***Research Paper:* Citing Paraphrases and Direct Quotations**

While writing a research paper, it is necessary to accurately cite all sources within the writing itself, as well as on the Works Cited page. Some people think that you only have to cite the source if using a direct quotation—writing down an exact quote; this belief is INCORRECT! In fact, any time you even borrow an idea from another author, you must cite the material accurately. Here’s how:

**Paraphrasing** is when a writer puts an idea into his own wording or rewords a passage. This *doesn’t* mean that you go through a great quote and change every other word. Rather, when paraphrasing, you’re expected to read and understand a passage, summarizing it in your own words. For instance, let’s paraphrase this bit from p. 198 of Eric Schlosser’s *Fast Food Nation* in 20 words or less:

*Before World War II, pork had been the most popular meat in the United States. Rising incomes, falling cattle prices, the growth of the fast food industry, and the mass appeal of the hamburger later pushed American consumption of beef higher than that of pork. By the early 1990s, beef production was responsible for almost half of the employment in American agriculture, and the annual revenues generated by beef were higher than those of any other agricultural commodity in the United States. The average American ate three hamburgers a week. More than two-thirds of those hamburgers were bought at fast food restaurants.*

At the end of your paraphrase, you simply have to add the author’s name and the page number in parentheses ( ) followed by a period. Guess what this is called?

**Direct quotations**, on the other hand, mean using an author’s *exact* words. Unlike paraphrasing, this should be used sparingly. Remember, you want the writing to be yours, not someone else’s. Still, if you find that an author has written something so powerfully and succinctly that you can’t top it, consider using a direct quotation. When discussing the *E. coli* outbreak at Jack in the Box and its effect on Lauren Beth Rudolph, Schlosser writes,

*She was admitted to the hospital on Christmas Eve, suffered terrible pain, had three heart attacks, and died in her mother’s arms on December 28, 1992. She was six years old.*

Those two sentences are powerful, and you may not be able to say it any better. If quoting this directly be sure to first explain background, introduce the quote with a short phrase (Schlosser writes, *or* The author of *Fast Food Nation* chronicles the event in the following statement:), copy the quote correctly, then add the necessary citation outside quotation marks: (198-199) or (Schlosser 198-199). Just don’t overuse direct quotations.