

## Learning Activity: Identifying and Paraphrasing Author's Findings

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**Purpose:** This exercise is intended to help you 1) learn to read and correctly interpret social science research, and 2) explain that material in your own words.

Complete steps 1-8 on your own. Once you have completed all the steps, you will meet with a tutor in the Learning Commons to go over your activity. You can drop by Library 168 any time or make an appointment by visiting [gavilan.mywconline.net](http://gavilan.mywconline.net) or by calling (408) 848-4811. If you cannot come to campus, you can request an e-tutoring appointment by visiting [gavilan.mywconline.net](http://gavilan.mywconline.net).

### Pre-Activity Reflection

1. What do you see as the role of alcohol in domestic violence?

### Locate and Quote Primary Findings or Results.

It is important to remember that in sociology research, authors will usually tell you what they view as their most important results or findings in the “Conclusions” section at the end of the article. To make sure you do not misread and/or misrepresent what research has found, always first check with what the authors identify as their primary results before you use material that appears in research articles. For some research articles there is no Conclusion section, only a Discussion section, in which case you will need to use the initial 1 paragraph abstract to find a concise version of the main result(s).

2. Read the “Conclusions” section on page 658. In the #2 box below labeled “Author’s Conclusion,” copy exactly (quote) the primary finding or result as identified by the author. Remember to use quotation marks around the author’s words and properly cite (author’s last name: page #):

**\*\*\*For steps #4-6, use worksheet with two columns at the back of this packet.\*\*\***

**Identify & Quote Key Segments of the Author's Argument.**

You can find more in-depth explanation and analysis of the author's findings or results in the "Discussion" section of sociology research articles. For this article, you will use two sub-sections of the "Discussion" section, "Alcohol is Not Enough" and "Choice and Control" to practice identifying and quoting segments of the text that relate most closely to the author's overall findings.

3. Read each section ("Alcohol is Not Enough" and "Choice and Control") all the way through, and underline all segments that relate to the author's overall findings or results (refer to #2 as needed).
4. From those segments, choose the 2 quotes that are most relevant to the author's overall findings or results. Copy these quotes into the #4 box labeled "key segments" (the left-hand column). Use quotation marks and properly cite (author's last name: page #).
5. In box #5 (below the columns), explain your reasoning. Why did you choose these quotes, from all potential quotes from this section of the research, as most relevant to the author's overall conclusion?

Use this page to record your responses to questions #4-#6 for the “Alcohol is Not Enough” section:

#4: Copy exactly (quote) 2 segments from the “Alcohol is Not Enough” section:

#6: Paraphrase each quote (explain it in your own words) and cite (author’s last name: page):

#5: Explain your reasoning. Why did you choose the above 2 quotes, from all potential quotes from this section of the research, as most relevant to the author’s overall conclusion?

Use this page to record your responses to questions #4-#6 for the “Choice and Control” section:

#4: Copy exactly (quote) 2 segments from the “Choice and Control” section:

#6: Paraphrase each quote (explain it in your own words) and cite (author’s last name: page):

#5: Explain your reasoning. Why did you choose the above 2 quotes, from all potential quotes from this section of the research, as most relevant to the author’s overall conclusion?

Use this page to record your responses to questions #4-#6 for the “Alcohol is Not Enough” section:

<p>#4: Copy exactly (quote) 2 segments from the “Alcohol is Not Enough” section:</p>	<p>#6: Paraphrase each quote (explain it in your own words) and cite (author’s last name: page):</p>
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<p>#5: Explain your reasoning. Why did you choose the above 2 quotes, from all potential quotes from this section of the research, as most relevant to the author’s overall conclusion?</p>
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Use this page to record your responses to questions #4-#6 for the “Control is Not Enough” section:

<p>#4: Copy exactly (quote) 2 segments from the “Choice and Control” section:</p>	<p>#6: Paraphrase each quote (explain it in your own words) and cite (author’s last name: page):</p>
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<p>#5: Explain your reasoning. Why did you choose the above 2 quotes, from all potential quotes from this section of the research, as most relevant to the author’s overall conclusion?</p>
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**Explain key ideas in your own words.**

Paraphrasing an author’s key findings or results is an essential skill in the social sciences or any discipline. For this activity, you will explain in your own words the segments you identified as most relevant to the author’s primary findings or results to demonstrate that you understand the meaning of the segment.

