# **3 Tips for Integrating Sources | QC Writing Center**

* When you choose to include a direct quote, it must adhere smoothly to the writing around it so it makes sense to your reader.
* Rather than “dump” quotes in the middle of your sentences or allow “floating quotes”—quotes that are totally divorced from the writing around them—writers can tether their quotes to their own ideas.
  + NOTE: The examples in this section employ MLA style, which employs verbs in the present tense when discussing others’ ideas.

1. **Introduce the Source**

* Introducing your source to the reader can establish and enhance their sense of trust in its legitimacy.
* If you’re referencing multiple sources in your writing, introducing the sources when quoting directly from them can help your reader better follow along as you switch between them.
* Try these:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name/describe the author.** | **Describe the source and/or its genre.** | **Describe the source’s credentials.** |
| Harold Lyman grants that “news reporters like everyone else, form impressions of what they see and hear.” But, Lyman insists, “a good reporter does not fail to separate opinions from facts” (52). | Harold Lyman, in his book *The Conscience of the Journalist*, grants that “news reporters, like everyone else, form impressions of what they see and hear.” But, Lyman insists, “a good reporter does not fail to separate opinions from facts” (52). | Harold Lyman, a newspaper editor for more than forty years, grants that ““news reporters, like everyone else, form impressions of what they see and hear.” But, Lyman insists, “a good reporter does not fail to separate opinions from facts” (52). |

1. **Use Signal Phrasing**

* Signal phrasing provides a cue to your reader that a source is being referenced, and can also indicate how the source should be interpreted.
  + For example, here’s a sentence *without* signal phrasing: One editor disagrees with this view and “a good reporter does not fail to separate opinions from facts” (Lyman 52).
  + Here’s a sentence *with* signal phrasing: One editor disagrees with this view, maintaining that “a good reporter does not fail to separate opinions from facts: (Lyman 52). [Note how the reader can now confirm that the quote comes from the editor in disagreement.]
* Try these verbs when you want to signal the use of a source:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Author is Neutral** | **Author is Critical** | **Author is in Agreement** | **Author Argues** | **Author Suggests** |
| Comments | Bemoans | Admits | Claims | Supposes |
| Describes | Complains | Confesses | Contends | Asks |
| Explains | Condemns | Concedes | Defends | Assesses |
| Illustrates | Deplores | Concurs | Holds | Concludes |
| Notes | Derides | Grants | Insists | Considers |
| Observes | Warns | Agrees | Maintains | Finds |
| Writes | Laments |  | Disagrees | Predicts |
| Reports |  |  | Counters | Proposes |
| Records |  |  |  | Speculates |
| Offers |  |  |  | Infers |

1. **Choose Appropriate Verbiage**
   * When including a direct quote in your writing, you may need to modify its syntax for it to gel with the remainder of your writing. Remember to **indicate changes** **with brackets**, as in the following examples:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Words Added for Specificity** | **Verb Form Changed** | **Capitalization Changed** | **Noun Replaces Pronoun** |
| The tabloids [of England] are a journalistic case study in bad reporting,” claims Lyman (52).  [The words “of England” are not included in the original.] | A bad reporter, Lyman implies, is one who “[fails] to separate opinions from facts” (52).  [The bracketed verb phrase replaces *fail* in the original.] | “[T]o separate opinions from facts” is the work of a good reporter (Lyman 52).  [The original quote did not open a sentence and therefore did not begin with a capital letter.] | The reliability of a news organization “depends on [reporters’] trustworthiness,” says Lyman (52).  [The bracketed noun replaces *their* in the original.] |

* + You may also need to interject your own commentary in the middle of a quote in order to contextualize it for your reader, as in the following example:

**Before:** Many news editors and reporters maintain that it is impossible to keep personal opinions from influencing the selection and presentation of facts. “True, news reporters like everyone else, form impressions of what they see and hear. However, a good reporter does not fail to separate opinions from facts” (Lyman 52). [Not how the reader must figure out for themselves that the quotation states an opposite point of view.]

**After:** Many news editors and reporters maintain that it is impossible to keep personal opinions from influencing the selection and presentation of facts. Yet not all authorities agree with this view. One editor grants, “news reporters, like everyone else, from impressions of what they see and hear.” But, he insists, “a good reporter does not fail to separate opinions from facts” (Lyman 52). [Note how the added underlined portions break up the quote and help frame the quotations, promoting the reader’s understanding.]