

Integrating Sources with Attributive Tags



University
Writing Center

Attributive tags are leading phrases which signal to the reader that a quotation, summary, or paraphrase is someone else's idea. They give credit to the original author in addition to the parenthetical note. Attributive tags are very useful because they can be **positive** or **negative**: Attributive tags can help strengthen a claim or weaken an opposing claim while introducing a quote, and they signal the intent of the quote.

TYPES OF ATTRIBUTIVE TAGS:

TYPE OF TAG	REASON FOR USE	EXAMPLE
Author's credentials	Enhances the credibility of quoted material	John Smith, a famed literary critic, states that...
Author's lack of credentials	Influences audience against this material	John Smith, a literary critic with no background in psychology, claims that...
Author's political or social beliefs	Can influence the audience either positively or negatively about the material	Radical conservative John Smith argues... <i>OR</i> Acclaimed animal rights activist John Smith pleads...
Title of Source	Provides context for the material by showing where it came from	In his book <u>My Generic Example</u> , John Smith states...
Historical or cultural information about the source	To provide context or background about the material	In his first new book written after the tragic death of his mother in 1975, John Smith proclaimed...
Information about the purpose or angle of the source	Helps the audience understand the context of the material	John Smith, in a short story designed to shock and offend, boldly claims...

PLACEMENT OF ATTRIBUTIVE TAGS:

Attributive tags can be placed before, within, or after the quotation. When an attributive tag is placed within a quotation, the second half of the quotation is not capitalized unless it begins a new sentence:

Michael Karnok says, "To be a father is to know the meaning of failure."
"To be a father," says Michael Karnok, "is to know the meaning of failure."
"To be a father is to know the meaning of failure," says Michael Karnok. (714)

USING ATTRIBUTIVE TAGS:

- ◆ When naming an author for the first time, use his/her full name in the attributive tag. Afterward, you can refer to the author using the last name only.
- ◆ Attributive tags are vital in showing the relationship between your ideas and those of a source. They act as transitional links that connect your thoughts to someone else's.

LIST OF POSSIBLE ATTRIBUTIVE TAGS:



according to
acknowledge
add
admit
advise
agree
argue
assert
belief
claim
comment
compare
concede
conclude
confirm
contend
declare
deny
disagree
discuss
dispute

emphasize
endorse
explain
find
grant
illustrate
imply
insist
note
observe
point out
reason
refute
reject
reply
report
respond
state
suggest
think
write

Works Cited

Ramage, John and John Bean, eds. The Allyn & Bacon Guide to Writing. New York: Longman Publishing Group, 1999.