The Reading Process

Learning Objectives
In this chapter, you will learn how to . . .
1. Engage in a conversation with an author through active reading.
2. Read as a believer and as a doubter.
3. Put IDEAS to work when reading.
4. Demonstrate your understanding of a text through summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting.

Like these students, you are a reader, and strong readers, like strong writers, use a process. How can you become a more active and critical reader, someone who sees beyond the obvious?
The ability to read actively is vitally important in college because you will have to work with, connect with, and be tested on texts all the time. Being a good reader is also important in your workplace and personal life.

There have been many surveys about what qualities employers want most in their workers, and survey after survey indicates employers hire analytical thinkers—people who read actively and critically—and strong communicators—people who write and speak well. In your personal life, you can broaden your general knowledge, expand your vocabulary, and improve your writing ability by reading from a variety of sources such as newspapers, magazines, blogs, websites, novels, and nonfiction texts. Being an active and critical reader will benefit you in all areas of your life.

Active Reading: A Conversation with an Author

When you sit down to read something for a class or for your own enjoyment, how do you go about it?

• Do you take notes?
• If you are reading a book or a handout from class, do you write in the margins?
• Do you underline important passages in your own books and react to them in the margins?
• Do you note parts of the writing that confuse you?
• Do you look up words you do not understand?

When you read in your college courses, think of reading an essay or an article as being in a conversation. Respond to what is written. Connect and talk back to what is stated. Be an active reader.

Strategies for Active Reading

The following strategies will help you become a strong reader, whether you are reading for your classes, for your job, or for enjoyment:

• **Know the context:** When you read, think about where the writing was published and who is its intended audience. Was it published in a newspaper, on a blog, on a corporation’s website, or in a textbook? Are the intended readers specialists, or are they part of a
general audience? Knowing the audience a writer is trying to reach will give you insights into the writer’s purpose and the strategies used to achieve that purpose.

- **Determine the author’s thesis or controlling idea:** Everything you read has a subject, and each writer also has a point to make about that subject. This point, called a **thesis**, is the stand—the position on the subject—that the rest of the document details and supports. The thesis is also called a **controlling idea** because this main point controls the action of an essay, memo, or report.

  When you read, always try to determine the writer’s thesis because the function of the entire piece of writing is to support or back up that thesis. Some writers will state their thesis clearly and explicitly, often in the beginning of their work, but more often the thesis is an underlying foundation. You will not be able to underline a single sentence and say, “That’s the thesis!” But all good writing is developed and organized around a point about the subject—an opinion the writer holds and will have to support if readers are to agree with it.

- **Use a dictionary as you read:** It is easy to find inexpensive but good dictionaries and even simpler to look up words online. If there is a word that you do not understand, **LOOK IT UP!** Active readers look up words as they read because they know they will better understand the material, and they will build their vocabulary in their own writing and speaking.

- **Read once for enjoyment and twice for analysis:** We suggest you generally read essays and articles twice, the first time for enjoyment and the second time as an exercise in analysis. As you become more skilled at college-level reading, the two steps might combine into one. You will enjoy reading the document and breaking it down, looking at how the writer uses specific details, examples, beliefs, anecdotes, and facts to support a thesis.

- **Annotate the text as you read:** As you **converse** with a text, use a pencil or pen to highlight specific, important passages or words you need to remember. Write your own thoughts or summarize the author’s ideas in the margins. If the author states something confusing, put a question mark in the margin and ask your professor about it. If the author says something you really connect to—an experience much like your own—write a short note in the margins to remind yourself of the connection. If the author makes a statement that seems inappropriate or wrong, write comments that challenge him or her. Your marginal notes can work as a guide for discussing the reading in class, or as a model for your own writing if you are assigned to write about the article.
• **Take notes:** If you cannot write in a text or you are reading something published on the Web, simply take notes, using the same strategies for marking up a printed text. Strong readers both write in their texts and take notes because in their notes they can extend their conversation with the piece of writing.

• **Make connections:** Can you talk about how a piece of writing makes you feel and why? How has the text made you think about the subject differently? More importantly, can you make connections among various readings in the same course or to something you have read elsewhere? In what way does the text reinforce, question, or go against other essays or articles you have read or ideas you have encountered from family and friends or various media?

**EXERCISE 2.1 Practice Active Reading**

Directions: Describe the reading process you have followed up until now. Of the active reading strategies described so far, how many have you used? Choose one of the active reading strategies that you have seldom or never used. Make practicing that strategy a priority as you go through the rest of this chapter. After you have finished reading this chapter, write a short description of how using this strategy helped you become a more active reader.

In the following excerpt from a famous essay in the journal *The American Scholar*, William Cronon, a professor of history, geography, and environmental studies, provides inside knowledge about what professors want and expect; how strong reading, writing, and critical thinking skills are crucial; and how students need to be active readers and thinkers who make connections.

As you read Cronon’s article, practice the active reading strategies introduced in this chapter.

“In Only Connect . . .”: The Goals of a Liberal Education

by William Cronon

**PRE-READING PROMPT**

1. How can you tell if a person is educated? In other words, what is your definition of an educated person?
2. What do you think are the advantages of being educated?
3. What do you think are the responsibilities of being educated?
What does it mean to be a liberally educated person? It seems such a simple question, especially given the frequency with which colleges and universities genuflect toward this well-worn phrase as the central icon of their institutional missions. Mantra-like, the words are endlessly repeated, starting in the glossy admissions brochures that high school students receive by the hundreds in their mailboxes and continuing right down to the last tired invocations they hear on commencement day... So what exactly do we mean by liberal education, and why do we care so much about it?

In speaking of “liberal” education, we certainly do not mean an education that indoctrinates students in the values of political liberalism, at least not in the most obvious sense of the latter phrase. Rather, we use these words to describe an educational tradition that celebrates and nurtures human freedom. These days liberal and liberty have become words so mired in controversy, embraced and reviled as they have been by the far ends of the political spectrum, that we scarcely know how to use them without turning them into slogans—but they can hardly be separated from this educational tradition. Liberal derives from the Latin liberalis, meaning “of or relating to the liberal arts,” which in turn derives from the Latin word liber, meaning “free.” But the word actually has much deeper roots, being akin to the Old English word leodan, meaning “to grow,” and leod, meaning “people.” It is also related to the Greek word eleutheros, meaning “free,” and goes all the way back to the Sanskrit word rodhati, meaning “one climbs,” “one grows.” Freedom and growth: here, surely, are values that lie at the very core of what we mean when we speak of a liberal education.

Liberal education is built on these values: it aspires to nurture the growth of human talent in the service of human freedom. So one very simple answer to my question is that liberally educated people have been liberated by their education to explore and fulfill the promise of their own highest talents. But what might an education for human freedom actually look like? There’s the rub. . . .

