

**First Year Writing-OER**  
**Writing through the Rhetorical Modes**  
**Transitional Words and Phrases to Integrate Sources**

Integrating your own ideas with those of your sources shows you are considering how arguments in your thinking relate to the professional conversation already happening in your field of study. When you choose transition words, consider what the relationship between your ideas and those of others actually is and choose verbs that clarify this relationship. For example, don't habitually use, "Smith says, ..." or "According to Smith. ..." These transitions are not as precise as: John Smith explains his view this way, "..."; or, Smith, however, admits, "..."

Below are transitions for integrating sources that can offer variety and conciseness:

**Transitions to Integrate a Quotation or Paraphrase**

- |                              |                                |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| The [writer] says, . . .     | [Writer] recommends . . .      |
| The [writer] notes, . . .    | The [writer] warns. . .        |
| The [writer] believes, . . . | The [[writer] rejects, . . .   |
| [Writer] asks. . .           | The [writer] asserts, . . .    |
| The [writer] observes, . . . | The [writer] admits, . . .     |
| The [writer] declares, . . . | The [writer] cautions, . . .   |
| The [writer] suggests, . . . | The [writer] maintains, . . .  |
| The [writer] confirms, . . . | The [writer] insists, . . .    |
| The [writer] shows, . . .    | The [writer] emphasizes, . . . |
| The [writer] mentions, . . . | The [writer] contends, . . .   |
| [Writer] explains . . .      | The [writer] implies, . . .    |

**The list is endless:** determine, evaluate, compare, hypothesize, measure, point out, question, claim, contrast, believe, find, assess, study. Consider the relationship between the ideas you are presenting.

**Transitions to Introduce Paraphrases *after* Direct Quotations**

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| What this means is.....                          | More simply.....                                 |
| In other words.....                              | In short, .....                                  |
| What I understand this to say is.....            | To me, this means.....                           |
| I interpret this to mean.....                    | My understanding of this is.....                 |
| To put [author]'s statement in my own words, ... | This relates to my argument because it says..... |
| What this says to me is.....                     |  |

**A note on punctuation for quotations: notice the comma (tag) after the transition word and before the quotation. Example:**

Meyer states, "Music not only transports our minds, it creates connections between ideas we wouldn't understand otherwise."

**This rule is not always necessary for a paraphrase. Example:**

Meyer implies music is powerful enough to transport and help us see relationships between thoughts we might miss in other situations.

