WRITING WITH SOURCES

When to acknowledge your sources:

- Language is taken directly from another writer or speaker
- Ideas, information, graphics are the intellectual work of another writer, speaker, artist

When not to acknowledge your sources:

- Common knowledge (three of more reputable sources report the same information)
- Widely known phrases or statements which have no source

WHY? Writing is a conversation that relies on both your original work, interpretation, and findings, as well as those who have thought, researched, and written about your topic in the past. Acknowledging the work of others expresses your intellectual honesty and recognition that knowledge is a building process.

Note: Complete publication or access information appears in a Works Cited or Bibliography page appearing at the conclusion of your written work. Attribution of your source within your written work is an abbreviated form which allows the reader to find the complete information at the conclusion.

Sample of Source Consulted in Student Writing

I spent my final day in Camden at the city’s other high school, Woodrow Wilson, which also has its difficulties in retaining students. The dropout rate at Woodrow Wilson High is 58 percent, a number that does not include the 10 to 20 percent of would-be Wilson students who drop out in junior high and therefore do not show up in official figures. Of the nearly 1,400 children who attend this school, more than 800 drop out in the course of four years. About 200 finally graduate each year. Only 60 of these kids, however, take the SATs—prerequisite for entrance to most four-year colleges.

From Savage Inequalities by Jonathan Kozol. Published in New York by Crown Publishers in 1991. This excerpt appears on page 149.
Note: In each case the writer has borrowed the language and/or ideas of Jonathan Kozol.

Example 1: Direct Quotation with attribution within your work, plus in-text citation

One reason to believe that school districts under report drop-out rates is the phenomenon that Jonathan Kozol addresses in *Savage Inequalities*. Kozol writes that in the case of Woodrow Wilson High School in Camden, New Jersey, the drop-out rate “does not include the 10 to 20 percent of would-be Wilson students who drop out in junior high” (149).

Example 2: Direct quotation with attribution in in-text citation or footnote only

One example that school districts under report drop-out rates is the case of Woodrow Wilson High School in Camden, New Jersey, whose drop-out rate “does not include the 10 to 20 percent of would-be Wilson students who drop out in junior high” (Kozol 149).

Example 3: Paraphrase with attribution within your work, plus in-text citation

Award-winning author Jonathan Kozol documents the struggles in an urban, New Jersey high school where over half the students drop out within four years and only a few prepare for college (149).

Example 4: Paraphrase with attribution in in-text citation or footnote only

Woodrow Wilson High School in Camden, New Jersey, exemplifies the plight of public education in economically disadvantaged areas. More than half of its students do not complete high school and far fewer go on to a four-year college (Kozol 149).

Example 5: Combination of direct quotation and paraphrase with attribution within your work, plus in-text citation

Jonathan Kozol writes, “The dropout rate at Woodrow Wilson High is 58 percent,” and that is far from the total story with junior high dropouts not counted at all (149).