I would therefore like to return to my opening question and try to answer it (since I too find lists irresistible) with a list of my own. My list consists not of required courses but of personal qualities: the ten qualities I most admire in the people I know who seem to embody the values of a liberal education. How does one recognize liberally educated people?

1. They listen and they hear.

This is so simple that it may not seem worth saying, but in our distracted and over-busy age, I think it’s worth declaring that educated people know how to pay attention—to others and to the world around them. They work hard to hear what other people say. They can follow an argument, track logical reasoning, detect illogic, hear the emotions that lie behind both the logic and the illogic, and ultimately empathize with the person who is feeling those emotions.
2. They read and they understand.

This too is ridiculously simple to say but very difficult to achieve, since there are so many ways of reading in our world. Educated people can appreciate not only the front page of the *New York Times* but also the arts section, the sports section, the business section, the science section, and the editorials. They can gain insight from not only *The American Scholar* and the *New York Review of Books* but also from *Scientific American*, the *Economist*, the *National Enquirer*, *Vogue*, and *Reader’s Digest*. They can enjoy John Milton and John Grisham. But skilled readers know how to read far more than just words. They are moved by what they see in a great art museum and what they hear in a concert hall. They recognize extraordinary athletic achievements; they are engaged by classic and contemporary works of theater and cinema; they find in television a valuable window on popular culture. When they wander through a forest or a wetland or a desert, they can identify the wildlife and interpret the lay of the land. They can glance at a farmer’s field and tell the difference between soy beans and alfalfa. They recognize fine craftsmanship, whether by a cabinetmaker or an auto mechanic. And they can surf the World Wide Web. All of these are ways in which the eyes and the ears are attuned to the wonders that make up the human and the natural worlds. None of us can possibly master all these forms of "reading," but educated people should be competent in many of them and curious about all of them.

3. They can talk with anyone.

Educated people know how to talk. They can give a speech, ask thoughtful questions, and make people laugh. They can hold a conversation with a high school dropout or a Nobel laureate, a child or a nursing-home resident, a factory worker or a corporate president. Moreover, they participate in such conversations not because they like to talk about themselves but because they are genuinely interested in others. A friend of mine says one of the most important things his father ever told him was that whenever he had a conversation, his job was “to figure out what’s so neat about what the other person does.” I cannot imagine a more succinct description of this critically important quality.

4. They can write clearly and persuasively and movingly.

What goes for talking goes for writing as well: educated people know the craft of putting words on paper. I’m not talking about parsing a sentence or composing a paragraph, but about expressing what is in their minds and hearts so as to teach, persuade, and move the person who reads their words. I am talking about writing as a form of touching, akin to the touching that happens in an exhilarating conversation.
5. They can solve a wide variety of puzzles and problems.
9 The ability to solve puzzles requires many skills, including a basic comfort with numbers, a familiarity with computers, and the recognition that many problems that appear to turn on questions of quality can in fact be reinterpreted as subtle problems of quantity. These are the skills of the analyst, the manager, the engineer, the critic: the ability to look at a complicated reality, break it into pieces, and figure out how it works in order to do practical things in the real world. Part of the challenge in this, of course, is the ability to put reality back together again after having broken it into pieces—for only by so doing can we accomplish practical goals without violating the integrity of the world we are trying to change.

6. They respect rigor not so much for its own sake but as a way of seeking truth.
10 Truly educated people love learning, but they love wisdom more. They can appreciate a closely reasoned argument without being unduly impressed by mere logic. They understand that knowledge serves values, and they strive to put these two—knowledge and values—into constant dialogue with each other. The ability to recognize true rigor is one of the most important achievements in any education, but it is worthless, even dangerous, if it is not placed in the service of some larger vision that also renders it humane.

7. They practice humility, tolerance, and self-criticism.
11 This is another way of saying that they can understand the power of other people’s dreams and nightmares as well as their own. They have the intellectual range and emotional generosity to step outside their own experiences and prejudices, thereby opening themselves to perspectives different from their own. From this commitment to tolerance flow all those aspects of a liberal education that oppose parochialism and celebrate the wider world: studying foreign languages, learning about the cultures of distant peoples, exploring the history of long ago times, discovering the many ways in which men and women have known the sacred and given names to their gods. Without such encounters, we cannot learn how much people differ—and how much they have in common.

8. They understand how to get things done in the world.
12 In describing the goal of his Rhodes Scholarships, Cecil Rhodes spoke of trying to identify young people who would spend their lives engaged in what he called “the world’s fight,” by which he meant the struggle to leave the world a better place than they had found it. Learning how to get things done in the world in order to leave it a better place is surely one of the most practical and important lessons we can take from our education. It is fraught with peril because the power to act in the world can so easily be abused—but we fool

parochialism: a mindset that only cares about what’s happening locally
fraught: filled with
ourselves if we think we can avoid acting, avoid exercising power, avoid joining
the world’s fight. And so we study power and struggle to use it wisely and well.

9. They nurture and empower the people around them.

Nothing is more important in tempering the exercise of power and shaping
right action than the recognition that no one ever acts alone. Liberally educated
people understand that they belong to a community whose prosperity and well-
being are crucial to their own, and they help that community flourish by making
the success of others possible. If we speak of education for freedom, then one of
the crucial insights of a liberal education must be that the freedom of the individ-
ual is possible only in a free community, and vice versa. It is the community that
empowers the free individual, just as it is free individuals who lead and empower
the community. The fulfillment of high talent, the just exercise of power, the cel-
ebration of human diversity: nothing so redeems these things as the recognition
that what seem like personal triumphs are in fact the achievements of our com-
mon humanity.

10. They follow E. M. Forster’s injunction from Howards End: “Only connect. . . .”

More than anything else, being an educated person means being able to see
connections that allow one to make sense of the world and act within it in cre-
ative ways. Every one of the qualities I have described here—listening, reading,
talking, writing, puzzle solving, truth seeking, seeing through other people’s
eyes, leading, working in a community—is finally about connecting. A liberal
education is about gaining the power and the wisdom, the generosity and the
freedom to connect.

I believe we should measure our educational system—whether we speak of
grade schools or universities—by how well we succeed in training children and
young adults to aspire to these ten qualities. I believe we should judge ourselves
and our communities by how well we succeed in fostering and celebrating these
qualities in each of us.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Cronon begins his essay with a question. How does he try to make
his audience interested in knowing the answer to the question?

2. In his second paragraph, Cronon distinguishes his definition of liberal education from the political definition of liberal. Why do you
think he does this?