- 6. Explain key ideas in your own words. In box #6, paraphrase the quotes you copied into the #6 box labeled “key segments.” Another way to think of paraphrase: Explain the author’s findings or results in your own words. Cite (author’s last name: page) for your paraphrasing of other’s material, but do not include quotation marks for your own explanation in your own words.

**Check the Author’s Results**

The authors of research articles have access to far more data than is included in their articles. It is best to rely upon what the authors identify as key rather than to take a single segment of the results and try to reach your own conclusions about it. For this step, you will identify one quote from the Results section of the article that would support the key finding of the article (you quoted this in step #2).

- 7. Read through the results section for and choose one segment that supports the key finding of the article (you quoted this in step #2). Copy exactly (quote) the segment into the box below:

**8. After you have first completed parts 1-6 of this assignment: Post-Activity Reflection**

- a. Compare your response to the pre-reading activity with the author’s argument. Does your response match the author’s overall findings? What did you learn?

- b. Why should you always first check the overall conclusions as stated by study authors before using material from other sections?







**2. From the Conclusions section.** Copy exactly the author’s main finding/result (use quotation marks and properly cite): “Its primary finding is that the women in this study do not blame alcohol for their partner’s violence—they hold their partners, not the alcohol, responsible.

*(students may also add the next sentence) Furthermore, although the women recognized that alcohol has disinhibiting effects, they also recognized that these effects alone are insufficient to explain their partner’s violence and abuse of them” (Galvani: 658)*

*(I think that this segment should be separated from the #4 boxes below, and put immediately after the material for #2. Because they then go on to carry out the #3 part of the assignment, and #4 tells them to go to the next 2 pages to complete these sections, it should be less confusing. I do like the idea of putting #2 and # 4-6 together like you did, but it might not be as clear to the students just what is expected.)*

**4. “Alcohol is Not Enough” in the Discussion section: Key Arguments Segments.** Copy exactly the **2 quotes segments** from **this section** of the text that are most relevant to the author’s overall finding **that you identified in #2.** Use quotation marks and properly cite.

*(I think that some students will type, but others will complete this section by hand - especially those that do not have Word - so that two separate pages may well be needed, 1 per segment, since they will include 2 quotes per section, and then an explanation of why they chose them on the left side of the page).*

*(for a second page)*

**4. “Choice and Control” in the Discussion section: Key Arguments Segments.** Copy exactly the **2 quotes segments** from **this section** of the text that are most relevant to the author’s overall finding. Use quotation marks and properly cite.

**6. Paraphrase the quotes.** (Explain the quotes in your own words.) **and cite (author’s last name: page)**

*The following would be the most relevant to the author's primary conclusion, and hopefully students will include two of these, or at least one (or a portion of the whole quote) as one of their 2 quotes.*

“Alcohol is Not Enough” section: “It seemed to be outside the women’s power to influence their partner’s mood, and, therefore, their own responses had to be reactive rather than proactive. This would again suggest that the partner’s abusive or violent behavior was determined by their own decisions to act—thus, within their control—and that their behavior was not susceptible to the women’s external influence once their decision had been made.” (Galvani: 651)

“The fact that a particular environmental context can influence a man to exercise control over his actions reinforces the fact that he is able to choose his behavior, even under the influence of alcohol, when faced with particular negative consequences. This shows that violence or abuse in a private context is a choice, a conscious decision, for which he is responsible. He has chosen not to be violent in public and has chosen to be violent in private. It also shows his understanding that hitting women is no longer publicly acceptable and that he would reap public condemnation if he were violent to a woman in public.” (Galvani: 652)

“Choice and Control” section: “In this study, the element of control was often manifest in more subtle ways. Some women suggested their partners, in particular, drank quantities to maintain a particular image or commit a particular violent act they could blame on the alcohol. For other women, the men knew they should not drink beyond a particular point but chose to anyway.” (Galvani: 655)

“Whatever their views on alcohol’s role in their partner’s violence to them, the majority of women still believed alcohol was an excuse and that their partners had a choice about (a) how much they drank and/or (b) how to behave under its influence..” (Galvani: 655)

“Although some women reported their partners as heavy drinkers, very few stated their partners had a problem with alcohol. None of the women suggested her partner lacked control of his alcohol consumption to the extent that he was no longer responsible for his actions. Some men were perceived as having “less control,” but ultimately the women did not view alcohol, instead of their partners, as responsible for the violence.” (Galvani: 655)

5. Explain your reasoning – why did you choose the above 2 quotes, from all potential quotes from this section of the research, as most relevant to the author’s overall conclusion?