How to incorporate other writers’ work into your own writing
by Nancy McEnery
Librarian-Instructor
Three approaches

• Quotations
• Paraphrasing
• Summarizing
Quotations

• Identical to the original source

• Match the source document word for word

• Must be attributed to the original author
Exact Quotation

• “In the near future, economic crisis will bring democracy to Asia” (Bell 59).

or

• According to Daniel Bell, “In the near future, economic crisis will bring democracy to Asia” (59).
Paraphrasing

- Put passage from source into your own words.
- Attribute to original source.
- Usually shorter than the original passage.
Paraphrasing not Plagiarizing

• **Original Source:** Some of Dickinson’s most powerful poems express her firmly held conviction that life cannot be fully comprehended without an understanding of death.


**Plagiarism:** Emily Dickinson strongly believes that we cannot understand life fully unless we also comprehend death.

• **Paraphrase:** As Wendy Martin has suggested, Emily Dickinson held that we must understand death to be able to comprehend life more fully (625).
Summarizing

- Put the main idea(s) into your own words
- Include only the main points
- Attribute to original source
- Take broad overview
Summarizing

• **Original Source:** A decline in standardized test scores is but the most recent indicator that American education is in trouble. One reason for the crisis is that mandatory-attendance laws require many to attend school who have no wish to be there.


• **Summarize:** One reason that American education is in trouble is because students don’t want to be at school but must attend due to mandatory attendance laws (Sipher 22).
Putting it all together

• Vary your writing style by using a mixture of summaries, paraphrases, and quotations.
An Example

• In his famous and influential work *On the Interpretation of Dreams*, Sigmund Freud argues that dreams are the “royal road to the unconscious” (53), expressing in coded images the dreamer’s unfulfilled wishes through a process known as “the dream work” (54). According to Freud, our dreams are censored and coded through layers of condensation and displacement before emerging in a kind of rebus puzzle in the dream itself (59). Following upon the work of Freud, Carl Jung believed that our real, but unacceptable desires are censored internally (Jones 127).
Conclusion

• Avoid the use of other people's words, sentence structure, and ideas in work that will be turned in as your own. The three ways to do this are:
  quotations
  paraphrasing
  summarizing