

# Integrated Writing (Word Choice)

Integrated writing means using ideas from other sources. You are taking the same idea that you hear or read and including it in your own writing.

Sometimes you will use a direct quotation. A direct quotation means that you will use the exact words from the reading or listening passage. You will need to write the exact words in quotation marks (these " " are quotation marks).

However, there are many times when you will want to write the idea, but you will not be able to or want to use the exact words from the source. When we use our own words to explain an idea from another source, we call this summarizing or paraphrasing. We can also call it restating.

The most important skill for summarizing and paraphrasing is choosing vocabulary. You will want to use words with the same meaning. Words with the same (or very similar) meaning are called synonyms. Synonyms often have some difference in meaning.

In this part of the textbook, you will practice understanding the original source and choosing good words to explain the ideas in your own writing.

## Comprehension

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In your reading and listening classes, you practice understanding the main idea and major details. These are the same skills you need for integrated writing. In integrated writing, you do not need every detail. You are listening and/or reading with a specific purpose. That purpose will help you know what information you want to include in your writing.

## Example

For example, a student is writing about service animals. The student knows general information. She knows that dogs can be trained to help people who are blind. However, she thinks there is probably more specific information about the types of service animals.

The student finds this website: [ADA: Service Animals](#)

The teacher says this is a good source because it is an official government agency. The student uses the website to learn information about service animals.

- Dogs are the only service animals on this website.
- Service animals can be "trained to retrieve objects."
- Dogs can "remind [people] to take their medication."
- A dog can be "trained to detect the onset of a seizure and then help that person remain safe."

The information is excellent, but the student wants to explain the ideas in her own words.

When you read or listen to the source, you will choose the important information. The easiest way to think about comprehension for integrated writing is with questions. In the example, the student had a specific question in her mind "*What types of service animals are there?*" and she used this question to find information that will help her write.

Even TOEFL integrated writing gives you specific questions to think about. In the integrated writing, you are listening for three supporting reasons or details and comparing those to the reading. That comparison of specific details helps you to focus and choose ideas.

## Choosing How Much to Use

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When you have chosen the ideas that help answer your question, you need to decide how much you need to write to explain the idea clearly. Look at the example below:

## Example

There are a few options for how much information the student can include in her writing about service animals. The student will make this decision using the organization of the whole assignment.

### Option 1: General Ideas

If the actions the service animals do are not specifically important, she can describe their training more generally. This gives her more space in her essay to talk about service animals in a general way.

- Service animals are dogs that are trained to help people who have a disability to do tasks that are challenging for them.

This sentence explains the idea that connects all of the information she learned on the website. It is very general. This is good if the student wants to use more space in her writing to talk about the rules for service animals, how someone can get a service animal, and/or how the dogs are trained.

### Option 2: Specific Examples

The student could also choose to use more specific details and ideas from the original source. This adds strength to the essay by giving more description, but it can use space that the writer could use for other supporting ideas.

- Dogs can be trained to be service animals for people who have seizures to help keep them safe.

This is a great way to explain the same ideas, but now the supporting idea is very specific. The reader will expect more details about this example or for the same type of service animal to be described in the whole essay.

### Option 3: General and Specific

Of course, there is a way to combine the first two options. This is easiest to do in two sentences, but it can be done in one long sentence. You will just need to be careful with grammar.

- Service animals are dogs that are trained to help people who have a disability to do tasks that are challenging for them. For example, they can be trained to remind people to take their medicine.
- Service animals can be trained to help people with disabilities, like the dogs who can remind a person to take their medicine.

## Word Choice

When you are using the ideas from the source, but not a direct quotation, you will use synonyms. There are two parts of synonyms that are important to think about:

1. What is the dictionary definition?
2. When are the words used?

Sometimes a word might look like it has the same meaning. The internet dictionary might tell us that a word is a synonym, but there is a small difference in the meaning. For example, the word *state* is a little stronger than *say*. There is also a difference in when the two words are used. *State* is more formal and almost always in writing. *Say* can be used in speaking or writing and is more common.

## Example

The source about service animals uses some words that the student wants to change. Look at the list below and her notes on the vocabulary.

- retrieve (is this very formal?)
- trained (used too many times)
- "detect the onset" (what does this mean?)
- remain (more common word?)

Now look at the table to see her decisions on what words to use in her explanation of the ideas.

Original Word	Option(s)	Decision
Retrieve	bring back, fetch, recover	I will use <i>bring items</i> to explain the same idea as <i>retrieve objects</i> . <i>Fetch</i> can also be used for a game that dogs play, and I don't want this to be confusing. <i>Recover</i> doesn't have the same meaning in this sentence.
Trained	taught, qualified	The best option is to say that dogs <i>are taught</i> instead of using <i>trained</i> a lot of times. <i>Qualified</i> can work in this sentence, but it sounds too formal for dogs in my mind.
Detect the onset	observe, identify, catch, the start, the beginning	This phrase can be replaced best with <i>identify the start</i> . I think <i>observe</i> and <i>catch</i> are both good options. I just feel more comfortable with the word <i>identify</i> . <i>Beginning</i> sounds more formal.
Remain	continue, keep, stay	For this context, I like the word <i>keep them safe</i> because it feels more natural. <i>Continue</i> would need me to change the grammar, and that would be difficult for me to do. <i>Stay</i> is also a good choice.

# Exercises

## Exercise 1: Word Choice

Read the example sentences for integrated writing below. Change the underlined word for a synonym. Be careful not to change the meaning of the sentence.

1. Nobody wants to have a relationship with someone who is reliable, so one of the best ways to connect with someone is by serving others.
2. There is also a high probability that the person will overexert himself before or during the marathon and will not be able to finish it successfully
3. In conclusion, the physical characteristics between carnivores and herbivores are different and there are some advantages for each type of animal.

## Exercise 2: Restate the Ideas

You are writing about the Inca civilization. Read the example source information to learn more about interesting facts about this history. Write the ideas in your own words. You should write one focused on the general ideas and one focused on a specific example.

Source: [Inca Civilization](#) Use only the "Fast Facts" section of the reading.

## Exercise 3: Integrated Writing Practice

Watch the video and take notes on the main idea and any major details. Then click on the museum article and read that source. You have 20 minutes to answer the prompt. Your answer should be around 200 words long.

Prompt: According to the sources, how can you develop a talent? Why do the speaker and writer think that it is important to develop a talent?

Video:

Reading: [How to Discover Your Talents](#)



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