3. Cronon writes that liberal education “aspires to nurture the growth
of human talent in the service of human freedom.” What does he
mean? Explain this point in your own words.

4. Cronon has chosen to present in a list form the qualities he believes
exist in an educated person. Why do you think he chose this approach,
and how effective is it?
5. Why do you think educated people must “work hard” to listen? What difficulties have you encountered in trying to listen?
6. How do you think Cronon defines “reading,” since it involves so much more than the printed word?
7. How will awareness of audience help a person achieve the third and fourth traits Cronon describes?
8. Explain what you think Cronon means when he writes, “knowledge serves values.”
9. As you continue your education, what practical steps can you take to learn the kind of tolerance Cronon describes?
10. When Cronon says that ultimately, a liberal education is about the “freedom to connect,” what does he mean? Connect to what?

Read as a Believer and as a Doubter

Probably without being aware of it, you have been playing what writer and teacher Peter Elbow calls the “believing and doubting games.” You respond to some readings in a positive way, connecting to and agreeing with what
the author states. Then you encounter other readings that you disagree with or seriously question. For anyone who wants to become an active and successful reader in college, playing the believing and doubting games on a higher level is necessary.

**Reading as a Believer**

If you **read as a believer**, you read with an open mind and try to understand what a writer is saying. You think deeply about the writer’s ideas, and you open yourself up to the writer’s perspective—how he or she sees the world, why the information is important, and how the writer convinces you to accept his or her point. You have to think as you read and ask questions:

- Does the writer have a good point? Why?
- What examples and details reinforce what the writer wants me to think, feel, or understand?
- What does the text make me think about and why?
- How do my own experiences and ideas help me better understand what the writer says?
- How does the writer try to connect with readers?
- Where does the writer connect with me in particular?
- What particular examples or details explain, convince, or entertain me?

**Reading as a Doubter**

In contrast, when you **read as a doubter**, you are a hard-core skeptic who does not want to believe or who needs to question the points and supporting evidence the writer provides. When you read as a doubter, you actively question what the writer says. You listen, but you question. You inspect. You judge. You read closely in respectful disagreement and, again, ask questions:

- Are there any weak points in the writing? What are they?
- Where does the writer assume something he or she should not? How does that assumption hurt the piece of writing?
• What examples and details do not work and why?
• What examples or details could the writer have added to support the main points more effectively?
• How do my own experiences and ideas go against what the writer is saying?
• Where could the author have better connected to the reader?
• How could the writer have created more interest in the subject?
• What are particular examples or details that do not inform, persuade, or entertain me?

EXERCISE 2.2  Read as a Believer and a Doubter

Directions: Imagine a psychology teacher has asked you to do some reading about how personalities can be shaped by environment. You find the following article on birth order. First, carefully read the article as a believer and answer the questions that follow.

Adler’s Theory of Birth Order

1. In the 1920s, Alfred Adler, a physician and one-time colleague of Sigmund Freud, was among the first to suggest that birth order had much to do with shaping an individual’s personality. According to Adler’s theory, each place in a family structure comes with a role, which then shapes the personality of the family member in that role. Later theorists have expanded upon Adler’s work and propose that a child’s place in the family structure not only shapes personality but has implications for the child’s future in school and in the workplace.

2. The oldest child begins life with both parents’ attention, and with a lot of adult interaction tends to develop strong people skills. First borns are often intelligent and assertive. And because these children lose their parents’ complete attention when siblings arrive, first borns tend to be ambitious and disciplined perfectionists as they try to regain their parents’ attention and to assert their superiority over the other children. Their leadership role in the family may also lead first borns to be controlling and to place great importance on being right. First borns carry their high-achieving ways into their careers. They often choose professions that require higher education such as science, law, government and engineering. In business, first borns hold most senior management positions. Interestingly, over half of U.S. presidents and Nobel Prize winners are first borns. Winston Churchill, Oprah Winfrey, and Bill and Hillary Clinton are some famous first borns.

3. The typical middle child’s competitiveness may stem from trying to keep up with or surpass the older sibling. With this competitive nature comes flexibility and diplomacy since the middle child must deal with older and young siblings. At the same time, middle children may become rebellious as they try to win attention. A search for their
own identity leads many middles to move far from home once they are grown. More laid back and flexible than first borns, typical middles have good communication skills and enjoy socializing. Middles often choose careers in nursing, law enforcement, social work and support services. While middles do not typically earn as much as first borns, they report greater satisfaction with their jobs. Famous middles include such great communicators as Martin Luther King and John F. Kennedy as well as Bill Gates, Madonna, and Princess Diana.

4 The stereotype of the youngest child being pampered and spoiled often is the reality according to birth order theorists. Even though their parents are the most experienced, youngest children are frequently the least disciplined, possibly because their parents have grown more relaxed or just more tired from child-raising. Although used to being the center of attention and expecting others to provide for them, the youngest children can also be creative and delightful, winning over parents and siblings with charm and humor. Having been perceived as the smallest and weakest in their own families, last borns often swell the ranks of reform movements and champion the causes of the underdog, the downtrodden. Their creativity and love of attention draw last borns to careers in the arts, journalism, sales and athletics. Copernicus, Harriet Tubman, Mother Teresa, Jay Leno, and Eddie Murphy are famous last borns.

5 Dr. Adler presented his theories as only one of many ways of trying to understand people, and experts continue to both expand upon and question these theories. Birth order is only one of many variables that go into shaping an individual’s personality.

Reading as a Believer

1. Adler believes birth order plays a significant role in shaping one’s personality. Why might his theory have validity?

2. The author begins each body paragraph with an explanation of the traits associated with a particular birth order. How do these explanations support Adler’s theory?

3. The author also includes examples of well-known people. How do these examples support Adler’s theory?

4. What in your own experiences supports Adler’s theory? In what ways are you like the profile your birth order indicates? Do you have family and friends who fit Adler’s birth order profiles?

5. What do you find most convincing or most engaging about Adler’s theory?
Now go back and reread the same article as a doubter, looking for ways to question and disbelieve what the writer says. Then answer the following questions.

**Reading as a Doubter**

1. What questions about Adler and his theory does the introduction raise? Why might you doubt the theory’s credibility?
2. What other factors in a person’s life might reduce or even negate the influence of birth order?
3. What about Adler’s theory seems to suggest stereotyping?
4. What in your own experiences goes against Adler’s theory? In what ways are you unlike the profile your birth order indicates? Which friends and/or family members do not fit Adler’s birth order profiles?
5. What additional kinds of examples and explanation should the author have included to present Adler’s theory more convincingly?

