

Writing a Strong “Lead-In” to Highlight a Credible Source

THE “LEAD-IN”

A strong lead-in is essential in academic writing, especially when referencing impressive sources. It not only credits the authors but also highlights their expertise and helps establish credibility for your research.

Why Use a Lead-In?

Using a lead-in shows that you've carefully selected quality sources to support your arguments, making your research more convincing and trustworthy.

Weak Lead-Ins to Avoid

- A weak lead-in may be: "According to WebMD, ..."
 - Reason: The source is basic and doesn't add value to your paper. **Only create “lead-ins” for impressive sources.**
- Another weak lead-in may be: "According to 'What is the (Wrong of) Cultural Appropriation?'..."
 - Reason: The title weakens the lead-in; instead, focus on the author's name and credentials. If you cannot locate quality credentials, do not create a “lead-in.” Avoid using titles unless they're renowned or classic works.

THE ANATOMY OF A STRONG “LEAD-IN”

A good lead-in should:

1. Identify the author's name
2. Include their professional credentials
3. Mention the author's purpose for writing the content you'll present
4. Offer a [direct quote](#) or summary from the source
5. Provide page number information (if available)

Example of a Strong Lead-In

Anatomy of a lead-in followed by a quote or summary:

Person, **profession**, **institution**, **purpose**, **“quote” or summary**, **parenthetical citation/page number**.

for example:

Fiona Measham, Chair in Criminology at Liverpool University, offers hope for those wishing to decrease risks to public health when she asserts that the use of vapes and e-cigarettes can be denormalized through laws and education (38).

William Golding, author of *The Lord of the Flies*, symbolizes the increased protection Simon achieves as he crawls under the “screen of leaves [as] sunlight pelted down” fostering him the opportunity to benefit from new perspectives by isolating himself (190).

This may require some linear research (looking up more about the author on a web search)

Since the author's name was presented “in-text” earlier in the sentence, I only needed to include the page number information within the parenthetical portion of the citation.

Do not go “overboard” with the credentials; choose the most impressive or applicable credentials to highlight.

If there is more than one author, choose the first author listed and provide a lead-in for them, only.

How to lead-in and integrate a quote from a source that you have already created one lead-in for earlier in the paper:

As the paper progresses, it is not advisable to highlight a source using a lead-in once you have already done so.

Below is an example of how to “circle back” to the source. William Golding had been introduced as the author of the novel previously in the paper. He can now just be referred to as “Golding.”

Golding often suggests that Simon, who possesses traits of generosity and isolation, is seen as weak. The reader quickly recognizes this as untrue as “amid the roar of bees,” Simon demonstrates stolid bravery with “endless outstretched hands” and “double handfuls” of the “choicest” fruit (68).