

Supporting Your Argument with Sources

When you make an argument, you need details to explain why you are right. Getting facts to support your argument is important. It shows that you are not making up reasons, and people should believe you. You can strengthen your argument by showing that your facts come from trustworthy sources.

The first step to supporting an argument is to **research facts**. Use **nonfiction books or online articles written by trustworthy organizations**. You can trust websites that end in **.gov**, because they are from the government. Websites ending in **.org** or **.com** can also be reliable, but you may need to **check the website authors or ask an adult** to be sure.

Always **check with more than one source** when you research! If they say different things, one may not be true. Do more research until you **find the real answer**. If you can't tell when a fact is true, do not include that detail in your paper.

Circle if each source is trustworthy or not trustworthy.

- | | | |
|---|-------------|-----------------|
| 1. a picture from nasa.gov | trustworthy | not trustworthy |
| 2. an article from moonblog.com | trustworthy | not trustworthy |
| 3. a chapter from a school science textbook | trustworthy | not trustworthy |
| 4. a video from noaa.gov | trustworthy | not trustworthy |
| 5. a chapter from a fiction story book | trustworthy | not trustworthy |

After researching, use your notes to help you write the argument. **Cite sources in your writing**. "Cite" means to **say where you learned a fact**. Citing is a way to **give credit** to the source you used. You should **cite a source every time you use a fact or idea from someone else**.

If you are using the **exact same words** as a source, "**put them in quotation marks**." If you are not using the same words, rephrase them—but, still cite the source!

Here are two examples of how to cite a source in your writing:

- According to Source 1, "fact in the exact same words."
- Source 2 says that rephrased idea about the fact.

Each sentence below cites a source. Write the sources under each sentence.

6. The US Census in 2020 said there were 8,631,393 living in Virginia.

Source being cited: _____

7. In 2020, the National Education Association estimated there were 74,411 public school teachers in Massachusetts.

Source being cited: _____

8. The American Society of Professional Engineers defines an engineer as "a person who has been educated in the sciences and technologies utilized in the design and construction of structures and equipment."

Source being cited: _____

9. People farming fish, oysters and other seafood grew 658 million pounds of food in 2018, according to the NOAA Office of Aquaculture.

Source being cited: _____

10. The National Park Service says that "more than 85 million acres in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and US territories" make up the national parks.

Source being cited: _____

11. Why do some of the sentences above use quotation marks?

12. When should you cite a source in your writing?

Answer Key

- 1.** trustworthy
- 2.** not trustworthy
- 3.** trustworthy
- 4.** trustworthy
- 5.** not trustworthy

- 6.** US Census
- 7.** National Education Association
- 8.** American Society of Professional Engineers
- 9.** NOAA Office of Aquaculture
- 10.** National Park Service
- 11.** Answers can vary but should express those sentences quote the source exactly.
- 12.** Any time you use a fact or idea from someone else.