

## Using the Words of Others

One of the most important features of academic writing is the use of words and ideas from written sources to support your own points. Essentially, there are three ways to incorporate words and ideas from sources into your own writing:

1. **Direct quotation.** Bob Herbert says, “Most Americans have no idea of the extent of the race-based profiling that is carried out by law enforcement officials and the demoralizing effect it has on its victims” (17).
2. **Paraphrase.** In “Hounding the Innocent,” Bob Herbert notes that racial profiling is more extensive than we realize and is demoralizing to its victims (17).
3. **Summary.** In “Hounding the Innocent,” Bob Herbert cites statistics and stories from different parts of the country to prove that racial profiling is extensive and unjust. According to the author, “ethnic profiling” is practiced in a variety of ways throughout the United States, and no people of color, either walking or driving, are safe from its effects (17).

**Documentation.** You will also need to learn to take notes with full citation information. For print material, you need to record at least the author’s name, title of the publication, city of publication, publisher, publication date, and page number.

### MLA Format

**Books.** Here is the citation in MLA format for a typical book:

Bean, John C., Virginia A. Chappell, and Alice M. Gilliam. *Reading Rhetorically: A Reader for Writers*. New York: Longman, 2002.

**Newspapers.** Here is the bibliographic information for the Herbert article in MLA format. The fact that it was published in a newspaper changes the format and the information slightly:

Herbert, Bob. “Hounding the Innocent.” *New York Times* 13 June 1999, late ed., sec. 4: 17.

**Web Sites.** You might also want to incorporate material from Web sites into your writing. To document a Web site, you need to give the author’s name (if known), the title of the site (or a description, such as “Home-page,” if no title is available), the date of publication or most recent update (if known), the name of the organization that sponsors the site, the date of access, and the Web address (URL) in angle brackets; for example,

*University Writing Center*. 26 June 2003. University Writing Center, California Polytechnic State University, Pomona. 26 May 2004 <<http://www.csupomona.edu/uwc>>.

Because the name of the author is unknown for the above site, it is left out. This entry would appear in the Works Cited section, alphabetized as “University.”

**In-Text Documentation.** The MLA style also requires in-text documentation for every direct quotation, indirect quotation, paraphrase, or summary. If the author’s name is given in the text, the page number is furnished in parentheses at the end of the sentence containing the material. If not, both the name and page number must be furnished. For example, because the author is not named in the following excerpt from the Herbert article, his last name is placed in parentheses, along with the page number, at the end of the quotation:

“In New York, profiling was not only perpetuated but elevated to astonishing new heights during the regime of [New York City Mayor] Giuliani. Here, the targets are mostly pedestrians, not motorists. Young black and Hispanic males (and in some cases females) are stopped, frisked, and harassed in breathtaking numbers” (Herbert 17).