**Put IDEAS to Work When Reading**

Writers try to connect with an audience, a group of readers. So, in addition to reading as both a believer and a doubter, you should think about how a writer tries to inform, convince, or entertain readers. Writers who do a good job of connecting with their audience do all three. Good writers provide solid explanations, persuade readers to their point of view, and capture and keep their readers’ interest.

When you read, think about the components a writer uses to construct an essay or article. A good way to take apart a piece of writing and to analyze it is to use this five-part comprehensive template **IDEAS**

- **Interest**
- **Details**
- **Explanation**
- **Audience**
- **Style**

**Interest**

Writers have to grab the reader’s attention and keep it. As a reader, you need to judge how well a writer keeps your interest in the subject as you
closely read his or her essay. Some common methods writers use to capture and maintain reader interest include the following:

- **Relating personal experiences and anecdotes**: You may have heard the term *human interest*. Writers often engage readers by showing how a subject involves real people. Writers may use their own experiences to establish their authority and show first-hand knowledge of a subject. Writers also appeal to readers’ human interest by including *anecdotes*—short, interesting, or amusing incidents about real people.

- **Incorporating surprising facts or statistics**: Writers incorporate *facts*—irrefutable truths—to lend authority and credibility to their writing. Although not as reliable as facts because they can be misinterpreted or manipulated, statistics can also lend strength to an argument or information. The best writers avoid piling facts and statistics together in a dry, boring way. Instead, they look for ways to use this kind of support to capture the readers’ interest while providing compelling information.

- **Appealing to or questioning beliefs and assumptions**: Writers try to tap into common beliefs and assumptions as a way to connect with an audience, especially if they are trying to persuade them about something. Some common beliefs in our culture are these: those who work hard will succeed; everyone should have access to public education; our elected officials represent us as citizens; people should vote; and so on. What is interesting and sometimes makes for more thought-provoking writing is when an author takes on commonly held beliefs and shows how they are weak or even wrong. For example, an author could go against the common perception that bottled water is clean and healthy by including examples and studies that show tap water is as clean as, if not cleaner, cheaper, and more environmentally friendly than bottled water.

**Details**

Writers use various types of concrete and specific details to “paint a picture” with words.

- **Concrete details** use the five senses (sight, smell, sound, taste, touch) to present a sensory description of something, such as a Saturday afternoon in June: high-80s temperature, a gentle breeze from the west, the hum of your house’s air conditioner, the racket of the neighbor’s lawnmower, the green grass of your backyard, the shouts and laughter of kids down the street playing whiffle ball, barking dogs, the aroma of barbeque grills cooking meat, and so on.
- **Specific details** bring descriptive drama and clarity to writing. In contrast, broad or vague generalizations can leave writing bland and uninformative. Here are some examples that show the difference between general and specific details:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Specific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>walk</td>
<td>walk slowly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fruit</td>
<td>green apple, Granny Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haircut</td>
<td>short haircut, mohawk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>angry</td>
<td>very angry, outraged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red</td>
<td>dark red, deep dark red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hot</td>
<td>very hot and humid, sultry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>book</td>
<td>college textbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>team</td>
<td>professional baseball team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Explanation**

Strong explanation through good examples, facts, and anecdotes is key to helping readers understand a writer’s reasoning or point of view. Developed examples explain the reality of situations or problems. In addition, when using specialized terms or working with abstract concepts, a writer must provide explanations, so readers understand them and follow the writer’s train of thought. As a reader, you should question whether an author provides enough explanation for you to understand the point of the writing.

Albert Einstein once said, “Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing.” While Einstein was exaggerating a bit, good examples can be informative and persuasive because they explain and show readers what a writer means. A writer trying to convince readers of the dangers of texting and driving might cite examples of serious accidents that occurred because of drivers focused on their cell phones instead of the road. You, as a reader, need to judge how typical, representative, and accurate examples in a piece of writing are. In other words, you need to think, “Do the examples and details provide a strong enough explanation of the writer’s point?”

**Audience**

Good writers use word choice and level of language as well as particular details and examples to best reach their intended audience. They consider
what their readers already know and what they need to know about a topic. Writers also project a particular tone or attitude they hope will further appeal to their audience. Look at a typical “Letters to the Editor” page in a local newspaper. You will notice some writers sound angry or frustrated while others come across as polite and cordial. One writer may project a sarcastic or mocking tone while another sounds sympathetic or even sad. When you read, consider how well the writer appeals to the intended audience.

**Style**

Just like we dress differently for different occasions like weddings, job interviews, or athletic events, writers adjust their style of writing based on the writing situation. Style means that writers use various grammatical tools and different types of sentences to further appeal to their audience (see Chapter 14). They play with sentence rhythm by using long, medium, and short sentences. Style also includes the level of formality in a piece of writing. Do the audience and purpose require an informal, formal, or a middle-ground style?

In the next chapter, we will show you how this tool for close reading can also be used for generating ideas for writing. Successful writers use all of these components to inform, convince, and please readers—to make their work interesting, to make people want to read their writing, and to get their ideas and points across to their audience. This IDEAS template will serve you well as you read and write in college.

**EXERCISE 2.3 Read as a Believer and a Doubter and Use IDEAS**

*Directions:* Reading the following essay by Brent Staples entitled “Black Men and Public Space” will help you practice reading actively and critically, working the believing and doubting games, and using the IDEAS tool. After reading the essay, answer the questions related to reading as a believer and as a doubter and using IDEAS to analyze writing. Be sure to read the essay at least twice.

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**Black Men and Public Space**

by Brent Staples

*This essay by Staples first appeared in Ms. Magazine in 1986, under the title “Just Walk On By.” A year later, Staples revised it slightly for publication in Harper’s magazine under the present title.*
My first victim was a woman—white, well dressed, probably in her early twenties. I came upon her late one evening on a deserted street in Hyde Park, a relatively affluent neighborhood in an otherwise mean, impoverished section of Chicago. As I swung onto the avenue behind her, there seemed to be a discreet, uninflammatory distance between us. Not so. She cast back a worried glance. To her, the youngish black man—a broad six feet two inches with a beard and billowing hair, both hands shoved into the pockets of a bulky military jacket—seemed menacingly close. After a few more quick glimpses, she picked up her pace and was soon running in earnest. Within seconds she disappeared into a cross street.

