A major challenge when writing with sources as a graduate student comes in learning just how to integrate the material you read into your writing in a way that:

1) Shows you understand the material
2) Allows room for your own ideas
3) Distinguishes your ideas from your sources’ ideas

For graduate level projects, you also need to demonstrate a much deeper familiarity with your sources than you did as an undergraduate. Readers—whether faculty members on your committee or reviewers from a journal—will expect you to understand the source material AND to interact with it. You are, after all, trying to show that you are an authority. If all you do is summarize sources, you are not engaging them deeply enough.

**Believing and Doubting**

You need to strike a logical balance—not 50/50—between being critical of the ideas in your sources and showing that you are open to ideas and listening deeply to those sources. Peter Elbow, a prominent scholar in writing studies, describes these two ways of thinking as methodological believing and doubting—widely known as the “believing and doubting game.”

In short, Elbow argues that our default mode as scholars is “doubting”—being critical of the ideas of others and bringing sources into our work simply to disagree with them. Elbow pushes all writers to do more “believing” to show in writing that we value the ideas of others and give credit when those ideas bolster or challenge our own. Of course, this balance depends on your discipline, project, and even the specific section of a project.

**Sentence patterns/templates**

Many writers default to putting quotes at the beginning or end of sentences or paragraphs. Ideally, you will vary how you bring in quoted material in terms of placement in sentences and paragraphs and the phrasing you use before/after/between that material.

As you read material in your discipline, you will learn common sentence patterns for weaving quotations into your writing. This process can be sped up if you actively pay attention to these patterns. Another useful tool for introducing quoted material is the University of Manchester’s phrasebank: [http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/](http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/)
Writing with Sources

Citing Sources
Certainly, one part of writing with sources has to do with proper citations (in-text and references pages). As a graduate student, you need to be familiar with the citation style(s) used in your discipline—APA, MLA, Chicago, etc. At this stage in your career, you should have these basic pieces of citation style memorized:

- In-text citation of a book or article, with one author
- In-text citation of a secondary (or indirect) source
- Format/organization of a References, Works Cited, or Bibliography page
- Basic reference/wc/biblio entry for a book/article with one author

EVERYTHING else can be looked up. You will learn, and maybe even memorize, more as you go. Learning how to use manuals and resources is more important than memorizing any of this. You will NEVER be tested on citations.

Manuals and Resources
You should own latest edition of the publication manual used in your discipline; if not, go buy one. The handbook/manual you used as an undergraduate is no longer sufficient. It may be out of date and also lacks the information you need as a graduate student. While you can use these in the library or at the Miller Writing Center, having your own may make life easier. The three most prominent manuals are:

  Auburn Library: BF 76.7.P83 2010

  Auburn Library: Z 253 .C57
The Chicago Manual is available online (for a fee). Online tools and convenience make this an attractive option. http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html

  Auburn Library: PN 147.G444 2008
  ISBN (to purchase): 978-0-873-52297-7

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