrase will be almost the same length as the original material. When you paraphrase, you cannot leave out any part of the original piece of writing, nor can you add any ideas of your own as you incorporate the material into your research paper. Paraphrasing demands a great deal of skill because a writer has to have extensive control of language to be able to restate ideas using different words and different sentence structures.

Paraphrasing uses one's own words to restate each and every idea of a passage from another's work and results in a new passage that is virtually the same length as the original.

Here is how the first paragraph in the original text by David Blankenhorn might have been incorporated into a research paper using paraphrase. Our country is turning into a society without fathers. Twenty-five years ago, children could look forward to being raised by their fathers, but that is no longer true. We are reaching the point when childhood is just as accurately described as growing up without a father as growing up with a father. Note that the paraphrase has fifty-two words and the original has only forty-seven words. It is difficult to be as succinct as an experienced writer. Your own paraphrases may well be slightly longer than the originals.

Avoiding Plagiarism: Summarizing A final method of incorporating the ideas of another writer into your research paper is summarizing. A summary includes only the main ideas of a published source; it is therefore a reduced version of the original. To write a summary, you will probably need to review the original material more than once to separate the main ideas from the details and specific examples. Although a summary should be significantly shorter than the text you are working from, you must not leave out any of that text's main ideas. Also, you may not add any ideas of your own. Writing successful summaries is a skill that is often used by writers as they research material for their own work. Extracting the main ideas from the works of others is at the heart of education itself.

Terms Used to Introduce a Quote The author claims As the author says The author states As the author points out The author explains As the author reported According to the author As the author notes The author added

PART 5 STRUCTURING THE COLLEGE ESSAY 598

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Summarizing uses one's own words to provide a condensed restatement of the main ideas of another person's work.

Below is a writer's summary of the first paragraph of the David Blankenhorn excerpt. Compare it to the paraphrase of the same material given on p. 598. American children today are as likely to grow up without a father as those of a generation ago were likely to be raised with one.

Using Note-Taking Techniques The third paragraph from the David Blankenhorn excerpt is reproduced below.

Fatherlessness is the most harmful demographic trend of this generation. It is the leading cause of the decline in the well-being of children. It is also the engine driving our most urgent social problems, from crime to adolescent pregnancy to domestic violence. Yet, despite its scale and social consequences, fatherlessness is frequently ignored or denied.

Demonstrate your skill with note-taking techniques by using material from the paragraph to write direct and indirect quotations, a paraphrase, and a summary. 1. Show how you could incorporate a direct quotation of the first sentence into a research paper.

2. Show how you could incorporate an indirect quotation of the first sentence into a research paper.

3. Write a paraphrase of the paragraph.

4. Write a summary of the paragraph.

EXERCISE 1

According to David Blankenhorn, "Fatherlessness is the most harmful demographic trend of this generation."

Notice that certain key words from the original version will have to be retained.

David Blankenhorn claims that fatherlessness is the most serious trend facing this generation.

Answers will vary. The most serious problem facing our society today is the number of children growing up without their fathers. This situation is the major cause of our children's lack of physical and psychological health. In fact, it is the primary force behind our most pressing social issues: lawlessness, teenage pregnancy, and abusive behavior in the home. Even so, we very seldom hear anyone talking about this crisis.

Answers will vary. Although fatherlessness is the leading cause of psychological and physical ill-health among today's children, few people are confronting the serious consequences.

CHAPTER 33 OTHER COLLEGE WRITING: THE RESEARCH PAPER AND THE ESSAY EXAM 599

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DOCUMENTING SOURCES USING MLA GUIDELINES Whether you use direct quotation, indirect quotation, paraphrase, or summary, you must acknowledge your sources in a consistent format. This format can vary, depending on the style your instructor wants you to use. The most

commonly accepted authorities are the Modern Language Association (MLA style) and the American Psychological Association (APA style). MLA style is often used in the humanities, and APA style is recommended for use in scientific writing. Because so many different combinations of sources and authorship are possible, you will need some guidelines for the style your instructor requires so that you can prepare the documentation properly.