That was more than a decade ago, I was twenty-two years old, a graduate student newly arrived at the University of Chicago. It was in the echo of that terrified woman’s footfalls that I first began to know the unwieldy inheritance I’d come into—the ability to alter public space in ugly ways. It was clear that she thought herself the quarry of a mugger, a rapist, or worse. Suffering a bout of insomnia, however, I was stalking sleep, not defenseless wayfarers. As a softy who is scarcely able to take a knife to a raw chicken—let alone hold one to a person’s throat—I was surprised, embarrassed, and dismayed all at once. Her flight made me feel like an accomplice in tyranny. It also made it clear that I was indistinguishable from the muggers who occasionally seeped into the area from the surrounding ghetto. That first encounter, and those that followed, signified that a vast, unnerving gulf lay between nighttime pedestrians—particularly women—and me. And I soon gathered that being perceived as dangerous is a hazard in itself. I only needed to turn a corner into a dicey situation, or crowd some frightened, armed person in a foyer somewhere, or make an errant move after being pulled over by a policeman. Where fear and weapons meet—and they often do in urban America—there is always the possibility of death.

In that first year, my first away from my hometown, I was to become thoroughly familiar with the language of fear. At dark, shadowy intersections, I could cross in front of a car stopped at a traffic light and elicit the thunk, thunk, thunk of the driver—black, white, male, or female—hammering down the door locks. On less traveled streets after dark, I grew accustomed to but never comfortable with people crossing to the other side of the street rather than pass me. Then there were the standard unpleasantries with policemen, doormen, bouncers, cabdrivers, and others whose business it is to screen out troublesome individuals before there is any nastiness.

I moved to New York nearly two years ago and I have remained an avid night walker. In central Manhattan, the near-constant crowd cover minimizes tense one-on-one street encounters. Elsewhere—in SoHo, for example, where sidewalks are narrow and tightly spaced buildings shut out the sky—things can get very taut indeed.

After dark, on the warrenlike streets of Brooklyn where I live, I often see women who fear the worst from me. They seem to have set their faces on neutral, and with their purse straps strung across their chests bandolier-style, they
forge ahead as though bracing themselves against being tackled. I understand, of course, that the danger they perceive is not a hallucination. Women are particularly vulnerable to street violence, and young black males are drastically over-represented among the perpetrators of that violence. Yet these truths are no solace against the kind of alienation that comes of being ever the suspect, a fearsome entity with whom pedestrians avoid making eye contact.

6 It is not altogether clear to me how I reached the ripe old age of twenty-two without being conscious of the lethality nighttime pedestrians attributed to me. Perhaps it was because in Chester, Pennsylvania, the small, angry industrial town where I came of age in the 1960s, I was scarcely noticeable against a backdrop of gang warfare, street knifings, and murders. I grew up one of the good boys, perhaps a half-dozen fistfights. In retrospect, my shyness of combat has clear sources.

7 As a boy, I saw countless tough guys locked away; I have since buried several, too. They were babies, really—a teenage cousin, a brother of twenty-two, a childhood friend in his mid-twenties—all gone down in episodes of bravado played out in the streets. I came to doubt the virtues of intimidation early on. I chose, perhaps unconsciously, to remain a shadow—timid, but a survivor.

8 The fearsomeness mistakenly attributed to me in public places often has a perilous flavor. The most frightening of these confusions occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when I worked as a journalist in Chicago. One day, rushing into the office of a magazine I was writing for with a deadline story in hand, I was mistaken for a burglar. The office manager called security and, with an ad hoc posse, pursued me through the labyrinthine halls, nearly to my editor’s door. I had no way of proving who I was. I could only move briskly toward the company of someone who knew me.

9 Another time I was on assignment for a local paper and killing time before an interview. I entered a jewelry store on the city’s affluent Near North Side. The proprietor excused herself and returned with an enormous red Doberman pinscher straining at the end of a leash. She stood, the dog extended toward me, silent to my questions, her eyes bulging nearly out of her head. I took a cursory look around, nodded, and bade her good night.

10 Relatively speaking, however, I never fared as badly as another black male journalist. He went to nearby Waukegan, Illinois, a couple of summers ago to work on a story about a murderer who was born there. Mistaking the reporter for the killer, police officers hauled him from his car at gunpoint and but for his press credentials would probably have tried to book him. Such episodes are not uncommon. Black men trade tales like this all the time.

11 Over the years, I learned to smother the rage I felt at so often being taken for a criminal. Not to do so would surely have led to madness. I now take precautions to make myself less threatening. I move about with care, particularly late in the evening. I give a wide berth to nervous people on subway platforms during the wee hours, particularly when I have exchanged business clothes for jeans. If I happen to be entering a building behind some people who appear skittish, I may
walk by, letting them clear the lobby before I return, so as not to seem to be following them. I have been calm and extremely congenial on those rare occasions when I’ve been pulled over by the police.

And on late-evening constitutionals I employ what has proved to be an excellent tension-reducing measure: I whistle melodies from Beethoven and Vivaldi and the more popular classical composers. Even steely New Yorkers hunching toward nighttime destinations seem to relax, and occasionally they even join in the tune. Virtually everybody seems to sense that a mugger wouldn’t be warbling bright, sunny selections from Vivaldi’s Four Seasons. It is my equivalent of the cowbell that hikers wear when they know they are in bear country.

**READING “BLACK MEN AND PUBLIC SPACE” AS A BELIEVER**

1. Have you or has someone you know ever been misjudged because of appearance? How does having that kind of experience help you better understand Staples’ topic?
2. Which of Staples’ examples most clearly help you understand his situation?
3. Have you read or heard on the news about other situations similar to those of Staples? Are black men the most likely to suffer from being perceived as “dangerous”?
4. Although Staples does admit to feeling rage, does he also seem reasonable enough to understand why people react to him the way they do—especially women? What evidence in the essay suggests this?

**READING “BLACK MEN AND PUBLIC SPACE” AS A DOUBTER**

1. Staples gives three examples of his own experiences of “being perceived as dangerous” and one example of a black journalist. Are these examples enough to be convincing? Do you accept his statement that “Black men trade tales like this all the time” as valid? Why or why not?
2. What responsibility does Staples bear for people’s reaction to him? Is he justified in feeling “rage” because people can be afraid of him in the situations he describes?
3. Have you ever been in similar circumstances—either as a “victim” or as a menace? If so, was your experience comparable to his?
4. How could Staples have made this essay more appealing to you personally?

**DISCOVERING IDEAS IN “BLACK MEN AND PUBLIC SPACE”**

1. **Interest**
   
   How does Staples grab his readers’ interest with the opening line of the essay? What word in particular do you think Staples chose to catch readers’ attention? Why?
2. In this essay Staples looks at how he is perceived by other people. Why is it important to him that his readers and others understand that he is not a “dangerous” person?

Details
3. Staples describes his “first victim” as “terrified” as she runs away from him. To describe his own reactions to the encounter, he uses the following adjectives: “surprised,” “embarrassed,” and “dismayed.” How do the later details about his upbringing help the reader to better understand each of his reactions?
4. Staples refers to “the language of fear”—a very abstract idea. What concrete details does he use to help readers understand what he means by this?

