

Teaching Citation for Informal Writings

Citation requirements differ from discipline to discipline, from one genre to another, and at times for the level of formality. It's good to help students maintain a sense that sources are used even when the desired format is quite simple.

Purpose: Teaching the level of textual references required for the writing assignments in this class.

In-class time: 10 - 15 minutes

Out-of-class time: 30 minutes for assessment; 15 – 20 minutes for follow-up instruction

Activity: By our next class, please write one sentence which contains a reference for a quotation that you provide and one sentence that provides a reference for an idea, data, or a paraphrase. Use the two articles for next week's reading as material for these sentences.

Requirements: No formal reference list or bibliography or works cited is needed at the end of your papers. No parenthetical citations are needed either. Rather, please use the journalistic style for this course, which refers to authors or researchers by first and last name on first reference and subsequently by last name only. Use such references for direct quotation, ideas, and data alike.

Example: In "Constructive Toys," Denise Stephenson says that any writer, but especially those with strong kinesthetic intelligence, can benefit from building papers. She says that the fun involved in the process is also an important element of diminishing the fear people have of writing and unlocking creativity. Usually, we think of writing as a mental act rather than a physical one. But the two can't be separated according to "The Brain and the Immune System" by David Felton: "I can't imagine anybody thinking that the mind and the body could be separate in view of the multiplicity of connections from the brain to virtually all systems." Stephenson argues that even if she can't identify a particular brain-body link through science, her experience demonstrates that playing with toys can make writing much less onerous than it is otherwise.

(Please note that in the sample, there are both direct quotes and paraphrases, both of which refer to authors.)

Assessment: I can read these quickly and give feedback. If most of the class has it correct, I make note of the problems on the papers that make significant mistakes. Typically, the only problem of significance in this simple method is students' ability to paraphrase. If I find many of them doing that badly, I would lead the class in writing a few paraphrases together using reading due that day as material.