

## RTW Plus: Signal Phrases

Signal phrases are used to introduce quotations in your writing. They help your reader know a little something about who said it, and provides some context for the quote. Both APA and MLA documentation style guides recommend (but do not require) the use of signal phrases, and they suggest that you use a variety in order to avoid monotony in your writing. Here are a couple of model signal phrases:

- According to Mitchell, “. . . “
- In the words of Heitzeg, “. . . “

When using verbs in your signal phrase, please note that MLA requires present tense, while APA requires verbs in the past tense.

MLA examples:

- As Myers notes, “. . . “
- Miller reports, “. . . “

APA examples:

- As reported by Carroll, “. . . “
- King pointed out, “. . . “

You can also provide brief information about the author and/or the context in which the quote was given:

- In his letter to local church leaders when he was imprisoned in a Birmingham, Alabama jail, Dr. King wrote, “. . . “
- According to St. Catherine professor and historian Jane Carroll, “. . . “
- In an effort to explain the difference between science and non-science, Myers suggests, “. . . “

Here are some additional verbs to consider using in your signal phrases:

claim  
point out  
confirm  
reason  
insist  
declare  
observe  
suggest  
emphasize  
contend  
argue  
assert  
write