Explanation
5. In addition to the opening example, Staples uses two other personal examples to show how he has “the ability to alter public space in ugly ways.” Are these examples enough to convince you of the problem he claims to face? Why or why not?
6. In bear country, hikers wear bells to warn bears of their presence because startling a bear could cause it to attack. Staples describes his whistling classical music as his “equivalent of the cowbell.” Explain what he means.

Audience
7. This essay first appeared in Ms.—a magazine with a readership primarily composed of white women. What do you think Staples does in this essay to appeal to these female readers? How does he help them understand his situation even as he remains aware that many of them might react as “victims” if they met him on a deserted street?
8. Near the end of the essay, Staples talks about the “rage” he often felt at being mistaken for a criminal. What clues in the essay before this point led you to believe he might be angry about his situation? Why do you think he waited until nearly the end of the essay to state his anger so directly and forcefully?

Style
9. What about Staples’ writing style indicates that he is an educated individual? Give examples of words and phrases to illustrate your points.
10. Despite his high level of education—a Ph.D. in psychology—Staples still writes in a way that a general audience can follow his ideas. How does he keep his story engaging and his ideas clear?
Demonstrate Your Understanding of a Text through Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting

You know that you truly understand another writer’s work when you can pull out its most essential information and restate that information in your own words and writing style.

Instructors also know that if you can accurately restate the main ideas of written material in your own words, you truly understand what you read. Then you can present your evaluation of the material. This is why in many different courses you will frequently encounter assignments that require you to incorporate outside material through summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting.

The Essentials of Summarizing

Summarizing is condensing all or part of another writer’s work to create a much more concise version that focuses on the author’s main point(s) using your own words. For example, if you summarized Brent Staples’ article, you would relate the basic information about his essay in one paragraph or even in one sentence.
A summary must present the original material accurately in terms of content and tone. You must not misrepresent or misstate the original author’s ideas and information. If the original author takes a negative view of a subject, your summary should not use words that present the subject positively. Of course as a believing and doubting reader, you will both agree and disagree with the author; however, you must not do this in the summary itself. Present the original ideas accurately and then respond to them, so your ideas are clearly distinct from those of the original author.

Although you keep the content and tone consistent with the original author’s, the words and style of the summary must be your own. A summary that changes only a word or two or flip-flops a few sentences is a form of plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting another’s work as though it were your own. Even if you acknowledge that the ideas belong to the original author by using a citation or an endnote, a summary is still dishonest if it presents the original author’s words and style as though they were your own words and style. If the original author has a term or expression that you cannot put in your own words or style without losing meaning, incorporate it into your summary as a short direct quote. Do this very sparingly.

Here is what you need to do when you summarize:

Guidelines for Summarizing …

• Begin the summary by providing the name of the author and the title of the work you are summarizing in an introductory phrase (IP).
• Condense what the author says to only the main points that support the thesis. Generally, a summary reduces the original by 50 percent or more.
• Write the summary in your own words and style.
• Place within quotation marks important phrases or terms from the author that you want to keep if you’re allowed to quote when summarizing and then properly cite the author’s words through in-text citation (see Chapter 13, p. 378, for more details).
• Keep your summary’s overall attitude and tone consistent with those of the original author.
• Keep your own comments and opinions separate from the summary.

Sample Summary
An instructor asked his students to read “Black Men and Public Space” and to write a one-paragraph summary of it. He told them that he expected a detailed summary, not one or two sentences, so they needed to provide in-text citations when they paraphrased from the essay.
Here is one student’s response to this assignment. Notice how he presents the main points in the same order as Staples and does not include his own ideas and comments. He also uses transitions, so the summary is organized and coherent for readers who may not be familiar with the original essay.

Deondre Johnson  
Prof. Kory  
Introduction to College Writing  
28 November 2012

A Summary of “Black Men in Public Space”

In the article “Black Men and Public Space,” Brent Staples describes the impact he has on strangers he encounters in public places. Although people may perceive him as dangerous because of his race, Staples himself is in danger from these misperceptions. Staples begins by describing the impact he has on his “victims,” who are the people—especially women—who react with fear and concern when they meet him (39). They avoid eye contact, may hold their purses tighter, cross the street or lock their car doors. While Staples acknowledges that women have good reason to be cautious in public and young black men do commit acts of violence, he says the consistent public judgment against him is discouraging (40). What makes the reactions towards him particularly misguided is that Staples has consistently avoided violent behavior after growing up in a violent area. He saw too many people he knew killed or jailed, so he stayed reserved and quiet in the background (40). Despite his demeanor, Staples knows that his appearance puts him at risk for harm by those, including armed business owners and police officers, who may overreact with violence to the appearance of a large black man (40). But Staples has come to terms with the anger he feels at being mistaken for a violent criminal-type. He tries hard to make himself appear less dangerous, even whistling classical music when he walks alone at night as a way to protect himself from others’ perceptions (41).

Works Cited

Chapter 2  The Reading Process

Exercise 2.4  Identify Appropriate Summaries

Directions: In the following passage from his essay “‘Only Connect...’: The Goals of a Liberal Education,” William Cronon describes the traits of an educated reader. Read the passage, and then analyze each of the following attempts to summarize it. For each summary, determine if it is

(P) plagiarized.
(D) too detailed, containing more than the main ideas.
(G) too general, leaving out key information.
(A) acceptable.

2. They read and they understand.

This too is ridiculously simple to say but very difficult to achieve, since there are so many ways of reading in our world. Educated people can appreciate not only the front page of the New York Times but also the arts section, the sports section, the business section, the science section, and the editorials. They can gain insight from not only The American Scholar and the New York Review of Books but also from Scientific American, the Economist, the National Enquirer, Vogue, and Reader’s Digest. They can enjoy John Milton and John Grisham. But skilled readers know how to read far more than just words. They are moved by what they see in a great art museum and what they hear in a concert hall. They recognize extraordinary athletic achievements; they are engaged by classic and contemporary works of theater and cinema; they find in television a valuable window on popular culture. When they wander through a forest or a wetland or a desert, they can identify the wildlife and interpret the lay of the land. They can glance at a farmer’s field and tell the difference between soy beans and alfalfa. They recognize fine craftsmanship, whether by a cabinetmaker or an auto mechanic. And they can surf the World Wide Web. All of these are ways in which the eyes and the ears are attuned to the wonders that make up the human and the natural worlds. None of us can possibly master all these forms of “reading,” but educated people should be competent in many of them and curious about all of them.

