

# How to write an essay with three sources

1. **Write out your thesis or argument (including why) on a Post-it note.** Paste this in a corner of your computer screen to help stay focused on your argument. After each in-text citation, explain how the passage connects to the thesis. Unsure what to argue? Use the **Find Your Thesis handout** on the website. Below is only a suggestion, but it gives you an idea of one way to organize your arguments:

**HIT formula:**  
**Hook** or creative beginning to hook the reader which will lead into the issue generally.

Transition to **Introduction** of a source by author and title of your **strongest source** that discusses the issue you wish to argue. **Explain in your own words in a sentence or two what the source is about.** Use a transition to the **Thesis** statement or argument that includes why or how.

Use a transition from the thesis or argument to the paraphrase or quote from the passage you wish to use from the source you just introduced before your thesis. You need to connect this transition to the paraphrase or quote with by explaining its **context** (what is going on, who is being interviewed **before** you paraphrase or quote from it). **You then use a one-sentence paraphrase with a citation ( ) OR a one-sentence quote with a citation ( ).** After the citation, explain how this example ties in or supports the thesis.

Use a transition to your **second strongest source** that supports your thesis. If you have not introduced the source, introduce it by author and title and explain what it is about. Use a transition from the introduction of the source to the passage you wish to use by explaining its **context** (what is going on, who is being interviewed **before** you quote or paraphrase from it). **You then use a one-sentence paraphrase with a citation ( ) OR a one-sentence quote with a citation ( ).** After the citation, explain how this example ties in or supports the thesis.

Use a transition to your **third source** that supports your thesis. If you have not introduced the source, introduce it by author and title and explain what it is about. Use a transition from the introduction of the source to the passage you wish to use by explaining its **context** (what is going on, who is being interviewed **before** you quote or paraphrase from it). **You then use a one-sentence paraphrase with a citation ( ) OR a one-sentence quote with a citation ( ).** After the citation, explain how this example ties in or supports the thesis.

Use a transition to your conclusion. (Do not start with "In conclusion," since Ms. Freeman knows this.) **Do not restate previous points; instead, using your own ideas and words, suggest a solution or alternative that supports the thesis.**

2. Include a **Word Count** from the title down to the last line of your essay. **Writing more than the word limit, or writing less, costs you points.** Hit the return or enter key several times to the next page, which will be your Works Cited page.

3. **Write the entire essay, including the Works Cited page, as one document using the correct header. After writing the paper, come up with a title that ties in with the thesis.**

4. Spellcheck the paper and print it. Take a break from the paper for at least 30 minutes.

5. **Read the printed version out loud.** Using a pencil or pen, **write corrections on the printed version itself as you catch them.** Check for the following:

- Is your paper written in third person? (No “I,” “in my opinion,” “myself,” “me,” “our,” “we,” “your,” or “you.”)
- Is it spelled correctly? Double check any words replaced by spellcheck and all spellings of names and titles.
- Do you use complete sentences? Fix sentence fragments, comma splices, and run-on sentences.
- Are new ideas indicated with new paragraphs?
- Do you have a clearly worded thesis or argument?
- Do you connect your paragraphs with transitions of phrases or sentences?
- Do you use details, description, and strong verbs to create an interesting paper?
- Do you use a variety of sentence structure so that all sentences and paragraphs do not start the same way?
- Do you clearly explain who says each quote or paraphrase, that person’s title, and the context of each quote?
- Did you use the required quotes and paraphrases followed by an ( )?
- Is your entire paper in 12 pt. Times and double-spaced with 1” margins?
- Is your title and Works Cited title in regular type?
- Does your first page include four lines on the upper left that identify your name, instructor’s name, the class, days, and time, and the date in MLA format? (This should only be on your first page.)
- Do you have a header that includes your last name and the page number? (If done correctly, the page number will change on each page.)
- Do you have an interesting hook or beginning?
- Do you have an interesting title that ties in with your thesis?
- Is the Works Cited page formatted correctly? Is it the last page of your paper?
- Does most of this paper reflect your own thinking and ideas?
- Have you written substantial corrections on the printed version of your draft?
- Have you included a Word Count?

6. After writing and editing on the printed copy of your paper, **make these changes on your paper on the computer. Save this version as your final essay and print this version.**

**Bring both versions for peer review.** Save the final version on a thumb drive to back up your work. If you have time, make an appointment at the Writing Center or see a BC peer tutor at the Tutoring Center. Bring your assignment with you so the tutor can see what is expected. We will go over the essay in class during peer review.