

# Writing Workshop #2



**“The great enemy of clear language is insincerity.”  
George Orwell**

# Agenda



- **Synthesis – post it note / narrative strategies**
- **Summary**
- **Analysis**
- **Quotation – signal phrases**
- **Paraphrase**
- **APA chapter 6 “Crediting Sources”**
- **Plagiarism**
- **Your position**

# What does it mean to synthesize?



**Synthesis: the composition or combination of parts or elements so as to form a whole.**

**Beyond the dictionary definition: A sum is greater than its parts—when you synthesize a number of concepts or journal articles, you highlight key ideas from each source and weave them together with your own perspective to form the “whole.”**

# Summary and Synthesis - relationship



- To summarize is to condense the key ideas from a text.

- To synthesize is to take two or more summaries and bring them together in a fruitful way—possibly adding the glue of personal meaning.

# Types of syntheses



- **A literature review is a form of synthesis: you give an overview of what has been written about a topic in order to position your own ideas about the topic.**

# Strategy #1 for synthesis post-it notes



- ▶ Use post-it notes to practice word economy and prioritize. When you are at the stage of reading/comprehending an article, write 3-5 words on a post-it note to convey each of the key ideas of the article.
- ▶ Then use the post-it notes to organize a series of key ideas from several sources.
- ▶ Once you've got these lined up, start to think about similarities and differences. Which writers views/ ideas/ definitions agree and which diverge?

# Post-it strategy, continued



Organize the key ideas into different categories that suit your purpose—are you trying to compare different definitions/ views of epistemology? Ontology? You can group together the thinkers/ writers that share a certain definition or view.

The post-it note strategy can lead to you organizing a literature review or overview of literature.

A good example is Effken's overview of previous literature on intuition (see article)

# Strategy #2 for synthesis

## The narrative



- ▶ Sometimes it helps to think of synthesis as a bringing together of various “stories.”
- ▶ The narrative or story is a concept that crosses cultures and an excellent way to organize information.
- ▶ You have your own “story” to tell, and you borrow “stories” from others to help tell your own.
- ▶ This is well documented in Effken’s description of “how we see the world”; she has put into narrative form a synthesis of how different philosophers describe our experience of the world (see article).

# Analysis- what's that?



- **Synthesis means to bring together parts into a whole; analysis means the opposite – to separate a whole into its component parts.**
- **Thus, if you are asked to analyze an article, you will need to break it down into sections and define/explicate the meaning of each part.**

# Focus on APA – chapter 6



- Chapter 6 is on “Crediting Sources.”
- There is useful technical information in this chapter about how to quote material – shorter quotations and longer “block” quotations (40 words or more).
- One skill you will need to practice is how to smoothly integrate quotations into your prose.

# Integration – Vary signal phrases



- ▶ A signal phrase is the series of words you use to introduce the words or ideas of others. Some model signal phrases follow:
- ▶ According to
- ▶ In the words of
- ▶ As xx has noted
- ▶ Xxx pointed out that
- ▶ Xxx claimed
- ▶ “xxx,” wrote xx
- ▶ Xxx answered these objections with the following analysis:

# Varying signal phrases, continued



- Diane Hacker suggests many different verbs we can for signal phrases (but be sure meaning matches language):
- admitted – contended – reasoned – agreed – declared – refuted – rejected – denied – argued – asserted – emphasized – reported – believed – insisted – responded – claimed – noted – suggested – compared – observed – thought – confirmed – pointed out - wrote

# Quoting smoothly



- How would you fix this use of quoted material (there are five errors):
- Effken declares (2007) that we recognize dogs:  
“because we have an abstract idea of what “dogness” entails.”  
(23)

# Corrected:



- ▶ Effken (2007) noted that we recognize dogs “because we have an abstract idea of what ‘dogness’ entails” (p. 23).
- ▶ -placement of date – right after name
- ▶ -verb choice (declares is strident/ unnecessary for context) – tense – use past
- ▶ -quotation is short – not block (40 words or over)
- ▶ -use single quotation marks within double
- ▶ -need p. with number
- ▶ -period *after* in-text citation

# Other notable material in chapter 6 - APA



- ▶ Long or block quotations (unlike shorter quotations) do have final punctuation before the in-text citation – see example p. 171.
- ▶ Paraphrased material should also have a page or paragraph number to guide reader.
- ▶ Remember to change words *and* syntax to your own when paraphrasing – or you could be plagiarizing.
- ▶ You may change the first letter of the first word in a quotation to upper or lower case to suit your quotation (p. 172)

# More Chapter 6 material



- ▶ If you omit material, use 3 ellipsis points . . . To show omission of material; use 4 ellipsis to show omission between two sentences.
- ▶ Use square brackets to add material for clarity (see p. 173 for example).
- ▶ Add emphasis by italicizing a word or words in a quotation. Add immediately after the emphasized word [emphasis added].
- ▶ If you note an error in the material, add [*sic*] immediately after the noted error to clarify that you recognize the error and it is not your own.

# Plagiarism – credit all ideas and language.



- ▶ Take careful notes to keep track of sources.
- ▶ Always double check accuracy of quotations.
- ▶ Don't resubmit ideas/writings from another course.
- ▶ When paraphrasing change language and syntax – don't just plop in new words.
- ▶ Don't repeat language from original when summarizing unless you enclose in quotation marks.

# Your position?



- You will have certain “assumptions” and reactions to the material you read—these are not necessarily your “position.”
- You come to your position after reading – reading – reading – thinking – writing – reflecting – writing. You may doubt your first impressions and thoughts, but do not discard them. Note them—along with any “intuitions” for later use. They may inform your position.
- There is no one correct way to state your position—but your position is always in relation to others in the field. A metaphor I have found useful is the conversation. . . .

# Conversation



- Imagine that you are entering a conversation. You are adding your ideas to the ideas swirling around you.
- Perhaps, at first, your voice will feel shaky, or weak, or unsubstantial, or small.
- But the more that you listen carefully to the conversation around you . . . The more you will realize you have a place, too.
- You acknowledge the ideas of the others in the conversation, and you respectfully offer your own—because they matter.