D  a. According to Cronon, educated people read and understand what they read, a complex ability with the world’s varied texts. Educated people can read newspapers like the New York Times from its front page to its more specialized sections on business, science, and sports. They can read magazines like Scientific American and the Economist as well as more popular general magazines like Vogue and Reader’s Digest. They can read a wide range of authors from classic Milton to contemporary John Grisham. Educated people go far beyond reading only words. They read other “texts,” such as works of art, concerts, theater, athletic events and even television programs. When educated people
travel through various ecosystems, they know the various kinds of flora and fauna as well as the geographic features. They can identify various crops, such as soy beans and alfalfa. They can also tell whether or not a mechanic or a craftsman has done quality work.

Educated people can navigate and read the Internet as well. Whether the text is natural or man-made, educated people can read it successfully. There are far too many kinds of texts for anyone to learn to the point of being an expert; however, educated people learn as much as they can and always remain open to learning more.

**P** b. Cronon says that educated people understand everything they read. This ability is difficult to achieve because of all the different ways of reading. Educated people read not only scholarly journals, books and newspapers and enjoy authors like John Milton and John Grisham, they read more than just words. They are moved by what they read in great art, concerts, athletic achievements, theater, cinema and television. In different environments, they can identify wildlife and interpret the lay of the land. They can read farmers’ fields and recognize craftsmanship by cabinetmakers or mechanics. They can surf the Internet. They can read all these wonders of the human world and the natural world. Although none of us can master all this reading, educated people should be competent in many and curious about all.

**A** c. In his article, Cronon says educated people not only read, but understand what they read. Because of all the different ways of reading, this ability is deceptively complex. Educated people can read and enjoy a wide range of materials from scholarly and informative texts to purely entertaining material. Their ability to read also goes beyond the written word. Educated people respond to great visual art, music, athletic performances, movies, theatrical performances and even television shows. They can read the natural environment in its varied forms, and can appreciate the achievements of farmers as well as tradesmen. Educated people are technologically literate as well. While no one can be expert in all these natural and man-made texts, Cronon says educated people “should be competent in many of them and curious about all of them” (28).

**G** d. Cronon says it’s easier said than done, but educated people should be able to read and understand many different things besides literature, such as art and sports. They should understand nature in all its forms and the achievements of all different careers. Educated people should use computers. They should know a little of everything even though they’ll never be masters of anything.
EXERCISE 2.5  Summarize a Point from Cronon  
*Directions:* Pick one of the remaining nine points in Cronon’s “‘Only Connect . . .’: The Goals of a Liberal Education” (p. 27), and write a summary of that point. Remember, a summary should be a much smaller version of the original passage, it needs to be in your words and style, and you need to introduce the author and title of the work at the start of the summary. For this exercise, try to limit your summary to one or two sentences. Refer to the Guidelines for Summarizing on page 44 as necessary.

EXERCISE 2.6  Summarize “Be an Active Learner”  
*Directions:* In Chapter 1, there’s a section called “Be an Active Learner” (p. 2). Reread that section, take notes, and then summarize the whole section, including “Strategies for Active Learning,” in one paragraph of 6 to 8 sentences. Refer to the Guidelines for Summarizing on page 44 as necessary.

The Essentials of Paraphrasing

To work at an even closer level than summarizing, you can paraphrase part of an article or essay. You *paraphrase* when you take a specific passage from another writer and present the ideas of that writer entirely *in your own words and style*—without quoting.

Here, the goal is not to condense. A paraphrase is *about the same length* as the original material because it presents the details as well as the major points. But like a summary, a paraphrase restates the original material *in your words and style* while staying consistent with the original author’s content and tone. You must also acknowledge where you found the information.

Like summarizing, paraphrasing shows that you truly understand what another writer is saying.

Here is what you have to do when you paraphrase:

**Guidelines for Paraphrasing . . .**

- Begin the paraphrase by providing the name of the author and the title of the book, article, or other source you are paraphrasing in an introductory phrase (IP).
- Do not use the same words or phrases that are in the original piece of writing. Use your own words and style.
- Make sure the paraphrase is approximately the same length as the original.
- Double-check your words against the author’s words in the original passage, to make certain you are not using the author’s exact wording.
Demonstrate Your Understanding of a Text through Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting

- Keep the paraphrase’s overall attitude and tone consistent with those of the original author.
- Keep your own comments and opinions separate from the paraphrase.
- Properly cite the paraphrase using in-text citation (see p. 378 in Chapter 13).

When paraphrasing, the introductory phrase and the in-text citation at the end of the paraphrase indicate to the reader that you have started (the IP) and then you have stopped paraphrasing (the in-text citation).

Sample Paraphrase

An instructor has assigned readings from David Brooks’ essay “Self-Control Is the Key to Success” on page 3 of this text, and she wants to be sure students have understood key points by asking them to paraphrase some passages from the readings. Here is how one student paraphrased a key passage:

Original Passage

The ability to delay gratification, like most skills, correlates with socioeconomic status and parenting styles. Children from poorer homes do much worse on delayed gratification tests than children from middle-class homes. That’s probably because children from poorer homes are more likely to have their lives disrupted by marital breakdown, violence, moving, etc. They think in the short term because there is no predictable long term.

Brooks, “Self-Control Is the Key to Success,” p. 4

Paraphrase

In his essay, Brooks says that homes with higher income levels and parents who create a safe and more loving environment often produce children who are able to take their time to achieve goals and successes. These children are also more future-oriented as a direct result of the positive foundation they find at home. Children from poorer homes, on the other hand, often live in the moment because the present, for them, is so unsettled (4).

Exercise 2.7 Identify Appropriate Paraphrases

Directions: Read and analyze the paraphrases of the following passage, and determine if the paraphrases are

(P) plagiarized.
(G) too general.
(I) inaccurate.
(A) acceptable.
Chapter 2  The Reading Process

Original Passage

Here is the quotation from Brooks’ essay:

“Yet the Mischel experiments, along with everyday experience, tell us that self-control is essential. Young people who can delay gratification can sit through sometimes boring classes to get a degree. They can perform rote tasks in order to, say, master a language. They can avoid drugs and alcohol. For people without self-control skills, however, school is a series of failed ordeals. No wonder they drop out. Life is a parade of foolish decisions: teenage pregnancy, drug use, gambling, truancy and crime” (4).

G. According to David Brooks in his essay “Self-Control Is the Key to Success,” many young people want everything right now, and if they don’t get everything quick enough, they often end up using drugs and alcohol, get pregnant, and fail at just about everything in life. However, those who learn to take their time can have great lives (4).

A. According to David Brooks in his essay “Self-Control Is the Key to Success,” if young people are willing to take their time to achieve their goals, their path to success can be full of rewards along the way. These rewards can include everything from a better education to a mastery of skills, which will help them in their future careers and lives. On the other hand, those who are unwilling to move ahead slowly often fail in many ways, including dropping out of school, having problems with substance abuse, and even breaking the law (4).

