

## Using sources in academic essays

In most papers, you will be expected to read, understand, utilize, and synthesize sources. While there are a multitude of ways to do this, find below fundamental techniques to help you get started.

Steps	1) Introduce the Source	2) Insert the Quote	3) Analyze	4) Synthesize
<u>Description:</u>	Be sure to tell the audience who the author is, what the name of the source is, and any other relevant information.	Once you have introduced the author and the name of the piece, put in the quote.	Explain why the quote is important, isolate and analyze key words and phrases within the quote.	Relate your analysis or your quote to your main argument or to other sources that you are dealing with.
<u>Example:</u>	<u>Example:</u> In <i>Invisible Man</i> Ralph Ellison depicts... OR The opening line in Ralph Ellison's <i>Invisible Man</i> ...	"I am an invisible man."	The narrator's use of the word "invisible" is not literal. Instead he means that he is not a member of society, that he is a pariah, an outcast. This gives him power.	This relates to my discussion of racial "invisibility" in the novel by demonstrating the extent to which outcasts in society can influence that society.
<u>Tips:</u>	<u>Additional info:</u> Think about what your author needs to know. It might be important to provide additional context, such as the setting, the main argument, or the overall point of the piece.	Make sure that you choose your quotes wisely. Choose the quotes before you begin writing the paper.	Analysis and summary are vastly different things. Summary answers "What is being said." Analysis answers "why does it matter?" or "what is the significance of this quote / word / passage?"	Synthesis follows analysis because you need to explain and examine the sources / passages / quotes within themselves so the reader understands your thinking before you relate them to other aspects of the paper.

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Practice: Try with your assignment!				