

# Advice: Citing Text Evidence

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In Language Arts, one of your most important assignments is to analyze multiple articles and cite textual evidence. If you do not understand the importance of this task, let me explain. When you conduct research for a science fair project, for example, it has very little validity if you just cite one source, especially if it is not a credible source. Scientists who publish their work in professional journals analyze a broad plethora of sources.

It is not just scientists who cite textual evidence, though. This skill comes in handy across numerous disciplines.

## What is the best advice I have for you regarding this task?

1. When you are called to cite textual evidence, you either **take a stance** (meaning it is an opinion paper) or **inform your reader thoroughly** about a topic (meaning it is an expository, informative paper).
2. Your **tone and intended audiences are different** whether you are writing an opinion or informative paper. When you state your opinion, you take on the role of a **lawyer**. When you inform, you take on the role of a **reporter**.
3. **Organization** is major. The first sentence should captivate your reader. The first paragraph needs to get your reader comfortable and acquainted. The middle two or three paragraphs provide the grand majority of the supporting details. The last paragraph ties everything up, including a concluding sentence that intrigues and captivates. **Transitions** help the language of the paper to flow smoothly.
4. When you are called to state and support your opinion regarding a specific issue, you must understand what you are evaluating from a very **concise standpoint**. Both supporters and naysayers have not just one, but several reasons, why they have chosen their stance. Relate citing textual evidence when writing an opinion paper to being a lawyer. The more strength behind your

reasoning, the more educated (about your topic) and interesting you sound to your audience.

5. A phenomenal paper should include several examples of quoted text. Do not just list the quotes, but explain why you chose them and make it relevant to your topic. Also, make sure you equally focus on each article you are citing, whether you have two, three, or more to review.
6. When you cite textual evidence, you must be objective and not subjective. If you happen to be very knowledgeable about the topic you are reporting, do not just state a bunch of facts you know off the top of your head or share anecdotes about your experiences. The articles are provided for a reason!
7. Here are some key words for opinion and informative papers:

<b>Opinion:</b> support, refute, evidence, assess, stance, based on, basis	<b>Informative:</b> comprehensive, concise, inform, explain, illustrate
<b>Power verbs:</b> accentuate, articulate, clarify, elaborate, emphasize, establish, examine, explain concisely, highlight, illustrate, demonstrate, exemplify	
<b>Words indicating similarities:</b> comparatively, further accentuated by, further evidence states, likewise, moreover, similarly,	
<b>Words indicating differences:</b> conversely, in contrast, on the contrary, on the other hand, unlike	
<b>Words indicating cause and effect:</b> as a result, consequently, based on	