I. According to David Brooks in his essay “Self-Control Is the Key to Success,” all young people who want everything right now end up using drugs and alcohol, usually get pregnant, and even end up with criminal records. So, if young people don’t stop to smell the roses along the way, they are going to be in trouble (4).

P. According to David Brooks in his essay “Self-Control Is the Key to Success,” self-control is essential for young people. This self-control allows them to sit through boring classes and perform rote tasks in school. They can even master a language if they want to. However, for the students who don’t have these skills, life is going to be a series of failed ordeals and a parade of foolish decisions (4).

The Essentials of Quoting

As important as it is to learn to put material in your own words and style, there will be occasions when you will want to quote from a source. Using a direct quotation means you have copied the exact words from the source and placed them within quotation marks (“ ”). A direct quote must be properly cited.
When you paraphrase, you give the essential information from a source in your own words. In those cases, you are not using a source's exact words, so you do not need quotation marks. Here are examples of an indirect quote or paraphrase and a direct quotation taken from the article “Only Connect . . .: The Goals of a Liberal Education” on pages 26–30.

**Indirect Quote (paraphrase)**
According to William Cronon, the goal of a liberal education is to encourage people to develop their talents and then use them for the benefit of all (27).

**Direct Quote**
William Cronon says that a liberal education “aspires to nurture the growth of human talent in the service of human freedom” (27).

While direct quotations can be effective, you should avoid overusing them. Not only is overusing direct quotes a poor practice in a writing class where your professor wants to read and assess your writing, but also it indicates to any professor that you may not have understood the material well enough to paraphrase or summarize it.

Choosing the most suitable material to quote and presenting the material accurately are the keys to using direct quotes effectively. Quote material when the language is particularly striking or memorable. Do not simply quote sentences that contain facts or statistics. Incorporate that kind of material in a summary or paraphrase. If you plan to argue against an author’s position, you may also want to quote a key passage that presents that position, so you clearly are not misrepresenting it. Finally, when an author is a notable authority on a topic, you may incorporate some key points as direct quotes.

Because you will introduce those quotes by naming the author and perhaps including a note about the author’s authority, the quoted material will have more credibility and impact. In fact, quoted material should always be introduced, whether by naming a specific author or the general source of quoted material. Never simply “dump” quoted material into your writing. When a reader encounters a sentence or passage in quotation marks with no idea where it came from, except perhaps from a citation, that quote loses impact and relevance. Always introduce direct quotes.

**Guidelines for Using Direct Quotations . . .**
Here is what to keep in mind when you use direct quotes:

- **Use direct quotations sparingly.** Situations that require direct quotes rather than summaries or paraphrases include the following:
The author’s words are particularly striking or memorable.
- You plan to refute the author, so it is important that you present his or her position accurately.
- The author is a notable, recognized authority on the topic.

**Ensure direct quotations are accurate.** Do not change words within the quotation marks.
- Do not “dump” direct quotations into your paper, but incorporate them smoothly with verbs like explains, presents, argues, notes.
- Properly cite quotations by using introductory phrases and in-text citation. (See pp. 378, 383, and 391 in Chapter 13.)

**Examples**

William Cronon explains, “They can follow an argument, track logical reasoning, detect illogic, hear the emotions that lie behind both the logic and the illogic, and ultimately empathize with the person who is feeling those emotions” (27).

In his article, Cronon argues for the importance of making connections: “More than anything else, being an educated person means being able to see connections that allow one to make sense of the world and act within it in creative ways” (30).

**EXERCISE 2.8 Identifying Acceptable Quotes**

**Directions:** Evaluate each of the following uses of direct quotes as Acceptable (A) or Unacceptable (U). Be prepared to explain your decision.

- **U** a. According to Brooks, “The children who waited longer went on to get higher SAT scores. They got into better colleges and had, on average, better adult outcomes. The children who rang the bell quickest were more likely to become bullies. They received worse teacher and parental evaluations 10 years later and were more likely to have drug problems at age 32” (4).

- **A** b. Scholar and educator William Cronon believes that “skilled readers know how to read far more than just words” (28).

- **U** c. “Around 1970, psychologist Walter Mischel launched a classic experiment. He left a succession of 4-year-olds in a room with a bell and a marshmallow” (4).

- **A** d. For those unable to delay gratification, Brooks says, “school is a series of failed ordeals” (4).
A Final Note on Documentation

When you use summaries, paraphrases, and direct quotes in your writing, you must include acknowledgment that the material comes from an outside source. Typically, in MLA format, this is done through documenting the material within your paper with a parenthetical citation and including the source on a Works Cited page at the end of the paper. (APA style also uses parenthetical citations and sources are listed on a References page at the end of the paper.) Not documenting material you have summarized, paraphrased, or quoted is also a form of plagiarism. For more specific guidelines on how to document outside material you incorporate into your papers, see Chapter 13.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

Learning Objectives  How they connect to learning, reading, and writing at college . . .

1. Engage in a conversation with an author through active reading.
   When reading in college, use these active reading strategies:
   - Know the context.
   - Determine the author’s thesis or controlling idea.
   - Use a dictionary as you read.
   - Read once for enjoyment and twice for analysis.
   - Annotate the text as you read.
   - Take notes.
   - Make connections.

2. Read as a believer and as a doubter.
   When reading anything, you need to be open minded to and appreciative of the author’s ideas and points—reading as a believer. You also need to read as a skeptic, looking for weaknesses and problems—reading as a doubter.

3. Put IDEAS to work when reading.
   You can use the IDEAS tool (Interest, Details, Examples and Explanation, Audience, and Style) to analyze other people’s writing.
Learning Objectives

Demonstrate your understanding of a text through summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting.

How they connect to learning, reading, and writing at college . . .

There are three main ways to work with sources:

**Summarizing** When summarizing, provide the name of the author and the title of the work in an introductory phrase (IP). Condense what the author says to only the main points, and do so in your own words and style while keeping the attitude and tone consistent with those of the original author.

**Paraphrasing** When paraphrasing, begin by providing the name of the author and the title of the source in an introductory phrase (IP) and use an in-text citation at the end of the paraphrase. Use your own words, not the same words or phrases in the original piece of writing, so double-check your words against the original passage. The paraphrase should be approximately the same length as the original.

**Quoting** When quoting a source, use an introductory phrase (IP), copy the exact words from the source, place them within quotation marks (" "), and use an in-text citation.

**MyWritingLab** Visit Chapter 2, “The Reading Process,” in MyWritingLab to test your understanding of the chapter objectives.