

INCORPORATING TEXTS WHILE AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Incorporating texts is a vital part of academic writing, but in order to properly use someone else's ideas, writing or work, you must properly cite the borrowed materials as the original creator's work.
- Plagiarism occurs when you borrow information from someone else and do not give them credit, this can be accidental or intentional. Regardless, if you do not quote, summarize, paraphrase and cite properly, you actually are stealing their ideas.

INCORPORATING TEXT

- Below we will look at four different paragraphs. The first is the original text, the second is a paragraph that poorly summarizes the text and is actually plagiarism, the third and fourth paragraphs are two acceptable ways to incorporate text.
- As you read the examples below, pay attention to how they quote and paraphrase. Are they word for word and marked with quotations? Is it paraphrased into different words and then cited?

ORIGINAL TEXT

A Natural Setting: A History of Exploration and Settlement in Yosemite Valley

Since its first discovery by non-indigenous people in the mid-nineteenth century, Yosemite Valley has held a special, even religious, hold on the American conscience because its beauty makes it an incomparable valley and one of the grandest of all special temples of Nature. While Yosemite holds a special grip on the western mind, perceptions about the Valley have evolved over time due to changing politics, migration patterns and environmental concerns as man has become more attuned to his relationship and impact on nature.

Harrick, C. (1996). "A Natural Setting." Nature and its discontents 23.1 pp. 41-50. (As cited in The Plagiarism Spectrum)

PLAGIARIZED TEXT

A History of Exploration and Settlement in Yosemite Valley

From its earliest discovery by non-indigenous people in the mid-nineteenth century Yosemite Valley has held a spiritual hold on the American conscience; its beauty is incomparable and has been held up as one of the grandest of all special temples of Nature. While Yosemite has a special grip on the western mind, impressions about the Valley have evolved over time, shaped by changing politics, migration patterns and environmental concerns as mankind has become more attuned to its relationship and impact on nature (Harrick 1996). (Taken from *The Plagiarism Spectrum*).

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- Notice the highlighted portions of the text. These are word-for-word from the original text, but they are not put in quotation marks. Here the author makes it look like their own work, even though it is borrowed.
- This is plagiarism, regardless of the citation at the end of the paragraph.
- To fix this, the writer should use quotation marks and an in-text citation and put some of the quotes into their own words as a paraphrase and cite it in the text. See examples below.

PARAPHRASED TEXT

Yosemite Valley: A Beautiful Discovery

The American conscience has been enamored by the beauty of the Yosemite Valley, valuing both the physical splendor of the place and its religious ties since its discovery by non-natives in the 1800s. The beauty of the valley makes this sacred spot of Nature unmatched; it is no wonder that Yosemite caught the eyes of the West—although perceptions of the Valley have not always been the same. Politics, patterns of migration and concerns about the environment have brought greater attention to man’s direct influence on nature (Harrick, 1996).

- Notice the paragraph does not use the word-for-word language of the original text. This is a paraphrase.
- The author borrows the same ideas and explains them in different words.
- No quotation marks are needed because the words are not identical, but a citation is still used at the end because the ideas are originally from Harrick.

QUOTING AND PARAPHRASING TEXT

Yosemite Valley: A Beautiful Discovery

Harrick (1996) in his article “*A Natural Setting*” observes that “Since its first discovery by non-indigenous people in the mid-nineteenth century, Yosemite Valley has held a special, even religious, hold on the American conscience” (p. 42). This sacred spot of Nature is unmatched in beauty and has a special place in the minds of those from the West. Perceptions of the Valley have not always been the same. Politics, patterns of migration and concerns about the environment have brought greater attention to man’s direct influence on nature (Harrick, 1996).

- Notice the introductory phrase before the first word-for-word quotation and the page number after. This is to give credit to the original text.
- This paragraph utilizes a quotation for a portion of the text that the writer wanted to keep the same structure as the original text, but the writer uses paraphrases of the information for the rest of the paper. In both instances, the writer cites the author.
- Go back and read the original text and compare it. Do they sound the same? Do they sound different? Do they have the same ideas?